

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION IMPACTS

BASED ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S
"LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION IN THE EU"
REPORT (2020)

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FACTSHEET



THIS FACTSHEET WAS PREPARED BY TGEU WITH EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER 9 OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S "LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION IN THE EU: THE JOURNEYS OF TRANS PEOPLE TOWARDS FULL EQUALITY" REPORT (2020).

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

IS THE PROCESS(ES) BY WHICH INDIVIDUALS REQUEST THEIR FIRST NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER TO BE CHANGED IN THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS SO THAT OFFICIAL REGISTERS AND THEIR DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING IDENTITY DOCUMENTS AND BIRTH OR CIVIL STATUS CERTIFICATES, MATCH THEIR GENDER IDENTITY. IN SHORT, WE REFER TO LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION AS LGR.

POSITIVE IMPACTS OF LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

TRANS PEOPLE WHO HAVE OBTAINED LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION SHARED...

...they felt relief, **happiness** and felt **validated**

"When I changed my name... I couldn't get over the fact that having a piece of paper with the right gender in my hand was just like, so elevating! I look at it each day when I come home."

Transgender person, age unknown, living in Ireland (cluster 5)

...they felt greater **ease** and **reduced stress** in day-to-day life (traveling, going to the bank, etc.)

"I do not have to justify myself or get anxious in the moments of my daily life where it is necessary to prove my identity."

Trans man, aged 18-24, residing in France (cluster 4)

...they felt **empowered**, had more **self-confidence** and **self-esteem**
...they had **reduced symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, psychological distress, dysphoria**
...they felt **safer**
...they were finally able to **access the job market** and improve their financial situation

"From the moment of this change, I started to live better. For me, everything changed."

Trans woman (aged 45-54) living in France (cluster 4)

... they felt better able or safer to access higher **education** and focus on school

... they could access **healthcare** services, goods and services, insurance, housing, marriage or civil partnership, or parental custody
... they felt more **accepted** in daily life, amongst **family members, friends**, and in wider **society**. LGR helped with

...friends and relatives understanding and accepting their identity, and using the correct name

...family not misgendering them

...feeling free to be themselves

...feeling that they 'fit' in their family

...not hiding their identity at home

...gaining friends or strengthening existing friendships.

"LGR helped with my family. It was "the click" for [them]. They live in the countryside; the mentality is not the same as in big cities. The fact that there is an official recognition from the state helps with family, social and professional inclusion."

Trans woman, aged 55-64, residing in France (cluster 4)

"Being officially recognised as my true gender allows me to meet potential employers in my comfortable gender expression without my original birth name "outing" me, bringing a whole host of issues with it."

Trans woman, aged 25-34, residing in Hungary (cluster 3)

OVER 80% OF RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED WANTING TO ACCESS LGR IN FUTURE FELT THAT LGR WOULD HAVE BENEFICIAL IMPACTS ON THEIR WELL-BEING.

"I would feel more valid and accepted by society. Right now, we non-binary people are really invisible and it is easy for ignorant people to say that we do not even exist. Legal recognition would help a lot."

Non-binary person, aged 35-44, residing in Finland (cluster 2)

"I feel like I'm "grounded" and am sitting at home and just waiting to be able to go outside. That's kind of what it feels like without my gender marker being changed to male. I'm waiting to live my life in the way I want to. Gym memberships, every part of my life I'll feel free. I don't have to hide or cover my gender marker with my fingers when I show someone my ID because they don't believe that I'm 23."

Trans man, aged 18-24, residing in Croatia (cluster 3)

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

TRANS PEOPLE WHO HAVE OBTAINED LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION SHARED

...the design of LGR procedures caused them **psychological distress** - it was burdensome, stressful, and frustrating
 ...they had **difficulties** changing their gender on **important documents** after LGR, such as diplomas, bank accounts, marriage or partnership certificates, or their children's birth certificates

ONE IN FOUR PEOPLE SAID CHANGING DIPLOMAS WAS FAIRLY OR VERY DIFFICULT.

...they were struggling to **cover the costs** of LGR or related medical or legal fees, and some went into debt or used up their savings

...they could not focus on their **studies** while their LGR process was ongoing

...they could not access their **bank accounts** or apply for **credit**

...they could not access **healthcare** benefits

...they **lost their home** due to breakup, divorce, or discrimination by landlords.

"THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION WILL FOSTER BEST PRACTICE EXCHANGES BETWEEN MEMBER STATES ON HOW TO PUT IN PLACE ACCESSIBLE LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION LEGISLATION AND PROCEDURES BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND WITHOUT AGE RESTRICTIONS."

EU LGBTIQ STRATEGY (2020-2025)

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF NO LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

Trans people who had not gone through LGR explained:

"The identity card is a very painful reminder of how emotionally draining and difficult my life is as a transgender person in Poland."

Participant in the Polish focus group

"If I do not undertake the LGR, I can't change my name. This means that I [would have] to teach with a female name and I will be bullied, like when I was 12."

Transgender person, age unknown, residing in Italy (cluster 2)

Some shared that in lack of undergoing or being able to undergo LGR...

...it was **very difficult** to find a job and they had to resort to working in precarious sectors

...they **gave up** on pursuing their career

...they **failed** background checks

...they **could not access** employment agencies

Workarounds:

some people changed their ID picture or their name on job application even though they have not (been able to) undergo LGR yet.

