GUIDE TO
RAINBOW FAMILIES IN THE WORKPLACE


## A <br> FAMILY <br> IS A <br> FAMILY <br> IS

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## A

## FAMILY

_ When we hear the word "family", the image of "father, mother, child" quickly pops into our heads. Quite normal. But what is actually normal? In real life, family can be so much more than the heteronormative nuclear family, which is probably (still) the most present in the general public and the media.
_ What does family have to do with the world of work? People spend a large part of their everyday life at work. Whether working from home or in the office, the topic of family can hardly be separated from working life. So, an increasingly colorful (working) world cannot ignore so-called rainbow families. This guide shows how and why they can be integrated into work processes and corporate culture - and why this is worthwhile for all sides.
_ We will discuss different LGBT*IQ family constellations and provide information about their legal situation and the everyday discrimination they face. Above all, we want to provide interested employers with the information and recommendations to approach the topic of rainbow families in the workplace.

## _ The PROUT AT WORK-

 Foundation advocates for LGBT*IQ equal opportunity in the workplace - such that it becomes natural that the talents and potential of all identities are leveraged to the fullest.
## Everyone benefits from

this openness: people
and companies, society
and the economy.

## GENDER 101

Gender is not just the body a person is born with. A distinction can be made between the social definition (gender) and the biological/medical definition (sex). Biological sex can be determined by many characteristics such as chromosomes or sexual organs. Distinctions of gender and related stereotypes (such as "men are strong and women like pink") are social constructs that many mistakenly believe to be biologically-determined. Social gender can also be referred to as gender identity and is based solely on how a person defines themselves and cannot be determined externally.
If someone's gender identity does not match their biological sex, a person is transgender. People who are biologically neither clearly male or female are intersex.

## WE SPEAK LGBT*IQ

We can understand parenthood and family more deeply than the traditional father-mother-child formula. This is why we try to avoid certain terms. For example, since not only women can give birth and be mothers and not only men are fathers or sperm donors, we use terms like birthing person, parent and sperm donor to include other genders. Referring to the correct terminology is crucial to unpacking the current legal situation and understanding the instances where rainbow families still face discrimination.

NOTE: terms and connotations may differ in German and English language.

## GENDER 101 <br> 2.0


$\qquad$ female/woman
male/man
$\qquad$ other
(egg. nonbinary, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid)

GENDER EXPRESSION
$\square$
$\longrightarrow$ masculine
$\qquad$

Gender identity is comparable to social gender Just as the biological sex can have an infinite number of variants, gender is infinitely diverse. Some commonly used terms to describe gender identity, in addition to male and female, are: agender, gender fluid, nonbinary and queer.

Gender expression can also be understood as the answer to the question, "How do I present myself to the outside world?" or how am I read and/or perceived.

## ORIENTATION



Gender and orientation are independent of each other (terms for orientation are partly based on gender, e.g. "gay" and "lesbian").

The biological sex is not necessarily correctly recognized and assigned at birth (especially for people who are intersex). Biological sex is tied to several factors, including hormones, chromosomes, primary and secondary sexual organs.

We make no claim o completeness/ general validity with regard to the chart, as gender and orientation are very personal topics. No one has to categorize themselves. All categories are changeable and subject to change.

# LGBT*IQ INCLUSION IS RELEVANT TO EVERYONE 

_ Why should (heterosexual) employers be interested in the experiences of lesbian, gay and other LGBT*IQ people? Why is the world suddenly talking about diversity, adding a third option to gender forms and gender inclusive language? Why should employees' rainbow families matter to company executives? And where does the unique acronym of LGBT*IQ come from? In general, what does LGBT*IQ actually mean?
_ Let's start from the beginning: LGBT*IQ is the English abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer. In short: all who do not define themselves as male or female (in unison with their assigned gender) and/or heterosexual.
_ The concerns of all these people affect companies more than one might initially think. Firstly, there are more LGBT*IQ people than it seems. Secondly, nearly 40 percent of them do not dare to come out in the workplace. Finally, and this is an important sticking point: when you have to hide who you are all the time, it is very difficult to concentrate properly on your actual work tasks.

## LGBT*IQ INCLUSION IS WORTH IT

Alternatively, if everyone is simply allowed to be 100\% themselves, they can progress towards their full potential, work more productively and leverage their unique perspective. In this way, an open sense of unity becomes a productive sense of unity. LGBT*IQ topics are not niche, but rather quite the opposite: everyone benefits from a respectful and inclusive corporate culture, with:

## / stronger team spirit <br> / increased morale <br> / higher productivity <br> / greater employer attractiveness

The numbers also speak for themselves: the purchasing power of LGBT*।Q people is estimated at 3.7 trillion dollars. For example, so-called pink tourism (touristic activity of LGBT*।Q people) corresponds to up to 200 billion dollars. LGBT*IQ people have shown to be particularly loyal customers. They place great value on representation and on a company positioning itself clearly on the topic.

You can read in detail what else contributes to an inclusive and discrimination-free workplace in our HOW TO guide No. 4: "LGBT*।Q for Beginners. Why Diversity in the Workplace Pays Off."

## Who, what, why "Rainbow families"

_ The term can be used to describe families in which at least one parent is an LGBT*IQ person, i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex, or understands or identifies themselves as queer or otherwise different from the heteronormative, binary gender order. In the media, rainbow families are often portrayed as gay or lesbian couples with children, while other family constellations are disregarded.
_ By the way, the term rainbow family is actually not very popular among LGBT*IQ families because they simply see themselves as a family and do not want a special description. Many are also of the opinion that a family - whether with or without the term "rainbow" - does not necessarily have to include children. In the absence of an alternative, we will use the term rainbow family in this guide and refer specifically to the situation of families with children. However, we of course recognize each family as they wish to be recognized, according to their own unique definition.
_ Since rainbow families span many constellations and the percentage of LGBT*IQ people is not exactly known, there are no exact figures. However, amongst about eight million families with small kids in Germany, there are ten thousand rainbow families. The percentage of all LGBT*IQ people in the total population is currently estimated at $7.4 \%$. Either way, with around 44.8 million people employed in Germany (as of February 2019), that would mean at least 3.3 million LGBT*IQ employees across all industries and sectors. Not such a small minority after all, right?!

## The rainbow is colorful: different family constellations

The diversity of rainbow families is difficult to depict. With the following examples we are at least trying to depict it to a certain degree.

What is important in these examples is that from a legal point of view, the emotional definition as a family is often not sufficient. Due to different definitions of parenthood, a discrepancy arises between the self-image of families and their legal and social perception, which should also become clear in our examples.

There are female and male couples with biological, adopted or foster children.

There are LGBT*IQ people who fulfill their desire to have children alone or who join together in pairs or groups to start a family and form a queer family by that.

There are lesbian and gay couples who form a multi-parent family together.

There are also lesbian, gay or straight trans families as well as
so many more possibilities ...

## THE DIVERSITY OF PARENTHOOD

A family is a family is a family is a family. Rainbow families occur in the most diverse constellations. There can be two or more adult parents in a family in which at least one of them is gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, trans* or inter*.

|  | $\S$ | $\infty$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Social parenting | Legal parenthood | Biological parenthood |
| > Arises from taking responsibility in parenting. <br> > Pursued by people who have the desire to. | $>$ Arises through legal designation (e.g. at the registry office, in court, through adoption). <br> $>\operatorname{In}$ Germany, a current maximum of two people can obtain "full legal parenthood" for one child. | $>$ Arises through procreation and/ or birth. E.g. a birth parent is a biological parent, sperm donors are biological parents. <br> $>$ In principle, more than two biological parents are possible (e.g. through embryo donation). |

Genetic parenthood
> Arises through genetic ancestry.
/ Distinct from biological parenthood: in the case of egg or embryo donation, genetic parenthood does not lie with the biological parent who gives birth.
/ For example, a sperm donor is both a biological and genetic parent.

[^0]
## EXAMPLE 1


the mother
the mother
(not assigend
> woman and female or non-binary partner with joint child
> legal parenthood only with the mother (stepchild adoption did not go through yet)

EXAMPLE 2

> male foster parents
> no legal parenthood (only limited parenting rights in everyday life)

EXAMPLE 3

> child received via embryo donation (with the help of in vitro fertilization)
> legal parenthood received via stepchild adoption

## EXAMPLE 4


> a procreative inter* person can legally only be called mother after giving birth or father after adoption
$>$ in this example the inter* person is biological parent, but has no legal parenthood until after the stepchild adoption

## EXAMPLE 5


$>$ female and male couple are social parents together
$>$ legal parents in this example are the mothers, one through giving birth, one through stepchild adoption

## FOR COMPARISON


> heterosexual cis*couple as parents of the joint child

## REMARKS:

$>$ The term mother legally is always linked to the person giving birth to the child,
irrespective of her sex or gender.
> In Germany legal parent hood is limited to a maxi mum of two persons.
> Social parenthood can be held by more than two people.
$>$ The constellations shown are, as mentioned, only examples and there are many other constellations of rainbow families!

## BECOMING A PARENT IS NOT DIFFICULT?

## The expansion of marriage to same-sex

 couples in 2017 was an important step for the equality of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Since then, the biggest change has been that same-sex couples are now able to adopt children together. Before that, they only had the option of successive adoption (first one partner adopts a child alone, then the child is adopted by the second partner) or stepchild adoption (one partner adopts the biological child of the other).The coalition agreement of the German government, elected in the fall of 2021, outlined a variety of approaches to improve the situation for rainbow families, also regarding adoption, among other things. When and how exactly it will im plement concrete changes, however, is still unclear

Lesbian women or couples, in which at least one person is capable of giving birth, can fulfill their wish to have a child not only through joint adoption, but also with the help of a private or anonymous sperm donation, whereby the child must currently still be adopted by the non-birthing parent through stepchild adoption.

For a couple in which both partners are unable to bear children, starting a family is usually even more difficult e.g. for gay male couples. Among other things, one problem for them is that surrogacy or surrogate parenthood is not legal in Germany. So, often the only option is joint adoption in Germany or abroad, or surrogacy abroad.

Co-parenting i.e. shared parenthood with another couple - where one of whom is capable of childbearing - or with another single person capable of childbearing, is another option for people without childbearing abilities to take on social or even legal parenthood.

Taking on foster parenthood is also possible for any LGBT*IQ person in principle, as they don't have to fulfill any additional requirements compared to any other person. However, this form of parenthood is sometimes limited in time, especially in critical or temporary care relationships

There are also rainbow families that exist without a common desire to have children in the traditional sense. A late coming out of a parent as lesbian, gay or bisexual, for example, also affects the preexisting family constellation. This is especially the case if a parent enters into a new same-sex relationship after the end of the heterosexual relationship while the children are still growing up.

This is, similar to stepchild adoption, not purely a phenomenon of rainbow families, but rather a further variant of the patchwork family, which is no rarity in Germany nor worldwide. Coming out as transgender or intersex after starting a family of course also has an effect on the family and the family constellation.

## Discrimination against LGBT*IQ people and rainbow <br> families

The General Equal<br>Treatment Act/Allgemeines<br>Gleichbehandlungsgesetr<br>(AGG) is intended to<br>'prevent or eliminate<br>discrimination based on<br>race or ethnic origin,<br>gender, religion or belfef,<br>disability, age, or sexual<br>identity.'

_ Officially, LGBT*IQ people in Germany are entitled to protection from discrimination in the workplace. Despite social and legal changes regarding the situation of LGBT*IQ people, there are still many hurdles, especially regarding legal equality and representation. Contrary to the common assumption that LGBT*IQ people have long achieved equality in society, their discrimination - including in the workplace - is still an everyday reality with many negative effects on those affected. Out of fear, many still hide their sexual orientation or gender identity. This results in a game of personal hide-and-seek, manifesting itself for example, by avoiding supposedly normal questions about one's private life. This costs energy and impairs the work of those affected.
_ LGBT*IQ people who are out, sometimes experience serious discrimination and disadvantages and suffer from the consequences of bullying or exclusion, sometimes to the point of depression. In addition, they may experience further discrimination due to their own family situation, be it from colleagues, superiors or general company policies.
— The General Equal Treatment Act mentions discrimination in the workplace. An attempt by numerous activists to also include a ban on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in Article 3 of the German Basic Law/Grundgesetz failed again, recently in May 2021, but is still pursued further.
_ Discrimination and bullying can happen directly and indirectly, openly and covertly, maliciously or unintentionally. Experiences can therefore range from an internal congratulatory letter on a marriage addressed only to a man and a woman - whereas a female employee has married her female partner - to the extremes of unemployment, transfers or termination.

## Between

prejudices

## and <br> disadvantages

## PREJUDICES

Even starting with the mere desire to have children,
future rainbow families have to justify themselves.
They are often met with incomprehension, aversion or intimate questions about starting a family:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { "Are you sure?", "But your child must } \\
& \text { know its real father!", "How is your } \\
& \text { child supposed to explain in kindergarten that } \\
& \text { they have two fathers? - They will } \\
& \text { certainly be bullied - aren't you afraid of that?". }
\end{aligned}
$$

Rainbow families are also aware of other concerns that are not directly said to them. However, the prejudice that children only grow up "normally" if they have a mother and a father, or the belief that children from rainbow families will themselves become homosexual, are entirely untrue. This also arises the question: what would be the harm, if children do not develop heterosexually in the course of their lives?
Several studies have examined the situation of children in rainbow families and found that they are not negatively affected in their development at all. At most, any disadvantages they might experience are due to the external factors stemming from criticism of their family set up. Evidence shows that children from rainbow families actually possess a stronger sense of self-confidence and value gender categories less than other children.
The reality is that rainbow families have to deal with the likely possibility that their child will experience discrimination based on their family setup. They have to decide how they can best prepare for and manage it

## MORE THAN JUST COMING <br> OUT

Having to come out again and again in everyday life is common for LGBT*IQ people, whether it's due to a medical treatment, filling out a form, or simply when meeting new people.
Continuously coming out happens even more frequently when having children, e.g. through playgroups, kindergarten, parent-teacher conversations, and other similar situations. The children themselves - especially those born into a rainbow family - usually deal with their family setup quite organically. This is tied to how self-confidently the parents handle their dentity as an LGBT*IQ and rainbow family and how they model self-esteem for their children.

## STEPCHILD ADOPTION

The opening of marriage has left gay and queer couples at a disadvantage when it comes to starting a family. One relevant issue is the distinct treatment of spouses with a female or diverse gender entry with regard to legal parenthood. Specifically, the husband of the person who is giving birth automatically becomes the legal father of that child, regardless of whether he is the biological father. This does not apply to the wife of a person giving birth, as she only has the option of stepchild adoption to obtain legal parenthood. Such an adoption involves an examination of parenting ability, which can take months or years and involves a great deal of bureaucracy, including home visits by the youth welfare office, examinations into finances and private life, and a certificate of good conduct

While stepchild adoptions are the same for all couples, they still discriminate against same-sex and queer couples. Why? Stepchild adoption may be an appropriate procedure: for the adoption of stepchildren. However, in the case of rainbow families, there are no stepchildren, but own children from birth - and therefore this process is simply inappropriate. In addition, the length of the adoption process creates legal uncertainty for the children and the second parent. The wellbeing and interests of a child should always come first. However, this is not the case for stepchild adoption, as the child has no legal ties to one of its parents - which would be particularly problematic if something were to happen to the biological parent.

## COSTS

The attempt to have children can also be a big financial burden, for example the costs of having treatments in a fertility clinic or using adoption agencies abroad. It should be noted that rainbow families, unlike straight parents, rarely receive financial support from health insurance and usually cannot deduct the costs from their taxes.

Rhineland-Palatinate and Berlin are the only federal states that go further than the federal funding guidelines stipulate and also grant financial support to gay female couples in some cases. On top of that, the application for financial support is usually only possible if a form of infertility has been submitted by the future parents, or especially by the person who wants to become pregnant.

Similarly, bureaucratic costs, among other things in the case of stepchild adoption, shouldn't be underestimated. Once the children are part of the family, rainbow families sometimes do not receive any family discounts for leisure activities, which add to the financial burden

## REPRESENTATION

There is also a lack of public role models for rainbow families.

Children's books, school textbooks, brochures or films rarely portray ___ diverse family setups.

Therefore, rainbow families have not yet entered societal consciousness, meaning there is a general ignorance on the topic, which often leads to prejudices or reinforces them.

## The T*IQ <br> in <br> LGBT*IQ

## INTERSEX

Denotation for people with biological features that are variants of "standard" biological female and/or male features, but who can be assigned neither to the "male" nor to the female" sex. In some cases, these features might be visible from birth, while in others,
these features won't be visible before puberty or never at all. Intersexuality refers to the biological sex and therefore differs from sexual orientation or gender identity. An intersex person can be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or asexual. They can also identify as a man, a woman, both or neither (for example genderqueer, non-binary, genderfluid, etc.).

While the public focus regarding rainbow families is mostly on the LGB part, that is, on the sexual orientation of cisgender parents, we would like to have a look into the other letters and gender diversity.

TRANSGENDER/ TRANS*
A person whose gender identity does not align with the biological sex they were assigned with at birth.


QUEER
General term for persons, who do not perceive their gender identity clearly as "female" or "male", and/or see themselves as outside of the heterosexual norm. "Queer" is only a self-definition. When referring to gender, the legal definitions are limited to "female", "male", "diverse" or no entry of gender/sex.

THE T*IQ IN LGBT*IQ


Gender variations of intersex persons are infinitely diverse. Sometimes, intersex gender is established when checkups are done to investigate fertility problems. In any case, intersex people are not necessarily sterile and can have children either the "natural" way or with medical support. Fostering and adoption are theoretically possible, but discrimination often stands in the way.

Transgender and intersex people often encounter the problem that the legal treatment of their gender is different from their own definition, or that their own definition does not fit into legal definitions at all. The gender entry in the birth certificate determines important legal consequences, for example one's legal rights as a parent.

The PROUT AT WORK-Foundation is compiling a HOW TO guide on the issue of "Transgender people at work", which will contain more information.
$\square$

With regards to the relationship of a transgender parent and their child, only the gender entry of the parent at the time of the parent's birth matters legally. This means that when the partner of a transgender person bears a child and the transgender person needs to go through a step-child adoption process, they will have to do it on the basis of the sex they were born into. For example, a father who was born with female sex organs has to go through the process of adopting as a stepmother. Transgender people therefore face countless forced coming out situations and many additional bureaucratic obstacles. In most other situations, coercion to come out would be prohibited, especially at work.


The same is the case for transgender people and their families, to whom wording is especially important. For example, definitions like "parent" are more inclusive than "mother" or "father" In some cases, a transgender person could have bore a child before their transition, when they still defined themselves as a mother - but define themselves as a father after the transition. Such changes would have been legally unproblematic if the legal definition of any parent was simply "parent", before and after the transition, without reference to gender identity.

If a trans man gives birth to a child using existing female reproductive organs, he is by legal definition the mother of the child. However, a transgender man is not a mother, but a father.

Unfortunately, they are legally bound to the gender entry in their birth certificate, where a diverse gender entry can only be based on a biological basis, but not on a social basis.
The newly introduced diverse gender entry is based on a biological concept and does not get even close to solving the problem for those affected by this discrimination. The third option merely opens the possibility for intersex people to legally register their bio logical gender, conditioned on a medical attest. This does not lead to legal equality of all genders.

For more information regarding diverse gender entries, we recommend looking into our HOW TO guide No. 7 - "The third option and its implementation in organizations" (in German language)

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Especially in documents, using
terms other than mother and father
doesn't require extra effort for 
outsiders and can have a big impact,
because it leaves room for flexibility
and is inclusive.
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## Rainbow families in the workplace

## Opportunities for companies

If you improve the work environment to be inclusive of LGBT*IQ employees and their families, you show good business sense because you ...

1 - recruit and retain good employees. A more open company culture appeals not only to LGBT*IQ talent, but to all people who care about diversity. The talent pool you can choose from will automatically grow - as will the retention of future employees.

2 - increase productivity. When employees can be them selves, their creativity and performance increases.

3 - avoid risks. The General Equal Treatment Act/Allgemeine Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG) clearly prohibits discrimination against people on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Employers must ensure that discrimination does not occur and are obliged to take action against it.

4 - improve your image. A diverse corporate culture and active support of LGBT*IQ employees improve corporate image. Increased attractiveness will make it easier to attract new customers and employees.
5 - strengthen your business. Whether you are a large corporation, a medium-sized business or a small company - an inclusive working environment is becoming increasingly important. With increasing globalization and social changes, new customer needs are emerging. Heterogeneous teams that live diversity are more broadly positioned and have a greater chance of recognizing and mastering these challenges with confidence.
$\qquad$

## Parental leave

## Parental benefits do not directly affect employers, as contributions are made by the state. However, parental leave is important because employers must plan for the employee's absence and ensure a smooth return to work.

Parental leave is intended to allow parents of infants or young children to take time off from work. Employees can take up to three years leave of absence per child, either in one go or in segments - until the child's eighth birthday.

With regard to the entitlement to parental leave for rainbow families, it makes a difference whether a couple is married or not.
> Married/partnered: The biological parent is always entitled to parental leave, in addition to any maternity leave that may have been granted. However, according to the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth:

## "You can get parental leave [...] for <br> the biological child of your wife <br> or husband, or your life partner".

Thus, the non-biological parent is also entitled to parentall leave, provided she/he is married or partnered with the biological parent and lives in a common household.
> In the case of single cohabiting couples, there may still be an entitlement to parental leave for the non-biological parent, because: "You can get parental leave [...] for your adopted child, even if the adoption procedure is still ongoing." Since a stepchild adoption is equally possible for unmarried couples since 2020, this option is also valid for unmarried rainbow families.

Parental allowance: During parental leave, employees do not receive a salary. It is therefore advisable to also apply for parental allowance. This is paid by the state.

Regarding the entitlement to parental allowance, the same conditions as those for parental leave apply. It is therefore also possible for LGBT*IQ parents to apply for parental allowance under certain conditions.
$>$ In the case that the biological and the non-biological parent are married or partnered, the non-biological parent is entitled to parental allowance.
$>$ An ongoing adoption procedure also entitles the second parent to claim parental allowance, provided that the child lives in the joint household. However, this adoption procedure can be applied for no earlier than eight weeks after the birth of the child (see parental leave)

The brochure „Elterngeld, ElterngeldPlus ind Elternzeit" from the Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen and Jugend (Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Ci tizens, Women and Youth) is an important source of information on questions concerning parental leave and parental allowance. (in German language)

The brochure can
be found here.

## Creating an inclusive work environment for LGBT*IQ and their families

Every workplace is unique. Even if not all recommendations can be implemented, employers should always put their best effort forward within the scope of possibilities in order to offer all employees an inclusive, parent- and familyfriendly workplace, regardless of sexual orientation and gender.

An inclusive work environment for families and parents should include all families and parents, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. Rainbow families in particular should be offered this explicitly, and corporate communications should always make it clear that the company has an inclusive understanding of family.

A family-friendly, inclusive work environment means, among other things: flexible working time models, childcare offers, the option to work from home and the following specific measures:
> Inappropriate or even hostile behavior towards LGBT*IQ people (whether conscious or unconscious) must never be tolerated. In fact, the expectations around and consequences of such behavior should be made very clear. Stop any form of discrimination - regardless of if it comes from colleagues, superiors, customers or partner companies. Advise your leaders on how to identify and address inappropriate behavior. Offer various options for reporting misconduct, including anonymous ones, so that LGBT*IQ employees who are not out can also have their say.
> If there are existing special leave regulations for fathers, for example for the birth of their child, for home office, sick days of the child or the like, these should also apply to parents who are not the biological or childbearing parents of their child (if necessary, on request, to include
people who want to participate in the life of their biological child and its birth as a sperm donor or co-parent). If it is company practice that fathers are given time off to accompany pregnant partners to ultrasound examinations or other examination appointments, this should of course be applied to all parents and family types.
> Be accommodating to your employees: if, for example, an employee is about to become a parent because their partner is giving birth to a child, they should also be treated as a parent, even if this has not yet been legally confirmed
$>$ If greeting cards or similar messages are sent when employees become parents, this practice should be applied to all forms of family and parenting.
/ Avoid stereotypes i.e. no drawings, photos, etc. that only show mother-father-child families.
/ Use neutral sentences such as: "Congratulations on being a parent / parenthood!" or "We wish you and your family all the best!"
$>$ In general, the most inclusive practice would be to dispense the terms "father" and "mother" in general communication with employees, on forms, etc. and only use "parent" instead.
/ A legally defined term such as "maternity leave" must be named that way, but interna criticism can also be exercised and an alternative formulation such as "childbearing

## ... corporate communications <br> should always make <br> it clear that

the company

## has an inclusive understanding

 of family.protection", "protection period for childbearing people", "Pregnancy protection" or similar can be introduced into internal communication.
/ Even if you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the idea: motherhood does not only affect women! It's not just women who have children: transgender, intersex or queer people can also bear children and may not want to be referred to as women or mothers.
> "Maternity leave" must be granted to all people who give birth or breastfeed, even if they are not biological women.
> If there are salary top-ups, insurance benefits, pension top-ups, or other parenting bonuses in the company, being LGBT*IQ-inclusive means applying these practices to any form of family.
> Questions of respect: rainbow families or parents should not be asked inappropriate questions that are too personal or discriminatory (e.g. "Who is the real mother then?").
/ In some cases, it can be good and important to ask sensitive questions in order to avoid discriminatory language, especially with regard to the desired salutation or pronouns of the parents.
/ Asking, "How can we help and support?" is inclusive and shows genuine concern. Questions like "Did you have sex with the sperm donor?" or similar are absolutely inappropriate.
/ To find out whether a question is appropriate, ask yourself whether you would also ask the question to a heterosexual, cisgender person. You can also think about whether you want to ask the question to satisfy your curiosity and whether you are close enough friends with the person for personal questions to be acceptable. Is the question important for operational or business processes? Before asking any questions, go through these steps in your head. This is how you stay respectful and inclusive.
> Does your company have a LGBT*IQ network? All the better: get in touch, work together, dare to ask - that's exactly what the network is for!

Use gender-appropriate, inclusive language and spelling. We recommend our HOW TO guide "Do you speak LGBT*IQ?", guide No. 3 (only in German)


## Our recommendations for employees

You are about to become a parent? Congratulaions! This marks the beginning of an exciting time. Especially as part of a rainbow family, in addition to the anticipalion, there are many organizational tasks ahead of you, not only regarding your workplace. The next points should help you, at least regarding the workplace, and help you to concentrate and focus on the beautiful parts of becoming a parent.

It is helpful and fair to announce pregnancy or parenthood and/ or request parental leave, etc. in good time.

In order to avoid complications, all deadlines should generally be observed egg. when officially applying for parental leave, parental allowance, etc.

## Anyone can be an

 LGBT*IQ ally anytime, anywhere. How? You can find information about this in our HOW TO guide No. 6, the Ally guide. (Available in English and German)In the event of difficulties, such as rejection by executives, find out about your options and seek help if necessary.
$>$ You may also contact official
bodies - external or internal, people you trust or the LGBT*IQ network in your company.

If you are concerned about coming out as LGBT*IQ, our HOW TO guide No. 5 can help you come out at work. (Available in English and German)


The guide can be found here.

You can always reach out to your company's LGBT*IQ network if there is one. This applies if you are a LGBT*IQ person yourself, part of a rainbow family, or a colleague, etc.
> the network informs, connects, offers the opportunity to exchange thoughts and supports all parties.

If you are not an LGBT*IQ person yourself, be an ally and be proud to express this openly. This is how you create an inclusive culture that makes it easier for people to be themselves. be found here

Hand on your heart: The LGBT*IQ world is complex. Allow curiosity, be open to questions, allow mistakes, and encourage those around you.
$>$ However, do not feel obiged to do educational work if you do not want to! Feel free to point out to people that it is not your job as an LGBT*IQ person or part of a rainbow family to act as an encyclopedia on all LGBT*IQ topics, but that those interested should also inform themselves if they are genuinely curious.
> Of course, you do not have to answer questions about yourself or your family that you find too personal.
> It can be helpful to be open about yourself and your family, so that you do not have to play a "hide and seek" game. Of course, this is a personal choice.

Use the correct pronouns for your colleagues. If necessary, ask respectfully which pronouns a person uses for themselves.

## On a

personal note

These statements were each given in German and were translated for the English version of the guide.

"As a mother in a rainbow family which consists of two mothers, my colleagues at Der Paritätische fully accept me, and so do my supervisors. Knowing that my employer actively takes action against any kind of discrimination makes me feel good. Diversity, openness and tolerance are more than just a topic here. These values are actively being promoted."
"Interestingly, being a parent always includes a little bit of heteronormativity. In the world of rainbow parents, this results in a small piece of "normality", since suddenly there are many common issues that one shares with all parents. Especially for single parents or for working parents, housekeeping is half the battle. Fortunately, legal changes are also slowly happening, but there are still many uncertainties on all sides.

Engaging openly with issues of sexuality or gender (or even with their irrelevance) makes dealing with the question of children less complicated.

When I told my supervisor at the time that I would need to take all my annual vacation days at once in order to realize my desire to have children, he thought it was great and supported the idea immediately. Communication is the most important thing. Today, it's absolutely accepted that I sometimes have to attend a parents' evening or that I have to leave a meeting when there is a problem at school."


MATTHIAS STUPP
Noerr Partnerschaftsgesellschaft mbb
"My wife and I were both pregnant at almost the exact same time. Our children were born within nine weeks of each other. She was congratulated by her supervisor in a large health insurance company, already after the birth of our first child, which I had given birth to. At my previous job, colleagues wondered how the pregnancy might have occured. Immediately after the birth of our second child, my current position was advertised. Since I was a perfect fit for the job, I was offered a lot of freedom from the city of Dortmund, so that we as a family with two babies could organize ourselves well."


SUSANNE HILDEBRANDT City of Dortmund
"... A colleague, this must have occured around five years ago, announced loudly in our open-space office, that it's irresponsible for two women to have a child. A kid needs a father! At the end of the day, a
man must show his son how to play football, or the kid would grow

TINA LORTZ formerly Deutsche Börse AG

"My experience is that the more authentically I tell people about my family, the less of a target I am. My coworkers actually reacted to my wife's pregnancy in exactly the same way as with my pregnant straight, female colleagues or fathers-to-be. The only difference was their heightened curiosity about how we made it happen ; ) and if the child would be in touch with the father. As I started to give detailed explanations about how we used the cup method at home, many of them decided that they actually preferred not to know so much". effeminate. Well, four years ago, when my wife and I were pregnant with our son, I told only a select few about the beautiful experience we were going through. Coming out, which is now normal, is one thing, but discussing taking the next step and starting a family is another."

JUDITH JACOBI-HARNISCH Commerzbank


## Rainbow family simply look it up

## A quick ABC of LGBT*IQ

| Binary | an idea shaped mainly by Western culture in which gender <br> is thought of exclusively as "male" or "female". |
| :--- | :--- |
| Bi/Bisexuality | a term for people who have romantic and sexual relations- <br> hips not exclusively with people of a particular sex. |
| medical sex | defines medical categories and is composed of primary, <br> secondary and tertiary sexual characteristics, as well as <br> chromosomal sex, gonadal, gonoductal, genital and <br> morphological sex. It can therefore not be determined <br> exclusively by externally visible characteristics. |
| Cis/cisgender | a person whose gender identity corresponds to the sex <br> assigned at birth is cisgender or cis. The origin is in Latin <br> "cis-" (on this side, within, inside), the opposite of trans- <br> (on the other side, over, across). |
| Coming Out | usually mistakenly regarded as the announcement of a <br> deviation from the heteronormative norm. Distinguishing <br> between internal and external coming out usually helps. <br> Internal coming out concerns a person who must first work <br> out with themselves to what extent they deviate from the <br> norm. External coming out is merely the communication to <br> the outside of a process that may have already lasted for <br> years. |
| Gender | a term expressing the social gender, including the gender <br> role (including expectations) as well as gender identity. <br> This is distinct from biological sex, which means all <br> physical sex-specific characteristics. |


| Gender_Gap/ <br> Gender*asterisk | the German Gender_Gap or underscore used in words (e.g. <br> in for employees, "Mitarbeiter_innen") creates a space in <br> the German language to make all gender identities beyond <br> woman and man visible. The gender*asterisk is taken from <br> programming languages, where it stands for a variety <br> of possible endings that can follow a root word. For ex- <br> ample: transident, transsexual, intersexual, intergender or <br> transgender. |
| :--- | :--- | | the way a person outwardly embodies their gender/gender |
| :--- |
| identity. Gender expression goes far beyond clothing style. |
| It can be found in little traits and characteristics that we |
| use to pin down gender roles: gait, vocabulary, posture, |
| tone of voice, grooming, social behavior, etc. |


| Intersex | serves as an emancipatory and identity-based term for the <br> diversity of intersex realities. Term used to describe people <br> with biological characteristics (chromosomal, gonadal, hor- <br> monal, anatomical) who have variants of the all-female or <br> all-male medical characteristics. In some cases, intersex <br> characteristics may be visible at birth, while in others they <br> may not be visible until puberty, or may never be detected <br> thereafter. Some hormonal/chromosomal variations need <br> not be physically visible at all. |
| :--- | :--- |
| Interphobia | the discrimination against and hatred of intersex people. |
| Nonbinary | stands as a kind of umbrella term for gender(s), alongside <br> the binary spectrum of male and female. People who define <br> themselves as non-binary use it to define their gender <br> identity, regardless of their biological sex. They often use <br> they/them as pronouns in English; in German-speaking <br> countries, the use of pronouns is more difficult. |
| Pronouns | gersonal pronouns have an important meaning in every- <br> pend <br> day life, because they tell you the gender of a person and <br> how you should address them. Every person is allowed to <br> socially constructed, not just social gender, which is parti- <br> cularly subject to gender stereotypes). |
| in English, "sex" is the term for a person's physical or bio- |  |
| this decision must be accepted by others. |  |


| Sexual orientation | a person's capacity for deep emotional and sexual attraction and intimate and sexual relationship with individuals of the opposite or same sex. |
| :---: | :---: |
| "Third option" | applies to the Personal Status Act as of January 2019 and offers people who cannot be biologically clearly determined as male or female the option of having their gender depicted as "diverse" with medical confirmation. |
| trans* (transgender) | used to describe people who feel they belong to a different gender than they were assigned at birth. The prefix is used as an adjective and is therefore not written with a capital $t$ in German. |
| Transition | term for the process that some trans people go through after coming out. If someone wants to make changes to their body through hormones, this is part of transitioning. Transition can be understood literally as a process of change. Outdated terms like gender reassignment are discriminatory. More appropriate terms are "gender affirmation", "gender confirmation" or "transition". |
| trans* woman | a trans person whose sex was assigned male at birth but whose gender identity is female. |
| trans* man | a trans person whose sex was assigned female at birth, whose gender identity is male. |
| Trans* hostility | the discrimination against and hatred of trans people. |

## Special ABC of LGBT*IQ: Rainbow Families

| Co-Parenting | Shared parenthood with another couple, one of whom is childbearing, or with a single childbearing person as a way for people without childbearing capacity to take on social or legal parenthood. The concept of "shared parenting" is of course not limited to LGBT*IQ people. It deliberately deviates from the "normal" family in which two people in a romantic relationship have children together. People who co-parent are usually not in a romantic relationship and often do not live | together, but fulfill a desire to have children together - on a friendly rather than a romantic basis. This option is often considered by single women who want to have children. Co-parenting is also often an option for female couples. Many people see co-parenting as an advantage, especially when there are more than two parents. This allows the parental responsibilities to fall onto more than one shoulder, thus relieving the burden on the individual, both emotionally and financially. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Egg donation | Egg donation is similar to sperm donation, but technically more difficult to implement. In order for eggs to be donated, hormone treatments must be | carried out in advance and cell retrieval must be carried out by professionals and is therefore not possible privately. |
| Surrogacy | Surrogacy, or surrogate parenting by a person capable of childbearing. A person capable of childbearing carries a child for others without the intention of raising it as their own child. In this case, the egg of the surrogate herself is used or that of another person, e.g. the future social parent, if they have eggs but cannot give birth or carry a child themselves. This person would then also be the biological parent of the child. This variant of egg donation | can also happen with the donation of a stranger. <br> Surrogacy can be carried out commercially, i.e. for remuneration, or for altruistic reasons, as a kind of friendship service. <br> Countries in which surrogacy is banned (including Germany) usually argue that the ban is intended to prevent the commercial exploitation of women and other childbearing adults. |



## Stepchild <br> adoption

One partner adopts the biological child of the other. This practice is often used by lesbian couples to achieve legal parenthood for the second wife. In the case of stepchild adoption, if there are already two legal parents, the consent of both is required. In this case, the second parent gives up any rights
and obligations. For gay and lesbian couples, this form of adoption has only been possible since 2005. Since 2020 stepchild adoption has also been possible for unmarried couples, regardless of their gender. Before that, the marrage of the biological parent and the stepparent was a prerequisite.

## SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

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## $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ www.bpb.de

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Federal Ministry for Family Affairs,
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The L-Word in Business. A Study on the Experience of Lesbian Women in the World of Work with Recommendations for Action for Employers. $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ www.proutatwork.de

Lesben- und Schwulenverband Deutschland e.V. (LSVD) (2021): Ratgeber: Künstliche Befruchtung bei gleichgeschlechtlichen Paaren,
Guidebook: Artificial insemination for same-sex couples.
7 www.lsvd.de

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$\pi$ www.proutatwork.de
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School is out?! Comparative Study ,Experiences of Children from Rainbow Families in School". $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ www.gender.hu-berlin.de

## INFORMATION AND LINKS

Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG),
General Equal Treatment Act:
$\pi$ www.gesetze-im-internet.de
Mutterschutzgesetz, Maternity Protection Act:
$\pi$ www.gesetze-im-internet.de/muschg_2018/ MuSchG.pdf

Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes,
Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency:
7 www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de

Elterngeldrechner
Parental allowance calculator:
$\pi$ www.familienportal.de/familienportal/ rechner-antraege/elterngeldrechner

Familienplanung.de, betrieben von der Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung,
Familienplanung.de, operated by the Federal Center for Health Education:
$\pi \underline{w w w . f a m i l i e n p l a n u n g . d e ~}$
Familienportal des Bundesministeriums für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend:
7 www.familienportal.de
Regenbogenportal des Bundesministeriums für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend Rainbowfamily portal of the Federal Ministry
for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth:
$\pi$ www.regenbogenportal.de
$\pi$ www.regenbogenportal.de/informationen/ aktuelle-herausforderungen-fuer-regenbogenfamilien

Das Gender Unicorn, The Gender Unicorn:
$\pi$ Transstudent.org/gender
Die Genderbread-Person,
The Genderbread Person:
7 www.genderbread.org
Infoportal Regenbogenfamilien NRW, Infoportal Rainbow Families NRW:
$\pi$ www.regenbogenfamilien-nrw.de
Initiative GRUNDGESETZ FÜR ALLE,
Initiative BASIC LAW FOR ALL:
7 grundgesetz-fuer-alle.de
Lesben- und Schwulenverband Deutschland, Lesbian and Gay Association Germany:
7 www.lsvd.de/de

Nodoption, Initiative zur Abschaffung der Notwendigkeit der Stiefkindadoption bei Regenbogenfamilien etc., Nodoption, initiative to eliminate the need for stepchild adoption for rainbow families, etc.:
$\pi$ www.nodoption.de
Regenbogenfamilienzentren, Bsp. München,
Rainbow family centers, example Munich:
$\pi$ www.regenbogenfamilien-muenchen.de
Regenbogenkompetenz, Rainbow Expertise:
$\pi$ www.regenbogenkompetenz.de

## FILMS/CLIPS/PODCASTS ETC.

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Auf Klo: Väter von Zwillingen: „Mit Adoption zur Familie", On the loo: Fathers of twins: "From adoption to family"
7 www.youtube.com
„Familienrecht. Mutter, Mutter, Kind.", "Family law. Mother, mother, child": 7 www.zdf.de

Podcast: Gay Mom Talking, der Podcast über Regenbogenfamilien, Podcast: Gay Mom Talking, the podcast about rainbow families.
7 gay-mom-talking.podigee.io
Podcast: Justitias Töchter.
Folge 3 und 12 zu lesbischen Regenbogenmüttern. Podcast: Justitia's Daughters.
Episode 3 and 12 on lesbian rainbow mothers.
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[^0]:    > Genetically, only two parents are possible.

