

The Gender Recognition Act 2004

Call for evidence

In July 2018 the Government opened a consultation on how best to reform the Gender Recognition Act 2004. In September 2020, the Minister for Women and Equalities set out the Government's proposals, in response to this consultation:

The Government said it would:

- Place the whole procedure online
- Reduce the fee from £140 to a “nominal amount”.
- Open at least three new gender clinics this year in order to reduce waiting lists.
- Will the Government's proposed changes meet its aim of making the process “kinder and more straight forward”?
- Should a fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained? Are there other financial burdens on applicants that could be removed or retained?
- Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?
- Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?
- What is your view of the statutory declaration and should any changes have been made to it?
- Does the spousal consent provision in the Act need reforming? If so, how? If it needs reforming or removal, is anything else needed to protect any rights of the spouse or civil partner?
- Should the age limit at which people can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) be lowered?
- What impact will these proposed changes have on those people applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on trans people more generally?
- What else should the Government have included in its proposals, if anything?
- Does the Scottish Government's proposed Bill offer a more suitable alternative to reforming the Gender Recognition Act 2004?

Wider issues concerning transgender equality and current legislation:

- Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?
- Are there challenges in the way the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010 interact? For example, in terms of the different language and terminology used across both pieces of legislation.
- Are the provisions in the Equality Act for the provision of single-sex and separate-sex spaces and facilities in some circumstances clear and useable for service providers and service users? If not, is reform or further guidance needed?

Written evidence submitted by Mr David Kerley [GRA1770]

- Does the Equality Act adequately protect trans people? If not, what reforms, if any, are needed
- What issues do trans people have in accessing support services, including health and social care services, domestic violence and sexual violence services?
- Are legal reforms needed to better support the rights of gender-fluid and non-binary people? If so, how?

This is a response from Christians, my wife and myself. More than half the English population identifies as Christian.

As Christians, we believe the Bible is the word of God. The Bible states that we are made in the image of God as male or female (Genesis 1:27 - "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them").

We recognise that some people may feel that they should have been born in the opposite sex, but this may be transient leading to a wish to return to normality in the future. Also, we understand that research among teenagers has indicated that these feelings are often linked to other mental issues.

To change one's legal status as man or woman is a very serious step. Much more serious when physical intervention is made to the body which God gave at conception and birth. In life, we have to take some steps very seriously even when they **are** in accordance with God's word, the Bible. Examples include marriage and preparation for death by making a will, These steps require legal documentation and also some expenditure.

In the light of these facts, we wish to state that a change in status from male to female or vice versa should not be undertaken lightly.

Therefore, we do not believe there should be further loosening of the legal requirements beyond what the Government is proposing.

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