Only 10 Years Later … First Official Trans Rights Conference in Vilnius

Only 10 years later… One decade ago, in 2007, the European Court for Human Rights ruled that Lithuania had to introduce proper legal gender recognition procedures. Today, the first official conference on the subject was held at the Lithuanian Parliament in Vilnius, organised jointly by the Ombuds office, the Human Rights Commitee and the Council of Europe.

T., a young trans man from Vilnius shared with representatives of ministries, courts, the ombudsoffice and civil society his experiences navigating Lithuanian society as a trans person: From being humiliated and being accused of fraud for not having a student discount bus card with a male name on, psychological abuse at the public hospital, to the fear at the court hearing to have his documents adapted. For many participants it was their first encounter with a trans person.



T., a young trans man from Vilnius addressing the first official conference on transgender rights

Only last month, Lithuanian courts started to grant permission to obtain legal gender recognition without requiring sterility and surgical intervention.

TGEU has been working with its member organisation LGL over the last four years to improve the situation for trans people in Lithuania. Richard Köhler, TGEU senior policy officer, participated in the conference as an expert for the Council of Europe. He shared best practices from other European countries and discussed common myths around legal gender recognition.

“Implementing the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights is not only important for trans people in Lithuania. Trans people in Lithuania would be recognised as full-fledged members of society. It would also send an important signal to other European countries: Europe works! Judgements of the European Court of Human Rights set the legal principle and states have to follow that. Human rights do not tolerate complacement.” comments Richard Köhler.



Human Rights Monitoring Institute, Lithuanian Equal Opportunities Ombudsoffice, Transgender Europe, Council of Europe

Until today, the judgement in *L v Lithuania* from 2007 has not been implemented for a clear lack of political will. At the conference the establishment of an interdisciplinary workin group has been announced that shall develop a

proposal on how to reform legal gender recognition procedures. Slowly slowly the tide is changing in Lithuania.

Press Release from the Lithuanian Equal Opportunities Ombudsoffice (Lithuanian only)