

# New law that would legally erase transgender people inches closer to reality in Putin's Russia

Nick Duffy September 7, 2020

Russia could be set to follow in the footsteps of Hungary with a proposed law that would legally erase transgender people.

Proposed amendments to Russia's Family Code, put forward by anti-LGBT+ lawmaker Yelena Mizulinam, would legally bar transgender people from changing their gender on their birth certificates.

The proposal would effectively end recognition of trans people in the country, campaigners say – and those already granted new birth certificates could even face the prospect of having to hand them back if they did not have court approval.

## Proposed law would legally erase transgender people in Russia.

Yekaterina Messorosh of St Petersburg-based transgender rights group T-Action told [The Moscow Times](#): “It is primarily aimed at declaring LGBT+ people – and in this case, trans people separately and especially – second-class citizens.”

Trans people could also be restricted from marrying people of the opposite gender, with Tatiana Glushkova of the Transgender Legal Defense Project suggesting the lawmakers were acting based on “a fantasy in their heads that people change their documents in order to enter into a same-sex marriage”.

She added: “The lawmakers don't even understand the process involved for changing gender in Russia... these amendments shouldn't be accepted simply on technical grounds, not to mention the human rights violations.”

Human rights monitors have raised concerns about the law, with Kyle Knight of Human Rights Watch telling the outlet: “Trans people in Russia already occupied a precarious position vis-à-vis the law, and regressing legal standards further accomplishes nothing but to score cheap political points.”

The bill will go before the Duma later this month, according to [The Moscow Times](#).

Hungary's far-right president Viktor Orban [pushed through a similar law in May that also abolished gender recognition for trans people](#), capitalising on anti-LGBT rhetoric in the country.

## Architect of anti-trans law has had previous success in spreading hatred.

The architect of the Russian proposal, Yelena Mizulina, is chairman of the Duma Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs – and has played a leading role in many efforts to undermine LGBT+ rights.

In 2013, [she introduced the country's infamous 'gay propaganda' law](#), which bans so-called “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships” among minors.

Human rights monitors say that the law [has been widely exploited in Russia to clamp down on freedom of expression](#) for LGBT+ people, and is often weaponised where groups attempt to organise or protest. She has previously also suggested that gay parents should have children forcibly removed from them, even if they are biological children.