

Anger as trans inmates revert to males when they leave Scottish prisons

Concern after new research suggested that men who changed their gender to female in jail are switching back to their birth gender after release.

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Trans prisoners self-identifying as women has caused concern

Campaigners have called into question the [Scottish Prison Service's](#) (SPS) policy of allowing male prisoners to "self-id" as women in order to be put into a female-only prison.

Their concern has come after new research suggested that men who changed their gender to female in jail are switching back to their birth gender after release.

A study, published in the British Journal of Criminology, also revealed that some of these prisoners may only have [identified as women](#) in order to have sex with female inmates.

It has brought fresh concerns about self-identification of gender posing a risk to women's safety just as Nicola Sturgeon and the Scottish Government look to introduce [gender recognition legislation](#) later on this year.

Lucy Hunter Blackburn, who works as part of policy analysis collective MurrayBlackburnMackenzie, called into question SPS's thought process behind allowing men to self-id.

She wrote: "Every case transferred into the female prison estate will have been through an individual 'case by case' assessment about their suitability for transfer, by those designated as appropriately expert by the prison service.

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"We need the well-paid (relative to most of us, even if they don't always feel that) people in politics and officialdom to take proper responsibility for how policies adopted here have affected women in prison.

"These cases will also have been through the individual case by case assessment process, where professionals with a mix of backgrounds have access to all the information held about a person who has been through the court process right up to the point of sentencing.

"That ought to be a fuller history, with more detail on offending history and including any background reports produced for sentencing, than most other service providers will have access to.

"The SPS has more information and can if necessary take longer to make decisions here than is true for most other settings. It has institutional expertise at dealing with offenders, including the most manipulative, that others do not have.

"If, with all its information and experience advantages, the SPS has passed as suitable for transfer to women's prisons any male people strategically adopting selfID temporarily for any reason, policy and lawmakers beyond prisons need to think about the implications of that."

The study was carried out by Dr Matthew Maycock of [Dundee University](#), and he identified fears among female inmates of predatory behaviour by some trans prisoners.

One woman told of a trans woman prisoner in her work party who "wanted to be in this hall because he wanted to have sex with loads of lassies."

According to figures, 12 trans prisoners who were convicted of violence or sexual crimes have been accommodated in Scottish women's jails within the last year and a half.

Only one them had transitioned fully, while the rest had self-identified as a female.

