Historic first step: Swedish Parliament simplifies gender recognition process but doesn’t go far enough

article, legal gender recognition

In a historic vote today, the Swedish Parliament have simplified the process for legal gender recognition. The updated law means that trans people will be able to change their gender markers on official documents more easily and should no longer require a medical diagnosis. However, the updated law is not based on self-determination and trans people will still need a medical certificate to change their legal gender.

The new process means trans people will face much shorter waiting times to change their legal gender. At the moment, trans people in Sweden have to wait up to eight years to make the change. The delay is due to medical requirements and the backlog in receiving trans-specific healthcare.

We welcome today’s vote as an important first step towards a procedure based on the gender self-determination of the person concerned.

Seventeen years in the making, updating the law has taken a very long time. In the months and weeks leading up to today’s decision, transphobia has dominated public debate about the law.

In 1972, Sweden was the first country to have a legal gender recognition law. Many other countries modelled their laws on the Swedish law.

Thank you and congratulations to all the organisations and activists that have worked tirelessly to make this happen.

More information
Read New gender recognition act: a step in the right direction on RFSL’s website