

Perspective

October 2020

Need some ice for that burn

New Report Shows Where It's Illegal To Be Transgender In 2020

Widespread discrimination of rainbow community in New Zealand

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New Girl in School

TRANSGENDER

Half of transgender and non-binary Kiwis victims of attempted rape - survey

Waikato Region Group

As always we meet on the 3rd Saturday each month at 7pm in Hamilton and are happy to receive anyone who wishes to come along.

Yours sincerely,

Tracee Nelley

President of Agender NZ

Taranaki group

Phyllis is available to talk with new transgender people, their partners, family and supporters most evenings and, some days, depending on work commitments.

Phone or email to make contact.

Phyllis King

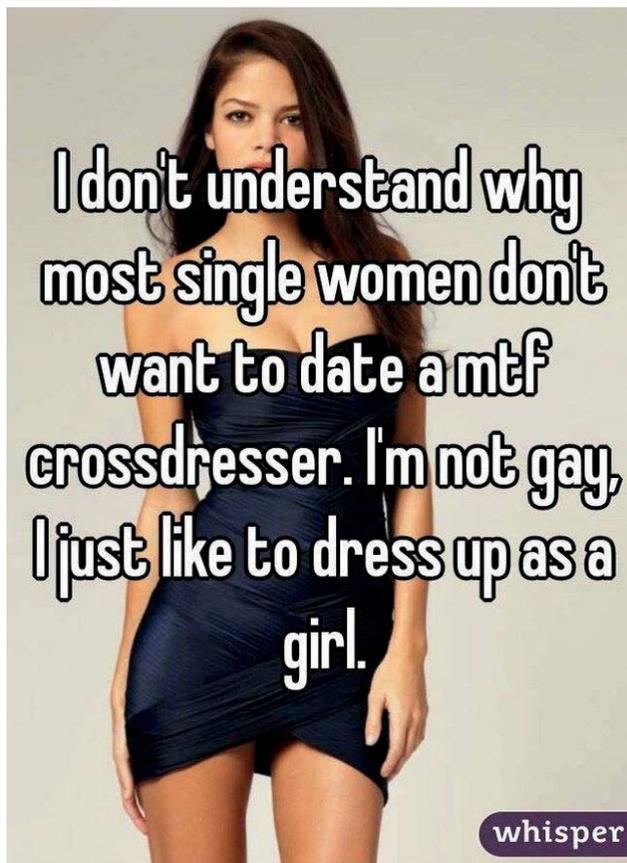
Mobile: 027 225 5034

phyllisking@xtra.co.nz

Manawatu Group

The Manawatu support group meets in Palmerston North on the last Saturday evening each month for a shared Coffee.

Text or call Katherine on 020 4009 3096 if you wish to participate.



WANTED

We are seeking somebody to help with the Agender Perspective.

Anybody interested in being the Editor and producing the Agender Perspective please Contact; Christina

(Mystery) Mystery1@outlook.co.nz

Wellington Group

Hi everyone,

The Wellington support group meets in south Wellington on the first Friday evening each month for a shared meal. Text or call Alison on 027 4033 468 if you wish to participate.

Agender Hawkes Bay

Hawke's Bay Report:

I helped to organise another meeting for the group of parents/family members and friends of transgender people in Hawke's Bay. The meeting went well. I have also spoken separately from that meeting with several people who are transgender, gender questioning, or potential allies of transgender people, about transgender matters. This was to help to improve the knowledge these people have about transgender topics of relevance to them. I have also been helping to organise a talk to parents of transgender people for November...the talk will be from a psychologist who helps transgender people.

Kind regards

Dion

For details contact Dion: Ph: 020 409 722 62

or email hbtransgender@gmail.com

There is often an very trans-friendly LGBTQIA social event on in Napier at the Cabana. Check there website for updates.

<http://www.cabana.net.nz/>



Remember this is your News-letter,

If anybody has any News, Article or cartoon's for the Perspective please send it to the Editor,

Mystery1@outlook.co.nz

Thanks ♀♂

Thanks to all the members who have shared an article for the Agender Perspective, This make publishing the Newsletter much easier. Please keep them Coming. ♀

Widespread discrimination of rainbow community in New Zealand - report

Andre Chumko 18:31, Jun 21 2020

ABIGAIL DOUGHERTY/STUFF

The Cook Islands did a U-turn on decriminalising homosexuality and have now expanded the law to include gay women.

A new report has found members of New Zealand's rainbow community continue to suffer from widespread discrimination and harm.

Its findings have renewed calls for a government office to be established to specifically oversee rainbow issues.

The Human Rights Commission [report](#) found current laws do not provide explicit legal protection from discrimination in regard to gender identity, expression or sex characteristics in New Zealand.

It found overt and subtle forms of discrimination to be widespread against members of the rainbow community, and that members of the community were also more likely to be victims of crime in New Zealand.



WILL RUSSELL/GETTY-IMAGES

The report has reignited calls for the establishment of a dedicated rainbow issues government department. (File photo)

A lack of information was found to be a key obstacle for the identification and resolution of issues concerning members of the rainbow community.

The report found data collection in New Zealand did not reflect a human rights-based approach, because response options limited diverse answers and the ability of rainbow people to be counted.

Currently, the New Zealand Census does not ask Kiwis about their sexual orientation or gender identity, which advocates have long said is a barrier to the community receiving specific or targeted funding or assistance.

The report also found issues with official identity documents having information about sex/gender that was difficult to correct for transgender, non-binary or intersex people.



ROBYN EDIE/STUFF

Green Party rainbow issues spokesperson Jan Logie says New Zealand has continually failed its rainbow community. (File photo)

This included requiring people who wanted to amend the sex on their birth certificate to meet a medical threshold, and involve the Family Court.

The report found members of the rainbow community had poorer physical and mental health outcomes compared with the general population, and that health care practitioners often lacked training to meet specific rainbow health needs.

Gender-affirming health care was difficult to access and highly dependent on geographical residence, it found.

The report revealed issues within the education system, in that the New Zealand curriculum didn't adequately integrate learning about diversity into schools.

School was also found to be an unsafe environment for rainbow youth in New Zealand. It found that young Kiwis with diverse sexual orientation or gender identity were, respectively, three and four-and-a-half times more likely than other students to be bullied.



Paul Hunt, Chief Human Rights Commissioner, said the report outlined a need for action in the areas of law, policy, social work and community-led initiatives. (File photo)

This translated to Kiwi workplaces. The most common complaint received by the Human Rights Commission on the grounds of sexual orientation was in relation to employment discrimination.

Rainbow Kiwis often concealed their identities and partners for fear of workplace discrimination, and a significant proportion of the community did not feel safe enough or feared discrimination both at work and while applying for jobs.

Chief Human Rights Commissioner Paul Hunt said the report was based on five comprehensive hui, including one with transgender prisoners and another with disabled rainbow Kiwis.

“While sexuality-diverse communities have had the benefit of rapid gains in social acceptance in Aotearoa New Zealand, the pace of change for those with diverse gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics has been much slower,” he said.

Queer people are still not counted on the NZ Census, in what advocates have long said has been a barrier to the community getting the targeted help it needs.

Sep 30, 2020, 03:30am EDT

New Report Shows Where It's Illegal To Be Transgender In 2020



Transgender people in thirteen countries live under specific laws that criminalise them, punishing them with prison, corporal punishment and, where anti-gay laws are also used against trans people, even death.

However, a new report has also found defacto criminalisation of trans people under laws in 37 countries.

The report emphasised the need for an interdisciplinary approach which blended law, policy, social work, and community-led initiatives to address the shortcomings.

Green Party rainbow issues spokesperson Jan Logie said the report highlighted failings for the equality of rainbow people, including unnecessary surgeries being performed on intersex youth, and continued suppression and erasure of sexual and gender fluidity in te ao Māori.

Logie reinstated a call for a government office to be set up to specifically focus on rainbow issues.

“We can’t continue to fail our rainbow communities. We have to make more progress to ensure they are safe and able to live as who they are.”

The latest *Trans Legal Mapping Report*, released by IGLA World today, also finds only 96 countries have processes to allow trans people to change gender legally. But crucially, only 25 are described as not having “prohibitive requirements.”

That means it’s not possible to legally change your gender in at least 47 UN member states.

The 13 countries who specifically criminalise transgender people, mostly using “cross-dressing” laws, are Brunei, the Gambia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Nigeria, Oman, South Sudan, Tonga, and the United Arab Emirates. Iran’s Islamic Penal Code also has severe punishments for bending gender norms in your expression.

The punishments for these ‘cross-dressing’ laws range from fines to extensive prison sentences and in Malawi can even include corporal punishments.



Labour announces ban on conversion therapy, plan to help provide gender-neutral bathrooms in schools

Rachel Sadler

© Getty Images



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The Labour Party has announced several policies to help New Zealanders “live free of discrimination” based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The policies include banning conversion therapy and working with schools to provide gender-neutral bathrooms.

The party’s Rainbow spokesperson Tāmami Coffey says more work needs to be done to “keep moving towards a more inclusive New Zealand”.

“We will pass a law to ban the harmful practice of conversion therapy. Conversion therapy is based on the misguided idea that people are wrong or broken because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This is fundamentally wrong,” he said.

“Conversion therapy has been linked to severe adverse mental health issues, including depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation.

“It is a practice that causes harm and is out of place in the kind, inclusive and modern country we are.”

Two petitions were presented to Parliament in 2018 calling for a ban on conversion therapy. The Justice Select Committee responded at the time by saying that while there was agreement that conversion therapy was harmful, «more work needs to be done» before any decision is taken to ban it.

Labour MP Grant Robertson says it hasn’t banned the practice during its three years of governing because there wasn’t “full government support” for it.

“What we are now saying though is this will be something we will push in government and we will pass legislation,” he said.

“The kind of practices that attempt to change or suppress somebody’s sexuality are wrong and we need to make sure that we send a very clear message about that.”

Along with the ban, Labour MP Louisa Wall says the party will also take action to ensure “every young person has a safe place to learn and thrive” by helping schools implement gender-neutral bathrooms.

“We will work with schools on providing gender-neutral bathrooms and research has shown fostering belonging in the school environment improves student achievement,” she said.

Labour’s other policies include investing \$4 million over four years for existing LGBTQ youth mental health services. This is to help better meet demand and provide targeted support during the COVID-19 recovery, Robertson says.

“We know the next few years will be hard as we continue to fight our way out of COVID-19, but we are committed to making sure our diverse communities aren’t left behind as we recover.”

Specialised health services and support for trans, intersex and gender diverse people is also on the agenda since they face “significantly poorer health outcomes and services” compared with other New Zealanders, Wall said.

Adoption and surrogacy policies will also be reviewed since they are “outdated”, Coffey said.

“I know from my own experience where my partner and I had to formally adopt our own biological son that we need to modernise the law.”

Currently, a person who gives birth to a baby is considered the legal guardian, even if they aren’t an ‘intending parent’. Therefore, couples who have a baby via surrogacy are required to adopt it in order to be recognised as the child’s parents.

“Labour has committed to reviewing adoption and surrogacy policies and legislation with a view to removing discriminatory practices,” Coffey said.

Activists praise Labour's commitment to ban conversion therapy

Laura Tupou



©Newshub; Image - Getty Images

Anti-conversion therapy activists who have pushed for an end to the practice say they're pleased to see Labour has committed to banning it.

Labour on Monday said it would outlaw conversion therapy if it forms the next government.

The contentious practice is used to try and change, suppress or eliminate someone's gender identity or sexual orientation.

Auckland Pride director Max Tweedie, who has spent two years pushing for a ban including presenting a petition to Parliament, said Labour's announcement couldn't come soon enough.

"We're looking forward to holding them to account for that and making sure it happens as soon as possible," Tweedie said.

Conversion Therapy Action Group co-founder Shaneel Lal agrees.

"I think it's quite clear that conversion therapy is state-sanctioned therapy. The message is clear, legislate away the hate."

Conversion therapy is done through many different methods, including prayer.

"We've heard young people say that they pray to God to heal them or kill them," Lal said.

Labour's Rainbow spokesperson Tāmati Coffey says the practice has major impacts on people's mental health.

"It's linked to severe anxiety and depression and even suicide in some cases," Coffey said.

He said all conversion therapy - no matter what it's labelled by groups who use it - "will" be outlawed by Labour.

"It's dangerous and needs to be banned."

Labour MP Grant Robertson admitted on Monday the party had the chance to ban it this term, but not all coalition partners were on board.

"What we are now saying though is that this is something that we will push in government and we will pass legislation," he said.

When asked if New Zealand First put the handbrake on the change, he wouldn't directly answer and said questions should be put to that party about it.

"You'll need to talk to them about that."

Along with banning conversion therapy, Labour will also invest \$4 million into existing LGTBQ+ youth mental health services, ensure those services are more responsive for trans, intersex and gender diverse people, help provide gender-neutral bathrooms in schools and remove discriminatory practices from adoption and surrogacy policies.

‘Need some ice for that burn’: Little takes a stand for LGBTQ+ community with sassy clap-back

Lana Andelane



©Newshub; Image - Getty

Andrew Little has hit back at a suggestion that banning conversion therapy should not be a priority for the Labour Party this election, after the Government declared it would put an end to the pseudoscientific practice if reelected.

On Monday night, the Justice Minister shared a rainbow-themed post promoting Labour’s election promise to ban conversion therapy - a supposed remedial treatment to convert an individual’s sexual orientation to heterosexual using psychological or physical interventions.

The party had revealed its pledge to ban conversion therapy in an earlier announcement on Monday, as well as declaring its commitment to helping schools install gender-neutral bathrooms.

“So-called ‘conversion therapy’ is not a real thing. LGBT Kiwis are perfect just the way they are,” Little captioned the post.

Despite an overwhelmingly positive reception from his Facebook following, one user wasn’t enthused.

“Why do you think this is one of the most pressing issues with NZ at the moment, don’t you think priorities [should] be back on getting our economy going?” they asked.

The minister retorted: “When is the economically ideal time to stop torturing people for existing?”

The comment, which has amassed more than 1200 likes at the time of writing, delighted social media commentators.

“[They’re] gonna need some ice for that burn mate!” one joked.

“As the parent of a child who is beginning to transition, I salute you and the government’s efforts at inclusion. That was a grand burn too,” said another.

“Good to know governments can tackle multiple issues at the same time. Most do,” a third quipped.

In 2019, a spokesperson for Living Wisdom School of Counselling told 1 News that 20 to 30 people had their heterosexuality “restored” through its services. Rainbow Youth, a New Zealand queer youth organisation, also become aware of hundreds of conversion therapy survivors in Auckland alone.

In 2018, TVNZ’s Sunday programme investigated the prevalence of conversion therapy in New Zealand, finding the contentious treatment was a mere Google search away for parents who were interested in subjecting their LGBTQ+ children to the practice.

Along with banning conversion therapy, Labour has also promised to invest \$4 million into existing LGBTQ+ youth mental health services; ensure services are more responsive for transgender, intersex and gender-diverse New Zealanders; and remove discriminatory practices from adoption and surrogacy policies.

Trans-centred web series premiered at New Zealand film festival

Andre Chumko, Jul 14 2020

Rūrangi premiered at the 2020 New Zealand International Film Festival in July. It's a new, locally-produced drama series written, produced by and starring transgender talent.

A trans-centred web series will be the first of its kind to premiere at the New Zealand International Film Festival later this month.

Rūrangi focuses on fictional trans activist Caz Davis, who returns to the titular remote dairy community hoping to reconnect with his estranged father.

The series is split into five episodes and has a gender-diverse and inclusive cast and production crew. It was previously selected for the 2020 Berlinale, alongside fellow New Zealand-produced heavyweight *The Luminaries*.

Director Max Currie said the production was made more important by the fact it had a gender-diverse cast and crew.



MELISSA NICKERSON/SUPPLIED

Actor Elz Carrad pictured with director Max Currie.

“The collaboration had trans voices at the centre. We have a gender-diverse cast and crew, this is really a New Zealand gender diverse community for the first time telling a story with the resources behind them. To be part of a festival is icing on the cake,” he said.

Having diverse voices included in the decision-making was the most important aspect of production, he said.

Rūrangi premieres at the New Zealand International Film Festival 2020.

Trans or minority voices were often brought in during consultation to “check a box” or reassure another writer or producer that a production had the “trans stamp of approval”, Currie said.

“There’s a big difference between tokenism ... and actual [involvement].”

Rūrangi had a five-person panel of gender-diverse people looking at scripts and early cuts. Currie said it benefited Rūrangi as it brought “really fresh, new, interesting” perspectives to the table.

Co-writer Cole Meyers said he’d previously had negative experiences being brought in “really late in the game”, which didn’t give him a chance to adequately address problems.

Meyers said he was clear and determined on a vision that didn’t just show trans characters in negative cinematic contexts.



MELISSA NICKERSON/SUPPLIED

It’s the first web series to show at the international festival.

“I hope [it] isn’t a rare thing in the future ... these things shouldn’t be spectacular, one-off things we see. It should just be normal and it shouldn’t be unusual to see tales of trans people being loved and accepted.”

What audiences saw on-screen affected how people viewed themselves, and how other people viewed trans communities, Meyers said.

It was not surprising trans people had worse health outcomes and difficulty applying for jobs when they were only shown as token characters in productions.

“When you don’t see yourself you start to think ‘well I can’t be that, I don’t exist’.”

Whānau Mārama New Zealand International Film Festival Director Marten Rabarts said it was delighted to be screening the world premiere.

“For the festival, it’s exciting to screen a web series for the first time, and this is a terrific piece of episodic drama.

“Rūrangi’s strength is that it is by the community, for the community and from within the trans community portrayed. This is a landmark for productions that aim for authentic representation and offers a model for this kind of work across diverse communities for the future.

“As a web series Rūrangi is elevated by great writing, direction, high production values and driven by stand-out performances from a gifted cast.”

Half of transgender and non-binary Kiwis victims of attempted rape - survey

24/09/2019

Almost half of all transgender and non-binary New Zealanders have been the victims of attempted rape.

That's one of the alarming results of the country's first comprehensive report into the health and wellbeing of the gender diverse community.

'[Counting Ourselves](#)', released in September, was funded by the Health Research Council as well as the University of Waikato and LGBT non-profit The Rule Foundation.

Between June and September of 2018, researchers surveyed 1178 people aged between 14 and 83 who identify as transgender or non-binary. Participants were asked questions about their family, education, work and health, as well as experiences of being discriminated against for their identity.

The report revealed gender diverse people in New Zealand suffer far higher rates of sexual violence than the general population.

Some 32 percent of participants said they had experience sexual violence since the age of 13. This rate is two to three times higher than women in the general population, and seven to 12 times higher than men.

A shocking 47 percent of trans and non-binary people said someone had tried to have sex with them against their will.

Another significant finding was rates of mental health problems, which are again much higher than among the general population. Transgender and non-binary people were nine times more likely to report high or very high psychological distress.

In the last 12 months, more than half the participants (56 percent) said they'd seriously considered attempting suicide, and 12 percent had attempted it.

Insufficient support from the healthcare system could be partially to blame for high levels of mental distress, with participants saying they were unable to access medically necessary treatment because of barriers such as cost, limited information, fear of bad treatment or lack of available DHB services.

Because nationwide surveys like the Census don't collect information about gender diverse New Zealanders, these statistics have never been officially collated before.

The results confirm that gender diverse Kiwis suffer similar levels of discrimination to their overseas counterparts.

Disproportionate sexual violence against gender diverse people has been better documented in other countries. The [2015 US Transgender Survey](#) found that 47 percent of transgender Americans are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime, and the rate is even higher for transgender people of colour.

Among the recommendations from the report are prioritising the wellbeing of gender diverse Kiwis, creating clear pathways for gender-affirming healthcare and protecting gender diverse people from violence.

Co-investigator and human rights researcher Jack Byrne says the report shows support from whānau can be of significant benefit to mental wellbeing among gender diverse people.

"Our study suggests that when trans and non-binary people are supported by their families, teachers, classmates, workmates or community, it could save lives."

Newshub.

The New Girl in School: Transgender Surgery at 18 ; Treatment for Teenagers Leaves Experts Divided as Number of Cases Rises

By Hartocollis, Anemona *International New York Times*

It was not an easy transition for Katherine Boone, but the question is no longer whether gender reassignment is an option, but instead how soon it should start.

In a cosy cottage decorated with butterflies to symbolize transformation, Katherine Boone was recovering in April from the operation that had changed her, in the most intimate part of her body, from a biological male into a female.

It was not easy. She retched for days afterward. She could hardly eat. She did not seem empowered; she seemed regressed.

“I just want to hold Emma,” she said in her darkened room at the bed-and-breakfast in New Hope, Pa., run by the doctor who performed the operation in a hospital nearby. Emma is her black and white cat, at her home near Syracuse, in central New York State, 250 miles away.

Her childlike reaction was, perhaps, not surprising. Kat, whose side-parted hair was dyed a sassy red, is just 18, and about to graduate from high school.

It is a transgender moment. President Obama was hailed just for saying the word “transgender” in his State of the Union address this year, in a list of people who should not be discriminated against. They are characters in popular television shows. Bruce Jenner’s transition from male sex symbol to a comely female named Caitlyn has elevated her back to her public profile as a gold-medal decathlete at the 1976 Summer Olympics.

With growing tolerance, the question is no longer whether gender reassignment is an option but rather how young should it begin.

No law prohibits minors from receiving sex-change hormones or even surgery, but insurers, both private and public, have generally refused to extend coverage for these procedures to those under 18. In March, New York State’s Medicaid program drew a line at that age, and at 21 for some procedures.

But the number of teenagers going through gender reassignment has been growing amid wider acceptance of transgender identity, more parental comfort with the treatment and the emergence of a number of willing practitioners.

Now advocates like Empire State Pride Agenda are fighting for coverage at an earlier age, beginning with hormone blockers at the onset of puberty, saying it is more seamless for a teenage boy to transition to becoming an adult woman, for example, if he does not first become a full-bodied man.

“Some of these women are passing, but barely, when they transition at 40 or 50,” said Dr. Irene Sills, an endocrinologist who just retired from a busy practice in the Syracuse area treating transgender children, including Kat. “At 16 or 17, you are going to have such an easier life with this.”

Given that there are no proven biological markers for what is known as gender dysphoria, however, there is no consensus in the medical community on the central question: whether teenagers, habitually trying on new identities and not known for foresight, should be granted an irreversible physical fix for what is still considered a psychological condition.

Some experts argue that the earlier the decision is made, the more treacherous, because it is impossible to predict which children will grow up to be transgender and which will not.

“Basically, you have clinics working by the seat of the pants, making these decisions, and depending on which clinic you go to, you get a different response,” said Dr. Jack Drescher, a New York City psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who helped develop the latest diagnostic criteria for gender dysphoria.

On the other hand, Dr. Drescher said, “Is it fair to make a child who’s never going to change wait till 16 or 18 to get treatment?”

At 16, after seeing a therapist, Kat began taking estrogen and a blood pressure drug, spironolactone, that is also used to block the actions of testosterone, to help her look more female. In the fall of junior year, she showed up at school wanting to be called Katherine, or Kat, because she likes cats. She does not want anything to do with her birth name, Caden. ...