

Landmark Law in Malta on Gender Identity, Expression and Protections for Intersex Children

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Contact: Suzanne Trimel, strimel@iglhrc.org, +1-212-430-6018, @strimel

(New York)—The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) celebrates the unanimous passage of the “Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act, 2015” by the Parliament of Malta today. The new law enshrines the right to gender identity recognition and introduces anti-discrimination measures, allowing Maltese citizens to self-determine their gender identity and legally change their first name and gender marker without requiring any medical diagnosis or treatment.

The law also mandates a right to “bodily autonomy and physical integrity”—among the first of its kind—which provides children, especially intersex children and infants, protection from any “sex assignment” or “surgical intervention on the sex characteristics” until the person to be treated can provide informed consent. Notable is the law’s inclusion of refugees, instituting a process for individuals to file their application for asylum with their self-determined gender and first name.

“Malta’s new law is really the cutting-edge of human-rights legislation in the fight to fully recognize the rights of trans, intersex and gender non-conforming individuals,” said Jessica Stern, executive director of IGLHRC. “Crucially, Malta’s new law protects intersex infants from unnecessary surgeries to ‘normalize’ their bodies. I congratulate members of the parliament and civil society for their years of hard work to develop and pass this landmark legislation.”

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Download the full-text of the law: [Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act, 2015](#)