

Same-Sex Partnerships

Greens are Calling for Gay Marriage

Rechtskomitee LAMBDA: Landmark decision on the way to equal rights

Rechtskomitee LAMBDA (RKL), Austria's Lesbian and Gay Rights Organisation, with great pleasure welcomes today's call of the Green party for opening up of marriage to same-sex couples, and hopes for respective initiatives of the party in parliament.

Ever more states are lifting one of the last prohibitions from marriage: the prohibition of marrying a person of the same sex. After the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada and parts of the USA recently the Republic of South Africa followed that suite. The Supreme Court of Appeals declared the limitation of marriage to opposite-sex couples to be in violation of human rights. Spain and Sweden are on their way to opening up of civil marriage for same-sex couples, and the Conseil d'Etat of Luxemburg criticized the government for proposing registered partnership; equal treatment could only be achieved by establishment of the equal right to marry.

Rechtskomitee LAMBDA (RKL), Austria's lesbian and gay rights organization, for a while has been opposing special legal institutions for same-sex couples and instead urges real equality by opening up civil marriage. The Social-Democratic Party, as the first of Austrian parties, followed last December when, in a resolution passed by the national party convention, pressing for the investigation of same-sex marriage. Now the Green Party expressly is calling for the abolishment of one the last prohibitions from marriage: being of the same-sex.

"Action must follow the words", says Dr. Helmut Graupner, attorney-at-law and president of *Rechtskomitee LAMBDA*, "We are therefore urging the Greens and the Social-Democrats to introduce a bill for gay-marriage in parliament thus, also in Austria, finally terminating legal discrimination of same-sex couples".

Rechtskomitee LAMBDA (RKL), founded in 1991, on a supra-partisan and denominational level is working for the implementation of human rights for homo- and bisexual men and women. In its honorary board it convenes so prominent members as the Chairman of the Social-Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) Dr. Alfred Gusenbauer, President MP Peter Schieder, MP Mag. Terezija Stoisits (Green Party), the well-known child and adolescent psychiatrist Univ.-Prof. Dr. Max Friedrich and the Ombudspersons for Children and Adolescents of Vienna DSA Monika Pinterits und Dr. Anton Schmid, the Secretary General of Amnesty International Austria Mag. Heinz Patzelt and the well-known human rights experts Dr. Lilian Hofmeister und Univ.-Prof. Dr. Manfred Nowak, the sexologists ao.Univ.-Prof. Dr. Josef Christian Aigner and Prof. Dr. Rotraud Perner, the theologian Univ.-Prof. Dr. Kurt Lüthi, entertainer Günter Tolar and many more.

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