



Government
Equalities Office

Gender Recognition Act

What people said



easy
read

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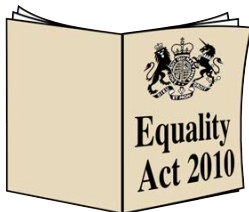
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Introduction



This information comes from the Government's Equalities Office.

We are the part of the Government that works to make things fair for everyone.



We are looking at the **Gender Recognition Act 2004**.



This is the law which lets you change your **gender** from the one you were born with.



Gender means either of the 2 sexes - male and female.



We asked people what they thought about this law, and what changes should be made to bring it up to date.



This document explains what people said.

The law at the moment

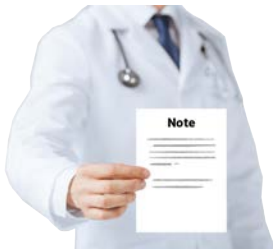


If you want to legally change your gender at the moment, the laws says you have to:



- get a letter from your doctor which says you have a condition called **gender dysphoria**

Gender dysphoria is the distress you experience when you feel you are the wrong gender



- show us a report about the medical treatment you are having



- prove you have lived as the new gender for at least 2 years



- sign a statement in front of a solicitor that you agree to stay the new gender for the rest of your life



- pay a fee of £140.



If you are married and want to change your gender, the law says you have to get an agreement from your husband or wife.



Gender Recognition Certificate

When you have legally changed your gender, you will be given a certificate from the Government.



This is called a **Gender Recognition Certificate**.



The certificate means that you are now officially recognised as your new gender.

How we asked people what they thought about the law



In July and October 2018, we sent out a questionnaire asking people what they thought about the way you can legally change your gender.



Over 100,000 people completed the questionnaire.



We also spoke with about 140 organisations.



Trans people

Trans means that you are now a different gender to the one you were given when you were born.



It is also used to describe people who are going through a gender change.



Just over 1,000 trans people completed our questionnaire.



About 600 of these people had received a Gender Recognition Certificate.



About 100 of these people had been refused a Gender Recognition Certificate.



About 300 of these people were waiting to get their Gender Recognition Certificate.

What people said



The Gender Recognition Certificate

Many trans people said that it is important to be able to get a Gender Recognition Certificate.



But some people didn't think it was worth getting it.



Gender dysphoria

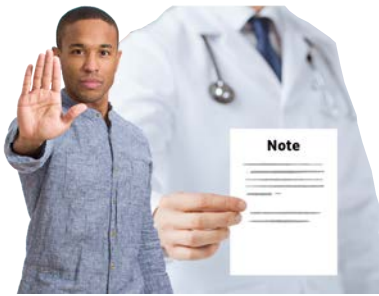
Nearly 2 out of every 3 people said that you should not have to get a letter from your doctor saying you have gender dysphoria.



Some people said that gender dysphoria is not a real condition.



Other people said you should get a letter from the doctor to show that you are taking gender change seriously.



Medical treatment

About 4 out of every 5 people said that we should not ask for a medical report.



People said that by asking for a medical report, we were not giving people respect.



Other people said that providing a medical report showed that you were taking the gender change seriously.



Living in the new gender for 2 years

3 out of 4 people said you should not have to prove that you had been living in your new gender for 2 years.



People said it is difficult for young people who may not be able to get documents, like bills, that show they are a new gender.



Other people said that providing proof showed that you were taking gender change seriously.



Making a statement in front of a solicitor

There is statement that the law says you must sign in front of a solicitor.



The statement says that you agree to stay in your new gender for the rest of your life.



Most people said this statement was a good idea.



But half of the people said it should not say 'for the rest of your life'.



Agreement from your husband or wife

Most people said that you should not have to get an agreement from your husband or wife.



People said that you should be able to make your own decision.



Other people said that in a marriage, the views of one person should not be put above the views of the other.



£140 fee

Just over half of the people said there should be no fee.



People said that this is stopping people legally changing their gender.



Most of the people who wanted to keep the fee said it should not be reduced.



Privacy

Most people said that the part of the law about privacy was not good enough.



At the moment, if someone shares your personal information without asking, you have 6 months to report it.



People said you should have longer to report it.



Younger people

People had strong views about the age that you can change your gender.



At the moment you have to be 18 before you can legally change your gender.

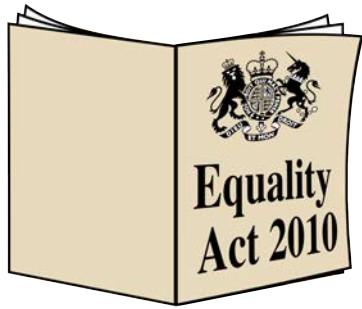


Some people said that the age should be lower because it is unfair on young people.



Other people said that young people under 18 should not be able to make decisions that would affect the rest of their lives.

The Equality Act 2010



The Equality Act 2010 is a law that says you have to be fair to everyone.



It says you should not treat people differently because they are a man or a woman.



But you can treat men and women differently in certain circumstances - like:



- sports competitions
- services for one gender only - like women's refuges, women's prisons



- services for people who have been abused



- bedrooms and toilets



- the armed forces



- marriage - churches are allowed to say that a marriage is between a man and a woman



- insurance - women tend to live longer than men, so insurance companies can charge men more for life insurance.



We are not planning to change the Equality Act 2010.



But we asked people how these things would be affected if it was easier to change your gender.

What people said

Sports competitions



Most people thought that sports competitions would be affected by a change in the law which makes it easier to change your gender.



Women only services and men only services

People had strong views about whether women only or men only services would be affected.



Some people thought that women only services would not be so safe.



People who have been abused

We asked trans people who have been abused what they thought. Only a few gave us any information.



People said that the support is not very good for trans people who have been abused.



People said it was difficult because services are mostly for women only or men only.



Women only and men only spaces

Some people thought that men could say they were trans just so they can get into women's spaces.



Others said there is no real change. Trans people also have a right to a safe space.



Armed forces

Most people said that trans people should be allowed to join the armed forces if they were strong enough.



Marriage

Half of the people thought that changing the law would make it harder for churches to say marriage should only be for a man and a woman.



Insurance

Most people thought that the cost of life insurance would not be affected by making it easier to legally change your gender.

Other issues



We wanted to know if people had any other thoughts about how the law should be changed to bring it up to date.



Some people said:

- the law needs to change to take account of people who are **non-binary**
- people born with male and female body parts should not have to provide medical information when legally changing their gender
- the government should think about how changes to this law affect women and children.



Non-binary means you are neither a man or a woman.

For more information



If you need more information please contact us by:



Post:

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