



**Scotland for
Marriage**

10 **Reasons**

**why the Government
is wrong to redefine
marriage**

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Reason 1

It will undermine marriage

Evidence shows that redefining marriage actually undermines support for marriage in wider society. In Spain, after gay marriage was introduced, marriage rates across the whole population plummeted.¹ In the Netherlands too there has been a significant fall in the marriage rate since marriage was redefined.² Same-sex marriage does not promote marriage.

Reason 2

Marriage is part of our history

Marriage between a man and a woman is not a recent social invention. Everyone knows that marriage predates law, nation and church. It goes back to the dawn of time. Yes, matrimonial law may have been tweaked over the years, but the law has never fundamentally altered the essential nature of marriage: a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman. Same-sex marriage would rewrite hundreds of years of legal tradition and thousands of years of cultural heritage.

Reason 3

Equality already exists

Same-sex couples already have equality. All the legal rights of marriage are already available to same-sex couples through civil partnerships. Equality doesn't mean bland uniformity or state-imposed sameness. If the Government genuinely wants to pursue equality, why is it banning heterosexual couples from entering a civil partnership? Same-sex couples have equal rights through civil partnerships, but they don't have the right to redefine marriage for everyone else.

Reason 4

Impact on schools

Education guidance from the Scottish Government says schools should teach about the importance of marriage.³ If marriage is given a new definition, schools will be under huge pressure to teach about same-sex marriage. According to expert legal advice, any teacher who fails to endorse same-sex marriage in the classroom could be dismissed. Parents will have no legal right to withdraw their children from lessons which endorse same-sex marriage across the curriculum. Already supporters of gay marriage are recommending books for use in schools which undermine traditional marriage, and call on schools to get children to act out gay weddings.⁴ The effect on schools will be polarising and divisive.

Reason 5

Thin end of the wedge

If we redefine marriage once, what's to stop marriage being redefined yet further? If marriage is solely about love and commitment between consenting adults, what's to say we shouldn't recognise three-way relationships? It's already happened in nations that redefined marriage. In Brazil, a three-way relationship was given marriage-like recognition under civil partnership laws.⁵ A similar situation has existed in the Netherlands for several years.⁶ In Canada after marriage was redefined, a polygamist argued in court that his relationship should be recognised in law.⁷ When politicians meddle with marriage it all starts to unravel.

Reason 6

Marginalises the majority

Calling opponents "bigots" is meant to shut down debate and stop people thinking for themselves. Nick Clegg landed in hot water over a draft speech which called opponents

of redefining marriage “bigots”⁸ He later retracted the word, but there’s no doubt that many who support this radical agenda think anyone who disagrees is not worthy of respect. Cardinal Keith O’Brien was labelled “bigot of the year” by gay rights activists, Stonewall. However, support for traditional marriage has come from many respected academics, lawyers, politicians from across the political spectrum, and religious leaders. They all know that redefining marriage would have a profound impact.

Reason 7 **Many gay people don’t want it**

Just four in ten members of the gay community see same-sex marriage as a priority,⁹ with only a quarter saying they would enter a same-sex marriage.¹⁰ A number of gay celebrities and journalists are themselves opposed to gay marriage. Latest official data shows that only 0.5 per cent of UK households are headed by a same-sex couple.¹¹ Not all of them want, or will enter, a same-sex marriage. So why is such a monumental change being imposed throughout society?

Reason 8 **The public don’t want it**

Most people in Scotland want marriage to stay as it is. In the Scottish Government’s consultation on the issue 64 per cent who responded said they opposed the plans. When an honest poll is taken, a majority, 55 per cent, agree that “marriage should continue to be defined as a life-long exclusive commitment between a man and a woman”. Only 38 per cent disagree.¹² And half

of all Scots want the matter to be decided by referendum, only 39 per cent want to leave it to MSPs.¹³ Ordinary people want the Scottish Government to concentrate on reviving the economy and providing better public services, not meddling with marriage.

Reason 9 **A huge change to society**

Since we already have civil partnerships, isn’t same-sex marriage just a small logical next step? No. Rewriting the meaning of marriage will have a far-reaching impact on society. Over 3,000 UK laws make reference to marriage. The UK Government has already admitted that official documents will need to be rewritten to remove words like ‘husband’ and ‘wife’. In France the Government is eradicating the words ‘father’ and ‘mother’ from all official documents.

Reason 10 **Freedom of conscience will be eroded**

The civil liberty of people who believe in traditional marriage is already being eroded. The former leader of the SNP, Gordon Wilson, was ousted from the Dundee Citizens Advice Bureau because of his support for traditional marriage.¹⁴ South of the border, a housing manager from Manchester was demoted and lost 40 per cent of his salary for stating, outside work time, that gay weddings in churches were “an equality too far”.¹⁵ And all this has taken place before any change to the law has taken place. What will it be like if the law does change? A leading human rights lawyer has outlined the devastating impact of redefining marriage on civil liberties in Scotland.¹⁶

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References

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