

President of the Republic of Poland
Andre Duda

Brussels, 21 September 2015

Subject: Call on your Excellency to sign the Gender Accordance Act into law

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of ILGA-Europe, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association. ILGA-Europe is an international non-governmental umbrella organisation bringing together 422 organisations from 45 European countries.

In 2015, Ireland and Malta have made important steps in protecting the fundamental rights of transgender people by improving their gender recognition procedures. The Parliament of Poland last week followed-suit and with the Gender Accordance Act for the first time started to put in place legal gender recognition legislation. ILGA-Europe calls on you to follow the path of Ireland and Malta and to sign the Gender Accordance Act into law.

The new Act will enable transgender citizens to enjoy their basic rights and freedoms.

This act will provide for a simple procedure for gender recognition before a judge and will no longer force applicants who seek to rectify their registered gender to sue their parents. The current procedure in Poland violates the right to privacy and protection of family life, both of the applicant and other family members.

In addition, this legislation does do away with current requirements of medical interventions, which means that for the first time in Poland, the right to bodily autonomy of transgender persons will be fully respected.

Through the Act, transgender persons will be able to receive a new birth certificate reflecting their legal gender and schools, universities, and employers will have to issue new documentation with the applicant's new name, surname and gender marker. This will overcome some of the obstacles transgender persons face in education and when seeking to access the labour market and will thus also benefit the Polish economy.

The Gender Accordance Act will ensure that transgender people's fundamental rights are respected and protected. It will not, as some might claim, create any privileges and will not impact anyone negatively.

I therefore call upon you to sign the Gender Accordance Act into law, and remain at your disposal should you need any further information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. P. P.' with a stylized flourish at the end.