Swedish gender recognition law takes effect, but medical barriers remain

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As of 1 July 2025, Sweden's new Legal Gender Recognition Act has officially come into force. The reform simplifies the legal gender recognition procedure but falls short of a full self-determination model.

The new Swedish proposal separates the requirements for changing one's legal gender marker in identity documents from accessing gender-affirming surgery, which is welcome. However, a trans person is still required to be medically examined and a decision made by the National Board of Health and Welfare as to who is entitled to access the change. This continues to pathologise trans people as medically ill, which violates human rights. However, the reform simplifies legal gender changes by allowing, for example, digital healthcare consultations instead of lengthy medical assessments. The proposal also lowers the age limit from the current 18 to 16 years old. For those under 16, parental consent is still required.

After attempting to delay the law, the Christian Democrats and right-wing opposition have now vowed to mobilise efforts to reverse it

Calls to action

TGEU urges the Swedish government to:

- Ensure procedures are based on self-determination only
- Remove the requirement for a medical examination and all medicalised aspects of the procedure to access legal gender recognition;
- and remove existing age limits.

More info

- Sweden Proposes Legal Gender Recognition Reform Without Self-determination | TGEU
- New gender recognition act: a step in the right direction | RFSL

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