



Greece Legalises Marriage for Same-sex Couples

Friday 16 February 2024 was a symbolic day in Greece. A landmark bill was passed by the Hellenic Parliament legalising same-sex marriage. Greece is the first Orthodox Christian country in the world to do so.

A cross-party majority of 176 lawmakers in the 300-seat parliament voted in favour of the bill. 76 rejected the reform whilst two abstained from the vote and 46 were not present for the vote. Greece is now the 16th European Union country to allow same sex marriage. Greek society was divided in the vote and there was strong opposition from the Orthodox Church.

The bill allows same-sex couples to legally adopt children but will not allow gay men to acquire biological children through surrogate mothers in Greece. This is an option that is currently available to women who can't have children for health reasons. The bill also does not give transgender people rights as parents.

The Greek Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis said *"this is a milestone for human rights, reflecting today's Greece- a progressive and democratic country, passionately committed to European values"*.

On a more global scale, according to the HRC Foundation (a US association created to monitor discrimination against the LGBTQ community), same-sex marriage is now currently legal in 36 countries (including Greece) around the world.

These countries are:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay.

None of the above countries are majority Orthodox Christian like Greece although several have



legalized civil partnerships in recent years. Greece did so in 2015. For further information on this topic or any other family law related issue, please feel free to contact us on enquires@iflg.uk.com

Partner, **Lucy Loizou** is a Greek speaking family law specialist at iFLG who has become the “go to” solicitor in the Greek and Cypriot community. She is available to assist with any family law questions/issues and can be contacted on lucy.loizou@iflg.uk.com

Lucy Loizou

lucy.loizou@iflg.uk.com

The International Family Law Group LLP

www.iflg.uk.com

© February 2024