XAVIER BETTEL

b. March 3, 1973

PRIME MINISTER OF LUXEMBOURG

"I didn't get up one morning and say, 'Hey, I'm gay.' It's not a choice."

> **Xavier Bettel is the prime minister of Luxembourg and the country's first openly gay leader.**

Xavier Bettel is the prime minister of Luxembourg. A member of the Democratic Party, he became the country's first openly gay leader in December 2013 and one of only three openly gay world leaders. Previously, Bettel served as mayor of Luxembourg city and also as a member of the city's chamber and council.

Bettel has described Luxembourg as a place where "people do not consider the fact of whether someone is gay or not." The tiny European country—one of the smallest in the word with just over half a million people—is a leading financial and banking center, second only to the United States in investment funds.

As prime minister, Bettel has advocated for teaching ethics instead of religion in public schools. He is credited with reinvigorating the political scene with progressive reforms and was instrumental in passing same-sex marriage laws in the predominately Roman Catholic country. He has been vocal on social media about LGBT rights.

Under Bettel's leadership, Luxembourg legalized same-sex marriage in 2014. One year later, after the marriage reforms went into effect, Bettel married his partner, the architect Gauthier Destenay. Bettel is the first openly gay European Union leader and only the second gay leader in the world to marry. The couple have been civil partners since 2010. "I wish for everyone to be as happy as I am," Bettel told a crowd gathered on his wedding day.

Born in Luxembourg city, Bettel graduated from the University of Nancy where he received a masters degree in public and European law, followed by a post-graduate diploma in advanced studies of political science and public law. He hosted a weekly television talk show early in his career.

Bettel came out publicly in 2008.

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