

Swimming's global oversight body bans trans women swimmers from elite events if they went through male puberty

Fina, swimming's world governing body, has voted to stop transgender athletes from competing in women's elite races if they have gone through any part of the process of male puberty.

Fina will also aim to establish an 'open' category at competitions for swimmers whose gender identity is different than their birth sex.

The new policy, which was passed with 71% of the vote from 152 Fina members, was described as "only a first step towards full inclusion" for transgender athletes.

The 34-page policy document says that male-to-female transgender athletes are still eligible to compete in the women's category "provided they have not experienced any part of male puberty beyond Tanner Stage 2 [which marks the start of physical development], or before age 12, whichever is later".

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It means that transgender American college swimmer Lia Thomas, who has expressed a desire to compete for a place at the Olympics, would be blocked from participating in the female category.

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'Athlete Ally' – an LGBT advocacy group which organised a letter of support for Thomas in February, called the new policy "discriminatory, harmful, unscientific and not in line with the 2021 IOC principles".

"The eligibility criteria for the women's category as it is laid out in the policy polices the bodies of all women, and will not be enforceable without seriously violating the privacy and human rights of any athlete looking to compete in the women's category," said Anne Lieberman, the group's director of policy and programmes.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)