Malta Depathologises Trans Identities

article, health and depathologisation

Bills approved tonight ban conversion therapy and the pathologisation of trans identities

Transgender Europe (TGEU) welcomes the adoption of two new acts in Malta this evening which protect LGBTI people in the country, particularly by **depathologising trans identities**[1] and **banning conversions therapies**.[2]

With the adoption of these bills Malta continues to be at the forefront of trans rights in Europe. After passing the Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics (GIGESC) act in April 2015 and since then also introducing policies on trans inclusion in education and prison facilities. The amendments to the GIGESC act passed tonight also specifically address the needs of young trans people[3] and trans people detained in gender-specific facilities.[4]

Richard Köhler, Senior Policy Officer at TGEU commented “Malta is again showing leadership in safeguarding the identities of LGBTI people. Depathologisation and conversion therapy bans are vital. **We call on the Maltese government to ensure that this symbolic gesture also translates into quality healthcare for trans people based on self determination and informed consent**.”

Mina Tolu, Communications Officer at TGEU said “This is not just about laws. And the trans community in Malta is making it clear that the next step should be access to adequate, affordable and high-quality healthcare for trans people in the country. Currently trans-specific healthcare is not available on national health, and this can negatively affect a trans person’s wellbeing.”

The bills approved tonight are called the Act to Amend the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (GIGESC) Act and the Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression (SOGIGE) Act.

Timeline of Malta's protection of trans rights

April 2015: Malta Adopts Ground-breaking Trans and Intersex Law – TGEU Press Release

June 2015: Malta Launches Education Policy for Trans, Gender Variant, and Intersex Children

August 2016: Malta Prison Policy http://tgeu.org/malta-prison-policy-august-2016/

Footnotes

Toggle Accordion

1. Depathologisation of trans identities occurs under Bill no. 170: An Act to amend the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act, Cap. 540.
   "the pathologisation of any form of sexual orientation, gender identity and, or gender expression as may be classified under the International Classification of Diseases or any other similar internationally recognised classification, shall be **null and void** in Malta." ??
2. Bill no. 167: The Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression Act.
   "provides for a **ban on conversion practices** offered and, or performed by both professionals and individuals against variations of sexual orientation, gender identity and, or gender expression, particularly on vulnerable persons. **This Bill also prohibits the pathologisation of any sexual orientation, gender identity and, or gender expression."** ??
3. The GIGESC act now allows for young people from the age of 16 to change their documents by making use of a notarial deed. This was previously set to 18. ??
4. The GIGESC act aims to "ensure that the dignity and human rights of persons in detention facilities in Malta are safeguarded and protected by law." ??