

EUFASA CONFERENCE BUDAPEST 2011

STATUS OF THE SPOUSE

Sub group: SAME SEX PARTNERS

Finland

INTRODUCTION:

At the EUFASA conference in Madrid in 2010 it was decided to form a working group on "The Status of the Spouse". In a sub-group, the status of same-sex partners was to be examined. A questionnaire on this topic was prepared and sent to all EUFASA members and associate members, of which as many as 21 associations responded. This clearly shows the increased relevance and importance of this topic in today's changing world. In addition to the association of the **EU Commission**, answers from the following countries were received: **Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.**

No responses were received from the associations of **Cyprus, Ireland and Romania.**

The objectives of the survey were to

- create more awareness of the difficulties/concerns
- find suitable/possible postings
- help to limit so-called "failed postings"
- give recommendations to Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs)

SURVEY RESULTS:

According to findings of the survey, all of the above mentioned countries, **with the exception of Estonia, Greece, Poland and Italy**, legally recognise registered partnerships or marriages of same-sex couples in one way or another.

Not surprisingly, all countries which legally recognise registered partnerships or marriages of same-sex couples also give diplomatic accreditation to same-sex partners of foreign MFA transferable officers.

To get diplomatic accreditation for cohabitant same-sex partners for MFA transferable officers whose countries do not recognise registered/married same-sex partnerships is more problematic.

There is also a lack of information on suitable postings for same-sex couples.

CONCLUSION:

As a result of this survey, EUFASA recommends that Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) should

- add the issue of same-sex partners as a standard question to their post reports.
- assist same-sex couples in finding suitable postings, especially outside the EU member countries.
- help with accreditation for non-EU partners/spouses in EU member countries, that do not legally recognise same-sex partnerships/marriages.