



TRANSACTUAL – MARCH 2026

Trans Lives Report: Unlivable conditions for trans people in the UK and why it matters for human rights

The UK suffers from a culture of **distrust and disgust** towards trans people. This culture is reflected at the highest levels of government. In 2015, the UK ranked 1st in Europe for trans inclusion. By 2025, it had plummeted to 22nd. Hundreds of thousands of trans people have seen the degradation of their human rights protections in the past decade, and by extension a rapid decline in their quality of life.

Published by TransActual UK, the Trans Lives Report (2025) is the result of a community survey from December 2024 to January 2025. We received over 4000 responses, hearing from trans people across the UK, aged 18–81. We asked people about their experiences at home, work, in public spaces, healthcare and on social media. This is **the largest in-depth survey of the UK trans population** to date. Given the underreporting and erasure of trans and intersex people in censuses, Trans Lives offers critical data on trans people's lived experiences of inequality. The survey was completed *before the For Women Scotland Supreme Court ruling (FWS)*, which has exacerbated existing transphobia.

The survey results are decisive: trans people face **rampant health inequality**, both in transition and non-transition related healthcare. Trans people encounter **barriers to obtaining gender-congruent ID**, suffer **employment and housing discrimination**, and experience **high rates of homelessness**. Trans people of colour, disabled trans people and intersex trans people were especially likely to report transphobia in everyday life.

Trans people are enduring unliveable conditions in what amounts to a **domestic human rights crisis**. The UK government has an urgent responsibility to recommit itself to defending trans people's human rights.

Critical insights

The crisis in healthcare

- 43% of respondents have experienced transphobia in a healthcare setting. Trans people report that they avoid going to the GP, dentist, pharmacy, and sexual health clinics due to low confidence in medical professionals. 35% said they even avoid going to A&E.
- 14% of respondents said they had been refused non-transition related healthcare due to their trans identity. Examples included GPs refusing to schedule a routine cervical screening or prostate exam.
- When pursuing Gender-Affirming Hormone Therapy (GAHT), many trans people deal with refusal from their GP to prescribe hormones, even where Gender Identity Clinics have recommended they do so.

The material impact of hatred

- 23% of respondents said they had experienced housing insecurity, having slept rough, sofa surfed, or both. This suggests a rate of homelessness that is nearly 4 times higher than the wider UK population.
- More than nine in ten respondents believed that anti-trans and transphobic comments in the media had impacted how they were treated by family, friends, colleagues and strangers.

The struggle for recognition

- Only 13% of respondents had changed their ID without issue. Most respondents had been unable to access gender-congruent ID. Barriers included prohibitive cost, bureaucracy, and lack of a gender-neutral option. This has major consequences for trans people's right to privacy, ability to obtain employment, or opportunity to move through the world without risk of harassment and discrimination.

Trans rights in the UK

Supreme Court Ruling

In April 2025, the FWS ruling qualified “sex” in the Equality Act (2010) as referring uniquely to “biological sex” i.e. sex assigned at birth. The ruling was followed by [interim guidance](#) issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), calling on businesses and service providers to adopt trans-exclusionary practices.

The EHRC guidance breaches trans people’s right to privacy, enshrined in [Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights](#). For employers, complying with the EHRC guidance is impractical and expensive. In the wake of FWS, trans employees could be ‘outed’ at work when using the bathroom, or even be compelled to [leave a job because there is no suitable bathroom](#). In February 2026, [the High Court dismissed a legal challenge](#) to the EHRC guidance.

Since the Supreme Court ruling, the human rights and lived reality of trans people in the UK have deteriorated in a short period of time. The ruling has been condemned by national and international authorities, including the [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights](#), [Amnesty International UK](#), [Human Rights Watch UK](#), [Organisation Intersex International Europe](#) and the [British Medical Association](#).

Healthcare

Health rights are an urgent priority for the trans community. **Transphobia is pervasive:** it remains common in healthcare settings, leading to patient avoidance. This avoidance compounds with health inequality.

Health inequality includes the outright refusal to refer trans people to services they are entitled to, a [fatal lack of funding for Gender Identity Clinics](#), and widespread administrative failures. The [Levy Review \(2025\)](#) found that [NHS gender-affirming healthcare is not fit for purpose](#).

Trans people are marginalised by policy that erases the diversity of human sexuality and gender expression. A prime example is the [Sullivan Review \(2025\)](#). This was commissioned by the previous Conservative Government, who employed a prominent anti-trans campaigner to review how public bodies collect data on sex and gender.

The Sullivan Review makes policy recommendations to [erase trans people’s existence from the public record](#), including through NHS England. If implemented, this would (1) hamper public bodies from collecting information about trans people, reducing opportunity to improve services, and (2) risk trans people being outed when accessing healthcare or using their ID. In tandem with the FWS

ruling of the same year, the Sullivan Review reflects a disturbing trend: a total **disregard for trans people’s dignity and privacy rights**.

Red Flag Alert

The Trans Lives Report is published following the **Red Flag Alert from the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention (LIGP)** in June 2025. LIGP assessed that the UK’s current policies towards trans and intersex people meet the ninth pattern of genocide: denial and/or prevention of identity.

Genocide is a crime under international law. Genocide is a process: it includes creating conditions that make it impossible for people to exist as their true selves. LIGP notes that the practical implications of the Supreme Court ruling are that it forces trans and intersex people to choose between disclosure and breaking the law. Attempts to erase trans and intersex people from public life could constitute intent to commit genocide.

Key recommendations

1. Right to health, including healthcare equality

Proactive shift to an informed consent model for gender care, with a patient-centred ethos as recommended by the [World Professional Association for Transgender Health](#); urgent joint action plan by Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England to transition to local provision of gender care and reduce trans health inequality – including mandatory, high quality training of all NHS staff, as recommended by the Levy Review (2025).

2. Right to privacy, including gender-congruent ID

Reformed application process for gender-congruent ID, including fee waiver and support service; committed review of the current system for legal gender recognition, to bring the UK in line with international best practice of gender self-determination.

3. Action against transphobia:

Government-led initiative to develop a working definition of transphobia, including national awareness campaign; urgent funding for trans-specific mental health services; tougher regulation to protect against transphobic hate speech; independent statutory inquiry into transphobia in the media, including the creation of an independent press regulator; urgent development of EHRC Code of Practice that supports trans inclusion in public life.