



NELFA's Action Plan 2016-2017

Approved by the AGM, Barcelona, 12 March 2016

The Action Plan 2016-2017 was proposed by the Board of NELFA for discussion and approval at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 12 March 2016, in Barcelona.

Introduction

To fulfil the aims stated in its bylaws (3.1.-3.14.), NELFA has to develop:

Advocacy work by:

- *Promoting change in general attitudes towards LGBTI families in Europe;*
- *Influencing European policies through European institutions such as the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe (CE), The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE);*
- *Encouraging European states to adopt new legislation;*
- *Promoting equal access to reproduction techniques.*

Capacity building work by:

- *Helping families to start LGBTI family groups and associations in European countries;*
- *Enhancing communication between European groups.*

Cooperate with:

- *European LGBTI associations and European family and children organizations.*

Proposed Actions

In order to fulfil the above aims, the following actions are proposed:

1- Administration

The Board

The Board will meet in person at least once a year coinciding with the AGM of each year according to the current bylaws. The Belgian notary has confirmed that the general assemblies - which are compulsory - must be organised at least six months after the end of the 'exercice social', i.e. fiscal year. NELFA's fiscal year ends goes from January to December, which means that we can hold AGMs until the end of June of the following year, and no later than that. The Board will continue to aim to meet in person even if in a reduced format in October of each year, coinciding with Ilga-Europe's annual conference, as happened in Dublin in 2012, in Zagreb in 2013, in Riga in 2014, and in Athens in 2015. The 2016 Ilga-Europe's annual Meeting is planned to take place in Cyprus.



Board meetings

The Board will meet via Skype every first Monday of the month at 19:30 CET in line with practice to date (*the principle remains one “digital meeting” per month, but other IT means may be used and the day of the meeting may be changed in accordance with Board members’ availability*).

Annual General Meetings

Annual General Meeting in March 2013, London, UK.

Annual General Meeting in March 2014, Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Annual General Meeting in March 2015, Konstanz, Germany.

Annual General Meeting in March 2016, Barcelona, Spain.

The Board looks forward to applications from member organisations interested in hosting the 2017 AGM. The possibility of holding the AGM in Naples, Italy in 2017 will be explored by the Board.

Finances

Collection of Full and Supporting membership fees.

Targeted campaigns to increase the number of members and donations.

In future, at least one Board member should facilitate and coordinate NELFA’s fundraising activities.

European Family meetings:

Paris 2010

Spain 2012

Germany 2014

Portugal 2015

Finland 2018

In view of significant time constraints, no meeting will be organised in 2016, in line with the AGM’s vote. The Board will explore actively among NELFA Full Members the possibility of organising a meeting in 2017, and will seek formal confirmation as soon as possible from its Finnish member for meeting in 2018.

Change of name

The Board will take the necessary steps in 2016 to change the name of the organisation to European Network of LGBTIQ* Families Associations, in line with the AGM’s decision.



2- Communication

Members have a dedicated exclusive mailing list. This list is used for more formal communication related to NELFA core business. The Board will consider the creation of a dedicated members' area in the NELFA website. Friends of NELFA also have a dedicated mailing list (the NELFA Committee list), where news of general interest is shared.

Communication through NELFA mailing list, Facebook and Twitter will continue (a volunteer to manage the latter more regularly is wanted, if possible from a member organisation).

NELFA will continue to improve its website with photos, videos and press releases, as well as to feed its Facebook page and twitter account with relevant news. The Board will endeavour to attend relevant seminars and conferences where it can spread NELFA's messages.

The Board will look into creating a 'media team' inside the Board, responsible for leading on NELFA's communication policy and media activities.

3- Strategic priorities for 2016-2017:

Top priorities

- 1- European LGBTI Families annual meeting
- 2- Develop further IFED (communication campaign)
- 3- Reaching out to countries with no NELFA representation to date

3.1 Advocacy

- Awareness and visibility campaigns
- International Family Equality Day
- Family, children and reproduction seminars and conferences
- Europe Parliament Inter-group events
- Ilga-Europe events
- Family relevant networks (e.g. COFACE, Eurochild).

European Union (EU)

European Parliament Inter-group: build upon collaboration during 2015 IFED and former conferences on rainbow families in Europe with(out) borders.

European Commission: develop contacts inside DG Justice and Home Affairs (legal initiatives on free circulation of civil law documents and recognition of effects of civil law documents in the EU; implementation of freedom of movement directive; counteracting citizens initiative against 'mum, dad, kids').



EU Fundamental Rights Agency: use opportunities offered for networking and capacity building; make NELFA's voice heard via surveys and calls for input.

(poss.) European Ombudsman Office.

Council of Europe (CE) and European Court of Human Rights (ECHR): follow family cases in ECHR.

UN Human Rights Council Submissions and Statements (Side Events): Resolution on Protection of the family; coordination with other ESOCOC members; consultative status.

National law reforms: finding ways in which we can help each other to bring positive law reforms at national level (e.g. sharing knowledge and best practice, messages of support).

3.2 Capacity building

Reaching out to countries that are not involved yet. Geographic focus: Balkans and Eastern Europe. The Board will reach out to and target potential members in e.g. Poland, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Turkey.

Contacting LGBTI groups that might wish to start a family group and encouraging others to start a family group.

Maintain presence at Ilga-Europe's annual conference through workshops and a stand in the market place; use these events to network and promote NELFA messages.

Sharing good practices and strategies between NELFA members: workshops in NELFA's annual meetings organised by member organisations and Board members. Examples of workshops organised in the past include, amongst others:

- How to be 'out' as a family in kindergarten and elementary school;
- 'Social mothers': roles and coping with the outside world in certain country contexts;
- Divorced lesbians in 'patchwork families'.
- Conspicuous families: parenthood through adoption;
- Challenges trans-families face and ways to address them;
- LGBTI parents and their children – an engine for social change;
- How to build an LGBT family movement;
- International Family Equality Day - an international day for diversity and recognition of all families;
- Gender in a same-sex parenting context.



NELFA should pursue actively the possibility to launch another Grundtvig/ ERASMUS+ project (e.g. as the former project on Active Citizenship 2012-2014, which involved member associations from Finland, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Switzerland.)

In 2017, NELFA should look at systematising training packages for schools, teachers, government and public authorities, by pooling resources from member organisations.

NELFA should agree on a more developed policy paper on surrogacy, building upon currently agreed messages. The Board should lead this work.

3.3 Publications

Compulsory annual publications include NELFA's Annual Report of activities and annual financial report. The Board will look in particular at ways in which to maximise the impact of the Annual Report in terms of public communication.

Other non-compulsory publications include:

NELFA leaflet: requires regular updating as new members join NELFA (colouring the map); is available on NELFA's website for download; printing is done for special events.

International Family Equality Day Annual Report

NELFA should develop a short bibliography of books for children from different European countries (e.g. a selection per country of the 3 best books recommended by member organisations depicting rainbow families).

In 2017, NELFA should aim at publishing a brochure about European rainbow families (e.g. selection of articles from researchers and activities edited by NELFA).

3.4 Co-operation with external partners

Ilga-Europe: maintain workshops at Ilga-Europe's annual conferences and hold strategic meetings with Ilga-Europe on rainbow families policy matters.

COFACE: attain membership by the end of 2016; join their events and working groups, as relevant.

Eurochild: presence at their biannual conference in July 2016 with a NELFA delegation.



Targeted international cooperation:

- Family Equality Council (USA)
- LGBTQ Parenting Network (Canada)
- UNICEF (discrimination based on SOGI)
- UNESCO
- UN Human Rights Council
- CSW (Commission on the Status of Women)
- Embassies of selected countries: promote advocacy on behalf of rainbow families: sensitise officials to multiple stigma and the intersectionality of discrimination; promote the opportunity to invest in strengthening the rainbow families movement and to forge new alliances.

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12/03/2016