

## **‘Different Families, Same Love’**

ILGA-Europe has produced and printed a serie of 12 A2 posters of LGBT families.

[Report, Inclusion and Equality, Legal Protection, Family](#)

Each poster highlights the challenges and issues LGBT families in Europe face because of the lack of legal recognition, as well as various positive developments at European level advancing the legal situation for LGBT families.



Different families,  
same love

all entitled to equal  
recognition, rights and respect

A number of European countries **legally recognise same-sex partners** and have introduced laws allowing them to marry or register their unions. These laws differ from country to country and provide different levels of recognition, protections and rights.

However, there are still many European countries which do not legally recognise same-sex partnerships and some even introduced legal provisions specifically excluding same-sex couples from marriage.

ILGA  
EUROPE  
The European Region of the  
International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender  
Human Rights Campaign

Working for equality and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Europe  
[www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org)

The image is published with the support of the European Commission. The European Union supports the European LGBTI Human Rights Campaign.



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Children in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families are often victims of discrimination because many European countries do not legally recognise these families. Children in LGBT families often do not have the means of establishing a legally-recognised relationship with their non-biological parent, regardless of the depth of relationship between them. This leaves such relationships with a key adult in their life extremely vulnerable, which is certainly against the child's best interest, and may lead to a violation of a **child's rights** to be raised by his or her parents.

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*Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families that are denied official recognition can miss out on many **benefits** such as common income tax computations or other benefits that are made available to heterosexual families when a family member dies or is injured. Thus these families can experience serious economic hardship and disadvantages as a result of the lack of recognition of their family.*

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The European Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights Organisation (ILGA-Europe) is a non-profit organization that works for the equality and human rights of LGBTI people in Europe and Central Asia. It is a member of the European Union of Fundamental Rights Organizations (EUFRO).

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The European Court of Human Rights ruled that not allowing a parent **custody** of his/her biological child solely on the grounds of sexual orientation is discriminatory and in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. Likewise the Court ruled that excluding lesbian, gay and bisexual people from applying for **child adoption** is discriminatory and breaches the Convention.

Care and love are important factors in the upbringing of children, and not the parents' sexual orientation.

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The European Court of Human Rights ruled that same-sex partners have equal rights as unmarried opposite-sex partners to succeed to **tenancy agreements**. When a person who is an official tenant dies, a surviving partner cannot be evicted by the landlord and made homeless.

However this protection only applies in those countries where cohabiting opposite-sex couples have tenancy rights. This leaves a gap in those European countries where same-sex and unmarried opposite sex couples are still not legally recognised.

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*"We don't need to worry or think twice when we are affectionate towards each other in public. We want none of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender friends to hide their affection and love or to be harassed only because they dare to express their love."*

On a daily basis, same-sex couples, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their children face **hatred, abuse and violence** because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Only a few countries in Europe criminalise such violence and hatred towards LGBT people.

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*Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families are not recognised for **immigration law** purposes in many European countries. When the partners are coming from different countries, they are denied their basic need to be with a loved person, live together and establish a home in one of the partner's native country. The situation is even more difficult for persons who require a visa to live and work in Europe.*

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Immigration Lawyers and  
Human Rights Defenders  
since 2001

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Opposite sex couples have access to safe and **medically assisted artificial insemination**. Lesbian couples are often denied such an option despite the availability of modern technology for them to have their own biological children. Given technological advances, such exclusion is solely motivated by lesbophobia and is discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

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Many **pension schemes** offer particular benefits to family members but do not recognise lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender partners. This can leave the surviving partners of LGBT families without the financial support that they would otherwise be entitled to on their partner's death simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. When such benefits are denied to a certain group on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity, they are discriminated against both on their family life and economic rights.

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*"We are what is considered a 'traditional' married couple with children. We find ridiculous and offensive claims by some clergy, and the so-called 'defenders' of traditional family values, that the legal recognition of same-sex families and their children is a threat to our family. We oppose the discrimination and unfair treatment that same-sex couples and their children still face in Europe.*

*Love does not have a gender or sexual orientation and should be embraced and recognised in all its expressions!"*

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& Transsexuals

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Many EU countries have laws recognising same-sex marriage and registered partnerships, but most do not recognise each others' laws.

For example, two lesbians are married in Belgium. To continue to benefit from the rights, responsibilities and protections outside Belgium, they can only move to one of a few EU countries which currently recognise their marriage. The lack of mutual recognition results in serious violations of one of the most fundamental EU principles—**freedom of movement of citizens.**

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