



The UK is ostensibly a liberal democracy. But women and girls are losing rights and assurances that have long been accepted as fair and necessary. The groups of women and girls most affected by these issues are (from the UN SRVAWG list):

- c) Lesbian, gay, bisexual women or transgender
- d) Members of racial, ethnic or religious minority communities
- e) Women active in politics and public life (including sports)
- f) Women human rights defenders
- g) Women and girls active in exercising their freedom of speech, thought and freedom of assembly

Our particular concerns are:

1. **Language:** There is a concerted effort from transactivist lobby groups to remove references to women and girls in public policy, and to break the link between being female/ a woman and matters which affect female bodies: female health concerns, pregnancy and maternity, birth control, abortion, FGM. This hampers our ability to talk about discrimination against women and girls.
2. **Data collection:** The conflation of sex and gender identity is leading to problems in data collection and reporting in the UK. This is already distorting healthcare information, crime statistics, pay gap and other employment matters.
3. **Males being granted access to female-only spaces and services on the basis of their claimed identity:** Many service-providers in the UK have operated an informal system of self-ID for some years. Fair Play For Women has had numerous reports of problems in changing rooms, hospital wards, prisons and bail hostels, and in single-sex service provision for female victims of male violence (domestic abuse refuges, rape shelters and counselling services).
4. **The loss of free speech for those defending women's rights:** Women who object to self-ID policies are often vilified, harassed, silenced or threatened, and sometimes lose their jobs, as numerous court actions show. Thus there is little resistance to these policies on the public record. Meetings to discuss these issues are targeted and shut down.
5. **Sport:** Fair Play For Women has compiled extensive evidence of the significant impact on women and girls of policies which accept declared gender identity as if it were sex, and hence which allow males into female events, teams and competitions, in our report, [How 'inclusion' in sport is harming women and girls](#), published in January 2024.

ACTION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Clarify that sex in the Equality Act 2010 means birth sex/biological sex, which cannot be changed.
- ii. Re-establish and defend the legitimacy of female-only spaces, services and sport, which are already lawful under the Equality Act.
- iii. Defend the right to free speech of those who campaign on these issues; show unequivocal support for those who believe that sex is immutable and that sometimes it matters.

Our submission in January addresses these issues in more detail.