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# **CHILE's first gay couple weds as same sex marriage law takes effect**

By Fabian Cambero

Reuters (11.03.2022) - <https://reut.rs/3tPgFdy> - Chile's Javier Silva and Jaime Nazar became the first two men to tie the knot in the South American country's history on Thursday after a law allowing same-sex marriage went into effect.

In December, Congress approved legislation guaranteeing legal rights for same-sex couples in a milestone for the conservative nation after a decade-long battle by LGBTQ communities and rights groups. [read more](#)

"Being the first couple to get married in Chile for us is an honor, something to be proud of," Silva told reporters after the civil ceremony. "We did it! It's something we didn't think could happen."

Silva and Nazar have been together for seven years and have two young children. They have had a civil union for the last three years, but marriage is a significant step forward for their whole family.

"Now our children have the same rights (as other families) and they will be able to have, we hope, a better future, that they will not be discriminated against for having two parents who love each other," Silva added.

Despite its long conservative tradition, Chile has been making progress in recent years in recognizing LGBTQ rights.

"My congratulations to Jaime and Javier for being the first couple to marry under the new #EqualMarriage law. To continue advancing for a Chile with equal rights and freedoms for all people," President-elect Gabriel Boric, who takes office on Friday, said on Twitter.

Same-sex marriage legislation was first discussed in 2017 and pushed by former President Michelle Bachelet, but was delayed until last year.

Before that, starting in 2015, same-sex couples were able register a Civil Union Agreement (AUC), which allowed some legal benefits.

"I think we're putting ourselves at the level the rest of the world is living in, which is great," Nazar said. "I know our society is very conservative, but I also know we have a promising future as a country."

## **GUATEMALA Congress bans same-sex marriage**

***Guatemala's Congress has voted in favour of a law which prohibits same-sex marriage.***

BBC News (10.03.2022) - <https://bbc.in/3KUyl3> - The law will also prohibit the teaching of sexual diversity in schools and raise the prison sentences for women seeking abortion. Abortion is banned in Guatemala except in cases where the woman's life is at risk.

In order to come into force, the law still needs to be signed by Guatemala's president, Alejandro Giammattei.

The "Life and Family Protection Law" was passed by an overwhelming majority in the conservative-led Congress. Only eight lawmakers out of 160 voted against it.

It is not yet clear, whether Mr Giammattei, a conservative, will sign it but many members of his party gave their backing to it.

Under the law, women who "have induced their own abortion or given their consent to another person to carry it out" will face a minimum of five years in jail, but the sentences could be much higher.

If signed by the president, it will reform Guatemala's Civil Code to "expressly prohibit same-sex marriages".

The law also stipulates that schools be banned from teaching pupils that "anything other than heterosexuality is normal".

One of the lawmakers who supported the bill, Patricia Sandoval, said that "under the concept of family we understand the union between a man and a woman".

Guatemala's human rights ombudsman, Jordán Rodas, called it a violation of rights and a "setback to freedom" and vowed to challenge it.

Opposition lawmaker Lucrecia Hernández urged President Giammattei to veto the law, arguing that it was unconstitutional.

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