Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 16299
03 December 2025

Comprehensive protection of children in rainbow families across Europe

Motion for a resolution
tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Across Europe, thousands of children are raised by same-sex parents in families built on love and care. Yet their legal and social recognition varies widely. While some countries offer full protection, others leave these children vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion.

Spain stands out for its inclusive approach. Children in LGTBI families benefit from legal recognition of both parents, inclusive education, and healthcare systems that respect diverse family structures. Regional laws promote visibility in classrooms, and national legislation ensures equal treatment in adoption, inheritance, and parental leave.

Elsewhere, the situation is more troubling. In Hungary, Bulgaria, and Poland, laws restrict the visibility of rainbow families in schools and limit access to essential services. Often, only one parent is legally recognised, putting children at risk in matters of custody, healthcare, and travel.

The statistics are alarming. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency reports that 45% of LGTBI adolescents face discrimination, and 13% have experienced physical or sexual violence. Many incidents go unreported due to fear or mistrust in institutions. The lack of inclusive education and emotional support further isolates these children, impacting their mental health and development.

Despite these challenges, civil society, educators, and families continue to push for change. But they need support. Every child deserves equality – regardless of who their parents are.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe should call on member States to ensure full legal recognition of children in LGTBI families, promote inclusive education reflecting family diversity, guarantee equal access to healthcare and emotional support, and protect civic space for organisations defending rainbow family rights.