



## **The Council of Europe grants NELFA participatory status Brussels, 9 September 2016**

Today we were notified that NELFA has been granted participatory status with the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It includes 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed on to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Since 1952 the Council of Europe has had working relations with international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs). In 2003, in recognition of the increasingly active role played by the INGOs, the Council of Europe decided to change the “consultative status” to “participatory”, a status currently held by some 320 INGOs.

NELFA's Vice-President, Luís Amorim, says “With the granting of participatory status to independent nongovernmental organisations, the Council of Europe recognises the vital role of INGOs in a democracy. NELFA's participatory status with the Council of Europe strengthens civil society and increases our ability to support family diversity in all 47 member states of the Council of Europe.”

NELFA's President, Maria von Känel, adds, “With this decision the Council of Europe gives us the opportunity to contribute to emancipating civil society and reinforcing our participation in decision-making processes, as well as building a society based on equality, justice and human rights.”

The Conference of INGOs at the Council of Europe has established three thematic committees which are responsible for its work in the priority fields of human rights, democracy, social cohesion and global challenges as well as education and culture. The main aim is to ensure that human rights, and consequently also social and cultural rights, are included in member states' legislation and in their daily practices. The NGO database can be found here: <http://coe-ngo.org/>

About NELFA: NELFA is the European platform of LGBTIQ\* families associations, bringing together LGBTI parents and parents-to-be from all over Europe. NELFA currently represents 29 organisations in 18 European countries with more than 25,500 members. NELFA is a member of ILGA-Europe and Transgender Europe. <http://www.nelfa.org>

Our new leaflet:

[http://nelfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/NelfaLeafletUpdate2016-02\\_www.pdf](http://nelfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/NelfaLeafletUpdate2016-02_www.pdf)

IFED here: <http://internationalfamilyequalityday.org>

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