

POLICY DOCUMENT

Document Title: ADOPTION BY SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CYPRUS

Organization(s): Youth of the Democratic Party (YDP)

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Policy Positions:

The discussion around adoption by same-sex couples is a matter of great importance in societies striving for equality, respect, and the protection of all citizens' rights. In Cyprus, as in other countries, the recognition of same-sex couples' rights to adoption faces challenges and resistance. However, an inclusive policy for marriage and adoption ensures equal opportunities for every individual to form a family, regardless of sexual orientation, fostering a fairer society. In Cyprus, same-sex couples can enter into a civil partnership, which, with the amendment of the Civil Union Law of 2015 (Law 184(1)/2015), is equivalent to marriage, thus creating the same rights and obligations. However, with the phrase "...excluding the Adoption Law...", same-sex couples are barred from adoption rights, and thus from their reproductive rights. Research shows that parenting ability does not depend on the gender or sexual orientation of parents. Studies indicate that children raised in same-sex parent families show the same psychological and social well-being as children raised in heterosexual families. Additionally, the stability and love of a home, regardless of the parents' gender, are critical factors for children's healthy development.

The denial of this right perpetuates stigma, creates social divisions, and deprives people of fundamental rights. Granting adoption rights to same-sex couples can promote a more inclusive society, recognizing that family structures vary and that same-sex couples can provide love, care, and stability to children. Thus, it is essential to initiate a discussion on legislative reform. By adopting a progressive approach, Cyprus can enhance respect for diversity, promote equality, and ensure that every child has access to a safe and supportive environment. The Cyprus Youth Council and other organizations can play a significant role in shaping policies that advance everyone's rights.

Policy Positions:

- **Inclusion of Discussion on Same-Sex Marriage and Adoption:** Integrate discussions on same-sex marriage and adoption into the national strategy for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- **Legislative Regulation:**
 - Legal recognition of marriage for same-sex couples: Revise existing legislation.
 - Propose to the government the establishment of a legal framework recognizing adoption rights for same-sex couples, ensuring equal rights in comparison to heterosexual couples.
- **Awareness and Education:** The Cyprus Youth Council and youth organizations can organize seminars and awareness campaigns to promote understanding and acceptance of adoption by same-sex couples, educating the public about its benefits and addressing prejudices.
- **Support for Families and Children:** Enhance the provision of psychological and counseling support for families with same-sex parents, aiming to create a stable and supportive environment for children.
- **Collaboration with International Organizations:** Strengthen collaboration between the Cyprus Youth Council and international organizations to exchange best practices and experiences, ensuring the smooth adaptation of Cypriot society to new policy and social challenges.