

# Congresso internazionale

## **SALUTE TRANSGENDER NELL'ARCO DELLA VITA: TRA BENESSERE E DIRITTI**

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## **Iva Žegura**

### **BIO**

Iva Žegura is a licensed university specialist of clinical psychology and PhD candidate. She has background in gestalt integrative therapy, cybernetics of psychotherapy, and sexual therapy. Žegura works at the University Psychiatric Hospital Vrapče in Zagreb for 20 years. She collaborates with various universities and institutions as associate professor, including the Department of Psychology of University of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb; Department of Psychology of University of Croatian Studies, Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb and Private University Algebra Bernays, IGW Centre Zagreb. She was a trailblazer of LGBTIQ+ affirmative practice in Croatia and region. She initiated development of legislative and health care for transgender and gender diverse people according to the WPATH SOC in Croatia. She is a member of the National List of Experts for the Health Care of Transgender People. She is an author of several scientific papers, and she authored and edited books. Žegura is a member of the several national, European and international professional societies and associations. She is the recipient of several professional certificates of appreciation and awards.

### **Abstract**

According to minority stress theory structural, interpersonal, and individual forms of stigma give rise to proximal stress experiences that in turn elevate health risks for sexual and gender minorities (LGBTIQ+). Interpersonal discrimination and victimization are closely associated with proximal minority stressors, such as internalized trans and homonegativity, and sensitivity to status-based rejection. They are in turn associated with poor mental health and health-risk behaviours and in general poor health outcomes. The effects of chronic stress on the immune system are well documented through allostatic load models. On a global and European level anti-gender movement has emerged that is pushing back on women's, LGBTIQ+ rights, and comprehensive sex education. Anti-gender movement often defines their target as "gender ideology" – a term under whose banner conservative movements systematically misrepresents scientific insights to gain political power, oppress, and cease LGBTIQ+ and women's rights which has repercussions on health care and sexual well-being of LGBTIQ+ people. It is harmful to the profession, to the professionals who work with trans and gender-diverse people, to trans people who seek professional help, and to society, because anti-gender rhetoric widens the societal divisions, and petrifies prejudices, stigmatization, and oppression.

Our professions cannot be seen as isolated from societal impacts. As professionals, especially if the professional has an LGBTIQ+ identity, they are exposed to the harmful impacts of stigma-related stressors, and oppression that can impact their health, well-being in general and sexual well-being per se, and right to practice according to evidence-based knowledge and professional ethics. The professional's perspective is also important to have in mind when talking about both healthcare services for LGBTIQ+ people and barriers in Europe, but also when we're developing curriculum and training programs for professionals.