



**Rainbow
Cities
Network**

Press release

Rainbow Cities Network present LGBTIQ+ policy guidelines for local governments on IDAHOBIT 2023

Mannheim, May, 11th 2023. The Rainbow Cities Network (RCN) presents its first policy guidelines for municipalities under the title “**Rainbow Cities in Action**” as a series of recommendations, actions and good examples for local authorities to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) in their local communities and cities, with an European outreach. In 2021 the “Europe for Citizens” program by the European Commission granted the Rainbow Cities Network over 140.000 Euro funding to conduct five events to draft the first LGBTIQ policy guidelines for local governments.

The “Rainbow Cities in Action” guideline builds up on the European Commission’s LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and proposes more than **50 recommendations accompanied from 21 European cities** that have successfully implemented such policies. The participating cities are Aarhus, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels Capital Region, Bruges, Cologne, Cork, Esch-sur-Alzette, Hamburg, Hanover, Kotor, Leuven, Ljubljana, Mannheim, Nuremberg, Paris, Rotterdam, Vienna and three extra contributors: Bergen, Geneva, and Heidelberg.

On May, 17th, the **International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia** (IDAHOBIT), the RCN decided to publish the “Rainbow Cities in Action” guidelines because at a worldwide action day like IDAHOBIT the focus is on recognizing and defending the lives and rights of people with diverse sexualities and gender identities, across all ages, races, nationalities, abilities and legal statuses.

RCN’s chair Juliane Steeger, LGBT officer city of Hannover, states: “The rate of hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ is sadly rising again. Open harassment is happening in the life of queer people on a daily basis. This is what we are highlighting on IDAHOBIT every year and why we decided to publish the brochure on this date. Despite immense challenges, LGBTIQ+ communities continue to be at the forefront of reclaiming their human rights, while also demanding equal rights from those in government. Therefore, these guidelines are an answer for those claims, enacted from cities to other cities to enable the LGBTIQ+ community at the local level and supports administrations in their help for LGBTIQ+. With this brochure, we share our experiences, our knowledge, and our expertise, to achieve equal rights for queer people everywhere. The past two years we worked on putting together best practice examples from more than 20 European cities on how to battle discrimination and improve the living conditions of queer people on a local level and we are very pleased to present the outcome to the public now.”

The guidelines give examples on how cities and municipalities can work to eliminate inequalities and challenges affecting LGBTIQ people. The “Cities in Action” brochure sets out a number of targeted actions and recommendations that will impact the lives of LGBTIQ people in the cities where they live. This guide comprises 12 policy fields that cover topics from Health, Families, Youth, Disability & Inclusion, Cultural Diversity & Migration, Social Hardship, Sport, Culture & History among others. The aforementioned policy fields are intersected by three policy strands: responsibility and accountability, access, inclusion and participation and last but not least education and representation.



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The preparation and creation of this document took more than two years and the meetings took place at five different venues across Europe. It started with the first conference in June 2021 in Brussels Capital Region, followed by Berlin in June 2022, Aarhus in September 2022, Cork in January 2023 and Kotor in March 2023. In each event, the 19 partner cities plus the contributors convened to jointly give recommendations based on successful policies across Europe that could be useful for other local governments across Europe. In Brussels and Berlin, not only the cities took part, but also NGOs, specialists, academics and other members of civil society. The participants actively joined in more than 24 workshops where they were able to raise their concerns and needs to be included in the recommendations contained in this document. All this work was conducted with the sole purpose of improving the living conditions of LGBTIQ population across Europe at the local level. The partners of this project have a clear record of actively engaging in these policies and more importantly are at the front row in bringing the LGBTIQ affairs at the center of their public policies.

To download the brochure (publish date is on May 17 2023) and for more materials please visit: www.rainbowcities.com/in-action

Please contact the RCN's Managing Director for further questions and interview requests:

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About the Rainbow Cities Network

The Rainbow Cities Network (RCN) is a global network in form of a registered association that brings together cities on an international level. The network consists of 47 municipalities from 22 different countries that have LGBTIQ+ policies in place. They exchange expertise and experiences, bring forward best practices and defend LGBTIQ+ rights on a local level. The RCN aims to increase the impact of local approaches to create solutions and social inclusion at the local level.

The RCN is administered by the board, consisting of 5 active member cities which are Hannover (chair), Mannheim (deputy chair), Reykjavik (secretary), Bergen, and Cork (board members).

For more information, please visit www.rainbowcities.com.