

Transgender Europe (TGEU) Media Statement

Council of Europe Adopts Historic Transgender Resolution

April 22, 2015

Today, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted with an overwhelming majority a comprehensive resolution on trans persons' human rights. The Assembly calls upon Member States to respect, protect and fulfil trans persons' right not to be discriminated against and to facilitate quick, transparent and accessible legal gender recognition based on self-determination. In an at times emotional debate, the parliamentarians urged member states to take pro-active measures for advancing the living conditions of trans people and to raise awareness.

In a nutshell, the resolution calls upon member states to:

- Adopt explicitly trans-inclusive anti-discrimination and hate crime legislation and measures,
- Adopt quick, transparent and accessible legal gender recognition procedures, based on self-determination, without further limitations based on a person's characteristic (such as age),
- Abolish sterilization and other medical requirements such as a mental health diagnosis or a divorce requirement in legal gender recognition,
- Ensure that the best interest of the child in cases concerning children is always given primary consideration,
- Consider including a third gender option in identity documents for those who seek it,
- Make trans-specific health care accessible and ensure that trans people (incl. children) are not labelled as mentally ill in national or international classifications,
- Be pro-active as concerns information, awareness raising and training, particularly for professional groups.

Since 2013, the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination heard the perspectives of trans people several times. Transgender Europe closely followed the process throughout and is grateful for having been able to contribute to the work of the committee. Yesterday, in powerful testimonies, activists from Ukraine, Turkey, France, Lithuania and Ireland informed delegates about the living realities of trans people. They urged the parliamentarians to support the resolution as a vital step to improve the living situation of trans people across the continent.

The initial interventions of Maltese Minister for Civil Liberties Helena Dalli and Rapporteur Deborah Schembri's were followed by a well-informed and warm debate at the Assembly.

"We are thrilled about this comprehensive set of recommendations as it sends a clear message to trans people that they are born equal in rights. The Resolution is the most important and wide-ranging statement of support for the rights of transgender persons ever made at European level." Explains Richard Köhler, TGEU Senior Policy Officer.

“It is a historic moment for trans people. Parliamentarians across political parties have confirmed their strong support for trans people’s human rights. We warmly thank Deborah Schembri for her excellent work raising awareness on the issues trans people are facing. Now, it is upon member states to make this benchmark resolution a lived reality. “ comments Alecs Recher, TGEU co-chair.

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The **draft resolution** and report can be found at [this link](#).

Transgender Europe is a European human rights NGO working for the human rights and equality of all trans people. More Information: www.tgeu.org

Transgender or **Trans** is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity or expression differs from the sex assigned to them at birth.

PACE - Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is made up of delegates from 47 European national parliaments.

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