

# Rishi Sunak confirms UK could block Scotland's gender recognition bill

**Westminster looking at 'nuclear option' to stop bill on self-identification for people wanting to change legal gender**

Rishi Sunak has waded into the row over Scotland's gender recognition bill, insisting it was "perfectly reasonable" to assess its potential impact on women.

The prime minister confirmed on Friday that the UK government is considering blocking the new law, which makes it easier for trans people to legally change their gender.

Westminster officials now have 28 days to decide whether to deploy the "nuclear option" of prohibiting the bill from going for royal assent, after Scotland on Thursday became the first part of the UK to introduce a self-identification system.

The UK's Scottish secretary, Alister Jack, said he could invoke section 35 of the Scotland Act, which in effect gives him a veto on laws he believes have an impact on constitutionally reserved matters - a decision that could set the stage for a bitter constitutional clash.

While gender recognition is devolved to Holyrood, equalities legislation - which the new law will interact with - is reserved to Westminster.

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## **Source:**

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/dec/23/rishi-sunak-confirms-uk-could-block-scotlands-gender-recognition-bill>