



WIENER ANTIDISKRIMINIERUNGSSTELLE  
FÜR GLEICHGESCHLECHTLICHE UND  
TRANSGENDER LEBENSWEISEN  
StadT Wien

## **CITY OF VIENNA**

### **Viennese Antidiscrimination Unit for Lesbian, Gay and Transgender Issues**

The City of Vienna established the Viennese Antidiscrimination Unit for Lesbian, Gay and Transgender Issues (WASt) in 1998. The intention was to bring up LGBTIQ and queer topics into all levels of administration but also to mainstream LGBTIQ in society.

The WASt is the only one specific LGBTIQ unit in the public sector in Austria.

#### **Policy:**

The Viennese city government stated in various ways to fight homophobia and transphobia, for example in the intergovernmental agreement (“Wiener Paket für Vielfalt und Akzeptanz” from 2011-2015) or the Viennese Declaration of Human Rights in 2014.

#### **Key focuses areas** (short term and long term):

- Establishing diversity and awareness about LGBTIQ issues within the public sector
- Consultation and support for people who have been discriminated
- Trainings and workshops on the subject of homosexuality and transidentity for colleagues and apprentices within the municipality as well as for students of public medical institutions, social workers, teachers and so on
- Funding of queer projects realized by (LGBTIQ) associations in Vienna
- Conferences and city-talks on several topics, e.g. transgender, elderly LGBTIQ, rainbow families, workplace, violence, international situation, human rights in different perspectives
- Networking within local non-governmental organizations
- Mainstreaming diversity with the focus on LGBTIQ at the educational sector
- Supporting equal legal opportunities for LGBTIQ on national level International cooperation
- Combating homophobia, transphobia and violence
- Different publications as brochures, advise booklets and books on specific, LGBTIQ relevant topics

#### **Situation for LGBTIQ persons in Austria and Vienna:**

Homosexuality and homosexual activities have been legal in Austria since 1971. In Vienna Anti-discrimination laws were introduced in 2004, and lesbian and gay people have been able to enter into civil partnership since 2010. The civil partnership is largely equal to the heterosexual marriage (differences are for example: surname instead of family name; age of entering a civil partnership is 18 years, for a marriage 16 years). There have been some differences with adoption. In Vienna, lesbian and gay people have been able to become foster parents for 20 years. In the meantime, it has become possible in all states of Austria. Since 2013 civil partners can adopt their partner’s biological children (Step children). From 2016 they will also be able to adopt children in general. Lesbian couples, whether they live in a civil partnership or not, have had the right to in-vitro-fertilization

since 2015. In-vitro-fertilization is illegal for single women in Austria, and there is also a ban on surrogacy in Austria.

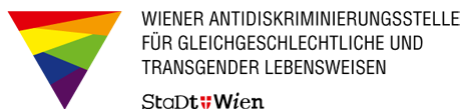
Trans\*gender persons are protected in case of discrimination because of gender in all areas of life. In Austria, trans\*gender persons can change their legal gender at the register office where their birth was registered. They need to submit a medical or psychological certificate but do not need gender reassignment surgery since 2009. Following the registration of their acquired gender they can also change their first name, which has to be gender-specific in Austria. In 2014, new regulations and medical guidelines were introduced regarding hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery.

The Viennese Antidiscrimination Unit for Lesbian, Gay and Transgender Issues carried out a survey and ascertained the situation of LGBTIQ persons in Vienna, which was presented in June 2015.<sup>1</sup> People who are living in Vienna were asked about several aspects, e.g. if LGBTIQ persons are out at the working place. 14 % of the participants of the survey felt discriminated at the office or company in the past 12 months (Austria: 21 %, EU: 20 %<sup>2</sup>).

As a municipal unit, the Viennese Antidiscrimination Unit for Lesbian, Gay and Transgender Issues works together with all municipal departments of the City of Vienna, is cooperating with local LGBTIQ associations and is a member of the Rainbow Cities Network. The WAST took and takes part in EU-projects since 1999.

If you want more information, please contact:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/queer/schwerpunkte/wast-studie.html>

<sup>2</sup> FRA. European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights, EU LGBT survey. European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey. Results at a glance, 2013, 16.