

**Arm yourself with the facts!**  
**This is why England and Wales needs Equal Civil Partnerships...**

There is currently a bizarre **anomaly in UK law**, in which same-sex couples can choose between having their relationship legally recognised through either civil partnership or marriage, while opposite-sex couples can only choose marriage.

- there are currently just under **3 million opposite-sex couples** living together who aren't married, with approximately **1.9 million dependent children**
- the **number of opposite-sex couples cohabiting has doubled** since 1996
- **women and their families are the most likely to suffer** as a result of not having access to the same protections as marriage, which include:
  - **no entitlement to any financial support** in the event of a relationship breaking down (beyond child maintenance)
  - **no entitlement to property** that is not in their name, even if they have lived there for decades and have contributed to the mortgage and to improving the property
  - in the event of their partner's death, they must pay **inheritance tax** - unlike married couples - which can often result in the surviving partner being forced to sell their home
  - **no entitlement to national insurance bereavement benefits or state pensions**, in the event of their partner's death, and unless they have a specific arrangement are not entitled to private pensions, unlike spouses and civil partners, who are automatically entitled to all of the above
  - **no entitlement to the tax breaks** that married couples benefit from
- **61 per cent** of respondents to a government consultation (2012) of 228,000 people said that '**civil partnerships should be made available for opposite sex couples**'<sup>12</sup>
- the current legislation **contravenes the UK's national and international equality and human rights obligations**, namely Article 14 (read with Article 8) of the European Convention on Human Rights, which states that **everyone should be treated equally by law, regardless of sex and sexual orientation**. This is enshrined in UK law through the Human Rights Act 1998
- the law as it stands is simply **a hangover from previous inequality** that was enshrined in legislation, **it is illogical** and it makes no sense - **it's time to fix it**.

---

<sup>1</sup> 'Equal Marriage: The Government's Response,' 2012, see:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/133262/consultation-response\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/133262/consultation-response_1_.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> N/B the government cite a much smaller consultation from 2014, in which there were just 10,000 respondents (compared to 220,000) where 76 per cent said they were against extending the right of civil partnerships to opposite-sex couples.

For more information, see [www.equalcivilpartnerships.org.uk](http://www.equalcivilpartnerships.org.uk).