



**International
Family
Equality
Day**

Celebrating the Rainbow of Families in our World!

The International Family Equality Day (IFED) Network **Annual Report 2016**





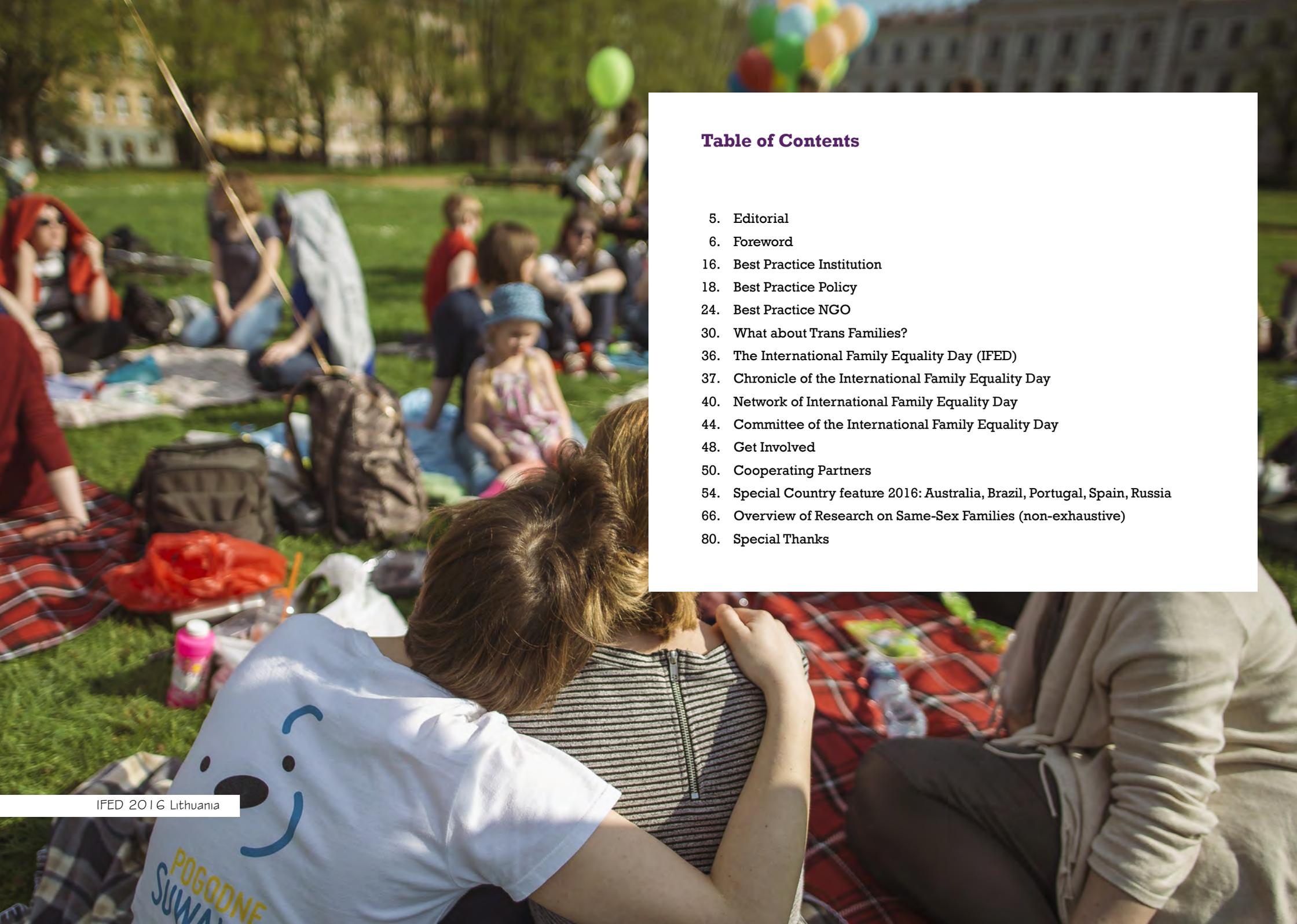


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IFED 2016 Italy

Editorial Bringing Visibility to Family Diversity

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer parents with children (we call them rainbow families or LGBTIQ* families) are increasingly common; they are gaining visibility as well as social and legal recognition – in some countries. In others, unfortunately, these families have to live hidden in order to avoid blatant discrimination, stigma, even the threat of violence.

This is why the International Family Equality Day (IFED) is so important. Since 2012, IFED has been celebrated on the first Sunday in May all over the world. On this day, family diversity becomes visible and can be experienced. It was launched as a sign of solidarity and strength and to promote equality for all families. Society and politics are to be made aware of the necessity of equal treatment and recognition of all family forms. The Council of Europe recognises the International Family Equality Day as an important tool to combat homophobia and transphobia and to promote a tolerant and cohesive society.

Participation for IFED is steadily increasing: this year, six more countries joined the IFED family: Ecuador, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Sweden and Venezuela, and the 5th IFED was celebrated in 74 towns and 36 countries worldwide, under the motto “Families Without Borders”. LGBTIQ* groups and their allies celebrated together, some on a small scale with picnics or gatherings in safe spaces, others with big public events.

This Annual Report introduces the organisations involved in IFED as well as the work done by the IFED Committee, and it highlights the activities in the different countries. The Annual Report aims to serve as an inspiration for the 6th International Family Equality Day, which will take place on Sunday, 7 May 2017, under the motto “LOVE MAKES A FAMILY”.

Thank you to the countless activists, families, policymakers, politicians, human rights defenders and institutions who tirelessly champion the visibility and equality of rainbow families around the world!

Maria von Känel
Founder of IFED and Coordinator
of the IFED Network



Foreword by Charles Radcliffe

Chief of Global Issues & Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Ask my son what “family” means to him, and he’ll tell you it’s his Daddy and Papa, his Grandma and Grandpa, Bonne-Maman and Bon-Papa, and an assortment of beloved aunties, uncles and cousins. For him, there’s no such thing as a gay family or a straight family, traditional or non-traditional. That’s because, at age 10, he knows a truth that apparently still eludes many of his elders, which is that love is what makes a family – not the sex or gender of the parents.

Science says the same thing. Of 78 peer-reviewed research studies of children with same-sex parents carried out between 1980 and 2015, all but four concluded that children raised by same-sex parents did at least as well as children raised by different-sex parents. In all cases, children’s educational, social, emotional and behavioural outcomes matched or exceeded those of their peers with different-sex parents. The four studies that found otherwise were based on small samples of children who had endured family break-up, which typically impacts negatively on all children, regardless of whether their parents are of the same sex or different sexes.

Critics of same-sex parenting tend to cling to narrow gender stereotypes to justify their position. Children, the argument goes, need a male parent to be the breadwinner and disciplinarian, and a female parent to be the caretaker. Yet as many parents – straight, gay, lesbian and trans – demonstrate every day, men can be caring and gentle, just as women can lay down rules and support their families financially. Far from being deprived, many children benefit from growing up in an environment where gender roles are less rigidly enforced.

While the precise figure is unknown, many hundreds of thousands of children around the world are already growing up with same-sex parents. Based on data from the 2010 Census, the Williams Institute estimates that some 220,000 children are being raised by gay and lesbian couples in the U.S. alone – with as

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many as 6 million having at least one parent who identifies as lesbian, gay, bi or trans. The question for policy makers is not whether to support these families but how best to do so.

There are two areas where action is most urgently needed if the best interests of the children concerned are to be protected. The first is legal recognition: Providing same-sex parents with legal recognition of their relationships with one another and with their children is essential if their children are to enjoy the same degree of security as the children of different-sex couples. Without such recognition, a whole range of parenting responsibilities become harder to discharge – from securing school placement and healthcare to ensuring financial security in the event of a death of one parent.

The past decade has seen important progress in this area, even if much more needs to be done. In 2006, only five countries permitted same-sex couples to marry. Today, 22 do so, and a further 19 offer civil unions with equivalent rights and responsibilities. Ten years ago, only seven countries allowed same-sex



Charles Radcliffe and his family



IFED 2016 Lithuania

couples to adopt jointly, and eight permitted second-parent adoption – now those figures are 26 and 23, respectively.

Other challenges stem from discriminatory attitudes in society, which can lead to same-sex parents and their children being treated unfairly and, in some cases, subjected to bullying and intimidation. Here again, governments, along with civil society and the media, have a critical role to play. Discrimination against children based on their or their parents' sexual orientation or gender identity should be prohibited, and steps should be taken to sensitise the public, as well as public officials, teachers and healthcare professionals.

Making the world safer and more accepting for all children – including those being raised in rainbow families – requires a long-term commitment to social and legal change in countries around the world. If the scale of the task can seem daunting, the pages of this report remind us why it is so important. The photos and stories featured here reveal the great joy, love and devotion that lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex people bring to parenthood. They should give heart to even the most exhausted reformer and give even the harshest critic pause for thought.

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Charles Radcliffe

Foreword by Hon Tanya Plibersek MP

Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Education, Shadow Minister for Women, Member for Sydney, Australia

Leo Tolstoy says in Anna Karenina, “All happy families are alike...”

We’re alike because what makes a family is love. But we’re not all alike in the eyes of the law.

When I introduce my husband, I never have to wonder how our relationship will be received. When we travel overseas, I never have to check if we’ll both be recognised as our children’s parents in the countries we visit. I never have to worry that, if something goes wrong for us or our children, our rights as partners and parents might not be acknowledged.

My family is the same as the families of the same-sex couples in the community I’m so fortunate to serve. We all experience the same joys, the same worries,



the same occasional frustrations. My families, and their families, are created by love. But in Australia, the law defines our families differently, and my family enjoys rights denied to others.

Australia has made progress in recognising the diversity of families, in recognising that what makes a family is love. We have fixed unequal treatment under family law, social security, Medicare, veterans’ entitlements, immigration – a whole range of areas. The next important step in Australia is marriage equality.

Around the world, great strides are being made in recognising the equality of all families. I celebrate, and am inspired by, the patience, the commitment, the untiring efforts of those campaigning around the world to achieve change – whether through the courts, as in the United States, through changing the constitution, as in Ireland, or through legislation, as in the United Kingdom. Our legal frameworks, and the steps we must take to change them, differ. Our motivation is the same. We know that all families are precious. We know that all families deserve recognition. We know that families are made by love.

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Austria

On Saturday, 7 May, over 130 friends, supporters and volunteers came together in Park Spoor Noord in Antwerp to celebrate International Family Equality Day. The event was organised by the LGBT organisations Cavana, Het Roze Huis, 't Kwadraat, WIJ and QT4M. Many families enjoyed the XXL games for children and took advantage of the photo booth to remember their day or just relaxed with a picnic and a chance to speak with others. An LGBT bookstore came by with its selection of family books and cute children's books.

In Vienna, LGBT families and friends met on 8 May to celebrate the diversity of our families. It was a beautiful, sunny afternoon in one of Vienna's best-known parks, the Augarten, where many Viennese like to spend their Sunday afternoon.

We had great support from Austria's Socialist Party, which sponsored a play bus full of entertainment for our kids along with a qualified team to supervise the games. We are looking forward to IFED 2017.



Belgium - Antwerp

The early bird catches the worm! IFED 2016 was celebrated on 17 April in Beersel, organised by members of the rainbow families association Homoparentalités from nearby Brussels. It was just a small party in a blossoming private garden wonder, with great fun, delicious homemade cakes, multilingual and very enriching conversations, happy children and cheerful LGBTIQ* parents. As one guest summed up: What a nice smile all around!



Belgium - Beersel

On 8 June, the Brussels Capital Region celebrated Iris Day. And once again, LGBTIQ* activists presented their colourful OUT! VILLAGE with a broad variety of concerts, stands and a cosy cocktail bar around the big fountain in the royal Parc de Bruxelles. NELFA and its Belgian member organisation Homoparentalités joined forces to promote International Family Equality Day. We displayed brand-new posters, some children's books and the eminently watchable documentary Right2Love. Children were invited to draw their own families. And, yes, some of them proudly presented their two dads or two moms! It was a wonderful, surprisingly sunny day in the European capital!



Belgium - Brussels



Croatia

Around 20 people gathered for the IFED celebration in Croatia on Saturday, 30 April. The event was organised by "Dugine obitelji" (Rainbow Families). To start the IFED celebration, we had the first official assembly of Dugine obitelji, where we adopted our statutes and elected seven board members. Afterwards, the Rainbow Family Tea Time was an opportunity for informal conversation, but also for some fun activities – the children especially liked the drawing activities! After the IFED celebration, an interview with two Croatian rainbow families was published in one of the most popular Croatian newspapers.

A bunch of rainbow families and future parents got together to share Gay Pride 2016. We don't have a formal established organisation in Ecuador, but we got together for the same reason as "Ishkay Mamas" and "Ishkay Taitas" (Two Moms and Two Dads). After Pride we had a family lunch of typical Ecuadorian food. Hopefully next year more people will join us.



Ecuador

APGL's annual gathering for its members and their families is becoming the ideal moment to celebrate IFED. The 2016 edition took place from 13-16 May in Hourtin, in the Aquitaine region, home of Bordeaux wines and haute cuisine. 135 adults and 60 children, from newborns to teens, shared those precious days to celebrate the 30th anniversary of APGL and the third year of same-sex marriage and adoption equality law in France. By selecting Hourtin to host its annual gathering, APGL also entered the 2017 presidential and general elections, as Hourtin is the home of one of the frontrunners for this election. The IFED celebration serves not only to support, empower and increase the visibility of rainbow families but also as a political tool geared towards policymakers and the media.



France



Finland

On 1 May 2016, Finland celebrated International Family Equality Day for the fifth time. About 115 people took part in happenings in five cities – Kotka, Pori, Tampere, Turku and Helsinki. The programmes included circus, pancake parties, picnics and adventure tracks.



Germany

Berlin celebrated the IFED on 30 April with music, plays and good food at a cultural youth centre, following an invitation by the German Green Party. A panel discussion addressed different topics, such as difficulties for rainbow families to move from one country to another while maintaining their rights, the possibility to have more than two legally recognised parents and the challenges of trans families. The author Stephanie Gerlach gave a speech, and the musician Suli Puschban and her band launched the new anthem for rainbow families singing it with all families and guests present.

IFED 2016 and its motto "Families Without Borders" were celebrated at an evening event for LGBTIQ* parents of binational/international rainbow families in Berlin, organised by NELFA and the LSVD Berlin-Brandenburg Rainbow Families Centre. The need for greater acceptance, respect and full legal protection for rainbow families within and across countries worldwide was clearly addressed by participants, highlighting the importance of LGBTIQ* activism and networking and calling on policy makers to effect crucial change.



Germany

Best Practice Institution

Cities embrace and celebrate family diversity

International Family Equality Day celebrations are gaining momentum worldwide, including among the members of our Rainbow Cities Network. Since cities are the places where children go to school and play in the streets and where their parents work and go out in addition to depending on service providers, local authorities have a huge influence on rainbow families' lives. Policies might

Does your hometown explicitly include rainbow families in their focus and priorities? Just check the overview of the members' policies!

seem abstract to most of us, but marriage equality, parental custody, tax benefits for same-sex couples or sensitivity about LGBT issues among health and welfare providers (to name just a few) are issues that affect many members of the LGBT community. And these issues are often dealt with at a local level.

Of the 31 cities (from 15 countries) that were members of the Rainbow Cities Network as at 1 July 2016, seven cities explicitly include rainbow families in their focus and priorities. The cities sum up the specifics of their LGBT policies in so-called one-pagers every year. Some cities work with local rainbow family organisations on policy development and/or education in schools, others also support the celebration of IFED. Rainbow Cities can be an interesting partner for organisations working on family equality issues, since commitment of these local authorities to LGBT inclusion is

IFED 2016 celebrations in Zürich, city member of the Rainbow Cities Network



internationally promoted and often very visible locally. Rainbow families can join Pride marches and events, be involved in local IDAHOT (International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia) celebrations and other local events aimed at families in general. Visibility is also important for the cities: when local authorities know of the existence of specific interest groups, those can be invited, involved and included in local policy making and official events and remembrances.

The complete overview of the members' policies: <http://tinyurl.com/gm65lhk>

The Rainbow Cities Network is a network of municipalities that acknowledge their responsibility towards the LGBT community. They exchange policy approaches, good practices, initiatives and campaigns on LGBT issues from a local perspective with other cities on an international level. Political commitment and active participation at the administrative level are required; any city that develops and executes an LGBT-inclusive policy can apply for membership. For more information on the network and the preconditions for membership, please contact the coordinator, Juul van Hoof: j.vanhoof@movisie.nl

RCN

**Rainbow
Cities
Network**

Juul van Hoof

Coordinator of the Rainbow Cities Network



Juul van Hoof, NL

Best Practice Policy

The German Green Parliamentary Group's second Rainbow Family Day

On the occasion of International Family Equality Day, on 30 April 2016 the Green Parliamentary Group held its second Rainbow Family Day in Berlin in cooperation with the first Rainbow Family Centre in Germany. More than 200 adults and children talked, played and enjoyed a barbecue in good weather and a very friendly atmosphere.

Katrin Göring-Eckardt, leader of the Green Parliamentary Group, welcomed the guests and stressed that rainbow families have become commonplace, especially in big cities. However, their daily lives are still characterised by specific challenges that traditional families do not face.

The so-called second-parent adoption (...) still discriminates against homosexual couples and violates their rights.

In her keynote, author Stephanie Gerlach provided a detailed picture of the lives of rainbow families and the everyday challenges they face. Gerlach's account of the daily lives of rainbow families resonated with the experiences and concerns of many of the guests in attendance. She drew a picture of a broad plurality of families and discussed how children with two mothers or two fathers experience this as normal and natural.

Katja Dörner, the deputy leader of the Greens' parliamentary faction, discussed with lawyer Dr Friederike Wapler (University of Göttingen) and two rainbow families the current legal situation for rainbow families. In the past 10 years, all legal improvements for homosexual couples and families originated in decisions by the constitutional court based on the Grundgesetz (Constitution), not from a conservative-dominated parliament.

The Green Party has been calling for marriage equality and the equal right to adopt children for homosexual couples for a long time. The possibility to become a legally accepted family through the so-called second-parent adoption (Stiefkindadoption) process is a small improvement but still discriminates against homosexual couples and violates their rights. There is no evidence that being adopted and brought up by a homosexual couple is damaging to

children. Ms Wapler stressed that the legislature is failing to consider the best interests of the child.

The discussion also focused on a concept presented by the Green Parliamentary Group concerning artificial insemination. The concept would create a legally binding agreement on parenthood prior to conception. This type of legally enforceable agreement would make the lives of lesbian couples much easier. In addition to this type of reform, it is necessary to find a legal solution clarifying the rights of parents in families with more than two parents – a situation that is quite common among rainbow families.

Photo (from left to right): Birte Rohles, mother; Katja Dörner, deputy parliamentary party leader Alliance '90/The Greens; Dr. Friederike Wapler, lawyer, University of Göttingen; Linda Mücke-Bunckenburg, mother.



Best Practice Policy

Rainbow Rose building coalition with PES Women to advocate for Rainbow Families in Europe

The mobility of rainbow families within the European Union and in Europe is still an important issue, and it is a priority for Rainbow Rose, the LGBTI network of the Party of European Socialists (PES).

Rainbow Rose, with the support of PES Women and other PES organisations and sister parties, advocates strongly for improving the situation of rainbow families in Europe. Rainbow Rose managed to introduce the mobility of all families in different policy papers adopted by the PES. Rainbow Rose is very happy to cooperate with IFED and promote this initiative among its network.

S&D Group LGBTI Paper in Collaboration with Rainbow Rose

The S&D Group is the leading centre-left political group in the European Parliament. It advocates mutual recognition and free circulation of civil status documents for all individuals, couples and families (including established through marriage and registered partnerships, legal sex changes and adoption and birth certificates) regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity in order to ensure their equal right to free movement and residence within the EU.

<http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/position-papers/sd-position-paper-lgbti-rights>

Homosexualité et Socialisme (HES) with Rainbow rose for IFED

With marriage equality and full adoption rights provided to same-sex couples by the Socialist government in France, an important step towards more equality has been achieved. Nevertheless, there is still a need to improve the legal situation of rainbow families. In 2016 HES adopted a manifesto which includes several proposals on families:

- Open the possibility of early declaration and recognition in local city halls for all children by all parents
- Creation of a social status of parent or stepparent, partner or companion of the father or mother to facilitate the assignment of shared parental authority
- Rethink the legal procedure of adoption to make it more equitable and respect the rights of the child to know
- Open IVF to all women
- Initiate a non-profit legal framework of ethical surrogacy

HES is also a strong supporter of Rainbow Rose – the LGBTI network of the Party of European Socialists (PES) – in promoting equal rights for LGBTI people all over Europe, including rainbow families. HES was thus happy to take part in the IFED campaign.

<http://www.hes-france.org/propositions/12-textes-d-orientation/115-manifest-hes-le-texte-soumis-au-vote#Familles>



Left: Aurélien Mazuy, President of Rainbow Rose and Zita Gurmai, President of PES Women
Right: Homosexualité et Socialisme (HES) board and representatives of regional groups

Best Practice Policy

Fighting for Rainbow Families' Freedom of Movement: Families shouldn't dissolve at the border!

The free movement of people is, together with freedom of movement of capital, goods and services, at the core of the European Union. However, freedom of movement is not effectively guaranteed to all EU citizens or their spouses and families in the same way. In practice, same-sex couples and their children may face vast difficulties when trying to have their marriage, partnership and the relevant rights, including parental rights, recognised in another EU country. This is unacceptable!

Currently, 10 EU Member States allow same-sex couples to marry, and 19 (some of them parallel to the right to marry) allow them to enter civil partnerships or cohabitation agreements. This is of course national competence of Member States, but when families use their right to freedom of movement in the EU, it becomes an EU matter.

Unfortunately, rainbow families continue to face obstacles when moving from one EU Member State to another. Two women legally married in Belgium may lose pension, next-of-kin or child custody rights when moving to another EU country. Their children might lose the right to have their parents recognized and seen as their parents! Even if two countries have similar levels of rights (e.g. United Kingdom and Spain), this does not guarantee that their citizens' rights will always be upheld. IFED-members and friends know better than anyone else about the difficult situations this can lead to.

In February 2014, the report for an EU LGBTI Roadmap was adopted by a large majority in the European Parliament. It explicitly asked the Commission to issue a proposal to guarantee the mutual recognition of the effects of all civil status documents across the EU. This would mean that the effects of individual birth certificates, civil partnership or marriage certificates would be recognised across the EU. Although the Commission rhetorically supports this position, it has refused to make a proposal to this effect.

rainbow families continue to face obstacles when moving from one EU Member State to another

Currently, the Parliament is also working on a report on cross-border aspects of adoptions, in which we are working across the political spectrum, to include a paragraph urging for mutual recognition of the effects of adoptions of all couples.

We will keep pushing the Commission to work to respect that everywhere in the EU rainbow families can be sure that their rights are recognised. Because it is not freedom of movement if families literally dissolve at the border!

Ulrike Lunacek

MEP and Co-President of the Intergroup on LGBTI Rights in the European Parliament.

Daniele Viotti

MEP and Co-President of the Intergroup on LGBTI Rights in the European Parliament



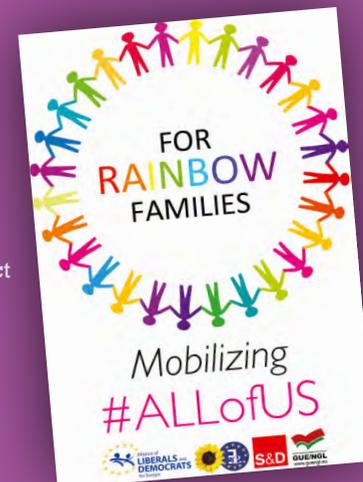
#ALLOFUS – MOBILISING FOR RAINBOW FAMILIES

Joint declaration of Members of the European Parliament

LGBTI rights are human rights. Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans and intersex persons should enjoy the same rights, duties and opportunities as well as the same level of protection as any other person within the EU. However, discrimination against LGBTI persons in the EU persists. ALL OF US want this discrimination to end.

ALL OF US believe that love makes a family, and that everyone should be able to fully enjoy the right to respect for family life without discrimination.

http://nelfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Rainbow-Families-Joint-declaration_ALLoFUS.pdf



Best Practice NGO

Familles en fête (Families celebrating) - A Creative and Fun Day to Promote Equality for All Families

On Saturday, 30 April, on the occasion of International Family Equality Day, more than 200 kids, (grand)parents, extended family and friends gathered together in Geneva, Switzerland for “Familles en fête”, a creative and fun day to promote equality for all families. They created communal paintings, built model houses, took part in a writing workshop, developed Android applications and robots, listened to tales, sang songs, etc. Genève sa gueule, a project of the City of Geneva, was also present to make portraits of family diversity.

Organised by the Swiss Rainbow Families Association, Association 360, Association Bloom and Boom and the Ecole des Parents, and held at the Ecole Active, IFED was open to all types of families, such as single-parent, patchwork, extended (grandparents, caregivers, godparents), migrant, adoptive and foster families. The idea was to get the families together so that they could get to know each other and raise awareness about the specific circumstances and difficulties

every type of family faces because of their family structure or social and legal contexts. Indeed, a space was created to allow exchanges about their issues and needs in terms of family policy. The exchanges will be presented in a future roundtable and presented to key institutions involved in family policy. Opening the day to all types of families also helped us raise awareness about rainbow families among the family associations that were partners and the people present and to make rainbow families more visible within the realm of family diversity.

“Seeing all those families having fun together and exchanging about their daily life filled us with joy. It was also especially satisfying and important to organise the day with other family associations.”

Delphine Roux, board member of the Swiss Rainbow Families Association.



Delphine Roux, CH

Eight family associations were partners for the day, which was also supported by the City of Geneva and the Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs.



IFED 2016 Switzerland

Best Practice NGO

Brighton and Manchester celebrate IFED

Rainbow Families Brighton is a social and support group for LGBTQI parents along the south coast of England. We have grown to 516 members in the last 20 years. We have a series of events throughout the year to meet the needs of our members and their children, from baby and toddler coffee mornings and soft play sessions to older-kid events where they go climbing, paddle-boarding, skateboarding and learning circus skills. We have an active single-parents group and hope to kick off a dads group this year. Our annual camping trip attracts around 40 families, and our Christmas party is attended by over 50 families.

In 2015–2016 we became much more visible within our local LGBT+ community network and have made connections with groups supporting the over-50-year-olds. We received a Community Development Award at our local LGBT community groups and businesses in Brighton and Hove, the Golden Handbag Awards, in June 2016.

For our IFED celebration we invited the African Rainbow Family organisation to join us in Brighton. We were delighted to host them in Hove for the overnight visit. It was very meaningful to meet friends from several African countries who had sought asylum in the UK. Around 40 families attended a local leisure centre which we hire on a monthly basis with soft play and bouncy castles for the

“We found the meeting up, the opportunity to travel out of Manchester for a celebration of the International Family Equality Day with fellow LGBT people and their families, and the brilliant reception accorded us by the amazing Brighton Rainbow Families, therapeutic and relaxing. This experience is much more than anything else!

“This kind of gathering and celebration of Rainbow Families of LGBT people can never happen in my country Nigeria or any of our members’ countries because of the criminalisation of consensual same-sex relationships and discrimination against LGBT people. I look forward to when such events will happen in my country!” says Aderonke Apata, founder of African Rainbow Family.



Aderonke Apata



younger children, with face-painting and craft activities. We hired an additional hall for a hockey skills session run by a member who plays hockey nationally.

We encouraged families to bring snacks and cakes to share. We also hired a member who is a kids’ entertainer who kept the little ones happy at the end of the event.

Video of the day: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FM20COGnEs&feature=youtu.be>

africanrainbowfamily.org

For the fourth consecutive year we organised an International Family Equality Day (IFED) celebration at the Akadimia Platonos Park in Athens. Some of the organisations present at the event to show their support and promote our demands were: the Sunday School for Immigrants, a volunteer initiative to provide Greek language lessons to immigrants and refugees; the Rainbow School, an initiative to promote LGBT inclusive education; the Balloon People, a network of arts and crafts teachers advocating humanist values through art in schools and beyond; and "Expel Racism", an initiative to combat racism against refugees. The activities scheduled for the day – a bouncy slide, team games, arts and crafts, a clown and plenty of music – kept the children engaged and made for an enjoyable and entertaining experience. Food and refreshments were provided for young and old alike, and we had a pleasant picnic in the shade of the trees. In addition, this year, several politicians stood by our side and in support of our demands: Eirini Agathopoulou (SYRIZA MP for Kilkis and president of the Research Centre for Gender Equality); Annetta Kavadias (SYRIZA MP for the 2nd electoral district of Athens); Eleni Stamatakis (SYRIZA MP for the 1st electoral district of Piraeus); Zoe Konstantopoulou (president of the Course of Freedom Party); Maria Giannakaki (Attica Prefecture councillor); Kostis Papaioannou (secretary general at the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights) accompanied by his four-year-old son, who had a fantastic time. We concluded the day with our traditional cutting of the rainbow cake, renewed our date for May 2017 and committed to doing all we can in the coming year to secure wider acceptance and legal equality for our families.



Greece



Italy

The Italian association "Rete Genitori Rainbow" ("Rainbow Parents Network" of LGBT people with children from heterosexual relationships) organised a cultural initiative to celebrate International Family Equality Day. On 1 May, rainbow parents, their relatives and friends took a trip to Cisterna di Latina in central Italy to visit the Garden of Ninfa, a landscape garden considered an Italian natural monument. Friends of the "Famiglie Arcobaleno" ("Rainbow Families") association were invited along as well, and the trip provided an opportunity to spend a special day together in a wonderful park, dotted by numerous small springs and with over a thousand varieties of plants and trees imported from all over the world. This incredible natural variety represents the great diversity that makes up our society and the natural harmony we could achieve and for which we will continue to work.

On 30 April 2016, Famiglie Arcobaleno, the Italian association of homosexual parents, made IFED coincide with the 8th edition of its main annual event, the Festa delle Famiglie, which is a national celebration of all kinds of families. This year, the Festa delle Famiglie took place in Milan and gathered rainbow families from all over the country as well as different groups, associations and citizens that believe in making a statement for equality and inclusion in society. The IFED event in Milan was a celebration of games, tales and music with the aim of providing fun for all children and families. It is important to point out that the 2016 Festa delle Famiglie happened just a few weeks after the Italian Senate decided to deny equality to all children by eliminating the stepchild adoption from the civil union bill. Many associations and Italian celebrities supported Famiglie Arcobaleno's 2016 event, because the fight will not stop until equality for all citizens, families and especially for all children is achieved.



Italy



Hungary

IFED 2016 marked the third time that families gathered for an IFED celebration in Hungary. The event took place at a game reserve close to the Hungarian capital, Budapest. After the park visit, parents, kids and parents-to-be continued to enjoy the warm and sunny day with a casual picnic that provided great opportunity for everyone to discuss rainbow family issues with old and new friends.

What about Trans Families?

Ten years ago, a group of experts elaborated the Yogyakarta Principles, which are acknowledged by legal experts worldwide as being a clear statement of human rights values for LGBTI people. They opened the debate within the UN and placed the notion of sexual orientation and gender identity rights firmly on human rights agendas across the world.

However, if we want to adopt these principles for trans persons wanting to found a family, often several obstacles persist which impede the realisation of that dream. First of all, many countries in Europe still apply legal gender recognition procedures (i.e. the process for change of name and/or legal gender) with cumbersome legal and medical requirements, including compulsory sex reassignment surgery, hormonal therapy or sterilisation. According to Transgender Europe's Trans Rights Europe Map of May 2016, sterilisation is required in 24 Council of Europe Member States, of which 12 belong to the European Union. "Such requirements clearly run counter to the respect for the physical integrity of the person," said Thomas Hammarberg, former Council of Europe Commissioner of Human Rights, as early as 2009 in the "Human Rights and Gender Identity Paper", which had a huge impact and led to the Committee of Ministers' "Recommendation to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity" in 2010.

Furthermore, in some countries married trans persons have to get a divorce before their new gender is legally recognised. This is particularly problematic in states that do not recognise same-sex marriage, where the change of gender would effectively lead to a same-sex marriage. In numerous cases, forced divorce is against the explicit will of the married couple who wish to remain a legally recognised family unit, especially if they have children in their care. In several countries the parent who has undergone the gender change is under the threat of losing custody rights of their children.

Among other things, Commissioner Hammarberg recommended that Council of Europe Member States "abolish sterilisation and other compulsory medical treatment as a necessary legal requirement to recognise a person's gender identity in laws regulating the process for name and sex change" and "remove any restrictions on the right of transgender persons to remain in an existing marriage following a recognised change of gender".

In the following years, changes of legal gender recognition provisions were implemented in several European countries. This was also due to successful awareness-raising and lobbying by civil society and in particular trans organisations such as Transgender Europe (TGEU). In April 2015, Malta adopted the

“Everyone has the right to found a family, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Families exist in diverse forms. No family may be subjected to discrimination on the basis of the sexual orientation or gender identity of any of its members.”

(Principle 24 of the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity)

groundbreaking "Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristic Act" (GIGESC Act), which introduces a quick, transparent and accessible gender recognition procedure, based on self-determination. In July 2015, after decades of struggle, Ireland adopted a progressive gender recognition law which enables trans persons over the age of 18 to self-declare their gender by way of a statutory declaration. In June 2016, Norway approved legal gender recognition based on self-determination.

Some other countries, on the other hand, could be forced to change their legal situation only through litigation. This was the case in Italy and Greece as well as Austria and Germany. In January 2011, the German Constitutional Court declared the requirement to undergo sterilisation or gender reconstruction surgery as "not constitutional". The decision would have required a reform of the

German Gender Recognition Act of 1980 (Transsexuellengesetz) in order to have a new, consistent law. But this never occurred, and instead new problems arose. Countries such as Germany still insist that persons who gave birth are the “mother”. Thus, according to current German legislation, if, for instance, a transman gives birth, he is automatically registered as “mother” with his former female name. This means that the lack of gender-neutral parental legislation forces trans persons to go to court and fight for their rights. And in the meantime, the birth certificates remain blank, with unbearable consequences for the children and the families.

In view of the increase of trans persons becoming parents it is crucial to focus on this issue – including at IFED. We need to raise awareness about, and enhance the visibility of, trans families with children and the challenges they face. We have to ensure that trans parents and their children enjoy equal rights, including having documentation of their family status without restriction based on their gender identity or expression. Apart from the legal obstacles, we also have to be aware of the many social difficulties facing in particular children of out trans parents. Finally, we need to support an inclusive understanding of family, making sure trans families are included when we talk about rainbow families, and strengthening capacity building on this issue within the community.

Caroline Ausserer

Board Member of NELFA, NELFA's IDAHOT Committee liaison, Member of TransInterQueer e.V., Germany



We have to ensure that trans parents and their children enjoy equal rights, including having documentation of their family status without restriction based on their gender identity or expression.





Japan

The 5th Annual Japan IFED Picnic was held at Yoyogi Park in Tokyo, on 8 May, along with Tokyo Rainbow Pride events (tokyorainbowpride.com). We had a booth set up as a resting area for families to mingle, relax and nurse their babies. This was the third year to have an official "LGBT family"-themed booth at Tokyo Pride. We enjoyed meeting new LGBT families, and talked to many LGBT people who were interested in becoming parents. We exhibited family photos at our booth for the second consecutive year. This year we had twice the number of photos of last year. We may run out of space for displaying pictures next year! LGBTQ-related topics are picked up on Japanese media almost daily. Our group is increasingly being contacted by the media and researchers these days. It is very important to be visible and get people used to our presence. At this point, we have four municipalities that recognise same-sex unions in Japan. We hope this movement continues to grow.



Lithuania

This year the event received much attention in social networks. The discussions were far-reaching, but for the first time we saw a conversation marked by understanding, respect and arguments. We started IFED with a lovely picnic in the park square in the centre of Vilnius. Different families came to play, to chat, to read a fairy tale that was forbidden because it contained same-sex family themes. The colourful balloons represented the diversity of families in Lithuania and the joy of respect and acceptance. The atmosphere of good cheer and energy was amazing. After the picnic we went to see the movie *Gayby Baby*, which touched our hearts with its sincere and true stories that reminded us of our own lives.



Norway



Sweden

On 1 May 2016, Rainbow Family Norway organised its first IFED. The event was small and informal, but for those in attendance it was a cosy and friendly day. The day was sunny and warm, as we took a boat to Hovedøya, an island right outside Oslo. We brought food for barbecue and spent a few hours at the beach. The rainbow flag was hung from one of the trees so we were visible for passers-by. The kids enjoyed the day playing on the beach together, and everyone was excited about the fox that dropped by – whether it visited IFED for the hot dogs or sympathised with our cause, we don't know...



Spain

FLG, the «Asociación de Familias LGTB»(Barcelona) had a double celebration this year. More than 150 people, adults and children, gathered to celebrate IFED at Palau Robert in the centre of Barcelona. We also celebrated our 15th anniversary as the first LGBTI family association in Catalonia and Spain to care and demand protection for the rights of LGBTI families. Many important political representatives came to support LGBTI families and explained the work that was going towards implementing the old and new regulations to protect our children's rights. FLG is very excited to share this wonderful event with our European partners.

The International Family Equality Day (IFED)

The first International Family Equality Day took place on May 6th 2012. Fifteen organizations from nine countries participated then and numbers have been increasing ever since! (see below) A few snapshots and short reports of the latest events can be found throughout this brochure; additional information and impressions (videos, personal reports of the events) can be found on the IFED website.



IFED 2016 USA

Chronicle of the International Family Equality Day

In terms of legal, political and social equality, rainbow families face very different standards depending on where in the world they live. In many countries these families have no protection at all, a fact which entails massive social, financial and legal uncertainty.

In July 2011, LGBTQ family activists from around the world gathered for the first ever International Symposium of LGBTQ parenting organizations. The symposium provided an opportunity to establish ongoing international cooperation in areas such as research, visibility and advocacy, and the development of resources and programs for LGBTQ families worldwide. The goal of the symposium was to help foster a sense of global community among the families, to increase the visibility and raise awareness about the challenges that rainbow families must overcome for social and legal acceptance.

As a key outcome of the symposium the involved family organizations from the U.S. (Family Equality Council), Canada (LGBTQ Parenting Network) and Europe (NELFA) took the opportunity to launch an official day for equality and recognition of all types of family: the International Family Equality Day, which takes place every year on the first Sunday in May.

IFED aims to highlight the diversity of family structures and to strengthen solidarity among families. At the same time it calls on administrative, institutional and political representatives to support equality and recognition for all families.



www.internationalfamilyequalityday.org



Switzerland

The Swiss Rainbow Family Association and the city of Zurich's Office for Gender Equality invited all rainbow and other families, grandparents and friends to join them in celebrating IFED 2016 in Zurich. The day provided a rich programme of fun and conversation for kids and grownups alike. The World Café in the morning was dedicated to discussing the challenges of the various family constellations and framing the demands for policymakers, educators and society as a whole. The afternoon started with a Skype meeting with St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, Ekaterinburg and Stockholm, where IFED was celebrated at the same time. This was followed by a roundtable, where family policy and civil society representatives exchanged their views on the legal, societal and political situation of rainbow families in Switzerland. IFED concluded with a circus act that the children had rehearsed throughout the day in a workshop run by Circus Luna and which they performed for the crowd to great acclaim and cheers.

In 2016, the Family Equality Council had just under 900 families take part in IFED celebrations in 13 different cities throughout the United States, including Birmingham (AL), Chicago (IL), Dallas (TX), Durham (NC), Minneapolis (MN), Nashville (TN), New York City (NY), Orlando (FL) and Washington (DC). This year our families celebrated together in many different ways – an outing at a petting farm, a day at the beach, a visit to our National Zoo and even a park festival, complete with face painting and bouncy houses!



USA

IFED GROWS!

- May 6th, 2012: 15 cities in 9 countries**
- May 5th, 2013: 44 cities in 17 countries**
- May 4th, 2014: 48 cities in 22 countries**
- May 3rd, 2015: 67 cities in 32 countries**
- May 1st, 2016: 74 cities in 36 countries**
- May 7th 2017: "Love makes a Family"**



Network of International Family Equality Day

As a sign of solidarity and strength and to promote equality for all type of families, the LGBTQ family organizations LGBTQ Parenting Network, Family Equality Council, NELFA and Coalition des familles homoparentales took the opportunity to establish ongoing international cooperation in areas such as research, visibility and advocacy, and the development of resources and programs for LGBTQ families worldwide.

Each organization puts forward representatives for the IFED Committee. The organizations and their respective representatives are introduced below:

LGBT Family Coalition

With over 1400 families, the LGBT Family Coalition (Coalition des familles LGBT) is the largest LGBT organization in Quebec, in terms of its membership. We offer services and resources in both English and French. The LGBT Family Coalition is the only advocacy group for families with LGBT parents in Quebec. The media has become increasingly focused on alternative families as adoption, surrogacy and assisted procreation have become “hot” issues. But even as we have increasingly gained legal recognition, society’s institutions still have much to learn about our families and our particular needs.



The Coalition works for the legal and social recognition of our families in collaboration with government bodies and the media. We work to increase our visibility and to raise public awareness about our diverse realities.

Another mandate of the LGBT Family Coalition is to create new resources that can be used in primary and secondary schools, day-care, doctors’ offices, community organizations and social services to sensitize the public about the diversity of family structures, as well as the impact of homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism, cis-centrism and gender-based harassment. Our training sessions have reached out to over 15,000 professionals across Quebec.

www.famillesLGBT.org

Family Equality Council



For over 34 years, Family Equality Council has been a leading advocate in the United States for our now more than three million parents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) and their six million children. We do our work by fostering supportive communities, educating the public, and pursuing policy change, all to advance LIVED equality for these LGBTQ-headed families across the US.

Family Equality Council creates lasting change for LGBTQ families by organizing our work into campaigns, which are executed at the federal, regional, and state levels. We target areas where we are needed most and we maintain a focus on the three components that we believe are critical to truly changing lives and laws:

1. Strengthening communities and local leaders through programs and events;
2. Educating communities and political leaders by sharing stories, providing resources, and training advocates;
3. Pursuing policy changes that directly affect the daily lives of our families by updating access to systems so that they better reflect today’s families, advancing pro-equality legislation, and combating discrimination in whatever form it takes.

We know there is no “finish line” in this work – Family Equality Council represents LGBTQ families and their needs, which continue to evolve. But one thing has and will remain the same, LOVE makes a family. Collectively, we are a community of parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, that reaches across the globe. By standing together, we can change attitudes and policies, and better ensure a world where all families are respected for their commitment to one another, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

www.familyequality.org

LGBTQ Parenting Network

The LGBTQ Parenting Network is a program of Sherbourne Health Centre, an innovative health care centre in Toronto, Canada.



The LGBTQ Parenting Network promotes the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer parents, prospective parents and their families through research, training, resources and community organizing.

We provide access to information and resources on our website, through workshops for LGBTQ parents, prospective parents and training opportunities for health, education and social service professionals who work with our communities.

One of the themes of our work is celebrating LGBTQ families. We have a set of resources and a workshop available to help agencies and individuals celebrate gender and sexual orientation diversity in families, which are all available on our website: <http://lgbtqpnp.ca/celebrating-lgbtq-parenting/>

www.lgbtqparentingnetwork.ca

NELFA

The Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations (NELFA) was created on 1 May 2009 to unite European associations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents (LGBT) and their children under one umbrella organisation. Meanwhile, NELFA included “intersexual” and “queer” parents and their children as well, to illustrate the diversity of the rainbow family movement in Europe. The asterisk reinforces NELFA’s openness to all family constellations beyond LGBTIQ.



With 27 associations representing 18 European countries [August 2016] and thousands of LGBTIQ* families, NELFA promotes the exchange of information among its members and assists in creating and developing LGBTIQ* families associations in Europe. NELFA works to ensure that children raised in LGBTIQ* families in Europe are granted the same rights as children from other families. NELFA encourages European governments to adopt legal systems and equal opportunity policies that do not discriminate against LGBTIQ* families, whether it be legally, financially, educationally or socially. NELFA also works to ensure the freedom of movement of LGBTIQ* families within the European Union without their family life being compromised by entering or settling in another Member State. NELFA was incorporated under Belgian law as an international non-profit association (AISBL) on 12 March 2012. The official NELFA headquarters are located in the Rainbow House in Brussels. With the incorporation of NELFA aisbl, 13 NELFA founding members from Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland took a major step towards further consolidating NELFA’s work on behalf of LGBTIQ* families in Europe.

NELFA’s budget derives from two sources: membership fees and donations. Board members (currently 15) work completely on a voluntary basis. They bear a large part of the costs (like travel expenses, event fees etc.) on their own. Thankfully, NELFA is now promoted by the EU programme „Erasmus+” for a one year period. The project is called “Adequate and equal legal protection for rainbow families”. It aims at strengthening NELFA, especially towards its educational activities.

www.nelfa.org

International Family Equality

Committee of the International Family Equality Day

The IFED Committee is composed of representatives from the various LGBTQ family organizations (Family Equality Council, LGBTQ Parenting Network, Coalition des familles homoparentales und NELFA). Communication takes place via a mailing list (listserv) and quarterly video conferences, during which cooperation and joint projects are discussed.

A website serves as a common platform. It introduces the involved organizations as well as ongoing and completed projects in connection with IFED and provides opportunities for networking.

Goals & Future Projects

The IFED Committee encourages families to join the IFED network by starting their own traditions in celebration of their family pride and ongoing efforts for full family equality. To that end, the Committee strives to identify and connect existing LGBTQ family organizations worldwide.

Workgroups are generating an international inventory of legal and social situations of LGBTQ families.

"Rainbow families have to overcome many challenges for legal, political and social acceptance. With the celebrations for the International Family Equality Day, family diversity becomes visible and can be experienced. Society and politics are to be sensitised to the necessity of equal treatment and recognition of all family forms." Maria von Känel - coordinator of IFED, General Manager of the Swiss Rainbow Families Association and president of NELFA.



Maria von Känel, CH



Kristina Afonina, RU

"IFED is new for the Russian LGBT community and a very important celebration for families unification into a single community, their pride and self-esteem. As their ally, I express my support and admiration!" Kristina Afonina, "Coming Out" LGBT group, St. Petersburg.

Family Equality Council serves today's American LGBTQ parents and their families by fostering a movement for social change, one that addresses both our legal system and the daily experiences of the families within the various communities across our country. Despite the recent passing of marriage equality in the U.S., there remains so much work to do – this has been clearly evidenced in 2016 by the rising tide of proposed anti-LGBTQ legislation, often disguised as "religious freedom" exemptions. However, by staying true to our commitment to serve families across their lifespan, from their family planning to their grandparenting, and by embracing the power of collaboration, we will continue to work in coalition and build lasting change." Brent Wright is the Director of Programs at Family Equality Council. He and his husband, Sandis, are raising two children.



Brent Wright, US



"The 500 members of Brighton and Hove Rainbow Families England have enjoyed much freedom and acceptance from our city and community. There's always work to be done of course but we were delighted to use the IFED on 1st May 2016 as an opportunity welcome members for the African Rainbow Families group based in Manchester to join us for the weekend. Sharing contrasting

experiences was really therapeutic for all of us. Our groups are connected now and will continue to support each other thanks to IFED."

Kathryn Clarke, Chair,
Brighton & Hove Rainbow Families

Juha-Pekka Hippilä is a board member of the Finnish Rainbow Families Association (Sateenkaariperheet). Earlier he was the chairperson of LGBTI Finland (Setä). He studied law and works as an attorney, including for family law issues. His family is still in the planning stages.

A member of Rainbow Family Japan. She's raising two young children with her Canadian partner in the Japanese countryside. "There are not many LGBTQ families in Japan, so I think it is very important for us to be visible and to raise awareness and provide support."

I am happy that the number of children at our gatherings increases year after year. Although the situation for rainbow families in Croatia is not perfect, a recent scientific study in Croatia about LGB parenting and positive articles in newspapers are encouraging and increase our visibility.



Kathryn Clarke, UK



Juha-Pekka-Hippilä, FI



Kumiko Matsumoto, JP



Boris Vrdoljak, HR

we are the IFED Committee



Angelo Berbotto, UK



Jordi Anton, ES

Step by step legal recognition of LGTBIQ* families is growing worldwide. However in some countries we still face discrimination, and our families are at risk. We must continue working for a better world where our children will be able to grow in a safe and peaceful environment. Because our families matter!, because with our rights granted societies are built better and healthier!

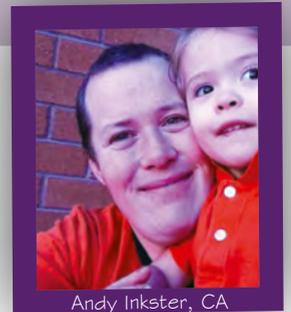


Manlia Serra, BR

Manlia Serra has a BA in Communications, has three children conceived by assisted reproduction, planned in a homosexual relationship and is the vice president of the Brazilian LGBT Families Association - ABRAFH. She believes that everyone is responsible for fighting the prejudice that results in violence and murder. "We must fight for a more equal and secure world for our children and descendants."

"Each spring, IFED is the first of a few days of significance to families – Canadians celebrate Mother's Day in May and Father's Day in June. The IFED picnic we host each year is our opportunity to bring LGBTQ parents and their kids together and to welcome new families into our communities. Leading up to IFED, we share resources and toolkits that emphasise celebrating diverse families in inclusive ways. The IFED resources we develop provide new ways of welcoming LGBTQ families into every agency, programme and community."

- Andy Inkster, Health Promoter, Sherbourne Health Centre



Andy Inkster, CA

LGBT families are changing society and are helping to bring down outdated expectations based on gender. LGBT parents show that the parenting tasks are genderless and they are thus modernising the way people parent in the 21st century. Because LGBT parents tend to plan their families and often go through great effort and expense to become parents, it's common to see them involved in their children's schools, sports and extracurricular activities – this contact and involvement with other families serves to enrich the communities they live in.

Get Involved

IFED & IDAHOT 2017
LOVE MAKES A FAMILY

The International Day against Homo- Bi- and Transphobia (IDAHOT) is celebrated each year on May 17 to commemorate the decision of the WHO on that day in 1990 to remove homosexuality from the ICD (International Classification of Diseases). In 2017 the IDAHOT motto will be “families”! Altogether we are invited to challenge the notion of family as a specific “institution” with the idea that “love makes a family”, no matter what shape and size. IDAHOT Committee Member Joel Bedos and Caroline Ausserer, Board Member of NELFA are starting to mobilize for the next IDAHOT and IFED. Get involved too!

internationalfamilyequalityday.org
dayagainsthomophobia.org



Joel Bedos



Caroline Ausserer



Mark Chapman



Martin della Valle



Miriam Förster



Francesca Silvestri

“As a (of course proud) dad of a 13-year-old, I feel personally very committed to having IDAHOT 2017 focus on families. Our kids deserve that we fight for a world where they are less stigmatised and where everyone will have the freedom to be who they really are.”

“The idea of an international day which celebrates the diversity and equality of families all over the world is as fascinating all possible support. With this in mind I elaborated a social media strategy with which even more people worldwide could be reached and get involved.”

“It is an honour for me to support the IFED with my graphic design and to make the campaign more visible and approachable.” Mark Frederick Chapman, former co-president of InterPride Inc. and former president of EPOA.

“Thanks to California’s progressive adoption laws, I am my daughter’s father not only in everyday life but also by law, which makes our life in Switzerland that much more secure. I want to make it possible for other rainbow families to have that same security by getting official recognition for their families, no matter where they live or travel.”

“As a digital native with a passion for web projects I had great pleasure to create the new IFED website. I was able to realize my ideas and even do something worthwhile: support the acceptance of alternative family forms. Next year, I support the IFED again on the web.”

“I am honoured to be in charge of the graphic design of the IFED annual report and to be able to use my professional skills to enhance the visibility of a cause that is very close to my heart.”

Cooperating Partners

ILGA-Europe

ILGA-Europe, the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, works for equality and human rights for LGBTI people at the European level. It is an international umbrella organisation bringing together 490 member organisations from 45 of the 49 countries in Europe.

www.ilga-europe.org



European Parliament Intergroup on LGBTI Rights

The LGBT Intergroup gathers 152 elected Members of the European Parliament from 23 European countries and 7 political groups. They are committed to upholding the fundamental rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

www.lgbt-ep.eu



ECSOL

The European Commission on Sexual Orientation Law (ECSOL) is a non-governmental and non-political network of legal experts. Its origins lie in the European Group of Experts on Combating Sexual Orientation Discrimination which appointed by the Commission of the European Communities operated between 2002 and 2004.

www.sexualorientationlaw.eu



TGEU

TGEU is a European umbrella organization working to advance the equality and human rights of all transgender people through advocacy, collaboration, empowerment and research. Founded in 2005, today, the organization counts over 80 member organisations and over 80 individual members in 42 countries.

www.tgeu.org



In the photo on the right, NELFA board members and ILGA-Europe staff members cooperating together for IFED during a recent meeting in Brussels.

European Green Party



The European Green Party (EGP) is a transnational political party, our members are the 46 national Green parties from all across Europe, both within the EU and beyond. Human rights are the core of our belief and work while at the same time through specific structures, such as European Queer Greens for LGBTIQ rights, we work together with all European Greens, civil society and other stakeholders to develop and enhance human rights on national and European level.

www.europeangreens.eu

Rainbow Rose

Rainbow Rose, the LGBT network within the PES (Party of European Socialist), works to promote LGBT rights, equality and diversity throughout Europe. It is an umbrella organization relaunched in 2013, gathering 30 social-democrat structures. It works at local, national and European levels with politicians and political parties member of the PES.

www.rainbowrose.eu



Interested in becoming a cooperating partner for IFED? Contact us!

info@internationalfamilyequalityday.org

International Family Equality Day

Celebrating the Rainbow of Families in our World!

Participating Associations



IFED 2016 Switzerland

AUSTRALIA - Special Country Feature

Australian Rainbow Families Join Global Celebration for International Family Equality Day

Hundreds of rainbow families from across New South Wales came together on Sunday, 1 May, to celebrate the 5th International Family Equality Day, with events held in Sydney, Newcastle, Dubbo, Currans Hill and Central Coast.

Rainbow Families Inc hosted a barbecue in Sydney Park with the theme "Love Makes a Family". The event was held in partnership with the City of Sydney and Australian Marriage Equality.

City of Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore said International Family Equality Day was a good way to recognise and celebrate rainbow families.

"It's so important that all children have the opportunity to grow up with certainty and security, no matter who their parents love," the lord mayor said. "I'm really proud the City can support this event; I believe it has an important role to play in celebrating the diversity of family structures in our city."

Whilst Moore could not be in attendance on Sunday, a number of local politicians lent their support. Former Deputy Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, deputy opposition leader Tanya Plibersek, member for Summer Hill Jo Haylen, member for Sydney Alex Greenwich and City of Sydney councillor Christine Forster were all in attendance. Officers from the NSW Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Service also had a presence at the event.

Event spokesperson and Rainbow Families Co-Chair Ashley Scott said that in an election year, and with the possibility of a highly divisive plebiscite on marriage equality, it was important to highlight the diversity of family structures and strengthen solidarity among families with LGBTIQ parents.

"It's our hope that by celebrating IFED, we can help raise awareness among politicians and the general public about the need for equal treatment and recognition for all families, regardless of the sexual orientation or gender identity of their family's members. IFED was a great opportunity for our community, family and friends to come together to show their support and have a fun day at the same time."

The day following the event, deputy opposition leader Tanya Plibersek tabled the Marriage Amendment (Marriage Equality) Bill 2016 for a first reading to the House of Representatives.

In presenting the bill, Plibersek spoke of attending the International Family Equality Day picnic hosted by Rainbow Families and expressed her concern at the damage a plebiscite on marriage equality would cause to the LGBTI community, in particular the children and families at the centre of this divisive debate.

Video Links

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNkwASrI62E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhgjtXhQfLk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-Dog3hw1DQ>



BRAZIL - Special country feature

In defense of all families in Brazil

On the occasion of International Family Equality Day, we want to present a brief profile of LGBTI issues in Brazil. Several LGBTI NGOs and organisations working on human rights seek to combat prejudice and violence motivated by homo- and transphobia and to promote respect for LGBTI people in Brazil.

According to a 2014 study by the University of São Paulo, seven out of ten Brazilian homosexuals have suffered some kind of aggression, whether physical or verbal. The country had 650 homophobic or transphobic killings in 2012 and 2013 and since 2008 accounts for almost half of transsexual homicides in the world, according to a report by Transgender Europe. Statistics compiled by the NGO Grupo Gay da Bahia (GGB) indicate that a lesbian or gay person is killed every 28 hours because of homophobia (murder and suicide) in Brazil, and in about 70% of cases, LGBTI murders go unpunished. This makes Brazil the country with the highest number of hate crimes against LGBTI people in the world, followed by Mexico and the United States.

Amnesty International pointed out in a 2015 report that the religious and political pressure in the country tends to block the advance of laws that could protect minorities, especially gays and lesbians, from discrimination. However, despite the unfriendly environment for LGBTI people in the country, a survey by the Pew Research Center showed that 65% of the population believe that homosexuality should be accepted by society.

In 2015, LGBTI families from different cities across Brazil realized the growing importance of exchanging experience and information and decided to bring together groups already active through social networks and create a national association to advocate for the rights of LGBTI families. This gave rise to ABRAFH, the Brazilian Association of LGBTI Families, representing different family configurations, including those formed by two mothers or two fathers, multiparent families, single parents, trans families and those with other social ties.

In June 2016, ABRAFH held its first International Congress in Rio de Janeiro, with a focus on the following topics: movement of persons and fundamental rights; reproductive rights and assisted reproduction; adoption – LGBTI people

changing paradigms; records, documents and forms – dignity, inclusion and respect; bullying – how schools deal with new families, LGBTI children and adolescents; trans children – demystifying, caring and including; guardianship, family life and parental alienation in same-sex families; conflict mediation and the paradigm of resolutions; religion and LGBT people; culture and LGBT visibility; families, children and adolescents – the rights of families and same-sex parenthood; public policies for the LGBTI community.

ABRAFH's launch comes at a delicate moment in Brazilian politics, as traditionalist and fundamentalist groups tend to exclude families formed by LGBT people. Our mission is to unite pro-LGBT groups and increase public awareness of the need to ensure equal rights for all, without distinction, as well as a culture of peace and respect.

Important dates for LGBTI rights advances in Brazil:

In May 2011, stable unions of homosexual couples are recognised as family units by the Supreme Court.

In 2013, Resolution No. 175 of the National Justice Council (CNJ) prohibits authorities from refusing to grant civil marriage to any couples or to convert stable unions into marriages.

In March 2016, the provision 52 of the CNJ ensures the recognition, registration of birth and issuance of birth certificates for children conceived by assisted reproduction, regardless of prior judicial authorisation.

We hope we'll be able to list many more achievements in the coming years.

Rogério Koscheck

ABRAFH's President in 2015-2017

Marília Serra

ABRAFH's Vice-President in 2015-2017



Photo: Board of ABRAFH in Congress held in Rio de Janeiro: Ana Lodi, Marília Serra, Saulo Amorim and Rogério Koscheck. Credit: gatania photography.

PORTUGAL - Special Country Feature

The colour village

My name is Bruno Magina, I'm 31 years old and I live in Portugal.

I'm going to talk about my first book, A Vila das Cores, which in English means The Colour Village. I wrote it in January 2013 for an ILGA Portugal contest called "A Rainbow Tale", but it was published on Christmas 2014. Later, I decided to present it in schools and libraries, and since then I've travelled miles and miles inside my own country.

The book is about a new family – a "rainbow family", or the "Violet Family", as I've called it – that arrives at the Colour Village, and the reactions of the other six families.

About my visit to her school, one teacher said, "Bruno Magina showed great sensitivity in the approach to the theme and great willingness to answer all questions. Despite its apparent simplicity, the book focuses on a current topic that is not always treated in the context of the classroom, for various reasons: teachers do not feel prepared or do not always have the time. Thus the presence of the book and author in schools is very important; listening to a story and talking about issues – opening new perspectives and realities to students – prepares them for today and tomorrow: there will be a day

when the "different" families come to our village, to our school, and nothing is better than everyone being able to live in harmony and happiness." (Maria João Cardoso Delgado)



Here are some students' opinions:

"I enjoyed the book and the way the colours are associated with families, as well as the opinions of the other characters, some positive, some negative, about the new family." (Tiago Teles, 6th grade)

"I really enjoyed the book because it shows that families, despite appearances, are all the same, that is, a man can like another man, a woman might like another woman, there can be families with a father and two daughters, an aunt and a nephew ... This book taught me that we should not discriminate against anyone for their differences." (Carolina Valsumo, 6th grade)

"This book conveys very well the message that we should treat people the same regardless of their sexuality. I think the author wrote a short text that is easy to understand, and it opened my eyes to the world around me." (Agnes Bernardo, 6th grade)

"We are all different, so we should not judge other people. We must accept people as they are, even though they are different from us. It's nice to be honest. We should not be ashamed of who we are. With Bruno Magina, we learned that we should not be afraid to be who we are." (6th grade class from Lisbon)

The book includes a preface from Paulo Côrte-Real (Vice-President of ILGA Portugal) and features the English version of the entire text.

I'm already working on new projects – especially books – but I'm sure The Colour Village will continue to be successful!

As I say in my book, "The Violet Family reminded the villagers that with so many colours out there in the world, there is no reason for indifference or prejudice. We are all different and we should be free to live as we like most. And it is this diversity that brings enrichment.

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RUSSIA - Special Country Feature

Despite the current situation in the country, this year four Russian cities have joined the IFED celebrations. This day inspires people to keep fighting for their rights, shows solidarity with the parents of other cities and countries, and allows us to feel proud of being part of a huge movement!

2017 has already been declared the year with a focus on family. IDAHOT 2017 and IFED 2017 are great events that will complement each other and through which we will be able to say to the Russian public, "Rainbow families exist; these people are some of the most courageous and inspiring by their example. Homophobia and transphobia will be defeated in Russia, because love thinks no evil, love is stronger than hate, and this is our time – the time to talk, the time to get stronger!"



St. Petersburg

In St. Petersburg "Coming Out" LGBT group and the initiative group "Rainbow Future" organised the IFED celebration with the support of the Russian LGBT Network.

Forty grown-ups and children were gathered in a beautiful bright space. Adults laughed, children ran and played, tables were laden with cakes and sweets, the whole room was decked out in rainbow colours. Parents shared stories of their families, we discussed important issues of further mutual help and development of the LGBT parent community, got in touch over Skype with other cities in Russia, Sweden and Switzerland. We danced, took pictures, together with our children made a collage and talked a lot.

One of the volunteers said "When I accepted being gay, I thought I was doomed to eternal loneliness. But today I see happy families, I see laughing children, and I understand that everything is possible. And I also have a chance at a happy family!"

The LGBT action group "Coming Out" has eight years of experience in protection of human rights and support for the LGBT community. LGBT parents (as part of the LGBT community) are one of the most vulnerable groups, and so we pay particular attention to them.

We organised a postcard flash mob dedicated to the IFED. We sent our postcards all around Russia as well as to LGBT organisations in all over Europe. We got responses from various cities all over the country. It was exciting and gratifying to see that our cards reached people in so many parts of Russia, and we finally realised that, yes, we did it!

Especially noteworthy was the photo project that our wonderful partners and friends from the organisation "Resource LGBTKIA Moscow" released during preparation for IFED 2016, which is dedicated to equality and recognition of different families (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVXp7FILx4o>). The project is a presentation of the psychological art project, with the participation of LGBTQIA-families as well as heterosexual families. It was widely shared on social networks and during the IFED 2016 celebration in St. Petersburg.

Moscow

Despite the fact that it was quite a gamble, given the current political situation, the celebration was held. We have firmly decided to declare ourselves to the community, saying, "Yes, we do exist, and we as well as others have the right to a peaceful and decent life in our country!"

In Moscow, the day was celebrated in an interesting and unusual way. The main goal of the organisers, the organization "Future 4 You", was to create a trusting and comfortable atmosphere for the participants as much as possible. Participants gathered early in the morning in a place popular among the LGBT community, near the Sergei Yesenin monument. Everybody was in a celebratory mood – smiling adults and children running around created a festive atmosphere. A bunch of colourful balloons complemented the positive vibe.

Later, all the participants relocated to a cosy café to chat and watch a movie created by activists expressly for International Family Equality Day. The film, about Moscow LGBT families with children, was bright and lively and, most important, objectively showed the life of Moscow LGBT families where children are brought up. The celebration was completed by launching balloons in the Red Square.

Samara

This year Samara appears on the virtual IFED map. Samara's Public LGBT Movement "Avers" celebrated this day. On 30 April we had a Skype meeting with families from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Stockholm and Zurich. We were shocked by the number of people and the size of the celebrations in participant cities. As always when family parties take place, it was fun and noisy – Maria von Känel, the President of the Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations (NELFA) had to really raise her voice to explain what was happening and make herself heard. Thanks to our friends from St. Petersburg, we were able to sign postcards with warm words and thanks for the support

On 2 May we went outdoors with our families. Unfortunately, it was a cold and rainy day, so families with children had to stay home. At a private summer house we had the first barbecue of the year, talked and took pictures. It was a good day, and there was a feeling that we are all one big family. We definitely want to celebrate IFED again next year.

Ekaterinburg

Organisers from Ekaterinburg, Resource LGBT Center Ekaterinburg, have decided not to hold a public event but celebrate in one of the city's cafés where LGBT families as well as tolerant citizens with their children might come and to discuss issues, share difficulties and, of course, have fun in a comfortable, safe environment. For several hours, adults and children had fun with animators who led all participants in play, dance, draw and even make huge soap bubbles. The pleasure of this wonderful process captivated the grownups as much as the children. Fun and games alternated with the official part of the event. Psychologists from the resource centre and guests discussed the difficulties and problems encountered by same-sex families and came to the conclusion that mutual support can make the life of LGBT families safer and more comfortable. Despite the fact that it was not the first time they got together, LGBT parents noted that this was the kind of event where you could keep the children busy while having a pleasant and helpful time. And it's very important both for the LGBT community itself and for the overall development of society's tolerance.



SPAIN - Special Country Feature

Family Diversity Education in Schools

At Galesh (the Asociación de Familias Homoparentales) we spent a lot of time working in educational institutions, mostly in elementary and primary schools. We worked with both children and their teachers. Because we believe that the age when a child builds its own personality and conception of what is socially good and bad is a crucial time, we have to provide adequate support to teachers in allowing them to try different things.

Our work came to fruition at the 2016 IFED through a wonderful exhibition about family. The idea came from our member Mara Abad, an arts and crafts teacher who proposed an exhibition of children's drawings about their families.

We began by inviting elementary schools (students between the ages of 3 and 6) and some primary schools (ages 6 to 12) to think about what makes a family.

We invited them to think about the things they did with their families and got them to think about the value of sharing within families, no matter what the composition of the family was (two dads, two mums, one mum and one dad, two grandmums or living half the year in Valencia and the other half in Turkey).

With this in mind, they drew their families sharing experiences such as going to the beach or the mountains, shopping, playing, etc.

The teachers loved our project, and many students collaborated. The final exhibit was larger than expected: 450 artworks!

We had a public exhibition at the municipal library.

The vice-president of the regional government (and councillor of inclusive and diversity policies), the general director of inclusive and



diversity policies in the regional government and some representatives of LGBT NGOs from Valencia all attended the exhibition's opening.

After the event, we were surprised to see schools taking field trips to our exhibition. On their visits we read the book "Tango Makes Three". The story about a couple of male penguins raising their penguin child allowed us to broach the topic of same-sex families, adoption and other ways to make a family.

This is a very successful example of how to talk about homosexuality, adoption and family diversity with children between 3 and 12 years of age.



Overview of Research on Same-Sex Families (non-exhaustive)¹

By Martine Gross

The earliest empirical studies of homosexual parents and their children go back to the 1970s and are for the most part American. Between 1972 and 2004, over 440 scientific articles on the subject were published (Vecho and Schneider, 2005). Early studies focused on the concern voiced by judges or social workers having to decide whether or not to give custody of a child to a homosexual parent, in particular in the context of the parents' separation, when the child had been born before the unmaking of a heterosexual relationship.

As regards homosexual adults, these studies concerned their mental health and their parenting abilities. Indeed, courts of law considered that gays and lesbians did not have a close enough relationship with their children, that lesbians were less maternal than heterosexual women or even that homosexuality was a disease. As for the children raised by homosexuals, several fears were voiced. The first was that the children would be rejected by their peers or that they would be mocked. The second was that these children would be confused as to their sexual identity or be more likely to become homosexual themselves, something that judges considered to be an especially negative consequence – it must be remembered that up until 1981 the World health organization considered homosexuality as a disease. Judges were worried by other aspects of the personal development of these children: they thought they would be more likely to display signs of mental illness and coping difficulties, and have more fragile mental health than children raised in heterosexual families. One last



common fear was that these children would be more exposed than others to sexual abuse by their parents or their parents' friends. Thus, most studies focused on the sexual identity, emotional development and social relations of these children with peers and adults.

The hundreds of studies all came to show no fundamental difference between the children raised in a household with parents of different sex and those raised by same-sex parents. According to Patterson (2005), not one single child raised in a same-sex family and having been part of a study (over 300 children) showed any gender identity disorders or gender-role behavior difficulties. Several studies have shown that the children raised in same-sex families are no more likely than others to suffer psychiatric conditions nor emotional or behavioral difficulties (Bos et al., 2007 ; Golombok et al., 1983 ; Kirkpatrick et al., 1981 ; Lick et al., 2013 ; Shechner et al., 2013; Wainright et al., 2004). In their study, Bos et al. (2016) make a significant contribution to the literature on same-sex parenting and child outcomes. Focusing on female same-sex parents who have been continuously coupled, they find that, although such couples report more parenting stress, their children demonstrate no differences in general health, emotional difficulties, coping behavior, and learning behavior from children reared in different-sex parent household. The study therefore corroborates the “no differences” conclusions that have been reached by numerous other scholarly studies. This study is significant because it draws its data from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), which made it possible to identify and control for family configurations that were ignored or unavailable in previous research. Further, the authors were able to identify continuously coupled parents raising children who had not experienced divorce, separation, or adoption, and who did not suffer from the disruptions that have often been associated with research on children with gay parents.

Finally, as regards sexual orientation, numerous studies have disproved the prejudice according to which the sexual orientation of children is dependent on that of the parents (Bailey et al., 1995 ; Bos et al., 2012 ; Golombok and Tasker, 1996 ; MacCallum and Golombok, 2004). The findings of these different studies show that the young adults raised by lesbian mothers are in good mental health,

1. *A large part of this text has been initially published in French in Gross, M., & Bureau, M.-F. (Eds.). (2015). Homoparentalités, transparentalités et manifestations de la diversité familiale: les défis contemporains de la parenté (Vol. 23): Enfances, Familles, Générations. (<http://www.efg.inrs.ca/index.php/EFG/article/view/636>), see English translation by Abigail Mira Crick Gay, lesbian, and trans families through the lens of social science: A revolution or a pluralisation of forms of parenthood? (<http://efg.revues.org/893>).*

do not define themselves as homosexual, but are more open than other to “experimenting” with a person of the same sex. However, a study published in 2010 does state that the daughters of lesbian mothers have a higher likelihood of living a homosexual experience (Gartrell et al., 2010).

Despite the rise in different family arrangement, it is often assumed that deviating from the two-parent heterosexual norm jeopardized the psychological well being of the children (Vecho and Schneider, 2015). Suzan Golombock, in her recent review of the literature (2015), shows how the structure of a family is of much less importance than support from the relatives, family dynamics and the quality of relations between parents and children and between the parents themselves.

As regards peer relations, the adolescents that were raised by lesbian mothers are not different from those who have heterosexual parents, whether in terms of the quality of their relationships, the number of male or female friends, or the presence of a best friend (Wainright and Patterson, 2006). In the longitudinal study led in the United-States with lesbian mothers and their children (Gartrell et al., 2005), 43% of the children interviewed at the age of 10 had experienced homophobia and had been distressed by it. At the age of 17, the adolescents were asked about their day-to-day life (Gartrell et al., 2012). In general, they had good results in school, had a social network and long-time close friends. Most were comfortable with inviting their friends to their house and telling them about their mother’s sexual orientation. Nonetheless, half of them had been confronted with negative reactions in school concerning their same-sex parents (van Gelderen et al., 2012).

The specifics of adoption within same-sex families has of yet received little attention but a review of the 18 articles published between 2003 and 2014 on the development of children adopted into same-sex families confirms the results of earlier data regarding the development of children raised in same-sex parenting contexts (Schneider and Vecho, 2015).

Research on the psychological development and the well-being of children raised by same-sex parents has almost entirely focused on lesbian households, and very little on gay ones. However, those studies suggest that children of



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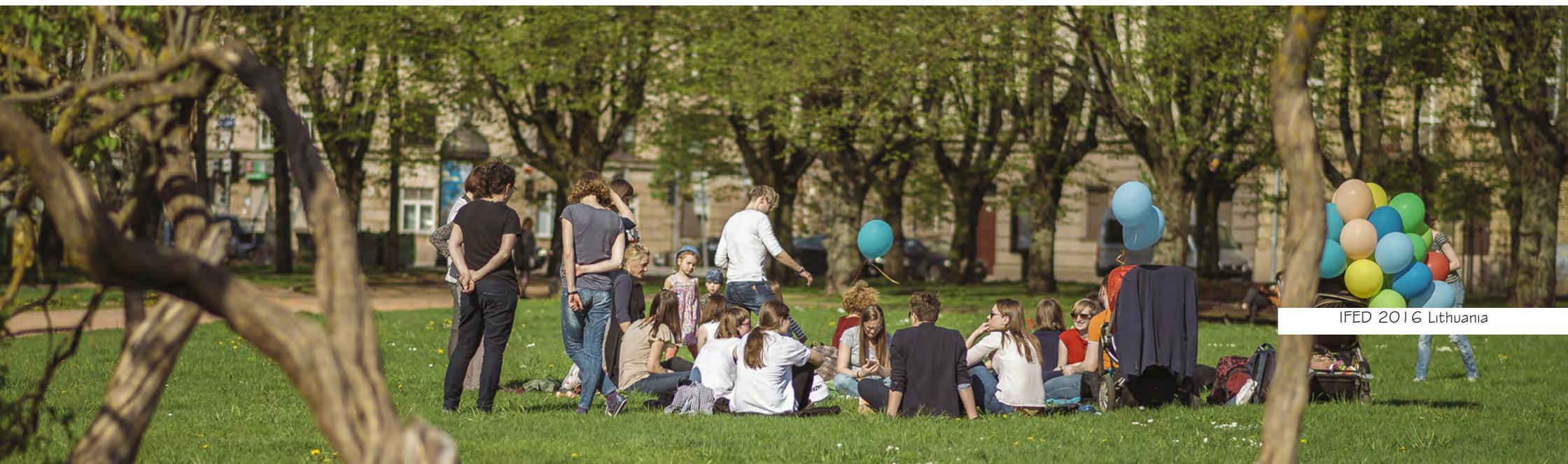
gay fathers do equally well. Recent research demonstrates that young children adopted by gay fathers are no different, in terms of their psychological adjustment, than those adopted by heterosexual parents (Farr et al., 2010). Note, however, that most studies related to children of gay fathers focus on children born into a heterosexual environment, which implies the painful experience of their parents' separation, or adopted children who suffer from abandonment-related trauma. There are very few studies on gay fathers who have raised their children since birth. The findings of a study on adoptive gay-father families indicated more positive parental well-being and parenting in gay-father families than in heterosexual-parent families. Child externalizing problems were greater among children in heterosexual families, and it was parenting stress, rather than family type, that was found to be a predictor of those issues (Golombok et al., 2014).

One often hears that adoption by gay fathers could further complicate an already potentially difficult situation. Do the children adopted by gay fathers suffer more problems than those that were adopted by lesbian mothers or by heterosexual parents? A study has shown that the problems of children who were adopted by heterosexual parents, lesbian mothers or gay fathers did not depend on the sexual orientation of the parents (Averett et al., 2009). Several studies involving samples of adoptive parents without setting apart the lesbian

mothers and gay fathers, using self-administered questionnaires, describe positive family functioning and children showing positive psychological adjustment (Erich et al., 2009 ; Erich et al., 2005 ; Leung et al., 2005). A study on gay and lesbian adoptive parents showed high levels of social support and appropriate parenting skills (Ryan, 2007; Ryan and Cash, 2004).

Many studies have shown that fathers and mothers influence their children in similar ways. According to these studies affection, attention and sensitivity, which are shared by fathers and mothers, are what matter most for the psychological well-being of children (Lamb, 2010). Furthermore, the quality of the relationship between a father and his child is more important than the father's behaving "masculine" (Pleck, 2010). Regarding the development of gender identity, it has been suggested that the children of gay fathers may differ from the children of lesbian mothers because of the absence of a mother. Golberg et al. (2012) started with the hypothesis that the children of gay fathers, especially the girls, may display a less gendered behavior than the children of heterosexual parents due to the absence of a female role model, but they concluded that that is not the case.

A quantitative synthesis of the available literature has been conducted to investigate the effects of parental gender and sexual identity on child and adolescent



outcomes. Results indicate that outcomes, including child sexual orientation, cognitive abilities, psychological adjustment and gender identity, are not moderated by parent gender or sexual orientation (Fedewa et al., 2014).

Studies led in Europe, in North America and in Anglo-Saxon countries in general have paved the way for new research, that is no longer focused on disproving prejudice, but rather on same-sex families as study objects that could shed light on contemporary transformations of the family. Today, the research is leaning somewhat less toward the future of children brought up by same-sex parents and more toward the functioning of families. In particular, the distribution of household and parental tasks – as gender no longer in and of itself assigns household and parental tasks to women and bread-winning to men – has been the subject of an increasing number of publications over recent years. Recently, a study examined the functioning of 624 same-sex couples with children, including questions on their economic behavior (Gross & Courduriès, 2015). Another interesting issue is that of the nature of relationships between gay or lesbian parents and their extended families (Courduriès & Fine, 2014; Gross, 2009, Julien et al., 2005). Regarding insemination with a known or unknown donor, some studies examine how the children who were raised by lesbian parents construct their relationships with their known donor (Goldberg & Allen, 2013) and their discourse about fathers and “daddies” (Malmquist et al., 2014) while others compare satisfaction levels with known, open-identity vs. unknown sperm donors reported by lesbian mothers of adolescents (Gartrell et al., 2015). There have been publications on a great many topics: the transmission of religious identity (Gross, 2004); terms of address between children and parents (Gross, 2014); gay fatherhood (Gross, 2012; L’Archevêque et Julien, 2013; Tarnowski, 2010); the importance of biological connections and heteronormative perceptions (Ciano-Boyce and Shelley-Sireci, 2002; Dalton and Bielby, 2000; Descoutures, 2010; Gratton, 2008), and the sharing of domestic and educative tasks in a household where gender does not come into play to pre-define the division of responsibilities (Patterson et al., 2004; Vecho et al., 2011).

With regard to the effects of homophobia and related child-protection strategies, one of my studies (Gross, 2011) on lesbian mothers indicates that the most effective strategies seem to be openness with early childcare personnel and teachers; parental involvement in school life, in particular the involvement

of the social mother; and finally, welcoming the child’s friends into the child’s home. The visibility of same-sex parents, at least in early school years, is very effective in eliminating homophobic comments. One study examined the direct and indirect associations between heterosexism and adolescents’ adjustment using a sample of 50 dyads composed of lesbian mothers and their adolescent children. The mothers’ experienced heterosexism and the adolescents’ perceived heterosexism were negatively associated with the adolescents’ adjustment. Consistent with previous research on younger children of lesbian mothers, the findings underlined the role of school, family and social networks in protecting the well-being of adolescents raised by lesbian mothers (Vyncke et al., 2014). Another study compared internalizing and externalizing problem behavior of 67 Dutch adolescents in planned lesbian families against 67 adolescents in heterosexual-parent families. The results revealed no differences in internalizing and externalizing problem behavior associated with family type. Offspring of lesbian families who reported more experiences of homophobic stigmatization also demonstrated more internalizing and externalizing problem behavior (van Gelderen et al., 2015).

Regarding the effects of various legal situations, a technical report by the American Academy of Pediatrics concludes that lack of opportunity for same-sex couples to marry adds to family stress, which affects the health and welfare of all household members (Perrin & Siegel, 2013).



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Special Thanks

To all the people who are actively involved in bringing visibility to the diversity of family forms in society, to all who are prepared to stand up for the rights of every one of these diverse families.

To our sponsor of the IFED Annual Report 2016: The Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations (NELFA), Sateenkaariperheet, The Swiss Rainbow Families Association, Marco Fritschi & Tobias Kuhnert.

To Francesca Silvestri (contact@francescasilvestri.com) for the graphic design and Martin della Valle for the proofreading of the IFED Annual Report 2016.

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