

FRANCE

Population: 59,5 Mio

Area: 543.965 km²

Part 1: Laws concerning Homosexuality

Forbidden by law: No

Registered partnership: Yes

Comments: This partnership registration is called PACS ("Partenariat Civil de Solidarité). It is not registered at the town hall as marriages are, but at the court hall.

Yes, since 1999

Differences to heterosexual marriages: They cannot adopt or have an artificial insemination. There are also differences regarding taxes, and the right of the partner to get French citizenship, or to be allowed to live in France if the partner is a citizen of a non-European country.

Anti-discrimination law, protecting lesbians/gays (L/G) against discrimination: Yes, in accordance with the European directives

At work: Yes, the law protecting the rights at the work place against all kinds of discrimination, published in November 2001.

On the housing market: No

In other areas: No

Comments: But there is a project against homophobic speech in the media, and a project of an independent body against every kind of discrimination.

Other groups in the society protected through such a law:

The law protecting the rights at the work place against all kinds of discrimination.

Incidents that briefly describe the situation of L/G in society:

The situation has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. Positive aspects: Paris elected a gay mayor in 2001. We see gay and lesbians on TV. There are more than 500 000 persons at the March for LGBT rights at the end of June every year. The law recognises same-sex couples now. Negative aspects: Most gay and lesbian people are closeted because they are still afraid of negative reactions. There is some homophobic violence. The Universities are very reluctant to research and teach about gay and lesbian issues. Transsexuals have no rights. Gay and lesbian parenthood is not recognised. There is no publicly funded campaign against homophobia. The fundamentalist or traditionalist religious groups (Christians, Muslims and Jews) are the core of the homophobic movement in France.

Part 2: Situation in the Church(es)

Open L/G welcome to

Eucharist: No, in most churches and parishes. You may find some rare exceptions.

Comments: Most gays and lesbians do not want to go to church to avoid religious homophobia.

Do volunteer work: No.

Comments: I do not know anyone who tried but we can probably find some rare cases. If you are well known in a parish and declare to be gay or lesbian, you may have a small chance to be accepted. If they didn't know you before, you will not be accepted except in some exceptionally liberal parishes (mostly Protestant).

Work as ordained ministers: No

Comments: Gay Catholic priests are closeted. Some of them tell their bishop that they are gay but it is not accepted to be an openly gay priest or an openly lesbian nun/pastoral assistant in front of a parish. There is a group of gay priests and a group of lesbian nuns in David and Jonathan, the French LGBT network. Only two gay priests accepted to talk on TV: Jacques [REDACTED] (who died 5 years ago) and Jacques [REDACTED]. Both are or were members of David and Jonathan. There are 2 or 3 gay or lesbian pastors in the French Reformed Church but the leadership of the Reformed Church declared just recently that this should not be accepted.

Other employment in church(es): No, unless they are closeted.

Partnership blessing possible: No

Comment: Exceptions are to be found in the "Centre du Christ Libérateur" or in the MCC movement. The "Centre du Christ Libérateur" in the area of Paris used to be a member of MCC. You may find some rare Catholic priest who would accept to bless a gay/lesbian couple unofficially. Lesbian/Gay partnership blessing is not a debate in the Catholic Church. The French Protestant Church (Calvinist Reformed) decided in 2004, after a long debate in the parishes, that they will not accept to bless lesbian/gay partnerships.

Incidents/outspoken attitudes that briefly describe the situation of L/G in the churches:

Publications of the Vatican clearly describe how the Catholic Church should react to homosexuality/homosexuals. The attitude basically is negative and discriminatory. However, many priests or Catholic persons are welcoming towards gays and lesbians. The report that was recently released by the French Reformed Church, after long debate in the parishes, is very negative.

Part 3: Christian Lesbian/Gay Networks

Network name: David et Jonathan

Number of members: paying members between 500 and 600 but in fact the double

Year of foundation: 1972

Web page/contact address:

92 bis rue de picpus, F 75012 Paris

<http://davidetjonathan.free.fr/>

davidetjonathan@wanadoo.fr

Network name: Centre du Christ Libérateur

Number of members: approx. 200 members in the Paris region

Year of foundation: 1974

Web page/contact address:

5 rue Crussol, F 75011 Paris 33

Network name: MCC Provence Languedoc

Number of members: members in Montpellier, Toulouse, Lille

Year of foundation: 1999

Web page/contact address:

Fabrice [REDACTED], MCC, 3 rue andré michel, F 34000 Montpellier

<http://eglise.mcc.free.fr/QUISOM.HTM>

eglise.mcc@free.fr

Questionnaire filled in by Robert, from "David et Jonathan", Paris