



15 December 2015

Towards the Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression Act

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1. Development to Date

The LGBTIQ Action Plan for 2015 – 2017 formulated by the LGBTIQ Consultative Council includes the criminalisation of harmful ‘conversion therapies’ as one of a number of legislative and policy actions being proposed.

Conversion therapy seeks to change and, or to repress a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity and, or gender expression. Furthermore, the international community of professionals in education, social work, health, mental health and counselling has determined that there is no evidence towards the validity or effectiveness of so called conversion therapy. On the contrary, it is dangerous to the individual’s mental and physical health, in some cases leading to suicide. Therefore Government is seeking to protect these individuals from harmful practices by enacting a Bill which will criminalize conversion therapy. To date, four US states have banned conversion therapy. Should this Bill become law, Malta will be the first European country to criminalise such practice. The United Kingdom is currently considering a similar Bill.

On 15 December 2015, Minister Helena Dalli presented the draft Bill for the prohibition of conversion therapy as a deceptive and harmful act to Parliament for its first reading. This Bill is now also open for a round of public consultation.

2. Consultation Questions

The Government is asking the general public to reflect on the proposed Bill and provide input as follows.

- a) Where there is an issue with a specific Article in the Bill, a direct reference to the Article in question is made, and comments about what needs to be added or removed are presented as brief and direct as possible.

It will be appreciated if alternative formulations, additions, subtractions, etc., to ensure a correct understanding and the best reflection of the proposal/s being made.

- b) Where there is an issue that the Bill is silent or is too generic about, the concern should first be explained and ideally formulated in terms of a concrete proposal.

3. Submission of Input

Submissions must be sent in through the following channels:

Online form: www.msdc.gov.mt/SOGIGE

By email: integration@gov.mt

By post: SOGIGE Consultation
Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties
Barriera Wharf,
Valletta VLT 1971

All input towards this consultation must be received by **Friday, 15 January 2016**.

We thank you in advance for your input.

Please be informed that all submissions will be published on the webpage of this consultation at the end of the consultation.