

**We are
the
LGBTQ
community
in
Israel**





Why does Israel's LGBTQ community still not have equal rights?

Well, it's complicated. First of all, in Israel, unlike in the United States for instance, there is no constitution to ensure basic civil rights, and religion and state are not fully divided. Secondly, politicians and pressure groups representing conservative communities are in the Knesset and the government working against us, preventing us from achieving equality.

In addition, Israel is a young country, which since its establishment has been struggling with a violent and complex political reality, so that the military and security agendas often push issues of civil rights for LGBTQ people aside, deeming them "less urgent". Despite these continuous challenges, we can certainly and proudly say that thanks to incredible persistence and hard work on the part of LGBTQ organizations, the struggle for LGBTQ equality in Israel has reached unprecedented achievements over the last four decades, as can be seen in the following timeline:

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- 1988** ● Abolition of the prohibition that made homosexual acts a crime.
 - 1992** ● The Knesset approves the first law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation
 - 1994** ● Verdict mandates equal benefits for same-sex in the workplace
 - 1998** ● First large-scale pride parade held in Tel Aviv
 - 2002** ● First Pride and Tolerance parade held in Jerusalem
 - 2005** ● For the first time, the Supreme Court acknowledges adoption of child by LGBTQ partners
 - 2006** ● Supreme Court requires authorities to register marriages for same sex couples held overseas
 - 2010** ● Supreme Court rules that discrimination against the LGBTQ community in allocating municipal resources is prohibited and dishonors human dignity
 - 2014** ● The Knesset approves an amendment to the Students' Rights Law, prohibiting gender-identity-based discrimination for the first time
 - 2016** ● The Ministry of Finance increases annual budgets allocated to the LGBTQ community from NIS 2 million to 11 million
 - 2018** ● For the first time in Israel's history, a mass LGBTQ protest brings 100,000 people to the streets, including 7,000 protesting against trans-phobic violence, recruiting hundreds of organizations and business to a solidarity protest

*This timeline is a sample of major milestones during the past 45-years and is not a complete history of achievements.

What does the future hold?

We have achieved a lot in three decades, but there's still a long way to go on the path towards equality. LGBTQ-phobia is still a severe problem in Israeli society. Politicians, religious officials and educators continue to incite hatred for the LGBTQ community on a regular basis. In cases such as the murder at the "Bar-Noar" (a club for LGBTQ teenagers) in 2009 and the murder at the pride and tolerance parade in Jerusalem, LGBTQ-phobia exacted the greatest price of all – human lives. Fourteen LGBTQ organizations work together and continue the public struggle while focusing on a few shared goals:

1. Fighting LGBTQ-phobia:

- Outlawing "conversion" therapy
- Implementing LGBTQ inclusive materials within the school curriculums
- Adopting internal procedures for addressing needs of LGBTQ youth in the education system

2. Recognition family and parental rights:

- Regulation of civilian marriage for LGBTQ couples
- Removing discrimination from the Adoption and Surrogacy Laws
- Equalizing registration procedures for LGBTQ parents to heterosexual procedures

3. Responding to the needs of the trans community

- Changing the national census gender question based on individual declaration
- Systematic response to the severe discrimination against transgender individuals in the work and housing markets
- Full financing of gender reassignment procedures as part of the national health-care program



Tehila

Tehila is a registered non-profit organization, run by volunteers, and all activities are conducted by volunteers, provides support by parents, for parents who have children in the LGBTQ community.

Tehila supports parents and families of lesbians, gay men, transgender persons and bisexuals.

Main activities:

Support groups: Tehila offers groups for parents throughout the country, including special groups for the religious sector and parents of transgender people.

Parents who have undergone special training serve as group moderators.

Group sessions provide parents of LGBTQ individuals a unique opportunity to meet, share thoughts, emotions and deliberations, and give and receive support; they are not alone.

- TEHILA promotes equality for all and acceptance of others in Israeli society
- TEHILA works together with other organizations, both within and outside the LGBTQ community.

Chair: Miri Bialer
info@tehila.org.il





The Aguda

'The Aguda' - The Association for LGBTQ Equality in Israel is a pioneer among the LGBTQ organizations in Israel. It promotes human rights and represents the LGBTQ community with the purpose of improving its legal and social status, transforming it to an integral part of the Israeli society, with equal rights.

In recent years we have succeeded to:

- Set up a forum of the executive directors of all LGBTQ organizations, which allows us to deepen the relationships and partnerships between them.
- Increase government support of the LGBTQ community from NIS 2.5 million to NIS 11 million

(per year).

- Connect the LGBTQ struggle to the Municipal arena - We supported over 40 cities in Israel in the planning and execution of their local pride events in the summer of 2019.
- Lead the largest protest of the LGBTQ community in Israel: In 2018 over 100,000 people protested to end discrimination against the LGBTQ community.

"The Aguda" serves as a common platform for each organization, group, or individual interested in the LGBTQ community – "since together we can influence more!".

CEO : Ohad Hizki
ceo@LGBTQ.org.il



IGY

IGY is Israel's national LGBTQ youth organization (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer), empowering thousands of participants each year between the ages of 12 to 23, to create a leading role for themselves in a more accepting society, while supporting their own understanding of sexual and/or gender identity. Founded in 2002, our nationwide network of volunteers and activities support the creation of safe spaces in an often homophobic culture. Our work extends to all areas of Israel's diverse society, including several support structures which focus on the very unique needs of LGBTQ youth in Israel's Orthodox Jewish, Arab, and Ethiopian heritage communities respectively.

From its inception to the present day, IGY is the **only** organization that works for LGBTQ youth in Israel and **in recent years has grown to become the largest LGBTQ community organizations in the country,** with over 320 volunteers and over 4,000 youth members and participants taking part in ongoing activities throughout the year.

Liana Meirom Asif
liana@igy.org.il



Israel AIDS Task Force (IATF)

Israel AIDS Task Force

Founded in 1985, IATF is Israel's only nationwide nonprofit organization working to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS and other STIs in the country, while fostering a supportive and embracing environment for people living with HIV and promoting sexual health as a basic right for every human being. IATF's strategic goals are: Lead the call to reach zero new HIV infections within 10 years in Israel, Amplify the voices of people who live with HIV and fight social stigma and discrimination, Advocate for ensuring

optimal sexual health services, Provide sexual education services and Promote LGBTQ health. IATF's current array of services includes anonymous rapid HIV testing along with other STIs tests, mobile outreach services for groups at high risk, educational workshops in high schools, junior highs and other state institutions, free mental health treatment and legal consultation for individuals who live with HIV and their families and for drug users harm reduction services.

CEO: Chen Shmilo
mankal@aidisrael.org.il



Supporting the message of the Israel AIDS mobile clinic by volunteering for testing

Bat-Kol

"Ever since my parents alienated me, Bat-Kol has been my only family" (Adi 29 Jerusalem)

Bat-Kol is the only women's LGBTQ NGO in Israel. Bat-Kol is the home of over 500 lesbian, bisexual, trans and queer women of various religious backgrounds.

Bat-Kol works in two main domains. The first, is the internal domain, within the organization for the members of the organization, providing a safe place for women, some of whom are in the closet or in the process of coming out, by running intimate group meetings, events throughout the year, a weekend retreat (ShaBatKol) and more. The second domain, is public engagement, leading, conceptual and constitutional change for tolerance in Israeli society, and more specifically within the religious community as well as raising the awareness for LGBTQ rights. Our public work includes constant cooperation with other LGBTQ organizations and other women's rights movements and activists.

CEO: Tehilla Atias Bassa
tehila@bat-kol.org



The LGBTQ Pride House of Be'er Sheva

The LGBTQ Pride House of Be'er Sheva and the South has been the leading organization and community center for the LGBTQ community in the southern district of Israel for more than 20 years. As the main organization representing LGBTQ people living in southern Israel, The Pride House works to raise awareness regarding LGBTQ rights in the area. In addition to providing the main platform for organizing social groups and political events for the community, The Pride House is viewed by many as their home. Additional activities in The Pride House include weekly and monthly gatherings and support groups for queer men

and women, transgender people, parents of LGBTQ people and LGBTQ youth.

Relying exclusively on volunteers, the LGBTQ Pride House of Be'er Sheva and the South has managed to create a vibrant community and social life. The Pride House is also responsible for the largest pride parade in the south held annually in Be'er Sheva. Even though Be'er Sheva is a metropolis, the vast majority of the population still holds anti-LGBTQ views. On top of that, despite gaining recognition from municipal authorities, The Pride House receives little to no financial aid from the municipalities in the district. The LGBTQ Pride House in Be'er Sheva and the South is currently looking to grow its main programs, to stabilize the future of the center to ensure a home for the LGBTQ community in the southern district.

Board member: Arine Szybowski
arineszybowski@gmail.com



Havruta



with LGBTQ identity, through dialogue, Torah study, and weekends together.

Havruta is one of Israel's LGBTQ organizations, serving the religious community. It focuses on building a bridge between the religious and LGBTQ identities. Through our publications, events, and public appearances, we emphasize the integrity of the religious LGBTQ identity, often denied by various ultra conservative factions in Israel.

We fight against conversion therapies and employ social groups all over the country, to create unique environments for orthodox Judaism combined

Chair: Avichai Abarbanel
info@havruta.org

The Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance



The Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance The Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance (JOH) is a non-profit organization, founded in 1997, with a community center serving people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. While working to secure LGBTQ rights in Israeli society at large, our main focuses are community building, providing humanitarian services and promoting social change.

Now in its 22nd year, the JOH transcends political, ethnic and religious boundaries to create a safe, pluralistic and egalitarian Jerusalem that is welcoming for all of its inhabitants, communities and visitors, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Chairperson: Eran Globus
Eran@joh.org.il



הבית הפתוח בירושלים לגאווה ולסובלנות (ע"ר)
البيت المفتوح في القدس للفخر والتسامح
Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance

The Communities' House For Pride and Tolerance

The Communities' House for Pride and Tolerance

Since its opening in 2017, as the Haifa municipality's community center for the LGBTQ communities in Haifa and northern Israel. Our goal is to encourage a grassroots, thriving and meaningful LGBTQ community through a diverse response that meets the unique needs of the LGBTQ community through the circle of life.

The Communities' House main programs:

Community:

Community resilience programs, Developing diverse community spaces such as: social groups and monthly Shabbat meals.

Culture and social events such as: Shows, lectures and enrichment workshops.

Youth:

In cooperation with IGY the open house provides 7 social groups including: Transgender people, Arabs and Muslim, Christian and Jewish religious groups (ages 13-23)

Education and Public Awareness:

a cooperation with HOSHEN Increasing LGBTQ awareness and visibility in various frameworks through: seminars, information sessions and activities on a variety of subjects for institutions, organizations and schools.

Healthy Living:

A clinic for HIV and STD, a cooperation with the Israel AIDS Task Force and the Minister of Health, Social workers services and clinic for emotional therapy in cooperation with the Aguda's Psychosocial Services. Family and Relationships - support groups for parents of LGBTQ children, led by Tehila, as well as activities preparing the members' House for parenting, healthy relationship.

CEO: Arnon Allouche
arnon.alush@gmail.com



Hoshen

Hoshen is Israel's LGBTQ education and information center. Our mission is to raise awareness regarding issues facing LGBTQ Israelis, while fighting stereotypes throughout Israel via comprehensive and effective programming. Hoshen's programs focus on gender issues and sexual orientation to create lasting social change that will enable acceptance and equal opportunities for Israel's LGBTQ community. We believe that change begins by shifting the attitudes of the general public, which can only be achieved through a process of discourse and identification. Hoshen works with 350 different institutions annually, most of them schools, conducting 1,700 workshops with students and teachers, towards this aim. Our activities also extend

to healthcare, welfare personnel, and IDF commanders. Every year, approximately 50,000 individuals take part in our activities.

Hoshen operates all over Israel, works in cooperation with the government, is funded by the Ministries of Education and Health, as well as Israeli donors and our dedicated board. Hoshen won the Knesset Speaker's Prize in 2016 - an honor which we are grateful to have received.

CEO: Tamar Yahel
ceo@hoshen.org





Ma'avarim

Ma'avarim, is a trans-led NGO, and the largest trans rights knowledge center in Israel, empowering the trans community.

While trans people remain one of the most marginalized communities, the struggle for trans rights is at the forefront of the LGBTQ movement. Ma'avarim believes the existence of trans and gender variant people challenges oppressive perceptions about gender, creating a better world for all: gay and straight, men and women, and all of those in between.

Established in 2014, Ma'avarim supports hundreds of trans people and their families every year. Ma'avarim launched an

academic student scholarships program with Microsoft, assisting 26 trans students graduate university. Ma'avarim has trained hundreds of doctors, educators, and therapists, and other agents of change, and has successfully built trans inclusion and diversity programs with businesses, such as Intel. Ma'avarim promotes policy change, working with the Israeli parliament, and ministry officials, with many accomplishments from the gender marker to suicide prevention. Last summer Ma'avarim led the biggest trans march in Israel of 7,000 people following the stabbing of a trans woman in sex work.

Executive Director: Elisha Alexande
elisha@maavarim.org

Ma'avarim 
Israeli Trans Community



The TLV LGBTQ Sports Club

The TLV LGBTQ Sports Club

was established with the aim of bringing about social change. The club's goal is to establish various social sports groups within the LGBTQ Community in Tel Aviv and its surrounding. The club is a means of connecting LGBTQ individuals and shedding a light on the Community's struggle against LGBTQphobia and discrimination in the sports arena. Being one of its kind in Israel, the Club believes in combining a healthy lifestyle with a social environment for the community. The club aspires to create safe space for LGBTQ athletes within the club itself and within the Israeli society at large. TLV LGBTQ Sports Club is the producer of Tel Aviv Games, a biannual international sports tournament and is a member of the Federation of Gay Games.

Chairperson: Sagi Krispin
cochair1@tlvsportsclub.com



LGBTQ CENTER
Creating a community



The LGBTQ Center

The LGBTQ+ Center

is a home for the queer community in Tel Aviv. It provides a framework for LGBTQ life by promoting initiative, partnership, social involvement, and culture, and by providing assistance and counseling services.

The center aims to bring together the mosaic elements that make up the LGBTQ community and the residents of the city of Tel Aviv and to create a strong and solidary community, and serves as a magnet for LGBTQ people across the country.

We create a community

all year round with dozens of volunteers, community events, social gatherings and more.

In the LGBTQ Center we believe that change for the queer community in Israel is only possible through an in-depth process in which community members connect with one another and with the different groups that make up our community. In so doing, the members of the LGBTQ community will strive for equality not only through protests and demonstrations, but rather all year long.

CEO: Avihu Meizan
Avihu@LGBTQcenter.org.il





