

Final project report

13.12.2016

I travelled to Finland on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November to do my final project. Our final project had to consist of an article and different multimedia elements that investigated a people related and problem oriented subject. I had planned ahead for 2-3 weeks and decided to do my project on the transgender law in Finland. I wanted to my project on the transgender law because I found it very interesting, as well as current.

The transgender law in Finland proposes different conditions for transgender people who want to change their legal gender. Some of these requirements are sterilization, change of marital status, psychological diagnosis and being 18 years old.

Human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, have criticised Finnish legislation for violating the rights of transgender people by demanding such things, and have for some time required the law to be reformed.

I decided to do my project in Finland, as I had never before practiced journalism in my home country before and I wanted to try out how well I could work on my own (as opposed to group work). The grant was especially helpful when booking flight tickets, as well as paying for different bus fares, in and out of Denmark.

In Finland, I met up with 2 transgender men who shared their stories with me. I wanted to meet them in order to see how the law affected their lives. One of them lived in Ypäjä and was not really aware of the law and had little to complain, but the other one, who lived in Helsinki, felt like it was unfair and wanted me to share his story. The grant was really helpful and appreciated at this point as I had to travel 2-3 hours back and forth on separate days, from where I was staying, and I also needed to eat.

I also had the chance to interview an Amnesty International employee who shared her views on the current law, and gave me their opinions on why he and Amnesty International think the law should be reformed.

Finally I interviewed a member of the conservative Christian Democratic Party, who is openly for not reforming the current law. I interviewed her in order to get "two sides of the story". Unfortunately I wasn't able to meet her since our timetables didn't match. However, I was able to interview her by phone and write about her view points.

I also interviewed a psychiatric doctor from Helsinki.

This project was incredibly difficult, but also very interesting and teaching. I learnt a lot during my trip to Finland. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December I travelled back to Denmark.

I'm really grateful for the grant, as it allowed me to do my project without worrying about the financial aspect of it.

Thank you!

Sara Silvennoinen