TransLucent
truth, clarity, justice

TRANS: A COMMUNITY UNDER ATTACK

Every story has two sides, in this report we give you the side that is not being reported.

TRANS: A COMMUNITY UNDER ATTACK (TACUA)

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Forward

This report is authored for MPs and other stakeholders to give an insight into the discrimination and prejudices the trans community suffer, particularly at the hands of bad-faith, trans-hostile actors who seek to remove our human rights.

In October 2017, Prime Minister Theresa May, laying out a plan to reform the Gender Recognition Act, said, *"Trans people still face indignities and prejudice – when they deserve understanding and respect."*

Sadly, at the same time, American Conservatives had precisely the opposite plan.

That same autumn, at a conference attended by President Donald Trump together with a host of anti-LGBT+ right-wing Republicans, long-time anti-trans activist Meg Kilgannon proposed a new course of action:

> *Separate trans activists from the gay rights movement, and their agenda becomes much easier to oppose. The first is to 'divide and conquer'. If we separate the T from the alphabet soup, we'll have more success.*
>
> *Explain that gender identity rights only come at the expense of others: women, sexual assault survivors, female athletes forced to compete against men and boys, ethnic minorities who culturally value modesty, economically challenged children ... children with anxiety disorders ... the list goes on and on and on".*

This proposal became the gender-critical blueprint for the trans discrimination we witness today.

Post-Brexit, with British Conservative politicians keen to bolster the 'special relationship' with the US, the UK was a ready target for disseminating this culture war.

Liz Truss as Minister for Women and Equalities in Boris Johnson's government, developed links with the US far-right think tank Heritage Foundation (later the author of Project 2025) and a raft of trans-hostile measures followed. Suddenly there were 'problems' with trans women in hospital wards, prisons, sports, refuges, toilets and changing rooms. The 'what is a woman' question became a UK political issue with the right-wing media happy to fan the flames.

In total, there are 48,000 trans men and 48,000 trans women in England and Wales. Trans women are outnumbered by cisgender women 633 to one in England and Wales and an even higher ratio in Scotland.

Today in the UK, gender-critical and/or trans-hostile organisations have emerged, as has the suggestion that some receive funding from known anti-trans hate groups. The Alliance Defending Freedom (a named hate group in the US), which promotes an anti-abortion and anti-trans agenda, has increased its UK funding tenfold to almost £1m.

There is no end in sight to the war against trans people (specifically trans women) from far-right agitators, right-wing media, Christian evangelical extremists and gender-critical 'feminists' allegedly protecting so-called 'sex-based rights'. **It's important to state that contrary to the unfounded scaremongering, the existing trans rights do not remove or deny any rights of cis gender women.**

The gender-critical movement

A global hate movement, initially orchestrated by US far-right white supremacists who advocate prejudice, discrimination and exclusion of trans people.

Many people applaud critical thinking because it analyses information and arguments objectively and rationally. Consequently, the term 'gender-critical' may not sound alarm bells and seems reasonable – sadly, however, that is far from true.

At the core of the gender-critical movement are people with strong ties to anti-abortion groups, anti-LGBT+ groups and those who seek to reinforce the patriarchy and return to 'traditional family values'. There are also links to fascist and racist organisations.

Alongside, exists a coalition of far-right agitators, evangelical extremists, traditional radical feminists (mainly on the left and often alleging they promote 'sex-based rights') and social media activists often from countries wanting to destabilise Western culture.

The gender-critical movement has seemingly unlimited funds, which can be traced to the US and the Russian Federation.

> *Media and political campaigns have positioned the rights of LGBTIQ+ people as negotiable and debatable. Some try to frame the human rights of transgender people as being at odds with women's rights, even asserting that trans women do not face gender-based discrimination or that they pose a threat to the rights, spaces, and safety of cisgender women.*

United Nations Women, May 2024

> *The gender critical movement simultaneously denies that transgender identity is real and seeks to eradicate it completely from society. Many gender critical ideologues identify themselves as feminists and believe themselves to be protecting women from men.*
>
> *The movement, a centrepiece of right-wing ascendancy in the Western world, calls for discrimination against and harassment of transgender individuals and the transgender community through laws and policies that criminalise trans identity and trans life".*

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, a US-based human rights organisation, September 2022[1]

> *The Assembly condemns the highly prejudicial anti-gender, gender-critical and anti-trans narratives which reduce the fight for the equality of LGBTI people to what these movements deliberately mis-characterises as 'gender ideology' or 'LGBTI ideology'. Such narratives deny the very existence of LGBTI people, dehumanise them, and often falsely portray their rights as being in conflict with women's and children's rights, or societal and family values in general. All of these are deeply damaging to LGBTI people, while also harming women's and children's rights and social cohesion."*

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, September 2021[2]

In short, the gender-critical movement is a global hate coalition, often funded by dark money, which seeks to create wedge issues against a vulnerable minority and remove trans human rights.

1. https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/statement-on-the-genocidal-nature-of-the-gender-critical-movement%E2%80%99s-ideology-and-practice
2. https://assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/EGA/Pdf/TextesProvisoires/2021/20210921-RisingHateLGBTI-EN.pdf

Hate crime and the media

Over the last decade, hate crime against the trans community has risen dramatically.[3] In the year ending March 2023 a total of 4,732 transgender hate crimes were recorded.[4]

Hate crime is defined by Criminal Prosecution Service as *"Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; or race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."* [5]

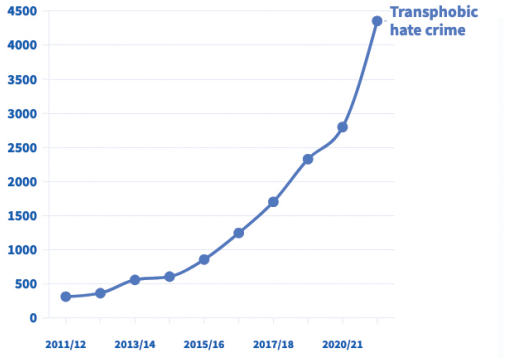
There is no doubt that the dramatic increase was fanned by the Conservative government, driving a culture war against the trans community with assistance from their right-wing media allies. In our opinion there is little doubt that some of this hate has been fuelled by social media personalities, such as JK Rowling and Andrew Tate, and aided by the gender-critical movement.

As an example, in January 2013 the Daily Mail published just six trans-related articles, however ten years later in 2023 that rocketed to 115, the overwhelming majority with highly trans-negative content. Similar statistics are true of other right-wing newspapers, especially the Telegraph who have published over 800 trans-hostile articles in the last year alone.[6]

In Galop's *2021 Hate Crime* community survey, 64% of respondents had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse, 92% had experienced verbal abuse and 29% had been subjected to physical violence – sadly only 13% of incidents were reported to the police, making official statistics unreflective of the actual level of hate crime, and therefore meaningless.[7]

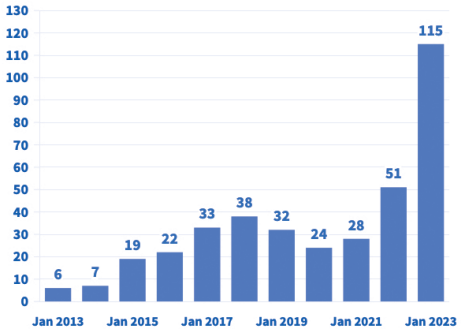
The annual cost of poor mental health to the nation has been estimated by the Centre for Mental Health as over £300bn.[8] There is a direct positive financial correlation to reducing hate crime. Sadly, data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that trans people are twice as likely to be victims of crime than cisgender people.[9]

Anti-trans hate crime, 2012-22



Source: Home Office. Hate crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022

Daily Mail articles related to transgender people



Source: Ell Folan / Stats for Lefties

3. https://novaramedia.com/2023/02/20/welcome-to-terf-island-how-anti-trans-hate-skyrocketed-156-in-four-years/
4. Home Office, Hate crime, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023 second edition
5. Hate crime, The Crown Prosecution Service (cps.gov.uk)
6. https://novaramedia.com/2023/02/20/welcome-to-terf-island-how-anti-trans-hate-skyrocketed-156-in-four-years/
7. https://galop.org.uk/resource/hate-crime-report-2021/
8. https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/publications/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-mental-ill-health/
9. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/17/trans-people-twice-as-likely-to-be-victims-of-in-england-and-wales

Trans adult healthcare

Research shows that over 40% of trans people attempt to take their own lives[10] and 56% self-harm. It is vital that the trans community has access to adequate and fit for purpose healthcare provision.

Sadly, for many years, trans healthcare in the UK has been in disarray, with the years-long waiting times to see specialists attributing to the high suicide rate.[11] Around 0.5% of the population (approximately 365 people per MP constituency) suffer from gender incongruence/dysphoria – often described by sufferers as desperation, wrongness, depression, jealousy, fear, sadness, hopelessness and self-hate.

Research from the UK suggests over 71% of trans people elect for gender-affirming healthcare and that around one in five will take their own lives if they are unable to access gender-affirming healthcare.[12] In the US, research revealed that 94% of 92,329 trans people were pleased they undertook gender-affirming healthcare.[13]

When a trans person 'comes out' to a GP, some ask for either hormones (oestrogen for trans women, testosterone for trans men) or, more likely, a referral to a gender identity clinic. Responses from GPs tend to be mixed; few these days will offer hormones and some even refuse to refer their patient to a gender identity clinic. Sadly, some will even remove their patient from their GP practice list, simply because they are trans.

There are (at the time of writing) seven conventional gender identity clinics in England, with a few new 'pilot' clinics scattered across the country trialling different care models. There are four gender identity clinics in Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. In Wales, where a different healthcare model exists, there is a base clinic in Cardiff with seven additional hubs.[14]

Common surgeries for trans men include breast reduction, genital reconstruction and facial surgery. Within a year of activating hormone therapy, the voice will usually deepen by one octave and beard growth will commence.

In contrast, trans women may seek vaginoplasty (construction of a vagina), breast augmentation, facial feminisation surgery and voice feminisation surgery. Hair removal methods depend on hair colour – dark hair responds to laser treatments, but fair hair doesn't – leaving the patient subject to hundreds of hours of painful and expensive electrolysis sessions.

Without question, the most pressing concern is waiting times for an initial gender identity clinic appointment. While many clinics in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland admit to waiting times of around five years or more,[15] our own research suggests waiting times are much longer. Access to gender-affirming hormones via a gender identity clinic will likely take an additional 12 months, and any surgery will not take place for several years. In Wales, waiting times are significantly less, although times to access surgery will be the same as England. **Because trans healthcare is so poor, many self-medicate or seek help abroad.**

10. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32250142/
11. https://transactual.org.uk/trans-lives-21/
12. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRWxNiZLowM
13. https://ustranssurvey.org/
14. https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/our-services/welsh-gender-service/
15. https://www.genderkit.org.uk/resources/wait-times/

Gender-questioning children and adolescents

Most gender-questioning children know by puberty they are ‘different’, even if they don’t know the full meaning of being transgender.

Much is made in the media and by those who are trans-hostile of an ‘explosion of trans kids’, yet 2024 NHS data state that 5,769 were awaiting NHS gender care[16] out of an estimated 9.6 million under-18s in England and Wales. This correlates to one child in 1,664 (0.06%) as being gender-questioning, a figure substantially lower than the ratio of trans men and women in England and Wales, circa one adult in 633 (0.16%).

These children are invariably the ‘trans kids’ who will need gender-affirming healthcare.

The Cass Review was commissioned by NHS England in 2020 to establish why there was an apparent increase in gender-questioning children and how best to care for them.[17] We agree the review was required as service provision has been totally inadequate and in no way fit for purpose. It is of course vital that great care is taken to ensure the correct and appropriate treatment for each child, but removing all care is not a neutral position.

Allegedly ‘independent’, it now appears the outcome of the Cass Review was politically motivated by the Conservative government as part of the culture war against the trans community, aided by highly placed gender-critical personnel within NHS England.

Dr Hilary Cass, a paediatrician with no experience in trans youth healthcare, was the only person considered for the role. Trans people were intentionally excluded from the Cass team. Experienced clinicians who worked with gender-questioning children at the Tavistock Gender Clinic were also excluded.[18]

Little is known of those who assisted on the advisory team, but it’s now evidenced that the methodology used was highly suspect and that she took significant advice from known trans-hate groups. As a result of global criticism from a plethora of established global healthcare providers, the trans community has lost confidence in the Cass findings and fear they are being used to prevent gender-affirming healthcare.

It is well documented that gender-questioning young people experience a high level of self-harm, for example, in the US, 46% of trans youth consider suicide each year, rising to 62% for those under 13.[19]

Speed is therefore of the essence in offering children suffering gender-dysphoria access to medically approved gender-affirming healthcare. The Cass Review has ensured that access to this is at best, highly restricted and at worst, non-existent.

Despite significant condemnation, the Labour Party (at time of publication) is still committed to a full implementation of the Cass recommendations. Consequently, TransLucent has worked with experienced healthcare professionals to risk-assess the Cass recommendations.

Our report, ‘Responding to the Cass Review: a solution-focused approach’ is available to bona fide stakeholders on request. Most trans healthcare policy is now being influenced by Cass; all we ask is for all stakeholders to listen to our community.

16. https://www.them.us/story/nhs-trans-youth-waitlist-two-years-gender-affirming-care
17. https://cass.independent-review.uk/home/publications/final-report/
18. https://ruthpearce.net/2024/04/16/whats-wrong-with-the-cass-review-a-round-up-of-commentary-and-evidence/
19. https://www.thetrevorproject.org/

Single-sex spaces

Over the past few years, allegations from trans-hostile actors have suggested that trans women occupying single-sex spaces is an 'issue'.

The trans community is not a new phenomenon; there is evidence we have existed since the time of the pharaohs. The first trans woman to have gender-affirming lower surgery in the UK was over 70 years ago.

Hospital wards: TransLucent has conducted four investigations into complaints received of trans women occupying beds in women's hospital wards. In total, we made 282 Freedom of Information Requests to NHS Foundation Trusts and associated Mental Health Trusts, covering a period of three years and three months. We found just one complaint (that was taken no further). In context, over six million women are admitted annually into NHS hospitals in England, and nearly 200,000 written complaints received.[20]

Everyone admitted to a hospital expects the right to privacy and decency – in hospital wards, this is already achieved by curtains surrounding every bed.

Toilets and changing rooms: Alongside our hospital investigations, we asked the 50 largest (by population) local authorities how many complaints had been received of trans women using a toilet or changing room during 2022. Not a single complaint was recorded.[21]

Domestic abuse refuges: The trans community in England has a dedicated domestic abuse service provider in 'Loving Me'. Additionally, the charity Galop provides a domestic abuse service for LGBT+ people across the UK. Allegations that there are issues are untrue and are raised by a handful of trans-hostile actors located inside the domestic abuse sector and media.

Many locally-based domestic abuse service providers will help trans people suffering from domestic abuse – particularly those who provide everyday support or practice the 'independent living' model rather than the communal accommodation model.

In May 2024, Women's Aid surveyed members on single-sex service provision and policies. The survey had a very low response rate, with just 23.7% of the members responding. If there were issues in the domestic abuse sector, obviously, the survey would have been better supported.

Prisons: At any one time, around 87,000 people are in prison in England and Wales and as of March 2024, just 230 were trans, around 150 of them trans women with only six being held in the female estate.[22] While no trans women who have abused cis women should ever be held in the female estate, little thought is given to the 140 or so trans women held in the male estate, many of whom say they are bullied, sexually abused and raped.

One trans woman ex-offender said:[23]

> *"I've lost count of the things that happened to me inside. I've been cut with razor blades; I was stripped and pinned down. I had boiling hot water, and sugar poured all over me. I got stabbed. In Wakefield, I was raped. In Feltham, I was gang-raped – the group stuck a pool cue in me".*

All those held in prison should be safe – for trans women, that is not the case.

20. https://translucent.org.uk/the-non-problem-of-trans-women-and-nhs-same-sex-accommodation
21. https://translucent.org.uk/local-authority-facilities-survey-2022/
22. https://insidetime.org/newsround/only-six-trans-women-in-womens-prisons/
23. https://inews.co.uk/news/uk-longest-serving-transgender-prisoner-sarah-jane-baker-369723

Conversion therapy ban

"LGBTQA+ people have nothing to be ashamed of and there is nothing wrong or broken about who we are. No one has the right to tell another person who they must be, yet conversion practices are still legal in the UK today." **Ban Conversion Therapy Coalition**

The World Health Organization removed homosexuality from the international classification of diseases in 1990 and being transgender in 2019. Yet years later, attempts to 'cure' us are still happening and are legal.

Conversion therapy includes medical, psychiatric, psychological, religious, cultural or any other interventions that seek to change, 'cure' or suppress the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of a person.

The government's National LGBT Survey found that:[24]

- 7% of LGBT people have been offered or undergone conversion therapy.
- 10% of asexual people have been offered or undergone conversion therapy.
- 13% of trans people have been offered or undergone conversion therapy.

TransLucent are members of the Ban Conversion Therapy Coalition, which includes Stonewall, Galop, Ozanne Foundation, LGBT Foundation, Humanists UK, The Peter Tatchell Foundation, Amnesty International together with other prominent LGBT+ organisations.[25]

The Coalition demand a ban that provides protection for all those who are LGBT+, without exception. We pledge to continue our campaign for a ban that protects us all from abuse, with no loopholes or exemptions. We must secure a legislative ban that makes conversion therapy illegal:

- Wherever it occurs – in public or private, through healthcare or religious and cultural interventions.
- Whoever is targeted – whether a child or an adult, whether they are coerced or have been pressured into 'consenting'.
- From the moment it's spotted – through advertising on and offline.

In all cases, the right to discuss and explore must and will remain outside of any ban; **the only unlawful act would be from those seeking to reach a predetermined outcome**. Any discussions conducted with an open mind will not be outlawed and will allow such conversations with parents or in a medical or religious setting.

In July 2024, the UK Government announced its intention to bring forward draft legislation to finally ban conversion practices.

We are calling for the UK government to honour its manifesto pledge and introduce a ban that leaves no one behind.

24. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report
25. https://www.banconversiontherapy.com/

Trans inclusion in sports

Since the inclusion of trans people in the Olympics, only one openly trans woman has qualified and competed … and she finished last.

In the evolving landscape of sports, inclusivity remains a cornerstone of progress. Still, since 2004, when the International Olympics Committee (IOC) first admitted trans people into the Olympics, 98,692 athletes have become Olympians, but only one openly trans woman has qualified and competed in any Olympic Games, and she finished last.

An unfair advantage does not have to produce winners to be unfair, but how can it be deemed 'unfair' when any retained advantages do not even result in qualification, let alone competing for medals?

Newspaper headlines suggest otherwise with unsubstantiated claims of trans women 'dominating women's sport' and 'destroying all women's world records', but the fact is **no trans woman has ever dominated any sport worldwide.**

Because of the gender-critical movement's campaign, backed up by the hostile right-wing press, should any trans woman have any impact even at grassroots level, a demand for exclusion inevitably follows.

Remarkably, there are bans for trans women competing in darts, fishing competitions and even chess. There is simply no logical justification for such bans, and this simply goes to highlight the fact that the true motivations to remove trans women from sport was never based on reasons of fairness or safety.

Embracing trans women in sports is not only about fairness, but also about recognising the fundamental human right of every individual to participate in activities that bring joy, health, and, at an elite level 'meaningful competition'.

Some sports have renamed the men's category to that of 'Open' category. However, they do not provide any way for testosterone-suppressed trans women to compete in 'meaningful competition' – they are effectively a blanket ban.

Trans women face significant barriers in sports, often rooted in misconceptions and biases. It is often cited trans women steal places from a cisgender women. But what they conveniently ignore is the fact trans men no longer compete in women's sport, so they give more places and it equals out. And that is the very essence of sport, you compete against whoever qualifies within the rules at that time.

Research has shown after two years of testosterone suppression, trans women's performance equals that of their cisgender counterparts.

Inclusion in sports is a matter of equality. Denying opportunity to compete is a form of discrimination that contradicts the principles of fairness and equality sports are meant to uphold.

Sports have the power to unite people from diverse backgrounds and on rare occasions trans women are included, it sends a powerful message of acceptance and respect.

Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging and community, essential for mental and emotional well-being of all minorities, and any level of visibility at elite level will produce important role models who inspire and give hope to a younger trans generation.

Gender Recognition Act reform

In 2004, the UK introduced the Gender Recognition Act in response to a court case in the European Court of Human Rights. Successful applicants are awarded a Gender Recognition Certificate, which enables a trans person the ability to change the sex marker on their birth certificate and to be able to marry in their true gender. It gives no added access rights to single sex spaces nor elite sport.

For the past ten years, trans people in the UK have been seeking a reform of the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) because it is no longer fit for purpose. It was ground-breaking in 2004, but that was 20 years ago, and today, more progressive countries[26] have moved to a more humane process of legal gender recognition by self-determination. Germany has recently followed suit, and both France and Holland look set to follow in the future.

The application requirements are incredibly difficult and it is believed that just 7,700 trans people are currently living in the UK who possess a Gender Recognition Certificate – meaning that around 84,300 do not. Over 100,000 non-binary people have no access to a third legal gender marker what-so-ever, albeit other countries have adopted this measure seamlessly.

One of the conditions when applying for a GRC is that the applicant signs a statutory declaration promising to live in their new gender for the rest of their life. Breaking a statutory declaration is an offence under the Perjury Act, with potential penalties of an unlimited fine and two years in prison.

Other countries have at least removed the stigma of having to visit a psychiatrist or gender specialist to 'prove' who they are.

In 2017, the then Prime Minister, Theresa May made reforming the GRA a Conservative government pledge, proposing a method of self-determination.

Sadly, the UK has stalled, and proposals announced by the Labour Party in 2023 stated that any reform of the GRA will still involve trans people having to get a diagnosis of gender dysphoria.

The trans community is appalled by this, in part because to access a diagnosis of gender dysphoria via the NHS is likely to take a minimum of seven to ten years.

We believe signing a statutory declaration is enough, and no further requirements are necessary. It is important to note that neither a GRC nor a birth certificate are accepted as a form of identification.

There are however bad faith arguments made by those opposing the reform, claiming risks to single sex spaces and women's sport. Neither are impacted in any way by this reform.

A reform of the GRA may not be the most pressing requirement of the trans community, however in the UK it has become a key battleground for trans human rights.

26. These countries include Ireland, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and Uruguay.

TransLucent
truth, clarity, justice
National Diversity Awards winner
LGBT Organisation of the Year 2022