Spain Moves One Step Closer to Self-determination for Trans People

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This week, the Spanish government has approved a legal gender recognition bill based on self-determination, which now starts its legislative process. After months of strong opposition within the Government, the Ministry of Equality has managed to move the bill forward.

If approved without changes, the law will guarantee that trans people over the age of 16 are able to change their registered gender; it will be enough to fill out a form. A psychiatric diagnosis and proof of medical treatment will no longer be required. Youth aged 14-16 must have parental approval and all applicants will need to confirm their decision three months later. People under 14 years old, migrants, and non-binary individuals will not be able to access legal gender recognition.

TGEU applauds the government for moving the bill forward but warns against political games. Policy makers need to stay vigilant now and fully committed so that the bill can finally become law.

Richard Köhler, TGEU Senior Policy Officer, comments:

> "*We call on policy makers to give this law its full support. Identity documents reflecting one's gender identity are key to education, job, and social participation. The law signals that hate won't win, and that each individual is cherished and respected for who they are.*"

Trans people's right to self-determination has recently become a heated battle in Spain. High-level political figures have falsely claimed that trans people pose a threat to society, as well as to women and children's rights. Another self-determination bill was blocked in May, after PSOE, a government party, abstained in the vote. Now, an unexpected agreement has been made, which Spanish activists find insufficient.

Köhler adds:

> *We hope the Spanish government will make this law one that all trans people deserve. For that, the 3-month waiting period should be removed. People need documents for jobs, schools, or when traveling, and cannot be expected to put their lives on hold for a quarter of a year to fulfil a random and unnecessary requirement. Restrictions for youth, migrants, and non-binary people are unjustifiable and must be lifted.*

TGEU sends a message of solidarity to all trans people and allies who have been and continue to be relentlessly working to make this law a reality.

Further information

Find out more about trans rights in Spain in TGEU's Trans Rights Map Europe & Central Asia 2021.