

Malta teħtieg approċċ pass pass għad-diskussjoni dwar il-mewt assistita

Mejju, 2025

Il-Partit Momentum iqis li wasal iż-żmien għal diskussjoni pubblika serja u bir-reqqa dwar il-kwistjoni kumplessa tal-mewt assistita f'Malta. Dan huwa suġġett sensittiv ħafna, li jolqot deċiżjonijiet dwar it-tmiem tal-ħajja, u Momentum jirrispetta l-opinjoni varji li jistgħu jinqalgħu f'dan id-dibattitu.

Konsistenti mal-istatut ta' Momentum, li jqis kwistjonijiet ta' din in-natura bħala kwistjonijiet ta' kuxjenza personali, il-membri u l-kandidati tagħna se jkollhom libertà sħiħa ta' espressjoni u, fl-aħħar mill-aħħar, libertà ta' vot meta jridu jittieħdu d-deċiżjonijiet.

Madankollu, xorta nixtiequ nagħtu l-ħsibijiet preliminari tagħna dwar id-dokument ippubblikat mill-gvern.

Rigward il-pubblikazzjoni reċenti tal-gvern, aħna favur approċċ li jippermetti deliberazzjoni tassew profonda u raġunata. Aħna mħassba li perjodu ta' żmien limitat, bħall-perjodu propost ta' 60 jum, mhuwiex biżżejjed għal suġġett ta' dan il-kobor, speċjalment meta jikkoinċidi ma' perjodu fejn ħafna familji u studenti huma okkupati bl-eżamijiet akkademici.

Bażikament, biex ngħiduha fi kliem ċar, aħna ma nafdawx fl-intenzjonijiet tal-gvern, peress li l-istorja reċenti urietna li l-għanijiet reali tal-gvernijiet Muscat u Abela meta jniedu inizjattivi bħal dawn huma aktar biex jirbħu punti politiċi milli biex ipogġu l-ġid komuni fuq quddiem.

Dan l-aġir iqajjem tħassib, simili għal kif ġiet immanigġjata r-riforma tal-marijuana, fejn kwistjonijiet soċjali tant kumplessi ġew meħuda b'għaġla, probabilmment biex jintlaħqu skopijiet politiċi. Biex jintlaħaq progress sinifikanti fuq kwistjoni delikata bħal din jinħtiegu żmien u diskussjoni aktar estiżi.

Minħabba n-nuqqas ta' serjetà li wera l-gvern meta l-legiżla dwar l-użu tal-marijuana, il-parlament issa kien imġiegħel jemenda l-liġi relattivament ġdida eżistenti dwar il-marijuana sabiex jipprova jsewwi xi

wħud mill-ħafna nuqqasijiet li fuqhom il-gvern ma agixxiex qabel, meta ġie mwissi minn esperti u partijiet oħra interessati, qabel it-tnedija tal-liġi.

Għalhekk, bħala l-ewwel punt, Momentum jitlob li d-dibattitu dwar il-mewt assistita jiġi mtawwal għal kemm hemm bżonn żmien biex jiġu diskussi fid-dettall l-implikazzjonijiet kollha ta' liġi sensittiva bħal din. Jekk ir-Renju Unit għadu jiddiskuti wara sentejn, jekk Franza u Spanja ħadu aktar minn sentejn ta' diskussjoni qabel ma ġiet promulgata l-liġi, kif jista' jkun li l-amministrazzjoni Abela qed tagħti biss 60 jum lill-pubbliku biex jiddiskuti? Din l-għaġla tikkonferma li l-priorità hija semplicement li jinkisbu voti.

Barra minn hekk, irridu nipproċedu b'għarfien profond tar-riskji potenzjali ta' abbuż inerenti fi kwalunkwe leġiżlazzjoni dwar il-mewt assistita. Huwa preċiżament minħabba dawn ir-riskji u n-natura irrevokabbli ta' deċiżjonijiet bħal dawn li hija meħtieġa attenzjoni metikoluża għad-dettall fit-tfassil ta' kwalunkwe qafas potenzjali. Dan jenfasizza l-ħtieġa ta' proċess mhux mgħaġġel.

Momentum jemmen li l-progress fuq din il-kwistjoni huwa meħtieġ, iżda b'approċċ pass pass. Aħna nsostnu li dan il-progress għandu jinkiseb permezz ta' proċess meqjus. Li wieħed jimxi direttament minn diskussjoni inizjali għal riżoluzzjoni finali komprensiva mingħajr ma jiġu indirizzati l-istadij interim ikun ifisser li wieħed jinjora l-kumplessità tas-suġġett.

Momentum iħoss il-bżonn li jippartecipa b'mod kostruttiv f'dan id-dibattitu. Aħna nipproponu li d-diskussjoni tiġi strutturata sekwenzjalment, billi jiġu indirizzati aspetti individwali wieħed wieħed, aktar milli bħala pakkett wieħed li jinkludi kolloxx. Pereżempju, l-ewwel pass vitali jkun li jiġu eżaminati bir-reqqa u mtejbja s-servizzi tal-kura palljattiva. Infahħru lil organizzazzjonijiet bħall-Hospice Movement li jipprovdu servizzi essenzjali, u nemmnu li l-appoġġ tal-gvern f'dan il-qasam għandu jissaħħaħ biex jiġi żgurat li l-kura komprensiva tkun disponibbli universalment.

Ladarba nkunu għamilna progress tangibbli fuq il-kura palljattiva, id-diskussjoni mbagħad tista' tipproċedi b'mod naturali biex tikkunsidra suġġetti relatati sussegwenti, bħat-testament bijoloġiku (living will). Jekk nindirizzaw kull aspekt individwali b'mod sistematiku, nistgħu nħallu biżżejjed żmien għal dibattitu pubbliku infurmat u riflessjoni, li jippermettu lill-komunità tilhaq konkluzjonijiet ikkunsidrati sew f'kull stadju.

Dan l-approċċ metodiku jiżgura li l-fokus jibqa' fuq il-benesseri u l-interessi tal-individwi u l-pazjenti. Momentum jemmen li dibattitu itwal u aktar meqjus huwa l-aktar mod responsabbli u kostruttiv biex jinkiseb progress ġenwin fuq din il-kwistjoni importanti ta' kuxjenza personali.

Dan il-mod gradwali jiżgura li fuq quddiem jibqa' il-benesseri tal-individwi u l-pazjenti. Momentum jipproponi li jiġi adottat il-mudell tal-parlament Skoċċiż, fejn m'hemmx liġi waħda, iżda leġiżlazzjonijiet differenti għal sitwazzjonijiet speċifiċi.

Per eżempju, il-Parlament Skoċċiż kien ippropona żewġ liġijiet flimkien:

- Proposta ta' liġi dwar il-kura palljattiva:
<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/proposals-for-bills/proposed-palliative-care-scotland-bill>
- Liġi dwar mewt assistita għal adulti morda b'mod terminali
<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/s6/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

Momentum jissuggerixxi li d-dibattitu f'Malta jkun strutturat fi tliet fażijiet konsekuttivi:

1. Liġi dwar id-dritt għall-kura palljattiva.
2. Liġi dwar id-dritt għal testment bijoloġiku (living will).
3. Liġi dwar id-dritt għall-mewt assistita għall-adulti.

B'dan il-mod, jinholq dibattitu itwal u aktar dettaljat, li jkun l-aktar mod responsabbli u kostruttiv biex jinkiseb progress fuq din il-kwistjoni sensittiva tant importanti.

Malta needs a step-by-step approach to the assisted death discussion

May, 2025

Momentum believes the time is right for a considered and thorough public discussion on the complex issue of assisted death. This is a profoundly sensitive subject, touching upon end-of-life considerations, and we acknowledge and respect the diverse perspectives that arise in such a debate.

Consistent with Momentum's statute, which recognises matters of this nature as issues of personal conscience, our members and candidates will have full freedom of expression and, ultimately, freedom of vote when decisions are to be made.

However, we still want to give our preliminary thoughts on the document published by the government.

Regarding the government's recent publication, we advocate for an approach that allows for truly deep and reasoned deliberation. We are concerned that a limited timeframe, such as the proposed 60-day period, is not sufficient for a topic of this magnitude, especially when it coincides with a period where many families and students are understandably preoccupied with academic examinations.

Basically, to say it in clear words, we are very mistrustful of the government's intentions, since recent history has shown us that the Muscat and Abela governments' real aims when launching such initiatives are more to garner political points than to put the common good at the forefront.

This approach of trying to deal with such sensitive affairs in a very hasty way, unfortunately, brings to mind previous instances, such as the marijuana reform, where complex societal issues appeared to be hastened, potentially prioritising political timelines over the depth of public consultation required. Meaningful progress on such a delicate matter requires a more extended and accommodating schedule, free from the appearance of undue urgency for political gain. Indeed, because of government's lack of seriousness when legislating on marijuana use, parliament has now been forced to amend the relatively new existing marijuana law in order to try and block some of the many loopholes on which the government did not act, when forewarned by experts and interested parties prior to the launching of the law.

Therefore, as a first point, Momentum demands that the debate on assisted death is prolonged for as long as necessary to thoroughly discuss all the implications of such a sensitive law. If the UK is still discussing after two years, if it took Spain and France over two years of discussion before the law was enacted, how is it that the Abela administration is just giving the public 60 days to discuss?

Moreover, we must proceed with a profound awareness of the potential risks of abuse inherent in any legislation concerning assisted death. It is precisely because of these risks and the irreversible nature of such decisions that the utmost care and meticulous attention to detail are required in crafting any potential framework. This underscores the need for an unhurried process.

With regards to the issue of assisted death, it is Momentum's firm belief that progress on this issue is necessary. We contend that such progress must be achieved through a carefully considered, step-by-step process. To move directly from an initial discussion to a comprehensive final resolution without addressing the interim stages would be to overlook the nuances and complexities involved.

Momentum is keen to participate constructively in this debate. We propose that the discussion be structured sequentially, addressing individual aspects one by one, rather than as a single, all-encompassing package. For instance, a vital first step would be to thoroughly examine and enhance palliative care services. It is commendable that organisations like the Hospice Movement provide essential services, and we believe government support in this area should be strengthened to ensure comprehensive care is universally available.

Once we have made tangible progress on palliative care, the discussion could then naturally proceed to consider subsequent related topics, such as living wills. By addressing each component systematically, we can allow ample time for informed public discourse and reflection, enabling the community to reach well-considered conclusions at each stage.

This methodical and phased approach will ensure that the focus remains steadfastly on the well-being and interests of individuals and patients. Momentum believes that a longer, more clearly delineated debate, with distinct milestones, is the most responsible and constructive way forward to achieve genuine progress on this important matter of personal conscience.

Momentum therefore suggests that we should consider adopting the Scottish parliament's model, whereby we do not have one comprehensive law that encompasses all issues in one package, but instead propose different legislations that deal with specific situations that could eventually lead to the final choice of assisted death

For example, the Scottish parliament has proposed, at the same time:

- A proposed bill for palliative care:
<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/proposals-for-bills/proposed-palliative-care-scotland-bill>
- A law on assisted dying for terminally ill adults:
<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/s6/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

Momentum thus proposes that the debate in Malta is structured following this model, in three basic chronological phases:

- Bill on the right to palliative care.
- Bill on the right to a living will.
- Bill on the right to assisted dying for adults.

In this way, a longer and more informed debate would be the most responsible and constructive way to achieve progress on such an important and sensitive issue.