

Cuba on the path to more rights for transgender people



El Mejunje in Santa Clara, the oldest queer cultural center in the country (source: [Дэ-Бюг /Commons/CC-BY-SA 4.0](#))

Cuba's National Assembly could pass a new law in July that would allow transgender people to change their gender on identity documents based on their self-perception. Until now, a court order or gender reassignment surgery was required.

The draft law on civil status registration stipulates that Cubans will be able to change their gender without these hurdles in the future. It is part of a series of reforms with which the socialist Caribbean island aims to strengthen the rights of LGBTQ people.

"I have plans to get married and have children," said Danny Ortiz, a 25-year-old transgender man who was registered as Daniela at birth, in an interview with Reuters. "But first I have to change my name."

Ortiz and others affected report bureaucratic hurdles that have often made it impossible to change their name and gender. Affidavits, police clearance certificates, and proof of social recognition of the chosen identity were required.

The new law is intended to end this practice.

As Fátima Abdulá Ruiz, legal advisor to the state LGBTQ organization Cenesex, explained, in the future an interdisciplinary statement from Cenesex will suffice to confirm the desire to change the gender entry.

“The law introduces an accelerated procedure for the first time,” said Abdulá Ruiz. She described the draft as “progress for the rights of transgender people.” Previously, the authorities had required a court order or proof of genital surgery to change the gender entry.

The draft law is part of the implementation of LGBTQ rights enshrined in the [2019 amended constitution](#). It complements the [2022 Family Code](#), which made marriage for all and adoption by same-sex couples possible. ([Cubaheute](#))