



Historic Day as Government Publish Wording for Referendum on Marriage Equality

Joint Press Release by Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN), Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and Marriage Equality

Wednesday 21 January 2015

Speaking jointly today (Wednesday 21 January 2015), the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN), Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and Marriage Equality have hailed the Government's publication of wording for the referendum on marriage equality as "historic".

GLEN Chair Kieran Rose said:

"This is a historic day for Ireland and Irish people. The proposed wording would amend the Constitution to add a right for lesbian and gay couples to have a civil marriage. Today we move a step closer to full inclusion in our Constitution for lesbian and gay couples. The referendum will put the question of equality in the Constitution for lesbian and gay couples to the people, as recommended by the Constitutional Convention. **The referendum, if carried, will complete the remarkable 25-year journey to Constitutional equality for lesbian and gay people in Ireland**" said Rose.

ICCL Director Mr Mark Kelly added "We have made great progress towards equality based on the generosity and fairness of the Irish people and we are confident that we can appeal to this sense of generosity and fairness once more. The proposed wording would ensure that existing marriages and future marriages of men and women are not altered in any way. The proposed amendment would update the Constitution to say that any two people can marry, regardless of their sex. **This wording rightly emphasises that the intention is to extend marriage 'without distinction' as to the sex of the spouses, thereby removing the last roadblock to the recognition in law of the full equality and dignity of same sex couples.**"

Marriage Equality Chair Grainne Healy said "We look forward to a **positive campaign for the referendum which focuses on the value of marriage** to everyone in Irish society and explains why marriage matters to lesbian and gay couples. **Irish people rightly take constitutional change very seriously** and our job over the next four months will be to engage in a national conversation with the citizens of Ireland to understand and assuage any concerns, and to encourage people to have their voices heard on the day" she concluded.

Ends.

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