

I am a trans non-binary individual, and I am concerned about the level of difficulties, discrimination and violence experienced by trans people across the UK. I am responding to this consultation because I do not feel that the proposed changes go far enough, nor do they meet the demands of the public as evidenced in responses to the GRA consultation. The UK is far behind other countries, such as Ireland, where a system of self-declaration is used and has seen no adverse results, only benefits to trans people.

Question 3: Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?

Yes, the requirement should be removed. Trans and non-binary people should be allowed to self-identify. Getting a diagnosis is difficult, with doctors required to put together in depth reports on the person's medical history. This is both time consuming and invasive of trans people's privacy. According to the BMA, doctors support trans people's right to self-identify, and do not wish to continue participating in the current process.

Diagnosing gender dysphoria can also add unnecessary stress and stigma for trans people by pathologizing their experience.

Question 4: Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?

Yes, this requirement should be removed. Firstly, it can be difficult and/or unsafe for trans people to live in their gender full time. Many people are in living or work situations where there is risk of discrimination or violence against them if their gender is revealed. For example, Stonewall state that 12% of trans people have been physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the last year alone. I personally am not out at work because of risk of discrimination. Secondly, what constitutes 'living in their acquired gender'? If this requirement only means that people must use a name and pronouns appropriate to their gender, how will people with gender neutral names or using they/them pronouns be viewed in relation to this requirement? On the other hand, I do not believe that names and pronouns are the main ingredients of gender. If you were to ask the population to define gender, I expect you would get as many answers as people. Who defines the standards or definitions of gender? This requirement serves to reinforce harmful gender stereotypes and leaves little room for people who exist outside a rigid gender binary.

Question 6: 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?

This provision should be removed. Now that both marriage and civil partnerships are legal for both hetero and same sex couples, there is no legal conflict if one person in the partnership transitions. Divorce can be a long, difficult, and expensive process, even if this is the outcome desired by both partners. If there is any contention then this process is even more difficult. The spousal veto gives power to the partner over

the trans person, in a scenario where the trans person is already potentially at risk (e.g. Stonewall found that over a quarter of trans people experienced domestic abuse in the last year).

Question 9: What else should the Government have included in its proposals, if anything?

Non-binary people should be included within the GRA. Stonewall found that over 30% of non-binary people experienced gender-based hate crime in the last year and 20% experienced discrimination whilst house-hunting. Half of non-binary people are not out at work because of fear of discrimination. All these factors take a severe toll on the mental health of non-binary people. Personally, I have faced discrimination due to my gender presentation, and I am not out at work currently. Although, in theory, the company has a policy to support transition at work, the reality is that many colleagues would not recognise my gender. The government could support non-binary people by legally recognising non-binary gender and making it possible to get documents (e.g. passports and driving licenses) without gender/sex stated on them. Adding a third category for gender on documentation would be preferable to the current situation, but is not ideal because it can increase risk of discrimination against all trans and non-binary people (people can be 'outed' as trans when required to show documentation listing a sex/gender marker which does not match what others might expect based on their appearance).

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