TGEU Welcomes Resolution on Human Rights in Kazakhstan

article, non-discrimination

TGEU welcomes the European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in Kazakhstan adopted on 11 February 2021 (2021/2544(RSP). This resolution brings attention to the worrying deterioration of human rights and the crackdown on civil society organisations in Kazakhstan.

The EU Parliament expressed concerns regarding the discriminatory amendments to the new health code in June 2020 that regulate aspects of healthcare for transgender people, where the process for changing one's legal gender in Kazakhstan remains invasive and humiliating.

Last year, the Kazakhstani Parliament proposed an amendment that raised the minimum age for social medical care and will make it impossible for trans people between the ages of 18 and 21 and for those with "behavioural disorders" of all ages to exercise their right to legal gender recognition.

TGEU Executive Director, Masen Davis, comments:

> *"Recent developments in Kazakhstan should concern human rights champions worldwide. We see a troubling increase in the legal and social discrimination of trans people. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, our communities need more support than ever. Instead of being protected, human rights defenders and marginalised communities are being attacked. We call on the Kazakhstan government to protect the lives and the dignity of trans people by eliminating all discriminatory legislation."*

Reports from TGEU's member organisations in Kazakhstan are very concerning. In November 2020, the updated 'Rules for Medical examination and Gender Reassignment for persons with Sexual Identification Disorder' was released. These rules have not undergone major changes, in addition to changing the format of medical examination from inpatient to outpatient and reducing the time for medical examination. The regulations still require a minimum age of 21 for medical transition describing the procedure of medical examination, passing the medical commission that consisting of professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologist, endocrinologist, therapist, gynaecologist and urologist and, a certain medical intervention (hormone therapy and surgeries) to receive the conclusion/approval for "change of sex". In addition, in its responses to requests on the e-Government website, the Ministry of Health informs that the medical examination procedure is aimed at regulating the medical transgender transition and is not part of the legal recognition of gender.

The EU Parliament calls upon the Kazakhstani government:

1. To respect and guarantee the principle of non-discrimination against the LGBTI community, including by prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of gender identity or sexual orientation by law.
2. For proper training for judicial and police officers, as well as service providers, to ensure that LGBTI people are given appropriate care and protection.

Further information

Find out more about trans rights in Kazakhstan in TGEU's Trans Rights Europe & Central Asia Index & Maps 2020.