



Registered Partnership

Forced Outing of Gay Couples

Rechtskomitee LAMBDA (RKL): "One more cruelty by the government"

Austrian Minister of Interior just sent out a draft for a directive based upon the partnership bill recently introduced into parliament. This draft highlights an incredible discrimination hidden in the bill. Both registered partners will lose their family-name and will be branded by a new name-category ("surname").

Austrian law so far knows two categories of names: forenames and family-names. Every person has (at least) one forename and one family-name.

The bill on registered partnership creates a new (a second) category of second-names: the "surname". And such new "surnames" are only for persons entering into a registered partnership.

Who enters into a registered partnership will lose his/her family-name. Both registered partners' will keep their second-names, but this name will cease to be a "family-name" and *ex lege* be changed into a "surname". If "Müller" and "Mayer" enter into a registered partnership they are keeping their names "Müller" and "Mayer", but not as "family-names" (as before registration) anymore but (new) as "surnames".

Public branding

Registered partnership will be available only for same-sex couples. And "surnames" will only be given to registered partners. All other people keep their second-names as family-names. So at each occasion where the second-name has to be provided (as in official forms like for the residence-register, for tax-declarations, for applications for unemployment-benefits etc.), registered partners are obliged to provide not (as all other people) a "family-name" but a "surname", and by that are forced to out themselves as part of a gay couple.

Already the refusal of opening up of marriage and the creation of a separate legal institution lead to forced outing of same-sex couples whenever they have to declare their family-status (not "married" but "in registered partnership"). But forced outing now will be even extended to those occasions where not family-status but (family-)name has to be provided (as in applications for passports, id-cards, driving-licences, registration of dogs etc.).

"This is one more act of cruelty against same-sex couples committed by our government", says *Dr. Helmut Graupner*, president of *Rechtskomitee LAMBDA (RKL)*, "This official branding of same-sex partners is outrageous and unacceptable".

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 former Prime Minister Dr. Alfred Gusenbauer, President of Federal Parliament Mag. Barbara Prammer, former Minister of Justice Mag. Karin Gastinger, the Honorary President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Dr. Peter Schieder, Federal Ombudsman Mag. Terezija Stoisits, former Director of Public Security Dr. Erik Buxbaum, the former President of National Judges Association Dr. Barbara Helige, the Vice-President of the Vienna Bar-Association Dr. Elisabeth Rech, the President of D.A.S.-legal expenses insurance company Dr. Franz Kronsteiner, the President of Weisser Ring Dr. Udo Jesionek, the Secretary General of Amnesty International Austria Mag. Heinz Patzelt and the well-known human-rights experts Dr. Lilian Hofmeister and Univ.-Prof. Dr. Manfred Nowak, the constitutional law professors Univ.-Prof. Dr. Christian Brünner, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Bernd-Christian Funk, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Mayer and Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ewald Wiederin, famous child- and adolescent psychiatrist Univ.-Prof. Dr. Max Friedrich and the Vienna Child- and Youth-Ombudspersons DSA Monika Pinterits and Dr. Anton Schmid, sexologists Univ.-Prof. Dr. Josef Christian Aigner, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Rotraud Perner and Univ.-Lekt. Mag. Johannes Wahala, theologian Univ.-Prof. Dr. Kurt Lüthi, Life-Ball-Organisator Gery Keszler and many more. October 2nd, 2006, RKL's 15 years anniversary has been celebrated in historic Ceremonial Act "Against Sexual Apartheid" in the lower chamber of Austrian federal parliament. This first honouring of an lgbt organisation in a national parliament worldwide took place in attendance of over 500 guests including highest representatives from the judiciary, administration and politics (<http://www.rklambda.at/festakt/index.htm>).

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