Strong International Support (73%) Among Developed Nations for Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Couples: Majorities in All 16 Countries Support Recognition

Majorities Agree Same-Sex Couples Should Be Allowed to Adopt (59% Internationally, Majorities in 12 of 16 Countries)

New York — On the heels of the legalization of same-sex marriage in France, and as a prelude to the fast-approaching Supreme Court ruling on the matter in the United States, seven in ten (73%) of those in 16 countries support some form of legal recognition of same-sex couples – 52% support full marriage equality and 21% support some form of legal recognition but not marriage. The survey, conducted global research company Ipsos on behalf of Reuters News, finds that there is quite a wide range of support on the rights of same-sex couples around the world.

While just over half of Japanese adults support some form of legal recognition, that number climbs to 57% for South Korea. Sweden and Norway top the list at 91% and 90% respectively. While views on same-sex marriage seem to have changed most in the last five years in Argentina and South Korea (50% and 47% respectively) - 36% of Japanese say that their views on same-sex marriage are different than they were five years ago.

87% of South Koreans and 84% of Japanese agree that some cultures are not ready for same-sex marriage. On the subject of whether same-sex marriage is or could be harmful to society, South Koreans are much more concerned with 45% agreeing compared to only 27% of Japanese (in the US, 39% agree, just to compare). Japan and South Korea are close to global averages in agreeing that "same-sex couples should have the same rights to adopt children as heterosexual couples do" (59% and 46% respectively against global average of 59%). South Koreans, however are less sure that "same-sex couples are just as likely as other parents to successfully raise children" with only 42% agreeing, compared to 62% in Japan and 64% globally.

Over half of Japanese and South Koreans agree that same-sex couples should be able to have their marriage recognized in country if they get married in another country (53% and 51% respectively, global average 66%). A similar proportion agree that same-sex couples who are legally married in their home country should be treated as married when they travel to another country (61% and 57%, global average 73%).

Interestingly, when it comes to knowing someone who is LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) - only 5% of Japanese and 3% of South Koreans say yes with another 19% and 14% who are unsure. This compared to a global average of 46% who know someone LGBT and a high of 66% in Spain.

Those in favor of allowing same-sex marriage in Japan tend to be female, under 35 years old, middle to high income, middle to high education. In South Korea, those in favor of same-sex marriage show similar skew to females under 25 but tend to be from low income households, not married and have lower education levels.

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