

Minutes

Rainbow Cities Network Meeting, Vienna 13. – 14.th November 2014, Vienna City Hall

Welcome by Sandra Frauenberger, Executive City Councilor for Antidiscrimination of the City of Vienna

Participants:

Florencio Chicote, Berlin
Eufemio Gianluca Truppa, Torino
Christian Rahmfeld, Cologne
Maria Knaup, Cologne
Juliane Steeger, Hannover
Solve Saetre, Bergen
Simona Topolinjak, Ljubljana
Tanja Hodnik, Ljubljana
Raoul Galarraga, Amsterdam
Ulrike Mößbauer, Munich
Angela Schwarz, Vienna
Wolfgang Wilhelm, Vienna
Aner Voloder, Zürich
Guillaume Mandicourt, Geneva
Juul van Hoof, Coordinator, Movisie, NL
Nancy de Klerk, Dutch Ministry of Education

Introduction of the participants

Introduction of the agenda

A short history of the Rainbow Cities Network by Juul van Hoof, coordinator of the network:

The idea of a Rainbow Cities Network was first discussed in the AHEAD project led by the City of Barcelona in 2009. In the Netherlands a Network of Dutch Rainbow Cities was formed and Movisie coordinated and supported this network. In 2012 Juul van Hoof/Movisie initiated a European Rainbow Cities Network after a project on LGBT by the cities of Barcelona, Cologne and Torino ended. The first meeting was in 2012 in The Hague, the second one also in The Hague. The Dutch government assigned (and paid) Movisie up to 2016 to coordinate this network, via the City of Amsterdam. Currently there are 21 cities listed in the Network.

Collection of our ambitions in the network

Main focusses were on:

- Exchange and mutual learning
 - exchange and share good practices
 - share materials and publications
 - expand personal expertise
- Cooperation and support
 - cooperation and exchange on certain themes and approaches
 - support, both professionally and personally
 - common actions and/or statements in the future
 - common projects (EU level, or between 2 or more cities)
- Structure

- increase the number of members with at least 8 new cities by 2016
- act as a reference point for local LGVT policies for EU, Council of Europa and other (international) structures and organisations
- set standards for current and new cities to secure quality of the Network
- involve cities with a French language background
- increase the visibility of the Network
- find a form for working together
- by the end of 2016: an independent network or part of other existing networks/structures
- a more formal status
- mutual legitimization
- Visibility
 - better image for all of us and support in “justifying” our local work
 - agree on public relations approach
 - improve the images of the cities and the network
 - share advertisement/awareness raising campaign materials

Memorandum of understanding (MoU) as a basis of our work:

It was agreed, that we need a common memorandum of understanding as a basis of our work. It should prohibit, that cities apply without real commitment.

The proposal of the memorandum is basically agreed, but it has been extended with some of the results of the discussions. See the separate draft memorandum.

Procedure:

The memorandum (MoU) will be updated and revised by the coordinator, then sent to the member cities for agreement on the final text. After that, the MoU will be signed by a government official as high as possible (as agreed) and sent back in a set time. This and the One Pager establish the membership.

The main objectives of the Network, with possible actions:

- Promoting the inclusion of LGBT people and increase visibility of LGBT issues
 - common poster
 - common flyer
 - information on local approaches on common website
- Sharing experiences, expertise, materials, good practices and challenges
 - on certain themes (education, policy making, LGBT citizens in prisons, refugees, elderly LGBT's, police/hate crimes, trans issues, housing, diversity management, media and communication, e.g.)
- Exploring possible common actions on special days, events or occasions
 - joint campaigns on IDAHOT, Coming Out Day, Gay Prides
 - Torino incontra Berlino 2015
- Developing projects / collaboration between two or more cities
 - EU/EC funded projects
 - photo project with images of LGBT citizens from Rainbow Cities
 - joint research projects

Discussion: is the term “included” better than “accepted”? It is decided that the term ‘included’ will be used.

Common grounds – agreed

The following points were agreed after shorter or longer discussions:

1. Signature on the Memorandum of Understanding:

Preferable the Mayor of the City, but it can also be someone else like counsellor, the Head of Department, etc.

2. Official name:

“Rainbow Cities Network”,
but Cities are free to use “International” informally.

3. Working language:

English. If members cannot communicate in English, they are still very welcome to join the meeting but they have to provide translation on their own initiative and costs.

4. Participation at the annual meetings:

- Every member city shall attend at the annual meeting with min. 1 person, max. 2 persons, but there is only one vote per city.
- Guest cities can attend one meeting, but have no vote.
- Other guests (experts, colleagues in a field we discuss) can be invited for certain parts of the meeting, when their presence is of added value.
- Observers from institutions/ministries/governments - who finance the network for example - can be invited as guests. It is decided that “observers” (who observe and not participate in the meeting) will not be part of the meeting.

5. Cities applying for the network – membership in the network

- In addition to the 21 members there are 10 European and 2 cities from outside of Europe interested in membership of the RCN. The coordinator will send all new official applications to the members via the mailing list.

- It was agreed, that applications for the membership are withheld until after the MoU becomes official and available. This will only be after all current members have agreed and signed the MoU.

- Interested cities should be referred to the coordinator of the network for further information and the application process.

- The signed memorandum by an assigned government/administrative official together with the annual one pager confirm the membership.

6. Visibility of the network

The network should have the following instruments for communication and information:

- A webpage for the network - www.rainbowcities.com is already reserved!
On the webpage will be:
 - A list of the member cities including logo's of municipal LGBT departments or the City logo
 - The annual One Pagers
 - Information from the annual meetings (no detailed minutes, but a general report can be shared)
 - The quarterly newsletter
- A quarterly newsletter (already 150 subscribers)
- Logo: Florencio offered to order 6 drafts for a logo (on Berlin costs) and he will present them via the mailing list for discussion and agreement.
- The internal mailing list will remain closed for member cities only.

7. Defining the roles:

Coordinator:

- Supports Rainbow Cities in their contacts with potential new member cities (e.g. follow up of initial contact, provision of information)
- Prepares the annual meetings and supports the host city in drafting the agenda
- Liaison between Rainbow Cities Network and international networks and structures (e.g. Council of Europe, European Commission, Focal Points Network, international LGBT umbrella NGO's, etc.)
- Draws up and sends a quarterly newsletter on (mainly European) local LGBT policy issues
- Services the website

Host City:

- Organizes the annual meeting in advance and sends out the invitation to the annual meeting
- Decides on one topic of the annual meeting and prepares an exchange with the local LGBT community
- Summarizes – with the help of the coordinator- the annual meeting in a general report which is published publicly on the website.

Members:

- Provide an overview on their local LGBT policy in a so-called one pager prior to the annual meeting (one page according to a format, to be distributed publicly in a booklet)
- Are responsible for organization and costs of travel, accommodation and other arrangements
- Are encouraged to send or to bring any materials, reports etc. they would like to share.
- Take an active part in the communication of the network
- Send contributions for the newsletter
- Provide a second page – the two pager – about certain theme subjects and what their work in that field is, for example sports, elderly LGBTI,... This theme will be linked with the theme of the annual meeting

8. Further meetings

There is a general preference for a meeting in the month of November, in order not to interfere with local LGBT-related activities or special assigned days. The length of the meeting is 1,5 days, at the end of a week. Whether the meetings start on Thursday morning or afternoon is up to the host city. The first part will ideally be reserved for internal discussions and decision making.

The second part should be more open, discussion about specific topics with relevant experts and guests.

The third part offers the possibility for an exchange with local NGOs.

The next meeting in 2015 will take place in Geneva.

The 2016 meeting will take place in Amsterdam.

Exact dates for the annual meeting will be announced by the host city as soon as possible, preferably 6 months before the meeting.

The host city, the coordinator and maximum 2 other cities can organize a preparatory meeting, approximately 2 months before the annual meeting. In this prep meeting the agenda will be drafted and proposals will be made for discussion or exchange. Member cities who cannot attend the prep meeting can send their input via email to the host city or the coordinator.

Guest presentation

Introducing the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU (input and exchange about future cooperation)

Dennis van der Veur, representative of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) presented selected results of the “EU LGBT survey” and the possible use of this outcomes and findings for administrations on a local level. His power point presentation will be sent as an attachment to these minutes.

Exchange

How is your unit embedded within the municipality?

Advantages/disadvantages

Meeting with local NGOs

At the end of the meeting 6 Viennese NGO's were invited – specifically dealing with: transgender, rainbow families and violence.