

**Over Half of People in Hong Kong Now Support Same-Sex Marriage
Over Half Also Support Immigration Rights at Issue in Tomorrow's *QT* Court Decision**

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A new report issued by the Centre for Comparative and Public Law shows that Hong Kong public opinion on same-sex couples' rights has changed significantly in recent years. In 2013, only a minority of Hong Kong people said that same-sex couples should be permitted to marry (38%). By 2017, however, over half of people expressed agreement with same-sex marriage (50.4%). In 2017, 78% of Hong Kong people said that same-sex couples should have at least some of the rights enjoyed by different-sex couples, compared with 73% in 2013. In addition, 69% of people in 2017 said that Hong Kong should have a law to protect against sexual orientation discrimination, compared with 58% in 2013.

The report is based on the first study ever to track changes in Hong Kong public opinion concerning legal protections for gay men and lesbians. The research was led by Holning Lau from the University of North Carolina, Charles Lau from RTI International, Kelley Loper from the University of Hong Kong, and Yiu-tung Suen from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The team conducted a telephone survey of a representative sample of Hong Kong residents in 2013, and then repeated the survey in 2017.

"Our study shows that support for the rights of same-sex couples has grown markedly over a short period," said Professor Suen. "A few years' time has made a significant difference."

"Our study also illuminates a discrepancy between law and public opinion," noted Professor Loper. "While 69% of Hong Kong people said they favor having a law to protect against sexual orientation discrimination, the government of Hong Kong has yet to enact such legislation."

In addition to repeating the survey questions from 2013 in 2017, the research team added a new question about immigration rights. They found that 53% of Hong Kong people said they agree that Hong Kong residents in same-sex partnerships should be permitted to apply for immigration visas for their partners; 18% were neutral and 29% disagreed.

The Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal is expected to hand down a decision tomorrow in *QT v. Director of Immigration*, a case concerning a lesbian seeking a visa for her same-sex partner. "Our research suggests that the majority of Hong Kong people support the same-sex couple in the *QT* case," said Professor Lau.

The Chinese and English versions of the report are available at: <http://www.law.hku.hk/ccpl/>.

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