

WORLDnews

cent oppose giving same-sex couples the right to full marriage when the question is asked in the context of including adoption rights.

Pollsters asked: "In [several European] countries, the possibility of wedlock for same-sex partners is being discussed. Such unions may entail the possibility of same-sex couples adopting children. Would you agree or disagree with a similar proposal for Chile?"

FRANCE

France's first same-sex marriage, conducted allegedly in violation of the law June 5 by Bègles Mayor Noël Mamère, was annulled July 27 by a court in Bordeaux, of which Bègles is a suburb.

Mamère and the couple—Stéphane Chapin and Bertrand Charpentier—have argued that the French civil code does not prohibit same-sex marriage. The spurned grooms plan an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

The French gay rights consortium Inter Centres LGBT denounced the ruling and urged President Jacques Chirac to call a national referendum on same-sex marriage. "It seemed possible [to us] to interpret the blur of the French civil code (which does not define in any moment marriage as the union of a man and a woman) in the light of the first article of the French Declaration of Human and Civic Rights [which states,] 'Human beings are born and remain free and equal in rights,'" the group said.

Polling has shown that two-thirds of French people support granting same-sex couples access to marriage. France lets same-sex couples form legal civil unions, but such partnerships are denied some of the rights and obligations of marriage.

AUSTRALIA

Two gay men kissed in front of Australian Governor General Michael Jeffrey as he addressed a Family Expo conference July 24 in Brisbane.

The governor general is the British sovereign's Australian representative. His duties are mostly ceremonial.

Kissers Jeff Poole and Jeff Cheverton, members of the gay group Action Reform Change Queensland, said they were demonstrating that "the family is not owned by religious fundamentalists." Reports said the audience gasped when the men locked lips.

NORWAY

A majority of members of Norway's Parliament now favor allowing gay couples to adopt children.

The adoption ban is the last distinction between marriage and gay registered partnership in Norway. The law could be changed within a few months.

CANADA

Gays and lesbians staged their fourth Pride parade July 25 in the town of Sydney on Cape Breton Island in the province of Nova Scotia.

The rainbow flag was raised above City Hall for the first time, but someone promptly stole it. CTV said "almost 100" people gathered on sidewalks to watch the parade.

INTERNATIONAL

The newly elected chairwoman of the European Parliament's women's committee, Anna Záborská, is under fire for comments the Slovakian reportedly made about abortion and gays. Eupolitix.com reported July 29. Several members of the Parliament refused to take part in the election in protest against Záborská's candidacy.



A court has annulled France's first same-sex marriage between Stéphane Chapin (left) and Bertrand Charpentier

But Záborská told the Web site, "It is not true to say that I am against women who have had an abortion or against men or women who are homosexuals." She blamed the brouhaha on "one article from a newspaper."

"I know that women who have abortions do so because they feel they have no other option," Záborská told the site. "It's a difficult decision taken in extreme situations. I don't want to judge these women; I want to help them."

As for gays, Záborská reportedly told a newspaper last year that people who behave exhibitionistically in Pride parades should not be allowed to work with children.

Now she says: "I was referring to a situation where images of people dancing naked in love parades in places like Berlin or Rome are broadcast on TV and watched by children. I was questioning myself if these people should be teachers of my kids. [But] I think any discrimination against human beings is unacceptable—any discrimination at all."



Anna Záborská

SWEDEN

Reported hate crimes against queer Swedes have doubled since 1996, a new study has found.

In 1996, 25 percent of 2,000 queers surveyed said they had been the victim of an anti-gay hate crime. The new study, also of 2,000 people, found that 52 percent of respondents have experienced a hate crime.

The research was conducted by criminologist Eva Tiby at the University of Stockholm. Common perpetrators included relatives, neighbors, students, pupils, blue collar workers, storekeepers and public authorities.

The most commonly reported incidents involved slander, insult and verbal harassment. About 12 percent of respondents reported violent crimes, and 11 percent reported sex crimes.

SOUTH KOREA

Same-sex relationships are not common law marriages, South Korea's Incheon District Court ruled July 27. "Kim" had asked the court to force her ex-lover of 20 years, "Yu," to pay alimony and divide their property.

But the court said: "In our society, marriage means a mental and physical unity between a man and a woman.... A partnership between two persons of the same sex cannot be approved as a married couple. Thus, it cannot be protected legally." ■

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.

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Endometriosis

Research participants are needed for a collaborative study between the OHSU Women's Health Research Unit and the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine.

The study compares 12 weeks of acupuncture and Chinese herbs to 12 weeks of hormone therapy for treating endometriosis-related pelvic pain, with follow up visits at weeks 24 & 36. You may qualify for the study if you have chronic pelvic pain, have been diagnosed with endometriosis confirmed by laparoscopy within the past 6 years, are between 18-45, and are willing to be randomly assigned to Chinese medicine or a hormone therapy that is already FDA approved. To determine if you qualify, please call the OHSU Women's Health Research Unit at 503/494-3666.

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Kevin Dean
Principal Real Estate Broker
Windermere Cronin & Caplan Realty Group, Inc.
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Portland, OR 97232
Office: 503-284-7755
Cell: 503-481-4400
kevindean@windermere.com