

Government Says Biological Sex No Longer Important on Passports

Anyone who wants to change the sex recorded on their passport will soon be able to do so as easily as if they were changing their name, following a government announcement.

Currently, if someone wants to change their stated sex they have to provide a doctor's letter to prove that they are permanently living as the opposite sex.

The number of people who have been issued with a Gender Recognition Certificate since the 2004 Act to change their legal birth sex is under 4,500 – around per cent of the U.K. population.

'Underlying conflicts'

Under the new rules, they will have to fill out a form and supply Her Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO) with some "supporting documentation."

A spokesman for the Government said: "HMPO will extend the range of supporting documentation that can be used by an applicant to demonstrate use of their gender of choice in their daily life. This will mirror the approach adopted for passport applicants who wish to change their name."

Equalities Minister Nicky Morgan commented: "It's fantastic to see trans issues increasingly on the public agenda. But we still don't know enough. That's why we are going to work with transgender people to understand more about the issues facing them."

The move was met with concern by Simon Calvert, Deputy

Director for Public Affairs at The Christian Institute, who stressed that such measures do nothing to resolve the underlying issues.

Political point-scoring

“Official documents have to reflect reality, and the reality is that people are either male or female. I don’t think most people would endorse the idea of inventing a third category. It looks to me like a political move.

“Official documents are crucial when it comes to matters of national security. They are not a blank slate for politicians to use to score political points.”

Official documents

Earlier this year, the Women and Equalities Committee recommended that the terms “male” and “female” be removed from official forms and documentation because they are “distressing” for transsexual people.

It called for the government to move towards the “non-gendering” of official records as a “general principle” and only record the sex of an applicant when it is a “relevant piece of information”.

Ministers have said they are carrying out an internal review to ascertain which documents make “unnecessary demands” for a person’s sex.

Politics

Mr Calvert said: “It is cruel to make transsexual people believe that surgery, or “non-gendering” of official records, will solve all their problems. It won’t.

“This is borne out by the tragically high suicide rate for

people who have had a “sex-change” operation.”