



PRESS RELEASE IMMEDIATE

LONDON 30 June 2026

Trans Exile Network and other organisations issue urgent travel advisory over UK civil rights crisis

This Press release is issued on behalf of the Trans Exile Network.

Today the **Trans Exile Network**, which is a mutual self-help group for the many people who have left or who are leaving the UK following the UK's anti-trans laws coming into force, joins with **TACC (Trans Advocacy and Complaints Collective)**, **Compton's Café CIC** and **Transpilot Ltd** in issuing an **urgent travel advisory** which will be sent to all known EU and other global organisations which advise LGBTQ+ people or publish travel guides which include safety guidance for LGBTQ+ people, and numerous other significant global bodies and rights organisations.

Speaking from Ireland where she lives in exile Dr Victoria McCloud said:

*“It is a sad state of affairs when independent organisations protecting and serving the civil freedoms of the trans and intersex communities, and other people including non-trans women and men affected by the UK's anti-trans laws, feel they have to issue a warning to visitors for their own safety. This guidance gets the message out globally: the UK is now a hostile environment for anyone who is, or appears to be not of a conventional gender appearance, and especially trans people and non-feminine presenting women. In this guidance we make the following key points which are the tip of the iceberg. **The message is: stay safe, stay away.**”*

/continues

Key points:

1. **A legal change of sex/gender is no longer recognised as valid in the UK.**
2. Any **sexual contact** between a trans person and a non-trans person can be regarded as a sexual assault or rape, due to a lack of consent, **unless the trans person discloses** that they are trans first.
3. It is official State guidance that if a trans person uses a facility for the sex they identify as, the business is likely to be committing **discrimination** against non-trans people and guidance stresses that this may be **harassment** of the non-trans person; this can be a crime as well as a civil wrong.
4. Trans women are being moved from **female** prisons to **male** ones, **irrespective of whether they have had surgery**, or other factors.
5. The Government has advised that **signs** be put up on doors, informing people of the restrictions on sex-specific spaces (in effect 'no trans' warnings).
6. The Government has advised that people **may be questioned about their presence** if they are believed to be 'transgender' based on their physical appearance. There are no documents in the UK which are regarded as proof of sex.
7. The UK police have introduced a policy that searches of trans people must be done by an officer of the same **birth** sex. For example a post-operative trans **woman** may be searched by a **man**.
8. In an emergency or for routine treatment on the National Health Service trans people must not be placed in single sex wards other than their birth sex (eg a post operative trans **woman** must be on a **male** ward).
9. Trans women no longer have the right to **equal pay** with men and correspondingly trans men no longer have a right to equal pay with women.
10. For visitors entering the UK **for sports, association or club activity**, whether amateur or professional there is a risk of issues over venues and competitions being obliged to exclude trans competitors or treat them in a way different from their home countries.

A copy of the Travel Advisory is attached.

/ends



From The Trans Exile Network (UK)

By email only from: [redacted]

30 June 2026

Urgent safety advice for visitors to the United Kingdom, especially LGBTQ+ visitors

I am writing to you on behalf of the Trans Exile Network (TEN), a support organisation for LGBTQ+ and other people and families relocating from the UK to other countries, due to the current hostile environment in the UK for transgender, non-binary and intersex individuals, or anyone who is seen as transgender (such as non-feminine appearing lesbian women). I also have the support in this letter of the below co-signed trans led and allied organisations.

We draw your urgent attention to the worrying developments which have occurred in the UK over the last year and especially within the last number of weeks. Official Government statutory guidance to business has now mandated trans exclusion and segregation, from all single sex spaces, within public, business and service environments. This will not only adversely affect 'trans' people, but also people suspected of being trans due to their physical appearance, or how they present themselves. This is already leading to serious issues for many UK residents, and is likely to also have potentially serious impacts on some travellers to the UK.

We urge you to please issue urgent travel advice for the attention of anyone travelling to the UK.

Last year the UK was 'red flagged' by the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, and concern has been expressed by the UN and Council of Europe about the UK situation. The UK is now ranked among the very worst for trans rights among European countries.¹²³

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/un-experts-warn-legal-uncertainty-and-rights-implications-following-uk>

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/united-kingdom-commissioner-addresses-human-rights-issues-in-policing-of-protests-and-the-situation-of-trans-people>

³ <https://rainbowmap.ilga-europe.org/>

In the last 5 years alone, there has been an explosion in anti-trans articles in the UK media, with a recent study of just four of the mainstream newspapers, finding 17,000 anti-trans articles (source: Amnesty International)⁴.

Crime against trans people is now **high**: Information can be found here⁵⁶. While the UK retains laws protecting transgender people and other minorities from discrimination and harassment, hostility in the media is contributing to a rise in harassment and abuse in everyday life. Several members of TEN have personally experienced street harassment, including verbal abuse and, on occasion, threatening behaviour.

Visitors should therefore be mindful of an elevated risk if they are, or are perceived to be, visibly transgender, and may wish to take sensible precautions in public spaces.

Your publication provides helpful information for travellers, many of whom may be at real risk if they come to the UK without being aware of the situation. We ask that you consider making sure this is set out in your publication at an appropriate place, as an urgent advisory, so people can make informed decisions on their safety, when deciding to travel to the UK.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. We hope you find it useful in informing your readers, and that you will consider covering the issue.

The specific issues (there are many but these are the most important):

1. **A legal change of sex/gender is no longer recognised as valid** for most purposes in the UK (wherever it is obtained in the world). **No legal documents** (passports, birth certificates, ID cards, driving licences) are accepted as proof of sex, or sex at birth. “Sex” now means **only** “biological sex at birth” and cannot be changed (but there is no legal definition of ‘biological’).
2. Any **sexual contact** between a trans person and a non-trans person can be regarded as a sexual assault or rape, due to a lack of consent, **unless the trans person discloses** that they are trans, and are not of the sex they appear to be.
3. It is official State guidance recently confirmed by a court case⁷ that if a trans person uses a facility for the sex they identify as, the business is likely to be committing **discrimination** against non-trans people and official guidance also stresses that this may be **harassment** of the non-trans person. In the UK harassment can lead to civil damages but can also be prosecuted as a criminal

⁴ <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/latest/new-uk-analysis-reveals--anti-trans-influence-media-politics/>

⁵ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/shaping-policy/hate-crime>

⁶ <https://www.stophateuk.org/about-hate-crime/transgender-hate/>

⁷ <https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nhs-england-loses-discrimination-claim-over-single-sex-spaces/>

offence in some circumstances with a maximum sentence of **six months** in prison (typically for a trans woman, now a male prison). A trans person in the UK is at risk of being ‘set up’ and facing false accusations of harassment and should be vigilant against this possibility. And see for example news coverage⁸

4. Following a court case in June 2026 trans women are being moved from **female** prisons to **male** ones, irrespective of whether they have had surgery or other factors (and likewise with trans men).
5. The Government has advised that **signs** be put up on doors, and that people be told when (for example) joining gyms or associations, informing people of the restrictions on sex-specific spaces.
6. The Government has advised that people **may be questioned about their presence** if they are believed to be ‘transgender’ based on their physical appearance.
7. The UK police have introduced a policy that searches of trans people must be done by an officer of the same **birth** sex. For example a post-operative trans woman may be searched by a man.
8. **Access to health services:** in an emergency or for routine treatment on the National Health Service or any private hospital, trans people must not be placed in single sex wards other than their birth sex (eg a post operative trans woman must be on a male ward) or in sex-neutral spaces of which there are very few in the NHS.
9. Trans women no longer have the right to **equal pay** with men and correspondingly trans men no longer have a right to equal pay with women.
10. For visitors entering the UK **for sports, association or club activity**, whether amateur or professional there is a risk of issues over venues and competitions being obliged to exclude trans competitors or treat them in a way different from their home countries. Children and young persons in particular also may be included in their home country but liable to be legally excluded in the UK, such as Girl Guide members. Visitors should check the position before committing.

⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e2rj3zi02o>

11. For **visiting students** who may be in the UK as part of their university courses, visitors should check carefully what policies a university has adopted towards the segregation of trans people since there is wide variation and some locations are regarded by students now as being hostile when previously the UK education sector was inclusive.

We believe your readers should understand how conditions in the UK have changed, so that transgender people — and others who may be perceived as transgender — can make informed decisions about travelling to, or through, the UK or coming here on work or business.

We have summarised above the problems, which are serious and real implications for LGBTQ+ and other visitors and residents in the UK. **We will now provide below information and sources for some of the points above so that you can research if you wish.**

Further information with sources

1. *“Sex” now means **only** “biological sex at birth” (but there is no legal definition of ‘biological’). **A legal change of sex is no longer recognised as valid** for most purposes in the UK (wherever it is obtained in the world). **No legal documents** (passports, birth certificates, ID cards, driving licences) are accepted as proof of sex, or sex at birth.*

Following a controversial Supreme Court decision, UK equality law now means that a person's "sex" is their **‘biological sex’** which is interpreted as sex as assigned at birth. This applies regardless of any medical or legal gender change, whether obtained in the UK or in a person's home country. See the judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16⁹, and official UK Government legal guidance paras 2.50–2.53 official UK Statutory Guidance¹⁰. There is no official way to ‘prove’ sex and it is left up to the business:

“13.179: “Where there remains a genuine concern about the accuracy of the response to a request for an individual to confirm their sex, then the service provider ... should consider what action is proportionate in the circumstances. There is no type of official record or document in the UK which provides reliable evidence of sex. For example, sex on passports and driving licences may be

⁹ <https://supremecourt.uk/cases/uksc-2024-0042>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026#exceptions-1>

changed with or without a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC), and birth certificates may reflect the acquired gender of someone who has a GRC.”

2. **Sexual contact** between a trans person and a non-trans person can be regarded as a sexual assault or rape, due to a lack of consent, **unless the trans person discloses** that they are trans, and are not of the sex they appear to be. This is ‘sexual assault by deception’.¹¹

Under Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance¹², failure to reveal to the other person that you are ‘trans’ can mean that the partner did not consent, giving rise to a serious sexual offence charge. In August 2025 a trans woman was convicted of sexual assault on this basis. Trans people dating or seeking partners in the UK should therefore be aware of this risk, which can arise even where the other person initiates contact.

3. It is official State guidance recently confirmed by a court case¹³ that if a trans person uses a facility for the sex they identify as, the business is likely to be committing **discrimination** against non-trans people and official guidance also stresses that this may be **harassment** of the non-trans person. In the UK harassment can lead to civil damages but can also be prosecuted as a criminal offence in some circumstances with a maximum sentence of **six months** in prison (typically for a trans woman, now a male prison). A trans person in the UK is at risk of being ‘set up’ and facing false accusations of harassment and should be vigilant against this possibility. And see for example news coverage^{14 15}

See official UK Statutory Guidance¹⁶:

“13.130 If a service provider ... admits trans people to a service intended for the opposite sex, ...

13.131 A service like this is very likely to amount to unlawful sex discrimination against the people of the opposite sex who are not allowed to use it. A service which is provided to women and trans women could also be unlawful sex discrimination or lead to unlawful harassment against women who use the

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cj6xlwn570lo>

¹² <https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/prosecutors-publish-updated-deception-sex-guidance>

¹³ <https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nhs-england-loses-discrimination-claim-over-single-sex-spaces/>

¹⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e2rj3zj02o>

¹⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e2rj3zj02o>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026#exceptions-1>

service. Similar considerations would apply to a service provided for men and trans men.”

See also para. 13.144.

Businesses therefore effectively are expected to ‘police’ these spaces. The guidance is contradictory in that it discourages enforcement where the toilet is not an important (‘integral’) part of the business service. The scope is unclear. Our members are reporting abuse and confrontation in toilets and gyms.

This means that anyone who is, or who appears to be, transgender could be challenged when using single-sex toilets, changing rooms or other facilities. The legal position remains unclear, but there is a risk of trans people being accused of trespassing, or of "harassment" of others, if deemed to be in the wrong place.

Many businesses face the threat of legal action if they do not exclude trans people from single-sex spaces. Gender-neutral toilets and changing rooms exist in some places, but this is limited and cannot be relied upon. From our own experience, we also know that many trans people will not wish to identify themselves as trans by using separate facilities.

<p>4. Following a court case in June 2026 trans women are being moved from female prisons to male ones, irrespective of whether they have had surgery or other factors (and likewise with trans men).</p>

This means that trans women, including those with vaginas, are being moved out of female jails to male jails. Travellers should be aware of the potential risk if they are arrested and charged even if innocent.

Source: see <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2jndnjwexo> and the court judgment at <https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/media/pnbpzgex/2026csoh59-petition-of-for-women-scotland-for-judicial-review.pdf>

5. The Government has advised that **signs** should be placed on doors, and that people should be warned when (for example) joining gyms or associations, informing people of the restrictions on sex-specific spaces.

Para 13.167:

*"In many cases, the primary means of ensuring that lawful provision is to clearly communicate to potential service users or members that those services are available to those of the same sex only. This should be done by using proportionate means which are likely to be effective. These may include signage, promotional materials including online and hard copies and verbal information provided as part of any enrolment, admission or induction process."*¹⁷

6. The Government has advised that people **may be questioned about their presence** if they are believed to be 'transgender' based on their physical appearance.

See official UK Statutory Guidance about when a person can be asked about being transgender, based on appearance. For example (among other paragraphs):

Para 13.147: "... Service providers should consider whether other service users could reasonably object because they are worried about sharing a single or separate-sex service with someone who appears to be of the opposite sex. That will depend on all the circumstances, including the nature of the service in question and the extent to which the trans person presents as the opposite sex."

Para 13.168: "Where, ... there is clear evidence of an issue with members of the opposite sex accessing or seeking to access the single or separate-sex service or association in question, it may be legitimate to ask individuals to provide confirmation that they are of the eligible sex by proportionate means. Evidence of such concern might include the individual's physique or physical appearance, behaviour or concerns raised by other service users."

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026/equality-act-2010-draft-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-associations-2026#exceptions-1>

7. The UK police have introduced a policy that **searches of trans people must be done by an officer of the same birth sex**. For example a post-operative trans woman may be searched by a male police officer.

The source for this is “**Police search guidance**”¹⁸ from The National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC).

“... thorough police searches, such as those which expose intimate body parts, should be carried out by police officers and staff of the same biological sex as the detained person.

There may be very limited exceptions considered where someone requests to be searched by an officer of their gender.”

8. **Access to health services:** in an emergency or for routine treatment on the National Health Service trans people must not be placed in single sex wards other than their birth sex (eg a post operative trans woman on a male ward) or in sex-neutral spaces of which there are very few in the NHS.

NHS policy is now that hospital spaces must be provided based on ‘biological sex’ and not reassigned sex for transgender people¹⁹. There are online reports of trans women being forced onto all-men wards and trans men forced to be shielded behind curtains and placed on women’s wards. *“Transgender women will not have the right to use female-only hospital wards after a ruling clarifying such decisions should be based on biological sex, a minister has said.”*

9. Trans women no longer have the right to **equal pay** with men and correspondingly trans men no longer have a right to equal pay with women.

Source: this is a simple consequence of the court decision referred to in 1 because in UK law a claim for Equal Pay is under the Equality Act 2010 and must include a comparison person of the ‘opposite’ sex. Due to the court decision a trans woman is a man and therefore cannot refer to a man as a comparison.

¹⁸ <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/new-police-search-guidance-following-supreme-court-decision>

¹⁹ https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/trans-women-female-only-nhs-wards-3654371?srsId=AfmBOorgPU1DoHqIKgJV4XrTQy6tmF2LAECc_SxfHapD0M48gEZbZ0QC

10. For visitors entering the UK **for sports, association or club activity**, whether amateur or professional there is a risk of issues over venues and competitions being obliged to exclude trans competitors or treat them in a way different from their home countries. Children and young persons in particular also may be included in their home country but liable to be legally excluded in the UK, such as Girl Guide members. Visitors should check the position before committing.

Source: This follows from the matters above but for Girl Guides see: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2rn250ddjo>

We flag in particular the risk of harm to the mental health of children in this context. Parents should exercise caution.

With very best wishes,

Victoria McCloud

Dr Victoria McCloud, Trans Exile Network UK

Emi Lewis, Director, Trans Advocacy and Complaints Collective.

Carla Ottersen, Director, Compton's Café CIC

Virginia Maine, Co-Founder, Transpilot Ltd

