

What will you do for **LGBTIQ*** families?

NELFA - the Network of European LGBTIQ* Families Associations - founded by national LGBTIQ* families organisations, is today composed of 37 members representing 30 countries and thousands of LGBTIQ* parents, their children and families-to-be, all across the European Union and beyond.

An **LGBTIQ* or “rainbow” family** is composed of at least one adult defining themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, or queer (LGBTIQ*) person and being a parent either with legal parenting rights or acting and acknowledging themselves as parent, but without the rights and status attached thereto – also referred to a “social” parent.

LGBTIQ* families are diverse as the color of the rainbow flag, with families formed through a former heterosexual union then dissolved when one of the parents is assuming their sexual orientation, through adoption or foster care or through contribution of a third party, i.e. with a sperm donor (with or without medical assistance, known or unknown donor) or by surrogacy.

LGBTIQ* families may be composed of one parent, a couple of two men or two women or three to four adults - and in that case, also referred as co-parenting families.

LGBTIQ* families are facing diverse situations in legal and social terms, depending on their respective country of residence or nationality, from full rights and integration to no rights and active discrimination. Therefore, within the EU, these families could cease to exist when crossing borders and moving from one Member State to another Member State.

NELFA’s aim is to raise awareness of the EU stakeholders and law makers about LGBTIQ* parents and their children, in their country and within the EU, and to contribute to bring forward remediation to make LGBTIQ* families as equal as all other families and stop discrimination either silent or active.

In that perspective, NELFA is reaching out to you as newly elected Member of the European Parliament and would like to know your position on the following questions:

- 1) To which extent are you aware of the difficulties for LGBTIQ* families in the EU? What actions are you willing to take to make yourself aware of their difficulties?
- 2) LGBTIQ* families are deprived of the fundamental right of free movement within the EU which is recognized and guaranteed to all citizens of all Member states, since their parental and/or marital rights are not recognized and protected in the same way, across all Member States. Children within these families are the ultimate victims of this adverse discriminative situation affecting their parents.

What legislation will you propose or support in order to give equal rights to LGBTIQ* families in the EU?

What actions are you willing to take or support in order to safeguard children's rights in LGBTIQ* families in the EU?

- 3) In NELFA, we believe knowledge and information are key factors to oppose discrimination and deconstruct prejudice. What actions are you willing to engage or support to raise awareness of the European Parliament and all its members on the lack of rights affecting the LGBTIQ* families and their children? Will you initiate, take part or support committees or reports dedicated to examine and define specific legislative work in that respect?
- 4) Like any other family, LGBTIQ* families rights, when they exist in a given Member State, are formalised through civil documents such as birth or marriage certificate. However so far, the Member States have been incapable to go through the full legal process to obtain mutual recognition of such documents, both in terms of format and content. Are you willing to contribute to have this legislation being adopted by the Parliament, for the benefit of all EU citizens including LGBTIQ* families?
- 5) One of the major obstacles to improve LGBTIQ* families rights at the EU levels is the principle that family matter is an exclusive competence of Member States within their jurisdiction. Do you think that the European legislation should include family matters when fundamental rights such as forming a family and preserving all parenting rights between the parents and the children are at stake? Alternatively, are you willing to apply pressure on other EU Member States to promote equal rights for LGBT families?
- 6) Will you participate or otherwise contribute to the work of the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBTI Rights?
- 7) NELFA will be pleased to share any of your comments or suggestions you may have which have not been addressed here above.

NELFA will communicate and make public on its site, all replies received, which shall be sent to: media@nelfa.org. NELFA is grateful for your time and your contributions.

Yours,

For the board of NELFA,

Dominique Boren