

Europe

Trans men entering Miss Italy in protest demand apology amid ‘continuous transphobia’ across country

Jul 27 • Written by Chantelle Billson

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Miss Italy trans activists from left to right: Elia Bonci, Jude Guaitamacchi and Federico Barbarossa. (Instagram / elia.lien / @stephaniedreamsphotography / fedor_b)

A group of trans men, who have entered

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Trans men enter Miss Italy contest to protest anti-trans ‘women from birth’ rule

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the Miss Italy contest to protest its ban on trans women, say they want to “blow away the sand castle of biology [organisers have] been hanging on to”.

More than 100 trans men have entered the Miss Italy beauty pageant to protest against patron Patrizia Mirigliani’s insistence that contestants should be “women from birth”.

Mirigliani told local radio earlier this month that she isn’t interested in the “glittery bandwagon of trans activism”.

Activist Federico Barbarossa, who is from southern Italy, began the protest. He told PinkNews that the pageant’s stance is yet another example of growing hostility towards LGBTQ+ people in his country.

“Since the very first moment I heard about the ‘women from birth’ rule, it was clear to me how out of touch with the present this pageant was,” Barbarossa said.

“I signed up as a joke at first, but I really wanted to blow away the sand castle built on biology that they’ve been hanging on to.”

He added that he hopes to “dismantle an outdated fetish for biology and so-called ‘right bodies’ that often leads to dehumanisation of trans people”.

In September 2022, Italy elected right-wing populist Giorgia Meloni as prime minister. She had campaigned against the “LGBT lobby” and “gender ideology” and her impact is already being felt.

In March, Meloni ordered that state agencies should no longer register the children of same-sex couples. In July, [lesbian mothers reported receiving letters confirming that their names would be removed from their children’s birth certificates.](#)

Barbarossa said that in southern Italy, trans healthcare is often overlooked, and the organisation where he is an activist, Mixed LGBTQIA+, often deals with “territory-specific issues such as creating safe spaces in an area that is strongly hostile” to trans people.

“This is a proud fightback, we are here to stay,” he added. “Miss Italy is just another example of Italy’s resistance to keep up with times, and their positions are so ridiculous that we were able to pull off a national campaign with a smile on our face, laughing at their struggle to keep up with so many subscriptions from ‘female from birth’ people, just as they requested.”

'It's shocking to witness the attack on LGBTQIA+ rights in Italy'

Trans and non-binary advocate, and the founder of global solidarity campaign Trans People Are Loved, Jude Guitamacchi, told PinkNews: "It's shocking to witness the attack on LGBTQIA+ rights in Italy."

Guitamacchi is Italian-born but lives in the UK. During a trip to visit his family in Italy, they became ill and were forced to re-apply for a female ID card to access healthcare, despite having a male UK passport.


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Over 100 trans men enter Miss Italy pageant after organiser says only "women from birth" allowed

Beatrice Fanucci
Tue, 25 July 2023 at 3:22 pm CEST · 3-min read



This article is about trans men entering the Miss Italy pageant. In the photo, split screen of contestants at one of the Miss Italy past editions and one of the trans activists who is boycotting th ... [More](#)

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@missitalia are ageist! I just tried to apply to enter as it's been announced that only people assigned female at birth can apply. Since I also have a female Italian identity card and I was born in Italy I am eligible. I am hoping they might reconsider extending their age bracket? I look great in a dress and I'm a face of Harrods Beauty surely you'd consider me lol? Since I was born in Milan does this mean I can enter @missitalialombardiaofficial ? @missitalia you are transphobic and in 2023 there is absolutely no

excuse. Don't think we won't stand up for our trans sisters because an attack on them is an attack on all of us. We expect fair judging mind you so please check out my hot non-binary portfolio 🥰. There is absolutely not excuse for this behaviour. Drag us into the past and we'll drag you into the future...WELL DONE @fedor_b for challenging them and launching this initiative 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌 @missitalia should be embarrassed this generation and next won't stand for this kind of BS. We're here we're trans, non-binary, queer and absolutely not going anywhere. When Italy is very very far down at number 34 on the @igla2023 list of LGBTQIA+ inclusive countries you're doing Italy no favours!!! An attack on transgender rights like this is not acceptable...

We expect you all to stand against this @missitaliaveneto @missitaliaabruzzo @missitaliacalabria @missitaliamarche @miss.italialiguria @missitaliatrentinoaltoadige @missitaliafriuliveneziagiulia @missitaliatoscana_ @miss_italia_campania @missitaliamoliseofficial @missitaliapuglia @missitaliaumbria @missitalialazio @missitalia_usa

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Guaitamacchi pointed to Italy being placed 34th out of 49 countries in the Rainbow Europe ranking of LGBTQ+ rights.

A report accompanying the annual list cited hate speech from politicians, anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes, Meloni's election and the rollback of parental rights for the low placing.

"This move [by Miss Italy] has done the country no favours," Guaitamacchi added.

"Luckily, we have some amazing trans activists in Italy like Federico who are willing to stand up for their trans sisters. I'd encourage trans allies to do the same. Italy is moving backwards but I'm hopeful that this generation will drag them into the future."

'We can only stand together and amplify our voices'

Astro Ferrante told PinkNews he joined the protest against Miss Italy because "as trans people, we don't have many ways to be heard in Italy, even less here in the south", adding: "Too often society forgets about us. If we want to be listened to, we can only stand together and amplify our voices.

Trans activist Astro Ferrante



Trans activist Astro Ferrante has entered Miss Italy to “amplify” the voices of the trans community. (Astro Ferrante)

“I never really thought of joining a pageant before, as I disagree with their stereotypical feminine imaginary, but if this little effort on my part can help some sisters who want to participate, then I’m all in.”

Author and activist, Elia Bonci, told PinkNews he entered the beauty pageant as “a gesture of protest against the transphobic declarations of the patron of the contest... and as a gesture of sisterhood towards all those trans women who are unjustly excluded from the contest and beyond”.

He added: “I want to clarify that what we want to achieve is not only that Miss Italia opens its doors to trans women and apologises, but [also], above all, that the situation of institutional and continuous discrimination and transphobia experienced by trans people in Italy is finally brought to light.”



elia.lien
Roma, Italia / Rome, Italy

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Mi sono iscritto a Miss Italia!

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Sulla scia di [@fedor_b](#) , [@caaptivus](#) e [@guglielmogiannotta](#) mi sono iscritto anche io a [@missitalia](#) 🇮🇹

È sorprendente come il regolamento Transfobico e trans-escludente sia in qualche modo invece simpaticamente includente per gli uomini trans!

Infatti, come mi faceva notare [@guglielmogiannotta](#) , nel regolamento c'è scritto che le partecipanti devono essere "di sesso femminili sin dalla nascita".

Questa dicitura purtroppo, lo sappiamo bene, esclude le donne trans. Ma non essendo chiara (ed essendoci ovviamente totale confusione tra sesso assegnato alla nascita, identità di genere e tutta ciò che concerne la transgenerità) permette comunque agli uomini trans o a tutte coloro che hanno sesso assegnato alla nascita femminile di potersi iscrivere.

Per questo, invito tutti i ragazzi trans che se la sentono a mandare la propria candidatura. Voglio proprio vedere la faccia di chi dovrà esaminare le richieste quando si ritroverà davanti questi bei maschioni!

È finita l'era in cui si poteva essere degli str*nzi Transfobici senza nessuna conseguenza.

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The Miss Italy row follows **Rikkie Valerie Kollé** making history by becoming the first trans woman to be crowned Miss Netherlands.

Following her win earlier this month, Kollé has been subjected to transphobic hate, but she has **handled the trolls by thanking them for giving her “a bigger platform”** than she could ever have imagined.

She will now compete in **Miss Universe**, which will be held in El Salvador in December.

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