

A log of efforts to sabotage the UK's equality watchdog

Stonewall and associated organisations have tried three times to get the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) to censure the Equality and Human Rights Commission for doing its job.



EHRC tells Stonewall it will not be renewing its membership of the Stonewall Champions Scheme

Several other regulators and Whitehall departments have also left the scheme, mainly citing "value-for-money" considerations.

March 2021



EHRC intervenes in Forstater v CGD Employment Appeal Tribunal

Karon Monaghan KC, representing the EHRC, argues that the original tribunal the employment judge "adopted the wrong approach when determining whether the Claimant's ['gender critical'] belief fell within the scope of s.10 of the Equality Act".

23rd April 2021

18th May 2021

NEWS DASHBOARD GRANTS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES EVENTS

ABOUT US OUR MEMBERS



EHRC Open Letter

Stonewall and 38 organisations publish a letter criticising the EHRC for intervening in Forstater

They say:

"... We are frustrated that you then chose to intervene in a case to say that so-called 'gender critical' beliefs should be a protected philosophical belief.

"It was a kick in the teeth to trans people to see the EHRC appear to put their organisational weight behind a movement that has only contributed to rising hate for trans people in communities, creating a policy environment where it is harder for trans people to access their rights. That the EHRC chose to add their weight to this intervention has sent a deeply damaging message to trans

people about their validity and worth. This intervention has lost the trust of trans people and LGBTQ+ people more broadly.”



EHRC responds

Kishwer Falkner says: “Defending the right to believe that sex is immutable in no way impacts on our commitment to uphold the rights of trans people.”

28th May 2021

Judgment in Forstater v CGD finds gender-critical beliefs to be worthy of respect in a democratic society

10th July 2021



EHRC publishes cautious position on reform of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 in Scotland

It raises concerns about the potential consequences of self ID and says:

“We consider that more detailed consideration is needed before any change is made to the provisions in the Act. The potential consequences include those relating to the collection and use of data, participation and drug testing in competitive sport, measures to address barriers facing women, and practices within the criminal justice system, inter alia.”

26th January 2022



EHRC publishes cautious position on proposed legislation banning conversion therapy

It recommends that legislation should initially focus on banning conversion therapy attempting to change a person’s sexual orientation and that legislation to ban conversion therapy attempting to change a person to or from being transgender should follow “once more detailed and evidence-based proposals are available which can be properly scrutinised”.

26th January 2022

26th January 2022



LGBT Foundation “severs ties” with the Equality and Human Rights Commission

It says the two statements “are extremely damaging and cannot be supported in any circumstances” and “EHRC can no longer call itself a true human rights organisation.”

26th January 2022



Liberty calls for the EHRC’s status as an NHRI to be reviewed

“For the EHRC to make such a damaging intervention calls in to question whether it is serving its purpose and Liberty supports the calls for the EHRC’s status as a national human rights institution (NHRI) to be reviewed.”

26th January 2022



Stonewall demands a review of the EHRC’s accreditation as an A-status National Human Rights Institution

“We believe the EHRC is no longer fit for purpose.”

2nd February 2022



VICE reports that "EHRC met privately with anti-trans groups"

VICE complains that the EHRC held meetings with gender-critical groups Fair Play for Women and LGB Alliance.

10th February 2022

LGBT+ groups call for EHRC to lose international status over trans stance

Equality watchdog accused of excessive government interference and 'politically motivated' appointments



▣ Nancy Kelley, head of Stonewall, which is leading a coalition calling for the EHRC to lose its Accreditation. Photograph: Andy Hall/The Observer

Stonewall-led coalition submits complaint to GANHRI

Signatories include the Good Law Project, Liberty, Gendered Intelligence, TransActual, Mermaids, Trans in the City, GIRES, Sparkle, Trans Safety Network, LGBT Consortium, LGBT Foundation, Equality Network, LGBT Youth Scotland, Galop, Feminist Gender Equality Network, Steph's Place UK, and the Outside Project.

"We believe that recent statements made by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Great Britain's NHRI, indicate that they can no longer be considered compliant with the Paris Principles, and are no longer fit for purpose as a National Human Rights Institution."



GANHRI

Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

GANHRI rejects Stonewall's complaint

EHRC says: "We are pleased that the Sub-Committee on Accreditation assessed evidence of our independence and effectiveness and upheld our position, declining a special review of our work."

"As we launch our new strategy, we are reaching out to organisations that have been critical of the EHRC, encouraging

1st April 2022

them to put aside past disagreements and to work with us and other like-minded organisations to protect everyone and to achieve a fairer society for all."



EHRC publishes new guidance on single-sex and separate-sex services

The guidance confirms that it is lawful and legitimate to provide female-only spaces and therefore to exclude men who identify as women from them.

4th April 2022

5th April 2022



Several organisations release statements condemning the guidance

"This new EHRC guidance is appalling and harmful. It encourages bigotry and discrimination. Its 'examples' include invitations to organisations to blanket ban trans women from exercise classes and women's toilets on a 'biological' basis." [Trans Legal Project](#)

30th May 2022



Translucent submits a 61-page complaint to GANHRI

Translucent (previously called "Steph's Place" and a signatory of the Stonewall complaint to GANHRI) makes a new complaint including accusations of "collusion with 'anti-trans' groups and individuals".

1st June 2022



Stonewall resubmits evidence to GANHRI

Together with the Good Law Project and 30 other civil-society organisations, Stonewall's lawyers send a letter and submissions to GANHRI, calling for the EHRC to lose its A status. It complains that EHRC Chair Kishwer Falkner "has spoken in support of anti-trans 'gender critical' beliefs and appears to have liaised disproportionately with 'gender critical' groups in her capacity as Chair" (citing the VICE article of 2nd February 2022). It complains that "the EHRC is now, like the government, substantively out of step with mainstream civil-society organisations in its stance on equality and human rights" and again raises the EHRC's position on conversion therapy, and its new single-sex services guidance.

2nd September 2022



A trans-rights protest group undertakes a dirty protest outside EHRC's offices

Masked representatives of the anonymous group Pissed Off Trannies (POT) ceremonially deliver the urine to the EHRC offices in Westminster, London and stage what they described as a "piss-in", leaving over 60 bottles of urine outside the offices of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and pouring urine over the entrance. One of the protesters pours urine over himself.

14th October 2022



GANHRI re-accredits EHRC as an 'A status' organisation

This follows a routine assessment. [The assessment report](#) includes recommendations that the EHRC:

- widens its human rights protection mandate
- continues to address human rights issues across all relevant areas
- cooperates with civil society organisations
- ensures pluralism and diversity in its board membership
- advocates for formalising the selection and appointment process of our Commissioners
- advocates for amendments regarding the provisions for dismissal of Commissioners
- advocates for greater financial autonomy from central government

16th December 2022



Victor Madrigal-Borloz claims that self-ID is an international human rights imperative

The UN Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity writes to the Scottish Government claiming that "legal recognition of gender identity" via self-identification is an "international human rights imperative".

3rd April 2023



EHRC Chair Kishwer Falkner writes to the Minister for Women and Equalities on clarifying the Equality Act

"A change to the Equality Act 2010, so that the protected characteristic of 'sex' means biological sex, could bring clarity in a number of areas, but potential ambiguity in others.
 "Our response to the Minister's request for advice suggests that the UK Government carefully identify and consider the potential implications of this change.
 "Should they wish to pursue work in this area, we recommend detailed policy and legal analysis be undertaken, in compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and with due regard to any possible disadvantages for trans men and trans women."

9th May 2023



Stonewall publishes a third letter to GANHRI together with 35 organisations

"This is not an institution that has listened to civil society, to the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation or to its own national committees. It is not demonstrating a commitment to the human rights of all persons, nor is it functioning in a pluralistic, independent and effective manner as mandated under the Paris Principles. It is a failed institution, it is harming the trans community in Great Britain, and it is undermining the status of independent human rights institutions and systems.

The letter is signed on behalf of Claire's Trans Talks, Equality Network, Feminist Gender Equality Network, Gendered Intelligence, GIRES (Gender Identity Research and Education Society), Global Butterflies, Hidayah LGBT, Intercom Trust, Kite Trust, LGBT Consortium, LGBT Foundation, Live Through This, London Friend, Mermaids, Ozanne Foundation, Proud Trust, Sparkle – The National Transgender Charity, Spectra, Star Support LGBTIQ+, Translucent, Stonewall, The Outside Project, Trans Activism UK, Trans Actual, Trans in the City, Trans Media Watch, Trans Safety Network, and Yorkshire Mesmac.

11th May 2023



Victor Madrigal-Borloz disparages EHRC in UK mission report