



 *European*
gay & lesbian sport federation



Fair Play, Tolerance and Safety in Sports for Everyone



"Our goal is to achieve a climate in sports in which people can be what they are, of their own free will, whether gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or straight."

Foto: Manfred Schür

Welcome!

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) sport in Europe is becoming increasingly popular. LGBT sports groups have already formed in most large West European cities. In other parts of Europe one can see the same development, though not yet on the same scale.

LGBT sports

You may think: "Why is it necessary to have special events and sports groups just for the LGBT community?" The reasons vary from one country to another, since every country in Europe is different. However, most of us know it is not easy to come out about your sexuality in a "regular" sports group. Some may even have got into situations where they felt harassed, were called names, or worse. They may have felt that by being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender they were not accepted by their fellow club members.

LGBT sports groups experience the same discrimination when they want to compete in mainstream events or join existing sports associations. Did you know that in some countries it isn't possible to rent a volleyball court if you say it's for an LGBT event?

We think this is not acceptable. Sport is supposed to be fun. We therefore need to work towards a climate in sports where people can be what they are, of their own free will, whether gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or straight. The EGLSF works towards that goal, together with LGBT mainstream organisations, like ILGA and others, as well as with European institutions like Council of Europe and the European Union.

EGLSF Board 2008 – Co-Presidents: Anne Jensen, Pepe García-Vázquez – Members: Lou Manders, Juha Meronen, Gisela Weil, Andrej Pisl, Gabriella Körmendi

EGLSF... who we are?

The European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF) was founded in 1989 as a network of LGBT sports groups. Unlike today, it was then difficult to get into contact with other groups. Today, EGLSF links over 100 groups, providing them with tools to announce sport events, exchange information, discuss sports and much more!





Foto: Bethel Fath

Let's Play Together

EGLSF and sports groups

By becoming members of our federation, European sports groups take an active part in our network. They benefit from services ranging from an extensive, up-to-date database with addresses of all known LGBT sports groups in Europe to the co-ordination of tournaments so there are no two sporting events at the same time in the same area. The federation is there to make life easier for our members when organising events, or to help them run their club on a day-to-day basis.

A special benefit of being a member of EGLSF is that all members of a sports group affiliated to EGLSF get a substantial reduction on the participation fee for the EuroGames.

Reduced Fee at the EuroGames

If you are a member of a sports club affiliated with EGLSF, you pay less to participate in the EuroGames.

EGLSF and you

As a network of sports groups, we focus on their needs, but we also offer many services to individual athletes in Europe. Here's a short list of what we do:

www.gaysport.info

This is our popular web site with over 350,000 visits per month, www.gaysport.info provides extensive information on LGBT sports in Europe including:

- **News**

Read the latest news on LGBT sports in Europe and abroad.

- **Tournament Calendar**

We publish a calendar of all scheduled events in Europe and overseas.

- **Links**

Find links to LGBT sports groups in your area.

www.eglsf.info

Find out about the work of the association, or visit the special members area.



Foto: Georg Thum

Against Discrimination



Advocacy work in EGLSF

Discrimination is regrettably still a common problem for gays and lesbians in sport!

In October 1994 EGLSF published: "A Documentation on the Discrimination of Gays and Lesbians in Sports." In this report a total of 25 examples of discrimination were outlined. The range of discrimination varies from excluding gay and lesbian athletes from participating in sports events up to open or hidden violence, mobbing and psychological pressure.

Since then, many additional cases have been reported. These cases were published in an update of the document called "Offside" in 1999. It was presented at the „Building Bridges“ conference in The Hague. "Offside" was distributed to all sport federations, the European Committee, the European Parliament, the European Council in Strasbourg and the organizers of the European Conference on Sport and Tolerance. One of the EGLSF's main tasks is to put its finger

on those cases of discrimination and homophobia and to raise awareness on this important issue in the world of sports. EGLSF lobbies for setting and acknowledging the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders in sports and therefore strives to be involved in all international declarations or agreements to fight discrimination of all sorts and against anyone, no matter whether he or she is gay, bi- or heterosexual.





Foto: Bethel Fath

Fair Play, Tolerance and Safety in Sports for Everyone

In 1996, EGLSF was invited to the International Conference of the European Council in Amsterdam as the only delegate of the gay and lesbian community. This conference, "International Round Table on Sports, Tolerance and Fair Play" accepted a declaration which stands for fair play and tolerance and condemns discrimination in all forms. This declaration is supported by EGLSF as a step in the right direction. However, EGLSF expressed its disappointment that the discrimination of gay and lesbian athletes was not explicitly mentioned.

In 1999, EGLSF organised a conference called "Building Bridges Between Regular Sports and Gay/Lesbian Sports" and gave a summary on the integration of gays and lesbians in regular sport. Due to the "Building Bridges" conference the Dutch Sports Ministry granted a subsidy to enable EGLSF to work with European institutions and regular sports associations.

In 2001, EGLSF was invited by the Council of Europe to participate in a special Ministers' Conference on "Sport, Fair Play & Tolerance" at the recommendation of the Dutch authorities.

In 2002, the Council of Europe officially granted EGLSF consultative status by which the organisation was acknowledged as an expert on homosexuality in sports.

In 2002, EGLSF initiated a motion for a recommendation on the problematic situation of lesbians and gays in sports in member states in the Council of Europe. Since September 2002, EGLSF has been working together with other NGO-sports organisations in the field of anti-discrimination in sports in the FARE-network (Football Against Racism in Europe).

In 2003, EGLSF attended the UEFA conference "Unite Against Racism" in London. At this conference, the topic of homophobia in football was addressed for the first time. A FARE conference was also held during the EuroGames in Copenhagen.

2004 was the 15th anniversary of EGLSF, reason enough for a second "Building Bridges" conference.

In 2006, the UEFA conference "Unite against Racism" was held in Barcelona, including a workshop on homophobia held by EGLSF.

In 2007, EGLSF's project "Football is everything..." supported by FARE had its kick off to put homophobia and sexism on the agenda of football organisations. With successful events in Germany and a first international meeting of Queer Football Fan Clubs is coming to Barcelona in 2009.



A Brief History of the EuroGames

- 1992** The Hague, The Netherlands
- 1993** The Hague, The Netherlands
- 1994 Gay Games, New York, USA
- 1995** Frankfurt, Germany
- 1996** Berlin, Germany
- 1997** Paris, France
- 1998 Gay Games, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 1999 no EuroGames, event withdrawn from Manchester
- 2000** Zurich, Switzerland
- 2001** Hanover, Germany
- 2002 Gay Games, Sydney, Australia
- 2003** Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2004** Munich, Germany
- 2005** Utrecht, The Netherlands
- 2006 Gay Games, Chicago, USA
Outgames, Montréal, Canada
- 2007** Antwerp, Belgium
- 2008** Barcelona, Spain
- 2009 Outgames, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2010 Gay Games, Cologne, Germany

It all began in 1992

The EuroGames took place for the first time in The Hague. About 300 athletes from five European countries competed in four sports: badminton, football, volleyball and basketball. The EuroGames started on a small scale to give lesbians and gays the opportunity to meet and have fun outside the scrutiny of the greater public. The basic idea was to support gay and

lesbian athletes in their coming out, increase the awareness of gay and lesbian sport in the greater public and to do networking between gay and lesbian sports clubs in Europe.

1993 – The Hague again

The gay and lesbian sports world met again in the administrative capital of the Netherlands. The sports were complemented by swimming and track & field. Over 540 participants, men and women from eight European countries honored the efforts of the organizers. The second EuroGames were officially opened by the Dutch Minister of Sport, Ms Hedy d'Ancona. As always it was the goal of the EGLSF to use the EuroGames as a tool for political action.

1994 – Gay Games New York

The Gay Games in New York with 11,000 Athletes were a huge success. This event was to have a tremendous influence on participation in the EuroGames, since many European participants were motivated by them to take part in the 1995 EuroGames.

1995 – A year of records: Frankfurt/Main

When the Frankfurter Volleyball Verein FVV and Artemis Sport Frankfurt joined forces to host the 1995 EuroGames, the largest estimates on participation hardly exceeded 1,000 athletes for the 10 sports on offer. When registration opened, a flood of applications overwhelmed the organisers and in only a few weeks' time additional sports locations and housing had to be found. Many other



logistical problems had to be mastered as well, which the Frankfurter FVV and Artemis did with great success. Frankfurt/M. provided the EuroGames logo "Star & Flame".

1996 – Semi-professional EuroGames in Berlin

The organizers were pleased to welcome 3,400 athletes competing in 17 sports between May 16th and 19th, 1996. The organisation reached a level of semi-professionalism, although the work itself was done entirely by volunteers. For the first time, over 50 athletes from East European countries participated in the EuroGames: athletes from Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Russia and Romania took part. The Berlin EuroGames provided the EuroGames hymn ("We Are Leaving" by Polaris).



1997 – Paris - the first real bidding

Due to the successful EuroGames history up to then, three cities showed interest in hosting the 1997 EuroGames. Brussels, Paris and Zurich competed to host the games. It was decided to give the EuroGames for the first time to France. The EuroGames were held in Paris from June 20th to 23rd, 1997: almost 2,000 athletes from 17 countries participated in 13 sports. The majority of outreach participants at the EuroGames V in Paris came from France, Italy and Spain.

1998 – Gay Games Amsterdam

In August 1998, the Gay Games were held in Europe for the first time. Over 14,000 athletes participated in the biggest LGBT sporting event until then.

1999 – An unfortunate year

In July 1998, after months of serious talks with the organizers from Manchester, the board of the EGLSF had to make the difficult decision to withdraw the right to host the EuroGames from Manchester.

2000 – In the "little" big city of Zurich

The EuroGames were bigger than expected. These well-organised EuroGames worked like a Swiss watch. Over 4,300 athletes participated from June 1st to 4th, 2000 in the EuroGames VI. 19 sports were offered to athletes from all across Europe. The outreach programme was a great success and 150 athletes from Southern and Eastern Europe took part. Following the example of the Gay Games Amsterdam 1998, a "Rainbow Square" was set up.



2001 – Hanover: first small-scale EuroGames

The EuroGames VII in August 2001 were the first 'small' EuroGames. Hanover (Germany) organized a very fine event with seven sports. In addition, co-operation with the local government worked out wonderfully. The dancing tournament was a great success, not only because of its

political statement; the competition was top level. The Hanover organisers created www.eurogames.info as a common domain to be used by all future EuroGames for information and registration.



2002 – Gay Games down under in Sydney

In November 2002 the Gay Games were held for the first time in the southern hemisphere. Over 13,000 athletes participated under the motto „Under New Skies“. In many cases the competitions were held in the same venues where the Olympic Games had taken place only two years before.

2003 – Second edition of small EuroGames in Copenhagen

For the first time the EuroGames were held in Northern Europe. EuroGames VIII offered volleyball, badminton, swimming, football, track and field, dancing and a very popular sport in Scandinavia, handball. Due to the enormous success of the previous EuroGames and the Gay Games in Sydney, where many Europeans were not able to participate, registrations were high: over 2,200 participants; a large number for „small“ EuroGames.



2004 – EuroGames at the Olympic venues of 1972 in Munich

Over 5,000 participants and thousands of guests met to celebrate EuroGames IX. For the first time, the major part of activities took place at the Olympic Park. Over 20 sports were offered.



2005 – Utrecht, first not-so-small global EuroGames

In June 2005, Utrecht was the first city to stage a bigger 'small' EuroGames with 9 competition sports. Almost 3,000 athletes from 44 countries competed at the games. For the first time, field hockey was a competition sport.



2006 – Two global LGBT sport events

A big split caused realisation of two games: Gay Games in Chicago, USA (under FGG), and OutGames in Montreal, Canada (under GLISA).

2007 – Women power

Antwerp, Belgium held the 11th EuroGames. Over 2,800 athletes from 40 countries participated in 12 sports. Over 40% of competitors were female, and approximately 600 volunteers took care that everything was carried out as planned.



2008 – Mediterranean games

Under the slogan "Come South, Play with us!" Barcelona hosted over 5,000 athletes, coming from 40 countries and participating in 25 sports at the 12th EuroGames.





Foto: Georg Thum

Let's Get in Touch

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by e-mail or regular mail. We would also appreciate any ideas you may have to further improve the working of our federation. If so, please, send your suggestions to the addresses below:

European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation

c/o NCS – Meeuwenlaan 41
NL-1021 HS Amsterdam - The Netherlands
eglsf@eglsf.info

Press & Media contact: media@eglsf.info

Check out our web sites and services:

www.eglsf.info

Here you can find, among other things, information about EGLSF activities -and how to become a member- as well as a members area with our newsletter and other subjects of interest.

www.eurogames.info

Information about EuroGames: past, present and future.

www.gaysport.info

Online portal on European LGBT sport. Receive information on tournaments and other LGBT sports matters by subscribing to one of our mailing lists.

