

Landmark Transgender Law Enforced in Denmark

London, 15 September 2014

On 1 September 2014, in an important step towards greater equality, an amendment to the law regulating the Danish National People's Register came into effect, allowing transgender people to obtain new official documents reflecting their choice of gender through a simple administrative procedure. The amendment makes Denmark the first European country to allow legal recognition of gender on the basis of self-identification. It is hoped that Denmark's move will pave the way for change in other countries, eventually ending the requirement that individuals undergo invasive medical procedures or diagnoses in order to receive legal recognition of their gender identity.

The Danish amendment was approved by parliament on 11 June 2014 in a split vote, 59 to 52. It allows a new social security number to be allocated upon a written request with two limitations - the person identifying as belonging to "the opposite sex" and making the request must be aged 18 or over and must confirm their request after a waiting period of six months. Once the new social security number is allocated, changes to other personal documents such as driving licences are possible.

Crucially, the amendment allows for a change in legal gender status without the need for any medical certification or intervention. Many countries continue to require transgender people to undergo psychiatric diagnosis, surgery, forced sterilisation or hormonal treatment before allowing a change in legal gender status. Such requirements are based on outdated understandings of gender identity, which fail to recognise that the only satisfactory approach is for individuals' right to self-identify to be recognised. Furthermore, the requirements amount to discriminatory inhuman treatment and thus serious human rights violations.

The Equal Rights Trust welcomes the amendment's entry into force as a significant step in the right direction and hopes that it will set a precedent across Europe and the rest of the world. We urge states to repeal discriminatory and repressive laws that require transgender people to undergo medical interventions or be diagnosed with a mental illness before being allowed to change their legal gender status. To read the amendment (in Danish) click [here](#). To read the amendment (unofficial English translation) click [here](#).

TO SUPPORT EQUALITY PLEASE CLICK HERE

Mission Statement

The Equal Rights Trust is an independent international organisation whose purpose is to combat discrimination and promote equality as a fundamental human right and a basic principle of social justice.

The Equal Rights Trust - 314 - 320 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8DP, UK.

Tel: + 44 (0) 207 610 2786. Fax: + 44 (0) 207 833 0277 Email: info@equalrightstrust.org

The Equal Rights Trust is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England. Company number 5559173.

It is also a registered charity, number 1113288