



solidarity with Natasha!

"My Name is Natasha. I am a Trans woman from Pakistan. In my home country I had many problems because people would not accept my gender identity. I faced a lot of violence, so I had to leave my country. I came to Greece three years ago, but also here I experienced sexual assault and physical violence. The fact that I can't have my own name and gender on my papers causes even more difficulties. It makes me vulnerable to more discriminations. Every time I show my ID, I have to explain that my name is Natasha and I have to justify myself in front of strangers. People say things like "You are a boy, you are not a girl. Why do you say your name is Natasha?". To avoid situations like this and make at least one part of my life easier, I want my own name and gender to be written on my documents."

Today the court will decide whether Natasha is allowed to use her own first name in her papers or if she has to keep documents with a name that does not reflect who she is. As for most trans people Natasha's gender identity and expression do not match the sex she was assigned at birth.

According to the new law, which was passed in October, trans people now have the right to change their papers according to their gender identity. **Natasha is the first trans refugee who applies for this procedure in Greece.** Therefore, today is an important day not only for Natasha, but for many other trans refugees who face intersectional discrimination.

In addition to this, the Asylum Service made a mistake when Natasha was registered: they mixed up her first name with her family name. Since Natasha can't read, she did not realize this mistake for a long time. So even if she succeeds in court today, her last name will be her old male first name. To the present day, the Asylum Service refuses to change this mistake. Natasha was asked to provide an original passport to the Asylum Service, which is impossible for her to get. So if we succeed today, the discrimination does not stop here and the fight will have to continue.

The legislation for the recognition of gender identity was voted last October in the Greek Parliament accompanied by discussions full of transphobia, patriarchal violence and heteronormative shit. This was one of the first legal steps towards the right direction in the daily fight of many trans people, so that their existence can be recognised by greek society. A society that [re]produces specific gender stereotypes, is built upon those stereotypes and stands against all the people who do not comply with its rules. This legislation somehow relieves the suffocating reality, composed by the exclusions or the limited access to a series of private/public life sectors. These exclusions are caused by the lack of the correspondence between the official documents and the real identity of trans people. Even if there is no longer a requirement for sterilization, hormonal replacement treatment or medical diagnoses, there are still clear legal prerequisites concerning the minimum age (in addition to pathologising the whole procedure) or for married people, who have to get a divorce. In addition to that, the gender identity recognition procedure remains time-consuming, since it is still based on a court hearing. Furthermore, there is still a significant lack of recognition of people who do not conform to the gender binary, refugees, immigrants or intersex people.