Italy proposes new law further restricting healthcare access and privacy for trans youth

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On August 11, 2025, a bill titled 'Provisions for Prescriptive Appropriateness and Proper Use of Gender Dysphoria Medications' (translation from the original 'Disposizioni per l'appropriatezza prescrittiva e il corretto utilizzo dei farmaci per la disforia di genere') was introduced in the Italian Parliament by the Minister of Health and Minister for the Family.

The bill proposes to redesign access to trans-specific healthcare for trans people under the age of 18 through three mechanisms to regulate the pathway to trans-specific healthcare:

1. Mandatory assessment by a multidisciplinary team, including psychiatric diagnosis, and subject to clinical protocols to be approved by the Ministry of Health.
2. Approval from the National Ethics Committee for every prescription until the adoption of official protocols, overriding the professional opinion of doctors and patient autonomy in the clinical relationship.
3. Creation of a national 'drug administration' register by the Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA) for the prescription and dispensation of medications. This will take place through the hospital pharmacy, which will record information regarding the reasons for the prescription of medication, including the documented outcomes of previous psychological and psychiatric assessments, comorbidities, and follow-up. The draft law mandates that this list must be transmitted to the Ministry of Health every six months, which will in turn present a report to the Parliament every three years.

The bill states that the provisions are based on recommendations issued by a Committee of Experts appointed last year to provide guidelines on the issue of trans-specific healthcare for minors in Italy. However, a request to access these records made by one of the members of the Italian Parliament's Commissione Affari Sociali (Committee of Social Affairs) revealed that there are no written records regarding the Committee's results.

TGEU – Trans Europe and Central Asia jointly with Italia Trans Agenda (the Italian trans organisations' network) express our serious concern about this draft law and call on the Italian government to withdraw this bill.

Concerns about the proposed law

The draft law seeks to displace both the informed clinical and professional opinion of doctors and patient autonomy by placing the ultimate approval for the prescription of medication with the ethics committee. This constitutes an erasure of medical expertise – the draft law undermines the trust between trans people and healthcare systems, and will have the effect of undermining patient-centred care, putting the lives of young trans people in Italy at risk. The law enables a situation where the considered clinical opinions of doctors can be ignored, leaving families seeking support for their children in uncertainty. At the same time, healthcare providers in Italy – who already operate in extremely challenging circumstances – will find themselves unable to offer the care they know to be best for their patients. It is imperative that any law or policy on the health of young trans people is developed in consultation with expert voices, including paediatric endocrinologists, psychologists, and trans health specialists, trans young people themselves and their families.

Further, the draft law's proposal to create a registry to record all information regarding dispensation of medication

along with clinical and medical history clearly risks violating the rights of trans people under 18 years guaranteed under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as well as ethical principles on patient confidentiality. Trans people, like all other patients, have the right for their medical information to remain private and confidential. Article 9, para 1 of the GDPR explicitly prohibits the processing of personal data concerning health. Further, in *Z v. Finland* , the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) reiterated that "the protection of personal data, not least medical data, is of fundamental importance to a person's enjoyment of the right to respect for his or her private life as guaranteed by Article 8 of the Convention. Respecting the confidentiality of health data is a vital principle in the legal systems of all the Contracting Parties to the Convention. It is crucial not only to respect the sense of privacy of a patient but also to preserve confidence in the medical profession and in the health services in general." The requirement to transmit personal medical information from hospital pharmacies to a registry maintained by AIFA is a clear violation of this prohibition and constitutes discriminatory, unreasonable and disproportionate surveillance. Trans people under the age of 18 years have been singled out for the purposes of the registry, without stating any clear purpose for the maintenance of such a registry

Background

Following the investigation into the Careggi hospital initiated in 2024, the condition of care for young trans people in Italy has worsened. Prior to the investigation, six hospitals in Italy officially offered trans-specific healthcare to minors. Out of these, Careggi was the only centre to provide treatment when needed, including puberty blockers. The other centres delayed treatment and focused only on psychological support.

After the investigation – and based on new advice from the National Bioethics Committee in December 2024 recommending further studies before prescription of medication and subjecting young trans people to clinical and psychiatric evaluations – the healthcare accessible through the Careggi hospital is very limited. New prescriptions for puberty blockers are, in actual fact, suspended. While old prescriptions are being renewed, periodic checks with a paediatric psychiatrist are now mandatory. The situation in the other centres remain unchanged: healthcare is delayed as much as possible until the young trans person is almost 18 and can access hormone therapy.

Continued erosion of the rights of trans people in Italy

The Italian government has long advanced the narrative that medical interventions to support trans people under the age of 18, such as puberty blockers, are dangerous, against which they must be protected. The draft law is a continuation of the series of steps taken by the Italian government to restrict the rights of trans people under the age of 18. In particular, this draft law follows the investigation into the Careggi hospital, which was the only centre in Italy that provided healthcare for young trans people. Since the investigation initiated in 2024 and an opinion of the National Bioethics Committee in December 2024 recommending further studies before prescription of medication and recommending subjecting young trans people to clinical and psychiatric evaluations, no form of trans-specific healthcare is accessible through the Careggi hospital, including puberty blockers. In practice, this means that the use of puberty blockers is effectively suspended. This measure has already created practical problems, as blockers are now provided only to those who already had a therapeutic plan in place. Consequently, young people who are just entering pubertal stage 2, or those who have completed treatment with blockers and wish to move on to hormones are left without options.

These developments are in stark contrast to current scientific and expert medical guidelines and standards. The latest clinical guidelines released by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health SOC-8 and the recent AWMF guidelines for practitioners in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland which clearly state that clinical and medical interventions can be hugely beneficial for young trans people. Further, regulations in several EU Member States (e.g. Belgium, Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands) permit the provision of puberty blockers and hormones to young trans people without violating their right to privacy and data protection laws.

Call to action

Trans children and young people deserve safety, understanding, and access to the same standard of care afforded to their peers. Decisions about their healthcare should be guided by medical evidence and the expertise of trained professionals. The bill is now before the Commissione Affari Sociali (Committee of Social Affairs) for consideration.

We urge the Italian government to withdraw this harmful bill and engage meaningfully with both the medical and scientific community and civil society groups representing the interests of young trans people and their families to ensure the best possible healthcare for young trans people.

We also urge lawmakers in Italy and the Committee of Social Affairs (Commissione Affari Sociali) to thoroughly review this bill and consult extensively with medical experts, researchers, and civil society organisations representing young trans people and their families in evaluating the bill. We urge the Committee to address the concerns with the bill in the Committee, and recommend that the bill be rejected or withdrawn.

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