



Glasgow West Amnesty International

Minutes - Thursday 12th July 2018

Apologies: JG, JC, AL, RB, JG

Attendees: PD, FL, CC, CR, JM, CA, AE, AP, AS, AS, D

Treasurer's report

£401 current balance. Hall rental paid until September.

Pride

Paul Daly, Advocacy and Activism Officer at the Amnesty Scotland office, came to talk to us about the three campaigns Amnesty are focusing on at Prides across the country this year. He explained that Amnesty have chosen to work on trans rights this year for two key reasons. Firstly, this has been a previously neglected area. Secondly, this is an important time for trans rights as we have an opportunity to review the Gender Recognition Act in Scotland, which could allow trans people to have the same rights as everyone else.

The Gender Recognition Act

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA) is the law that governs how trans people can get their gender identity legally recognised. Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, it is possible to apply to a Gender Recognition Panel and obtain a full Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). A person with a full GRC is recognised legally as having acquired a new gender, and their birth certificate is changed to reflect this. However, it does not allow for recognition of non-binary people or anyone under 18, and has been criticised for being too lengthy, complex and intrusive. In November 2017, the Scottish Government launched

a review of the Gender Recognition Act and Amnesty International's Scotland office responded. Full copies of Amnesty's response are available [here](#).

What Amnesty are calling for:

1. Self-declaration

We think that people should be able to decide their gender and that the Scottish Government should scrap the need for psychiatric assessment and the requirement to prove that a person has lived in an acquired gender for two years.

The current process is unnecessary, demeaning and counter to a person's freedom from discrimination based on gender identity.

2. Age

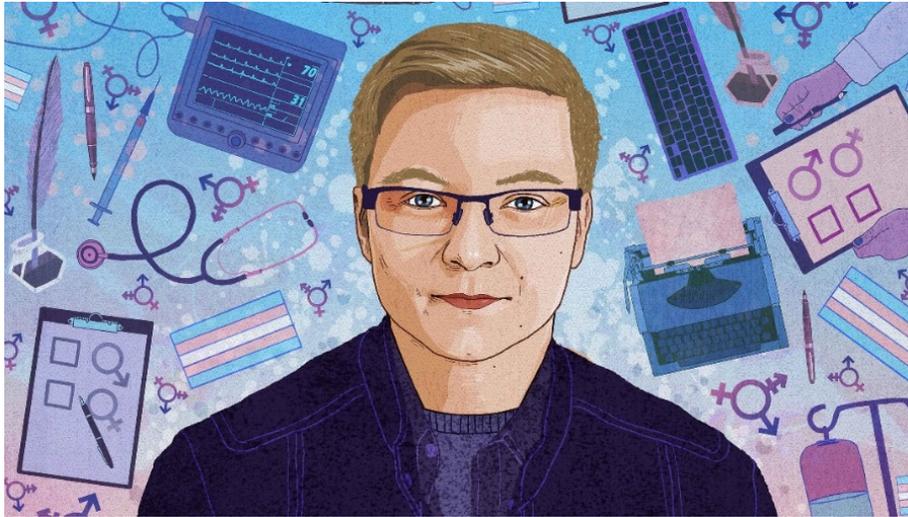
We believe that the age that people can officially declare their gender should be lowered to 16, with the potential for this to happen at a younger age in certain circumstances.

3. Non-binary

Non-binary people feel that their gender is neither male nor female. We believe that non-binary people's gender status should be recognised in Scotland. Medical documentation is particularly important for non-binary people and our health systems should provide the highest possible standard of healthcare for everyone.

This recognition happens elsewhere in the world. For example, Australians can use 'X' to record their gender instead of the binary male or female on passports and birth certificates.

Sakris Kupila



Sakris Kupila is a 21-year-old transgender activist and medical student from Finland, campaigning to have his gender legally recognised without undergoing the humiliating process of sterilisation and psychiatric diagnosis required by Finnish Law.

The current requirements violate the rights of transgender people to be free from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, to have the highest standard of health, to privacy, and to be recognised as a person before the law. Sakris advocates for the rights of transgender people in Finland, and as a result, has faced harassment, threats and hostility, forcing him to take a year off from his education. Amnesty's campaign aims to develop a gender-recognition procedure that is quick, transparent, based on self-determination and available regardless of age, medical or financial status and supports transgender rights.

Alejandra



Alejandra is a 43 year old trans woman, human rights defender and beautician from El Salvador. Alejandra was forced to flee her home country following repeated attacks and sexual abuse by a transnational gang and military officials due to her transgender identity. In November 2017 she requested asylum at the US – Mexico Border and is currently being held by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the privately operated Cibola County Correctional Centre in New Mexico.

Alejandra has been detained by ICE since December, where she and other trans women complained of inadequate and unresponsive health care. Roxana, another trans woman detained in the same facility as Alejandra, died two weeks ago after experiencing medical complications. Her death highlights the risks that trans asylum seekers with acute medical needs face in immigration detention. In April, she was denied parole by ICE, without justification to her lawyer as to why. Parole should be granted for humanitarian reasons where the person does not pose a threat to public safety and presents no flight risk. US immigration authorities should immediately free Alejandra while she awaits the decision on her asylum claim.

Paul also asked us to look out for a comment in the Herald the following day (13th July) regarding Alejandra and Trump's visit.

Thank you to Paul for taking the time to come and speak to the group.

FL briefed the group on the arrangements for the upcoming Glasgow Pride and Free Pride (14th and 15th July). There will be lots of ways to take action at Pride this year in Glasgow: petitions, selfies for promoting the campaigns on social media and action cards.

Other upcoming events

Friday 13th July – Trump rally. Meet at 5pm at George Square.

August – Edinburgh festival social – details TBC

Thursday 13th September – Possible death penalty themed meeting

Saturday 13th October – Amnesty Scotland Conference – will probably be in Dundee, probable theme human rights in crisis situations (e.g. Myanmar), may try and organise group transport.

Monday 28th January 2018 – Comedy night fundraiser at the Stand.

Urgent actions

Thanks to MR for providing the urgent actions.

Urgent Action **good news**: Liu Xia free, on her way to Berlin from China (no action required)

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-07/FI27017_2_0.pdf?SZ7S04vQim348xOAAVmJv8n1PksCRhsB

Urgent Action: Son of murder victim opposes execution in USA (send by 13 July)

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-07/UA13018.pdf?X.ccPXvJ0uHYvit8pUTxLXwvMcF1hCED>

Urgent Action update: Imprisoned journalist goes on hunger strike in Ukraine

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-07/FI16017_3.pdf?76PVTgmOjl2ekUQL08Hkc8umae61libjO

Urgent Action: Seven people killed in Cauca, Colombia

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-07/UA12818.pdf?7M.TU6BOGfzF7FmGTDddc.Wr_ETSNAH

Next meeting

Thursday 9th August 2018

7:30 PM, Woodlands Methodist Church, Woodlands Road