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CONFERENCE SPEAKERS : BIOGRAPHIES AND SUBJECTS/ISSUES COVERED

Patricia Prendiville



Biography

Patricia Prendiville is Director of Equality Works, an organisational development consultancy specialising in supporting strategic development for equality outcomes. From 2004-2009 she was Executive Director of ILGA-Europe, and from 1994-2004 she co-founded and worked with Meitheal Development, a support and training organisation working with civil society organisations. Patricia's voluntary work over the past 25 years has included the areas of reproductive rights, women's equality, physical and mental health, and lesbian and local community organising. She was appointed Irish Representative to the Board of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in 2010. Patricia has degrees in Psychology, Women's Studies and Organisational Development, and an advanced diploma in group analysis. She has authored resource books in facilitation skills, youth work with young women and lesbian inclusion.

Joke Swiebel



Biography

Joke Swiebel (1941) studied political science at the University of Amsterdam. She worked for many years on women's equality policies, both at the national and at the international level. From 1999 till 2004 she was Member of the European Parliament for the Dutch Labour Party. In that period she also served as President of the EP's Intergroup on Gay and Lesbian Rights. In 2007, Joke Swiebel received the Bob Angelo Award for her contribution to the national and international LGBT movements.

Subjects/Issues covered

Joke's focus will be the combat for the E-U Freedom of Movement Directive of 2004 and the outlook for the future.

Specifically, she will talk about how the issue of mutual recognition of same-sex partnerships and marriages came to appear on the EU's political agenda. Different political views on national sovereignty, immigration and (non)discrimination has resulted in a novelty: the 'host country principle'. Although registered partnerships were recognized in EU law for the first time, the Directive also leads to unacceptable inequality and uncertainty. EU policy-makers must be held accountable for living up to their obligation to prevent discrimination and to respect family life. They also have to refrain from hindering labour mobility and thereby hampering economic prospects for Europe.

Michael Cashman



Biography

Co-President of the Intergroup on LGBT Rights in the European Parliament, Michael Cashman has been a Labour Member of the European Parliament for the West Midlands since 1999.

Previously Co-founder and Chair of Stonewall, he campaigned alongside Ian McKellen and others to repeal Section 28 in the United Kingdom, and bring equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people to the forefront of British politics.

Subjects/Issues covered

Michael Cashman will discuss the issue of free movement for same-sex couples in the EU, why it is a matter of fundamental rights that the EU must address swiftly, and how the European Parliament is currently working on the issue.

Matteo Bonini Baraldi



Biography

Matteo Bonini Baraldi is a graduate of the Law Faculty of the University of Bologna, where he also obtained his PhD, and of the University of British Columbia. He now works as Programme Manager at the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, and has previously worked as University lecturer and researcher. He is author of various publications in the field of non-discrimination law, and is co-founder of ECSOL, the European Commission on Sexual Orientation Law.

Subjects/Issues covered

Matteo Bonini Baraldi will outline the main research findings from the comparative legal analysis published by the FRA in 2010, focusing in particular on equal treatment of same-sex couples in the context of freedom of movement and family reunification of third country nationals.

He will also illustrate the upcoming research of the FRA which aims at surveying both LGBT persons' experiences of discrimination and victimization, and the views and practices of public authorities.

Silvan Agius



Biography

Silvan Agius is the Policy Director of the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe)

At ILGA-Europe, he coordinates the policy team's efforts to advocate for equality on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression with the European Union institutions, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE.

He is also responsible of ILGA-Europe's work on securing equal legal and social recognition for the diversity of families and family relations. In this regard, extensive attention has been given by him to the theme of freedom of movement and mutual recognition, and he has delivered various speeches and policy recommendations to European Institutions and national governments alike.

He holds a Masters in Human Rights and Democratisation and a Bachelors Degree in Anthropology, and worked at the Maltese National Commission for the Promotion of Equality between Men and Women (NCPE) before joining ILGA-Europe.

Subjects/issues covered

In his speech, Silvan Agius, will give an overview of the changing European legal recognition landscape regarding same-sex partners and then relate that landscape to the situation vis-a-vis freedom of movement and mutual recognition. He will illustrate the difficulties experienced by same-sex partners by making reference to the cases of discrimination that are reported to ILGA-Europe by same-sex partners who experience discrimination. He will then conclude his speech by proposing a number of recommendations and actions to be taken by European Institutions.

Kelly Kollman



Biography

Kelly Kollman is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of Glasgow. Before moving to Glasgow in 2005, she taught at Carleton College in Minnesota after receiving her PhD in Political Science from the George Washington University in 2003. Her research focuses on the influence that transnational networks and soft law norms have on policy outcomes in European democracies. She is currently working on a research monograph tentatively entitled *The Same-sex Unions Revolution in Western Democracies: The Domestic Politics of International Socialization*, which examines the role that international social learning has played in the widespread adoption of same-sex unions policies since 1989.

Kelly also has published numerous peer-reviewed articles in such journals as *World Politics*, *International Studies Quarterly* and *International Studies Review* as well as opinion pieces in the print media.

Subjects/Issues covered

Kelly's talk describes the ways in which the European polity—both its formal and informal aspects—has catalysed the adoption of same-sex unions laws in European countries. She argues that same-sex relationship recognition has been a great European success story both in terms of influencing national policy and enhancing the reputation of the European human rights regime. The nature of Europe's influence has been more diffuse and less formal than is often portrayed by legal or politics scholars. To date this influence largely has been exerted by a transnational network of lesbian / gay rights activists and supportive policy elites, who have created and disseminated a soft law norm for relationship recognition that defines the latter as a human right. This network and their promotion of the norm over the past twenty years have laid the groundwork for the institutions of the European polity to advance more formal recognition of same-sex couples in European law.

Fabio Chiovini



Biography

Fabio is a law student, who has studied at the Universities of Milan, Brussels and Beijing, focussing on the protection of human rights in European and International law. He collaborated with the Equal Jus Project and with Avocatory per I Diorite LGBT - Rate Ledford. He is a member of the working group on legal issues within Arc gay's Executive Board.

Subjects/Issues covered

The speech will focus on the past and present situation of Italian legislation concerning LGBT rights and legal recognition of same-sex unions. In the last few years, different efforts have been made in order to achieve some kind of legal protection: as regards lawmaking, many bills were proposed at the Parliament (PACS, DICO, DIDORE...) without ever being approved; some limited recognition was granted by regional legislations and local regulations (civil unions register, attestation of registration...). Also, particular attention will be drawn on latest case law developments, including the judgment passed by the Constitutional Court in 2010.

Jose Ignacio Pichardo Galan



Biography

Jose Ignacio Pichardo (PhD in Social Anthropology, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, 2008) is an Assistant Professor of Social Anthropology at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. His doctoral dissertation dealt with the influence of people with same-sex sexual relations on the social conceptions of family in Spain . His research is focused on gender, kinship and sexuality. He has published several books and articles about rainbow families, sexual diversity, LGBT youth, sexual rights and homophobia.

Subjects/Issues covered

The combat for the recognition of same-sex couples and their families in Spain is not new, and a quick historical review will present the process that led to the legalization of same-sex marriage. More than six years after this milestone, is time to look at how lesbian and gay people are using this institution: who is getting married or not, the reasons for doing it and the difficulties in their processes of getting married, the rituals that are taking place, the presence of homophobia and stigma and the reality of non-national or bi-national same-sex couples. Although this legal change has meant a great step forward for the equality of gay and lesbian people, there are still challenges for them in the social and legal arena, especially if thinking on moving to another European country.

Tamás Dombos



Biography

Tamás Dombos is a junior research fellow at the Centre for Policy Studies at Central European University, where he has participated in several large-scale European comparative research projects on equal opportunities. Tamás is also a PhD student at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Central European University, recurrent lecturer at the College for Social Theory at the Corvinus University of Budapest, and editor of the quarterly interdisciplinary journal *Café Babel*. Tamás works on a voluntary basis at the NGO Háttér Support Society for LGBT People, where he is responsible for coordinating the lobbying and advocacy programmes of the association.

Subjects/Issues covered

Tamás' presentation will provide a brief introduction to the legislative and advocacy programmes that led to the introduction of registered partnerships in Hungary. This introduction will be followed by an analysis of the types of problem faced by foreign/ binational couples and how the Hungarian legislator has tried to cope with these issues. At the end of his presentation he will briefly address the current Hungarian situation in Hungary and the difficulties it poses for the further advancement of the rights of LGBT people in that country.

Bruno Selun



Biography

Bruno Selun joined the Intergroup in November 2009. An activist since 2002, Bruno joined the Intergroup after five years of international work in the field of LGBTQ youth, including as a Board member in the International LGBTQ Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO) between 2006 and 2009.

Subjects/Issues covered

Bruno will present the current work on free movement in the European Parliament, and show how the Intergroup on LGBT Rights works to make sure EU institutions keep working on mutual recognition.

Caroline Mecary



Biography

Caroline Mecary has been a lawyer at the Paris bar since 1991. She has written many books on legal subjects (in particular *Art et techniques de la plaidoirie*, Lexis Nexis 2011, *Le pacs 2010*, Delmas 2010 ; *L'adoption*, Puf 2006 ; *Le couple homosexuel et le droit*, Odile Jacob 2001 etc).

Since 2009, she has served as Co-President of the Fondation Copernic, a left-wing think tank. In March 2010 she was elected a member of the Regional Council for Ile de France on a Europe Ecologie-les verts "Green" ticket..

In addition, she is leader of the network of lawyers of the Réseau d'aide aux victimes d'agression et de discrimination (R.A.V.A.D), a voluntary victims-aid association that groups together numerous LGBT associations fighting against sexual-orientation linked discrimination in France. She is a member of ECSOL, the European Network to Combat Discrimination and works regularly in close co-operation with ILGA (the International Lesbian and Gay Association) and the human rights agency of the European Union, FRA.

Having practiced in the areas of criminal law and immigration law (she was one of the lawyers who defended a well known group of illegal immigrants in the case of the « Sans Papiers de Saint Bernard »), she now works mainly in the area of Family Law (adoption, probate,divorce etc .)

Caroline also works on cases related to new family models for example : marriage equality (she was the lawyer of the two men who were « married » in a symbolic ceremony held by the mayor of Bègles) She also obtained the first legal recognition by a French court of adoption by a couple of same-sex parents in July 2001 and the first legal judgement by a French court on delegation of parental authority in July 2004, followed in February 2006 by the first decision of the highest French Court of Appeal, the Cour de Cassation on the delegation of parental rights in February 2006.

In January 2008 she succeeded in obtaining, from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, (on the grounds of Articles 8 and 14 of the European Convention) a condemnation of the refusal to adopt by a lesbian woman. In July 2010, she obtained an an exequatur from the Cour de Cassation of an adoption judgement rendered in the United States in favour of the female companion of a woman who was the biological parent of the couple's children.

This legal precedent has since been extended to cover joint adoption by same-sex couples.

Subjects/Issues covered

Caroline Mecary will address the subject of strategic litigation, that is to say litigation aimed at :

- changing laws or policies that violate constitutional protections or human rights
- ensuring that laws are interpreted and enforced properly
- identifying and closing gaps in the law

Domenic Ghidei



Biography

Domenic Ghidei has been a Commissioner with the Equal Treatment Commission in the Netherlands (Commissie Gelijke Behandeling, or CGB), since April 2005.

Since 2005 she has also served as a member of the CGB Working Group on LGBTI Equality Rights and, since 2008, also of the CGB Working Group on the Equality Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Since November 2009, among other activities, she serves as member of the executive board of Equinet (the European Network of Equality Bodies). From November 1999 to 2001 she was Substitute Judge for the administrative law section of the District Court of Amsterdam.

In addition, since 2003 Domenica has been a member of The Hague Club, an International network of experts and prominent persons in the field of Refugee and Migration Policies. Moreover, since 2006 she has served as Chairperson of the African Diaspora Policy Centre.

Since 1985 she has set up and been a member of a number of grass root organisations and networks in the field of refugee women and the African Diaspora. She is also a trainer and advisor on Diversity Management.

She is author of the book 'Through the Eye of the Needle, a commentary on the practice of the Asylum eligibility process', Greber publisher, Utrecht 1995. In 1995 she was awarded the Clara Meijer-Wichmann medal, a Human Rights prize awarded by the League of Human Rights.

Subjects/Issues covered

Domenica Ghidei will provide her input on the experience of the Netherlands Equal Treatment Commission who have given opinions on complaints relating to a Registrar who refused to conduct ceremonies for same sex marriages. The Commission has also advised (local) government on how to deal with registrars who refuse to conduct ceremonies for same sex marriages, in the light of the Dutch Equal Treatment legislation.

Ina Vandenberghe

Biography

Ina Vandenberghe works in the Migration Department of the Belgian Equality body, the *Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism*. Since 2004, she has specialized in the areas of asylum, migration and free movement, and from 2008 to 2010 she was advisor on immigration and asylum policy to the Belgian Prime minister. Ina studied Political Sciences and Economics and took a one-year training course in European law on immigration and asylum matters.

Subjects/Issues covered

The focus of Ina's speech will be respect of the fundamental rights of foreign nationals, and more specifically the right to family life for EU-citizens and their same-sex partners. The starting-point of the speech is the task assigned to the Belgian Equality body to provide first line support to foreign nationals having requests about their fundamental rights or residence status.

Chrysoula Malisianou



Biography

Chrisoula Malisianou has a Master's degree in Community and European law from the University of Paris I (Sorbonne) and a Master's degree in human rights and international humanitarian law from the University of Paris II (Assas). She was judge's assistant in an administrative court, taught administrative law at the Cours d'Assas and is currently a jurist in the Public sector of the Mission against discrimination of the Defender of Rights Office, where she notably is a member of the working group on LGBT discrimination.

Subjects/Issues covered

As a result of intervention of the High Authority against Discrimination and for Equality (the HALDE), which has since become the Defender of Rights Office, the question of the principle of recognition, in France, of foreign partnerships is now governed by an Act of May 12, 2009 and its implementation circulars. The aim is to ensure that registered civil partnerships concluded abroad, produce similar legal effects in France to those of the PACS, provided that such registered civil partnerships are not contrary to the public policy rules of French law. However, the Defender of Rights Office is still interested in intervening in cases where litigation is pending or in which the French administration still refuses to recognise the effects of such partnerships.

Jean-Michel Monnot



Biography

Jean-Michel Monnot is Director of Diversity, Europe for Sodexo and is based at the group's head office in Issy les Moulineaux close to Paris..

Since 2007, he has been responsible for the implementation of Sodexo's diversity strategy in the 25 European countries in which the group has a presence.

Working in close co-operation with local management teams, he develops and provides accompaniment for each country's action programmes. Each business unit is thus free to choose the priorities that best correspond to its own local environment.

Sodexo's commitment covers 5 major areas : those of the women vs. men, intergenerational representation handicapped persons, sexual orientation and "visible" minority groups.

Sodexo, a world leader in quality of life improvement solutions has a total headcount of 380,000 people on 5 continents (of which 150 000 people in Europe). In the United States, the group is considered to be exemplary in so far as its diversity management is concerned and it has received many awards, being ranked number one, in 2010, in the prestigious Top 50 Corporations list drawn up annually by Diversity Inc. In 2004, Sodexo signed the French Diversity Charter and received the Diversity Trophies Prize for its corporate diversity policy in October 2009. Jean-Michel Monnot was born in Burgundy but now lives in Normandy. Most probably because of his origins he is passionate about wine. Indeed that passion was at the origin of his interest in Diversity as his greatest pleasure is to discover wines from different regions or different countries with varying colours, noses and vintages.

Subjects/Issues covered

Sodexo's aim is to encourage the creation of an inclusive environment for all its LGBT staff members (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transexual) The group seeks to foster a corporate culture that respects all forms of diversity, both "visible" and "invisible"

Using informal networks and partnerships, the group strives to develop an inclusive work environment within which all staff members can be themselves, feel fulfilled and so enable the corporation to benefit fully from their complete range of personal skills. .

Sodexo encourages international staff transfers for all mangement talent by providing same sex couples with the same benefits as those given to heterosexual couples.

Jan Stinissen

Biography

- Dutch Lieutenant-Colonel
- Works for the Personnel Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Defence
- Responsible for LGBT policy for the Dutch armed forces

Subjects/Issues covered

- LGBT policy in the Dutch Armed Forces;
- International co-operation
- Policy on foreign stationing.

Dara Breathnach

Biography

Ms. Dara Breathnach is an Assistant Principal Officer in the Irish Department of Justice and Equality, where she has worked in the Civil Law Reform Division since 2007. She has particular responsibility for policy development in the family and civil partnership law areas, and was involved in the development of Ireland's civil partnership legislation, the 'Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010'. Her previous roles in the Irish civil service cover a wide range of policy and administrative areas, from telecommunications licensing and regulation to waste management policy.

Subjects/Issues covered

Ireland's civil partnerships

Jeannette van Borselen-Struijlaart



Biography

Education: Master's Degree in Dutch Law, Faculty of Law, Leiden University, 1982-1989.
Position: From 2009: Legal Policy-advisor at the Gender- and LGBT Equality Department, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Hague, Netherlands : also Focal Point for equal treatment policy matters on all grounds, within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Subjects/Issues covered

- What is the political, economical and legal case for finding a solution for the cross-border problems of same-sex couples?
- What is the position of the Dutch government on the matter of recognition of same-sex marriages and registered partnerships?
- How and with whom could we speed up the process in Europe?
- Participants are invited to take part in exploring the possibilities on cooperation with like-minded countries.

Ben Baks



Biography

- Ben Baks, is an Economist by profession
- He is Senior Policy Advisor to the Dutch Minister for Gender & LGBT Equality
- He is equally General Secretary of the Dutch Governmental Inter-ministerial Working Group on LGBT Equality mainstreaming – IWOH
- Ben is also leader of the Dutch Governmental Focal Point LGBT Equality mainstreaming group

Subjects/Issues covered

- What is the intergovernmental Focal Points Network ? Who are its members ? How does it work ?
- Which Governments in Europe exchange good practice and experiences on mainstreaming LGBT Equality in member states and regions? What countries are now catching up with the former forerunners?
- Examples of exchanges on mutual recognition of same-sex unions (would it be acceptable to talk about this ?)
- In what ways does the Informal European Network of Governmental LGBT Focal Points influence national policy making ?
- What does the Informal European Network of Governmental LGBT Focal Points do at the level of European policy making ?

Frédéric Minvielle



Biography

Frédéric Minvielle runs SCARNO, his own sales and distribution agency in the Netherlands for luxury shoes and handbags

A Frenchman, having lived in the Netherlands since 2002, he married a Dutchman, Carl Nobelen, on December 6 2003. In 2007, one year after having acquired Dutch nationality, he was notified of the loss of his French citizenship, an administrative decision he contested and which was greeted with outrage by French associations defending homosexual rights.

The French Consulate in Amsterdam had applied the provisions of a bilateral agreement according to which any citizen of either of the two countries who acquired the nationality of the other should lose his original nationality except in the case of a marriage. Since France did not recognise same sex marriage, this exception was not considered to be applicable.

Subjects/issues covered

- Brief summary of Frédéric's personal experience.
- Projection of an extract from France 2's TV evening news programme
- Why Frédéric wanted to marry
- The difference in his view between a simple partnership agreement and a marriage
- His hopes for the future : recognition by France of same sex marriage in the Netherlands and marriage equality in France.

Kaisa

Biography

Kaisa is a Finnish citizen and mother of two children. She is PACSed with her French partner Claire.

Subjects/issues covered

Kaisa will discuss mutual recognition from her personal perspective as parent of an LGBT family, and a parent engaged in a registered partnership, whose rights have been recognized to some extent in France, but not all in Finland. What are the very practical consequences, particularly regarding the children, of this lack of mutual recognition?

Maks Banens



Biography

Maks Banens, born in 1951 in the Netherlands, studied philosophy at the University of Groningen and sociology and demography at the Universities of Bordeaux and Pau. Associate professor in sociodemography at the University of Lyon, he published, with Rommel Mendès-Leite, *Vivre avec le VIH* (Editions Calmann-Lévy 2006).

He is the author of a report on same-sex unions in Europe: *Nouvelles visibilités – nouvelles discriminations ?* (Ministère de la Santé et des Solidarités, 2008) and is currently preparing a book on the demographics of same-sex unions in Europe.

Subjects/Issues covered

Same-sex marriage and registered partnership created new, unexpected inequalities between European countries: British or Swiss frequency rates are ten times higher than Swedish or German rates, hundred times Slovenian rates. Unlike other inequalities, these are not considered as socially problematic per se. Yet, their explanation centres on the effects of social inclusion and exclusion. Research results point to the major influence of social attitudes towards homosexuality. These attitudes should be understood as being the social management of homosexuality rather than simply as homophobia.

Pierre Serne



Biography

Born in 1972, Pierre Serne has been a member of ILGA-Europe's Executive Board since 2004. He has also been for some years, co-chair of the LGBT national committee of the French Green party and was the former European delegate of the French LGBT umbrella organisation Inter-LGBT. He is currently coordinates the LGBT working group of the European Green Party and was elected to the Paris regional (Ile de France) Council in 2010.

Subjects/Issues covered

Pierre will give his perspective on the conclusions to be drawn from the two days of discussions and potential areas of future action as a member of the closing panel "Summing Up : What actions are required for the Future ?"

Darren Rosenblum



Biography

Darren Rosenblum joined the Pace University faculty in 2004, and was promoted to full professor with tenure in 2008.

He practiced international arbitration at Skadden, Arps, Slate Meagher and Flom LLP and at Clifford Chance LLP in New York from 1998-2004. Professor Rosenblum clerked for Judge Fusté in the U.S. District Court of Puerto Rico. He earned his B.A. (in Philosophy and French) and J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and a degree in International Affairs at Columbia University.

Professor Rosenblum has lectured and taught in Spanish, Portuguese and French in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, Peru, and in the United States.

He teaches Corporations, International Business Transactions and Contracts. His scholarship focuses on comparative corporate governance and international gender equality.

Subjects/Issues covered

The development of European law on the recognition of same sex couples' rights reveals the persistent and subtle ways in which national identity in Europe maintains substantial power of people's lives. Vast differences also characterize the laws of different states within the United States. Continued debates, both legal and social, over the role of federalism in the United States may provide some insight as to how to understand and perhaps resolve such differences in the European context.



