

**INVITATION**  
**to the 2nd Rainbow Parliament**  
**“Advancing Acceptance of LGBTI\*”**  
**on Saturday September 22 2018 in COLOGNE**

Decades of struggle have seen significant progress in the legal recognition and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people (LGBTI\*) within society. Yet even after the introduction of same-sex marriage in Germany, and the ground-breaking ruling handed down by Germany’s Federal Constitutional Court on the Third Sex, there is still widespread homophobia, transphobia and other forms of hostility toward particular groups in many areas of life. Hard-won gains in equality and acceptance are coming under attack from right-wing populists and opponents to equality. The threat is present that an aggressive and misanthropic climate will once more become socially acceptable.

How can “Rainbow Competence”<sup>1</sup> be improved elderly care services, education, in religious communities, the media, the workplace and international human rights work? We will debate this question together in expert-led forums and panel discussions at the second nationwide Rainbow Parliament. For the discussion on religion and media, we will build on and develop the ideas from the first Rainbow Parliament in Berlin.

**When: Saturday, September 22 2018, 09:30 - 17:00**

**Where: FORUM Volkshochschule, Museum am Neumarkt, Cäcilienstraße 29 – 33, 50667 Cologne**

The event is intended for LGBTI\* activists and professionals in education, science, media, politics, sports, the arts, religion, social work, anti-discrimination and anti-racism work, youth work and migrant organizations.

**Please register on our site [www.miteinander-staerken.de](http://www.miteinander-staerken.de) no later than September 14 2018.**

The Rainbow Parliament would not be possible without a **financial contribution** from participants for organization, catering and event management. The fee of EUR **30** per person should be paid into the following account:

**Familien- und Sozialverein des LSVD**

**IBAN: DE75 3702 0500 0007 1277 00 / BIC: BFSWDE33XXX**

**Purpose of payment: BEITRAG Miteinander staerken 22. September 2018 + LAST NAME, FIRST NAME**

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<sup>1</sup> “Rainbow competence” denotes the ability of specialist personnel to engage with issues relating to sexual orientation professionally and without discrimination.

## Agenda

09:30 **Arrival, registration**

10:00 **Opening of Rainbow Parliament**

Welcoming addresses by City of Cologne, LSVD

10:15 **Input: “Right-wing populist agitation against LGBTI\*”**

**Hans-Peter Killguss and Carolin Hesidenz** (Information & Education Center against Right-Wing Extremism in the NS Documentation Center of the City of Cologne)

10:45 **Questions & answers on the input**

11:00 **Presentation of the forums**

11:15 **Coffee break, participants go to forums**

11:30 **Forums**

### **Forum 1: “Rainbow Competence in (Elderly) Care Services”**

**Experts:** Gaby Grossbach und Kerstin Speer (Quellenhof Care Center/Julie-Roger-Haus), Vera Ruhrus (Lesbians and Age), Lucie Veith (Intersexuelle Menschen e.V.), Ulle Schauws (Member of German Bundestag)

People have the right to live openly and free of fear at every stage of their lives. Services in open elderly care, and outpatient/inpatient services for the elderly, often fail to align with the particular needs and life circumstances of LGBTI\* people. Some people conceal or deny key aspects of their own life history out of fear of prejudice or discrimination from care staff or co-residents. Restricted mobility and impaired health lead to loss of autonomy and social contacts. This has huge implications, also for LGBTI\*. What conditions need be in place for a self-determined old age? What can be done to encourage professional and non-discriminatory engagement with sexual and gender diversity in facilities for the elderly and those needing care? This forum will explore these and other questions. We will also elaborate requirements for policymakers in government and for society, and highlight best-practice examples.

## **Forum 2: “Rainbow Competence in Churches & Religious Communities”**

led by: Henny Engels (Member of LSVD National Executive Board)

**Experts:** Dr. Michael Brinkschröder (Homosexuals and Church), Günter B. Ginzler, Miyesser Ildem, Eva Burgdorf (Rainbow Forum)

Much debate surrounds the question whether being religious is compatible with an acceptance of different lifestyles and identities. Pronounced homophobic tendencies can be encountered in the Christian churches and also in Muslim and Jewish faith communities. Yet in all communities, there are also progressive forces advocating that faith is compatible with homosexuality and transsexuality. As well as exploring these trends, the forum will investigate how to improve the situation of LGBTI\* in religious communities, and also to improve how these communities engage within the public space with LGBTI\* and their interests. What examples of good theory and practice are there? How can rainbow competence be increased overall in churches and religious communities?

## **Forum 3: “Rainbow Competence in Public Broadcasting Councils”**

Led by: Tina Adomako (Neue Deutsche Medienmacher)

**Experts:** Benjamin Rottmann (Representative of LSVD Lower Saxony-Bremen in the Lower Saxony Media Authority), Jenny Renner (Member of ZDF Television Broadcasting Council), Caro Frank (Member of the Media Commission of North-Rhine Westfalia Institute for Media)

Media coverage and reporting of LGBTI\* have changed for the better, with some media reporting seriously and appropriately. However, others still present LGBTI issues in a predominantly lurid or voyeuristic style, with disparaging statements that are deliberately provocative. The last Rainbow Parliament in Berlin debated “LGBTI\* lives through the media: wish and reality”, and in Cologne we plan to revisit the discussion, to explore what improvements have been achieved through LGBTI\* representation on some of Germany’s public broadcasting councils, and what challenges are yet to be resolved. The forum also plans to formulate social and political demands to increase rainbow competence in broadcasting and media.

## **Forum 4: “Rainbow Competence in International Human Rights Work”**

Led by: Berena Yogarajah (speaker of Autonomous Women\* Lesbian\* department of the University of Cologne)

**Experts:** Bochra Triki (Chouf, Tunis), Dr. Sebastian Bartsch (Amnesty International, Cologne District), Susanne Bonnemann (Center for Lesbians, Gay Men and Transgender, City of Cologne), Sven Lehmann (Member of German Bundestag)

**Note:** the panel discussion in the first part of the forum will be in English. The second part will be in German.

Twin town and state-level exchange programs are effective ways to bring together people from different regions and countries. Such programs are part of international cultural exchange and also human rights work. But how should towns and organizations respond if, for example, LGBTI\* in partner countries are persecuted, detained or even tortured?

This forum seeks to clarify how initiatives and local authorities can actively promote human rights of LGBTI\* in twin towns and partner countries. What is the experience so far? The forum will also present good-practice examples from the Cologne-Tunis twin-town partnership. What requirements can be concluded for policymakers in government and for society?

### **Forum 5: “Out in Office – Rainbow Competence in the Workplace”**

Led by: Robert Hecklau (journalist)

**Experts:** Bernhard Kullmann (IGay Bau), Stefan Meinke (Chair of the Staff Council – School, Social & Health Administration of the City of Cologne), Sebastian Krebs (Deputy Chair of the GEW Education & Science Union, North-Rhine Westfalia)

LGBTI\* employees still experience exclusion, mobbing and discrimination in the workplace. Many are indeed able to be more open with their sexual and gender identity than was the case ten years ago – yet there are still numerous people who are unable or unwilling to speak openly about their sexual and gender identity in the workplace for fear of discrimination or mobbing. In this forum, we plan to debate how rainbow competence can be increased in the workplace. What experiences and approaches can serve as role models? What opportunities are offered by state-level action plans to combat homophobia and transphobia, and what can organizations such as trade unions do?

- 12:30 **Plenary session – snapshots from the forums**
- 12:45 **Networking**
- 13:15 **Lunch break**
- 14:15 **Forum round II**  
**Specific steps for strategy and action**  
 Joint work at expert tables
- 15:30 **Coffee break / return to plenary session**
- 15:45 **Panel discussion – Queer School – Rainbow Competence in Schools and Classrooms – moderated by Jürgen Piger (Youth Center anyway)**

**Experts:** Holger Henzler-Hübner (Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family, Berlin), Marco Düsterwald (vhs (Adult Education College) North-Rhine-Westfalia), Renate Bonow (State Coordination “School without Racism - School with Courage”), Sebastian Krebs (Deputy Chair of the GEW Education & Science Union, North-Rhine Westfalia), Laura Becker (Queer Education Federation), Nikita Grünwald (Representative of Federal School-Students’ Conference North-Rhine-Westfalia)

Diversity – in lifestyles and identities – is now part of everyday life in Germany. Schools and educational institutions have a special responsibility to prepare young people to engage with this diversity. However, such efforts often have only limited success. Children who are – or even just thought to be – lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* or intersex (LGBTI\*) still experience bullying and violence in schoolyards. “Gay” or “lesbian” are mis-used in a pejorative sense, often with no corrective intervention from teachers. Classes and teaching materials are heteronormative; LGBTI\*, if they are mentioned at all, are a topic only in biology class.

The panel discussion and experts will explore ways for schools to become places of respect and diversity. What opportunities are there in training of professional educators, and how can respect & diversity, part of the rainbow competence of pupils, be integrated into lessons across the curriculum? How can we deal with opposition to initiatives and smear campaigns? Children and young people should be able to learn and develop without fear. What frameworks need to be put in place, also by policymakers in government, to encourage children and young people to develop a positive, accepted self-image?

16:45 **Feedback**, end of event

**Moderation of Rainbow Parliament:** Berena Yogarajah (speaker of Autonomous Women\* Lesbian\* department of the University of Cologne)

*We would like to thank the following organizations for their support of the Rainbow Parliament:*



The LSVD project **“Miteinander stärken”**, which roughly translates as **“Stronger through Togetherness”**, promotes the acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* and intersex people (LGBTI\*). By developing sustainable strategies and establishing alliances within civil society, we can work to combat right-wing populist and anti-LGBTI\* attitudes, and empower LGBTI\* and their allies.

The “Familien- und Sozialverein des LSVD”, the project lead, is sponsored under the federal program “Living Democracy (“Demokratie leben!”) by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, so as to develop structures enabling the organization to act as a nationwide leader for promoting acceptance of and empowering lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersexual and -gender people and their relatives (Strukturentwicklung zum bundeszentralen Träger im Themen- und Strukturfeld “Akzeptanzförderung und Empowerment für lesbische, schwule, bi- und intersexuelle bzw. -geschlechtliche Menschen und ihre Angehörigen”).

Project website: [www.miteinander-staerken.de](http://www.miteinander-staerken.de)