COMPARATIVE TABLE

CAE Study 2024

Legal regime of unmarried couples in Europe

De facto unions, civil unions and registered partnerships, country by country

Barcelona, October 2024 5 min read Original language: Spanish

Unions between persons of the same sex with effects similar to those of marriage

	TYPE OF UNION	Date of introduction	Is proof of cohabitation required?	Couples covered	Authority competent for its formation	Personal effects	Property effects	Form of dissolution	Compensation in the event of dissolution?
ITALY	CIVIL UNION	2016	Declaration by the parties before the civil registrar.	Exclusively for same-sex couples.	Civil registrar.	Same effects as marriage (including the rules on immigration), except for the duty of fidelity and joint adoption.	Statutory regime of community of property. Possibility of agreeing contractual regimes by notarial deed or by declaration before the civil registrar. Succession and tax effects.	By joint declaration before the court in the event of disagreement.	Yes, on the same terms as marriage.

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CZECH REPUBLIC	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2006	Declaration by the parties.	Exclusively for same-sex couples.	Civil registrar.	Produces no effects as regards filiation. There is a reciprocal duty of assistance. Allows a residence permit to be obtained.	Powers of joint administration of property. Succession effects (the partner is a legal heir). Tax benefits. Same property regime as for spouses (community of property).	By court decision, at the request of one or both partners.	Where applicable, right to maintenance.
CROATIA	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2014	Simple declaration, made in the presence of two witnesses.	Exclusively for same-sex couples.	Before the civil registrar, in the presence of two witnesses.	Same effects as marriage, including those relating to filiation and immigration.	Same property effects as marriage, including succession and tax effects. Same property regime.	By court decision, at the request of one or both partners.	Yes, on the same terms as marriage.
MONTENEGRO	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2020	No. The declaration by the parties is sufficient.	Exclusively for same-sex couples.	Before the civil registrar.	Produces personal effects, including those relating to filiation and to obtaining a residence permit.	Effects similar to those of marriage: succession rights, same property regime and other legal consequences.	By mutual agreement or by court decision in the event of a dispute.	Yes, on the same terms as marriage.
AUSTRIA	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2010	Simple declaration by the parties.	For same-sex couples since 2019.	Before the civil registrar.	Effects similar to those of marriage.	Same property regime as marriage. Succession effects (the partner is a legal heir). Tax benefits.	Exclusively by court decision.	Yes, on the same terms as marriage.
HUNGARY	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP before the civil registrar / before a notary	2009	No. The declaration by the parties is sufficient.	Before the civil registry: same-sex couples only. Before a notary: open to all couples.	Civil registrar or notary, depending on the form.	Partnerships formed before the civil registry produce effects similar to those of marriage.	Those formed before the civil registry have effects similar to those of marriage: same property regime, succession effects, etc. The same is not true of those formed before a notary.	Before the civil registry: before a notary if there is agreement; before the court in the event of conflict. Before a notary: by notarial act.	Yes.

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SWITZERLAND	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2007 Repealed by the Act of 1 July 2022, which opened marriage to same-sex couples.	Declaration by the parties.	Exclusively for same-sex couples.	Before the civil registrar of the parties' place of residence.	Effects as regards filiation (adoption and medically assisted reproduction) and obtaining a residence permit.	Separation of property, unless otherwise agreed. Succession and tax effects.	Court proceedings.	Yes. One partner may claim maintenance from the other.

Unions open to all couples with effects similar to those of marriage

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UNITED KINGDOM	CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	2004 Open to heterosexual couples since 2019.	Presence of two witnesses at the time of the declaration.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples since 2019.	Before the civil registrar, in the presence of two witnesses.	Same effects as marriage.	Same effects as marriage.	By court decision.	Yes, in accordance with the applicable regime.
SPAIN (regime of the Autonomous Communities)	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	1998 in Catalonia, the first Autonomous Community to introduce it.	Yes. Cohabitation may be proved by any means of evidence, for example by a sworn statement.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Before a notary or before the competent authority, at the parties' choice. In Catalonia a notarial deed is required.	Effects similar to those of marriage, including filiation (adoption, assisted reproduction, etc.) and residence permit.	Effects similar to those of marriage: succession, tax, joint and several liability for debts, etc. There is no statutory property regime; a contractual one may be agreed.	By unilateral or joint declaration entered in the Register of De Facto Couples, or by marriage.	Only if agreed beforehand. Possibility of maintenance.
GREECE	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2008 Reform of 2015.	No.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples since 2015.	Exclusively before a notary.	Effects similar to those of marriage, except adoption by same-sex couples.	Effects similar to those of marriage. The surviving partner is an heir of the deceased.	By unilateral or joint declaration recorded in a notarial deed.	Yes.

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ANDORRA	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2005	Simple declaration by the parties.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Civil registrar.	Effects similar to those of marriage, including filiation and immigration (residence permit).	Effects similar to those of marriage: succession rights, tax benefits, etc. Same property regime as marriage.	By entry of the dissolution in the civil registry.	Yes.
MALTA	CIVIL UNION	2014	Simple declaration by the parties.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Civil registrar.	Effects similar to those of marriage, including filiation and immigration (residence permit).	Effects similar to those of marriage: succession rights, tax benefits, etc. Same property regime as marriage.	In accordance with the regime laid down for marriage.	Yes, on the same terms as marriage.
SLOVENIA	COHABITATION	2016	No.	Open to all couples.	At the parties' choice, before a notary or another competent authority.	Same effects as marriage.	Same effects as marriage.	There is no specific procedure for the dissolution of the cohabitation.	Yes.

Unions whose legal regime differs from that of marriage

	TYPE OF UNION	Date of introduction	Is proof of cohabitation required?	Couples covered	Authority competent for its formation	Personal effects	Property effects	Form of dissolution	Compensation in the event of dissolution?
FRANCE	PACS (CIVIL SOLIDARITY PACT)	1999 Reform of 2006.	No. Declaration by the parties.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Before the civil registrar of the municipality or before a notary.	There is no duty of fidelity and no possibility of joint adoption, which is reserved for marriage.	In principle, separation of property, with the option of community. No succession effects, except a right over the home, and tax effects equal to those of marriage. There is a primary regime: joint and several liability and contribution to household expenses.	By unilateral or joint declaration.	No.

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LATVIA	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2024	Yes.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Exclusively before a notary.	Effects as regards social security (pensions). No effects on filiation or on obtaining a residence permit.	No co-ownership or community of property. No succession effects. Tax effects similar to those of marriage.	By court decision or by mutual agreement recorded in a notarial deed.	No.
BELGIUM	LEGAL COHABITATION	-	Simple declaration.	Open to same-sex and different-sex couples.	Declaration before the civil registrar. The parties may regulate their property regime by contract before a notary.	Produces no personal effects comparable to those of marriage.	Separation of property. Special protection of the family home. No succession effects, except the usufruct of the shared home.	By unilateral or joint declaration before the civil registrar.	No.
ALBANIA	REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP	2009	Yes. Cohabitation must be proved.	Opening to same-sex couples is not indicated.	Before a notary.	No effects on filiation or on obtaining a residence permit.	No property, succession or tax effects.	No answer was provided.	No answer was provided.

Countries without legislation on registered partnerships: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine. Germany abolished the registered partnership regime in 2017, when it opened marriage to same-sex and different-sex couples.

Switzerland: since the entry into force of the Act of 1 July 2022, which opened marriage to all couples, it is no longer possible to form new registered partnerships.