

BERLIN



## RAINBOW CITY BERLIN

Berlin is Germany's Rainbow Capital and has one of the largest communities of lesbian\*, gay, bi+sexual, transgender, intersex and queer people (LGBTIQ+) in Europe. An estimated 200,000 to 300,000 LGBTIQ+ people live here. Berlin is also one of the most popular travel destinations for LGBTIQ+ people from around the world.

Berlin champions equal treatment and equality for people of all gender and sexual identities. This is laid down in Germany's General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG) and in Berlin's state constitution as well as in the Berlin State Anti-Discrimination Act (LADG), the only state-level anti-discrimination act in the country.

### GOOD TO KNOW ...

**lesbian\* (with asterisk)** - the asterisk is used to render visible people with multiple identifications and include variations on and different attitudes to the term 'lesbian'.

**bi+sexual (with plus sign)** - the plus sign means that bisexuality is not just about love for people of the same and a different gender, but includes many other sexual identities and orientations.

**queer** - non-heterosexual people and people who do not identify with traditional male and female gender roles or other societal norms around gender and sexuality sometimes use this term to describe themselves.

### GOOD TO KNOW ...

**gender and sexual identity** - gender identity means the personal sense of one's own gender. This may or may not correlate with the sex assigned at birth. Sexual identity is the identity a person develops based on their sexual orientation. The term makes clear that sexuality forms part of a person's self-conception and is determined by a range of factors, not just how they relate sexually to other people.

## LGBTI UNIT

The **Unit for the interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTI)** is part of the **Berlin State Office for Equal Treatment and against Discrimination (LADS)**. It addresses areas important to the lives of LGBTIQ+ people and advocates for their interests in political matters. For example, it provides information to the Senate and House of Representatives, contributes to laws and regulations and supports legal and departmental policy developments at a federal level, for instance via the Federal Council (Bundesrat). The Unit develops concepts and campaigns and promotes numerous projects by non-governmental organisations doing important work for LGBTIQ+ communities. It initiates and facilitates dialogue between public administration and civic society, hosts specialist events on relevant topics and publishes informational material. In addition, the LGBTI Unit coordinates Berlin's LGBTIQ+ Action Plans.

The expertise at LADS around different protected characteristics, e.g. age, disability and ethnic origin, allows different groups affected by discrimination to work closely together in campaigning for fundamental and human rights. Value is placed on diversity among LGBTIQ+ communities, while an intersectional approach keeps multiple discriminations in focus. In this context, the Unit advocates in particular for the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people with a disability, for lesbian\* visibility and for LGBTIQ+ refugees, and works on the interface between LGBTIQ+ and social status.

### GOOD TO KNOW ...

**disability** - rather than being a personal trait, disability is caused by the environment according to the social model of disability.

The LGBTI Unit works closely with the **Queer Berlin Liaison Officer**.

The LGBTI Unit is also well connected across Germany and on a European and international level. It is a member of

- the network of local LGBTIQ+ offices in Germany,
- the Bund-Länder-Netzwerk (network between the federal government and federal states) of officers for same-sex lifestyles, trans\* and intersexuality,
- the Rainbow Cities Network.



LGBTI  
Unit

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## DUTIES OF THE LGBTI UNIT

### SUPPORTING EMANCIPATION

Gender and sexual identity is an important part of someone's personhood. LGBTIQ+ people often feel unseen or unwelcome. This is why Berlin offers many options for those who have questions on coming out, relationships, love and sexuality, and family planning, or would simply like to connect with other LGBTIQ+ people. It also offers help and support at times of social hardship and crises and in cases of discrimination and experiences of violence. To this end, the State of Berlin assists non-governmental organisations delivering projects around psycho-social support and the empowerment of LGBTIQ+ people.

### STOPPING DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination and acts of violence motivated by queerphobia happen every day. As many victims of such offences do not come forward, the estimated number of unreported cases is high.

The Unit supports anti-violence, victim protection and counselling programmes as well as projects that provide advice in cases of discrimination on grounds of gender or sexual identity. It works closely with liaison officers for LGBTIQ+ people within the Berlin police service and at the Berlin state prosecutor's office. The Unit also commissions academic studies and expert reports to improve the knowledge base.

### PROMOTING ACCEPTANCE

The Unit helps to promote acceptance of gender and sexual diversity. It supports projects with a focus on raising general awareness and advising professionals in the field, organises specialist events and advanced training for civic society and public administration, develops concepts and campaigns, publishes materials that provide information and highlight related issues and is in regular dialogue with other cities and states.

#### GOOD TO KNOW ...

**queerphobia** - an umbrella term for the bias against, hostility towards and hatred for people who are homosexual, bi+sexual, intersex or transgender, non-binary or queer and their ways of life. As intersexphobia and transphobia, it is directed against the expression of gender identity or roles or against physical appearance. The term queerphobia includes the concept of homophobia, which describes the fear or hatred of people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual.

## THE BERLIN LGBTIQ+ ACTION PLAN

The Berlin LGBTIQ+ Action Plan comprises all of the State of Berlin's policy efforts in respect of LGBTIQ+ matters. In 2009, the Berlin House of Representatives passed Germany's first LGBTIQ+ Action Plan as part of the 'Berlin supports self-determination and acceptance of sexual diversity' initiative (ISV). New editions of the Action Plan have regularly been developed since that point to incorporate many measures in different areas. The LGBTI Unit ensures overall coordination of Berlin's LGBTIQ+ Action Plans under the (more recent) '**Berlin supports self-determination and acceptance of gender and sexual diversity**' initiative (IGSV). However, all Senate departments are responsible for implementing the measures in their own specific areas, while the city districts and civic society also have a big part to play.



Initiative: Berlin tritt ein für Selbstbestimmung und Akzeptanz geschlechtlicher und sexueller Vielfalt

SELBSTBESTIMMUNG · AKZEPTANZ · VIELFALT

Senate Department  
for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality,  
Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination

**BERLIN**



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