A step forward, but not far enough: TGEU demands full self-determination in Czechia

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TGEU celebrates the progress made by the Czech Ministry of Health in issuing new guidelines on legal gender recognition that finally remove the requirement for forced sterilisation. We congratulate the trans community in the Czech Republic and the tireless activists who have fought for this victory against this barbaric practice.

Progress, but far from enough

This development represents a significant step in the right direction. However, it is neither sufficient in content nor in form. The new guidelines still fall short of providing the comprehensive legal protection that trans people need and deserve in the 21st century.

As President of Trans*Parent, Viktor Heumann has rightly pointed out, “The castration condition was outdated, inhumane, and made the Czech Republic one of the shameful exceptions in Europe.” However, Trans*Parent has warned that the new guidelines still fall short of providing legal certainty. We echo this criticism and emphasise that proper law-making is essential to codify these changes and assert the rights of trans people under Czech law.

Outdated medical gatekeeping must end

In 2025, it is unacceptable that a person must still undergo assessment by a sexologist to change their name and gender marker. This requirement is particularly outdated given that EU Data Protection rules already establish the right to have one’s gendered data corrected if it is inaccurate. This kind of gatekeeping is at odds with an individual’s human right to quick, transparent and accessible legal gender recognition procedures, as per Council of Europe standards.

A last-minute fix — not real reform

The current situation arose after the Czech Constitutional Court quashed the sterilisation requirement in May 2024, giving the legislature until July 2025 to rectify this shortcoming. The Ministry of Health’s June guidelines represent a last-minute, minimal solution rather than the comprehensive reform that is needed. This comes despite the Ministry of Justice’s 2023 public promise to address trans people’s position and abolish the forced sterilisation condition. Although legislation was drafted and was supposed to undergo inter-ministerial consultation, no progress has been made since. The Czech Republic is facing elections this autumn with right-wing populist forces polling well.

Czech Republic lags behind Europe

According to TGEU’s 2025 Trans Rights Map, the Czech Republic was one of the last countries in Europe and the EU to maintain this unbearable practice. At the time of writing, only five out of 25 EU countries with legal gender recognition procedures still require sterilisation. Research conducted by the Czech National Institute of Mental Health in 2024 found that 90 per cent of trans people in the Czech Republic were dissatisfied with the sterilisation

condition and wanted it changed.

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency found that nearly a third of trans respondents in the Czech Republic said they could not access domestic procedures as they did not fulfil the requirements. While the 2023 Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination found that 49 per cent of people in the country support legal gender recognition.

Holding Czechia accountable on the international stage

TGEU has a long history of challenging this discriminatory practice. Together with ILGA-Europe, we brought the Czech Republic before the European Social Charter Committee and successfully challenged the sterilisation requirement as violating the right to the best attainable healthcare. We submitted a supportive intervention in the recent successful case *T.H. v Czechia* before the European Court of Human Rights, which found that the Czech Republic violates the rights of trans people by requiring forced sterilisation as a legal requirement for legal gender recognition.

Calls to action

We call on Czech lawmakers to finish the job and enact proper legislative reform and base legal gender recognition on self-determination. The current guidelines, while welcome, are insufficient to guarantee trans people's rights under Czech law.

TGEU remains committed to working with domestic actors, including policymakers and civil society organisations, to ensure this essential work is completed and that trans people in the Czech Republic finally receive the legal recognition and protection they deserve.

Your support makes change possible

We work across Europe and Central Asia to advance trans rights, build strong communities, and drive change through research, advocacy, and community-building.

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