



LSVD: The Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany

What we are fighting for

The Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (Lesben- und Schwulenverband in Deutschland e. V. or just LSVD) was originally founded as the Gay Men's Federation in Germany (SVD) in the East German city of Leipzig in 1990, drawing on the democratic movement in the former GDR to frame the issue of gay rights in terms of civil rights.

In 1999 the organization expanded to become the LSVD, which aims to represent the issues facing lesbians as well as gay men. The LSVD supports and aids the gay and lesbian community with issues of legal and social discrimination, marginalization and violence, while also aiming to improve the situation of lesbian and gay rights in German society by promoting personal emancipation, greater political and social participation and opportunities for full integration into society.

Equal rights

Our Federation is convinced that fighting for the interests of gays and lesbians means organizing political and societal majorities and being visible. We have to be present in the media, we have to lobby parliaments, governments and the relevant authorities. We have prepared detailed legal briefs on relevant legislation such as the registered partnership law or the upcoming antidiscrimination legislation, we take part in parliamentary hearings on legislation and we hold meeting with government ministers and their staff.

Only ten years after our foundation we were successful in obtaining a registered partnership law in Germany. This means that we convinced the German Parliament and society that equal rights for gay and lesbian couples are necessary for a modern, democratic society. Nevertheless, we still have to struggle for equal rights in areas like taxation and pension laws, adoption and child custody.

We consider ourselves as part of the civil rights movement. Therefore we have to fight against all legal and other discrimination based on sexual orientation. Our presence in media is based on campaigning with slogans like "Love deserves respect", "Equal rights for equal love" or "Equal rights are not simply granted. You have to fight for it!" By this means of campaigning we were successful in increasing the acceptance of homosexuality and homosexual life in German society during the last decade.

We live diversity

Within our Federation we consciously live diversity. People with different cultural background are organized in the LSVD. These four letters stand for Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany and not for German Lesbian and Gay Federation. We are proud of our intercultural member groups or migration projects.

Furthermore we offer support and advice to people with specific problems or questions: binational partnerships, LSVD fresh (for youngsters), ILSE (Initiative of lesbian and gay parents within the LSVD). Transgender people are organized in our association as well. They fight together with lesbians and gays for their rights.

The LSVD is Germany's biggest Gay and Lesbian Federation. We count more than 4.300 individual members and 100 member organizations. Our structure is a federal one: Apart from the organization on the national level, there are associations in the different federal states and in several cities.

Lust auf mehr?

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Rainbow families project

For a long time parenthood and homosexuality seemed to be incompatible even for homosexuals themselves. Nevertheless LGBT families or so called „rainbow families“ (lesbian mothers, gay fathers and their children) are no isolated cases. In Germany at least thousands of children grow up in rainbow families. These children mostly where conceived in earlier heterosexual relationships. More and more lesbians and gays choose to become parents after they “come out”.

Still LGBT families are not taken into account by commonly shared family images neither in science nor in society. Additionally these families are neither legally nor socially fully accepted. In Germany every day life as well as family planning raise more difficulties for lesbians and gays than for heterosexual women and men or for homosexual couples in some other European Countries, e.g. Scandinavia or the Netherlands.

LSVD has been supporting and lobbying for LGBT families for many years. Since 2002 we conduct a project named “Regenbogenfamilien” (rainbow families). The aim of the project - initially promoted by the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth – is to enhance the personal, social and legal status of LGBT families in Germany via counselling and networking. For example we initiated and maintain a network called ILSE (initiative of lesbian and gay parents), organising local family groups. Furthermore we installed the so called “KidsChat”, where children of LGBT parents can exchange experiences and views via the internet. In addition we aim at raising awareness for an adequate treatment of LGBT families in society and politics.

The range of our services includes a counselling hotline, online and personal counselling for LGBT families and specialists, publications and press relations as well as lectures and conferences. Our activities focus on family planning as well as difficulties of every day life in LGBT families.

A lot of clients seeking the advice of the LSVD family-hotline are concerned with issues like alimony and inheritance or guardianship, e.g. in case of the death of the legal parent, or the same-sex second parent adoption, which is permitted in Germany since 2005. By the second parent adoption two mothers or two fathers are legally recognized as parents in a rainbow family for the very first time.

Families and migration

In another family project we try to bring the issue homosexuality into families with a migration background. In some communities homosexuals and homosexuality still seem to be a taboo, families break up just because a son is gay or a daughter is a lesbian. Within migration communities we try to raise awareness for the issue and increase tolerance towards gays and lesbians. Of course, this is a long term project, patience and a long breath are needed.

☐ Ja, ich will Infos über den LSVD

☐ Ja, ich trete in den LSVD ein

Programm und Satzung des LSVD erkenne ich an.
Ich zahle einen monatlichen Beitrag* von

☐ € 8

☐ € 15

☐ € 30

☐ € _____

* Regelbeitrag € 8, für Nichtverdienende € 2,50

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