



# TRANS\* 101 OVERVIEW

[www.transfiguredmission.uk](http://www.transfiguredmission.uk)

EXPLAINER

# What is Gender?

Information provided by WHO (World Health Organisation), offers us a helpful place to start when unpacking this topic. Gender is something that differs across societies, cultures, and throughout history.



## Socially Constructed

Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.



## Different from sex

Gender interacts with but is different from sex, which refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of females, males and intersex persons, such as chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs. Gender and sex are related to but different from gender identity. Gender identity refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth.

# Know Your History

Information from Human Rights Campaign

The diversity of gender is historical, part of faith traditions, and impacted by who is in power.



## Trans Priests

Around 5000 to 3000 B.C., Gala, described as androgynous or trans priests of the Sumerian goddess Inanna.



## Colonialism

In South Asia, at least eight-known gender-expansive identities have historically been present in the subcontinent. (The British attempted to erase the Hijra).



## Book Burning

Historically men wore heels The oldest Western institute studying LGBTQ+ identities was started in Germany in 1919. (Destroyed in the first Nazi book burning).



## Saints

In the fourth century, Anastasia the Patrician fled life in Constantinople, the capital of the Roman Empire, to spend the remainder of life dressed in masculine attire and presentation as a monk.



## Louis XIV

Historically men wore heels and dresses.



# What influences us?

What do you think influences our understanding of gender?

*Education*

*Toys*

*Language*

*Society*

*Norms*

*From an early age we have ideas and ideals about what boys and girls should be like, what they should be interested in, how they should dress.*

*A silly example of how we still needlessly gender products:*

*BIC pens famously released a "For Her" line with a slimmer grip and pink colour, implying that men don't need pens that are comfortable to hold or that pens are inherently feminine.*



# What influences us?

Our unconscious bias has been informed by the media to be suspicious of trans people, especially trans women.



Cisgender men playing trans women in the media wrongly informs us that it temporary and easily achievable.

# The Gender Binary



**Male = Man**  
**Masculine**



**Female = Woman**  
**Feminine**

## NOT EVERYONE FITS INSIDE THE BINARY

This includes gender and biological sex.

*When we talk about gender we often think about the gender binary, and it correlating to biological sex.*

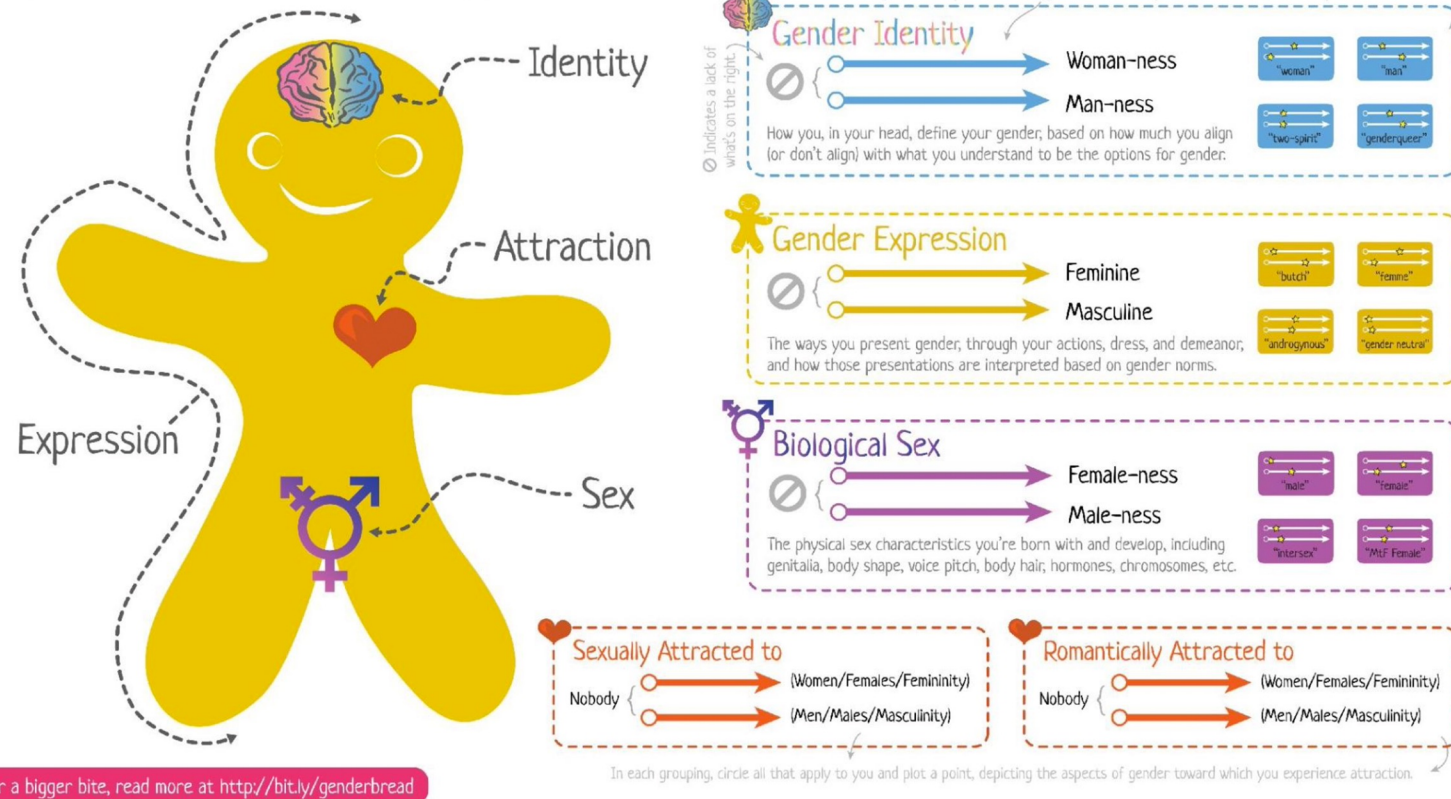
*Gender is not binary because biological sex exists on a spectrum, not just as two distinct categories. The existence of intersex individuals demonstrates that biological sex can have various combinations of chromosomes, hormones, and anatomy that don't fit neatly into male or female. Additionally, gender is a sociocultural concept distinct from biological sex, encompassing a wide range of identities beyond man or woman, which is captured by the inclusive term "nonbinary".*



# The Gender Bread Person

itspronouncedmetrosexual.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



*The Genderbread Person is a model that depicts the ways society constructs gender, and the different components that go into that. It's meant to be a digestible introduction to these ideas, for beginners, in a way that makes sense to most people.*

*The Genderbread Person is not comprehensive model of sexuality or sexual orientation. While it includes orientation, this is in the spirit of helping to understand how it intersects with gender.*



# The Trans\* Umbrella

The Trans Umbrella refers to any person whose gender identity or expression doesn't align with the gender they were assigned at birth, and whose gender differs from the cisgender standards of society. The umbrella recognises that not everyone fits into society's rigid definitions of gender.

*Note: trans\* or trans+ are used to include all people under the umbrella.*

*Some people choose not to use the word trans for various reasons.*

Art: Fox Fisher





# Terminology

## Transgender

Trans is a latin prefix that simple means, 'on the other side of' or 'beyond'. Therefore transgender means on the other side of gender. Often shortened to 'trans'.

## Cisgender

Cis is the opposite of this, and it means 'on the same side of'. Cis is not a slur but a word that's been used since 1994.

## Non-binary

Being non-binary means identifying with a gender that is not exclusively male or female. It falls outside the traditional gender binary, meaning a person's gender identity is not simply man or woman.

## Intersex

A term used to describe people born with sex characteristics (including chromosomes, hormones, and anatomy) that don't fit typical binary notions of male or female. It is estimated that there are more intersex people than redheads.

## Agender

This is where an individual does not identify with any gender. They may feel that they have no gender, or that their gender is neutral or absent.

## masc & fem

Likely to be extended to 'transmasc' or 'transfemme'. Trans\* identifying people whose expression leans towards feminine or masculine.

## FTM / MTF

'Female to male' or 'male to female'. Term may be used by some. Use being stopped as it implies gender is binary & focuses on past.

## Genderfluid

A gender identity that is not fixed and may shift over time, sometimes between male and female, or other genders.

# Terminology

## Deadnaming

Using a trans\* person's birth / old name.

## Misgendering

Using the incorrect pronouns.

## 'Passing'

Someone who 'passes' as cisgender.  
Typically a term to avoid.

## Gender Dysphoria

The unease or distress someone feels with their gender identity being different than their assigned identity at birth.

## Transphobe

Someone who is transphobic.  
Other terms include: TERF & Gender Critical.

## Stealth

To live fully as true gender without acknowledging to others that you are trans.  
Typically a term to avoid.



# Pronouns

Pronouns have appeared to become a hot topic, but it's really simple – it's about respecting the person before you. We all have pronouns!

## Gendered

He/him/his  
She/her/hers

## Multiple

She/they  
They/he  
She/he

## Netural

They/them/theirs

## Neo

Ze/ir/zirs  
Xe/xem/xirs  
Fae/faer/faes  
Ey/em/eir

Always refer to the person in their current pronouns and name, even when talking about them in the past.

Language is still evolving and developing. It's not uncommon for words to have multiple meanings. 'You' is a pronoun that is both plural and singular.

They/them has been in use since around the 14th century.

We use they/them all the time without thinking about it. For example: judges on Bake Off, when 'blind' judging.

**When getting it wrong, don't dwell on it – try and get it right the next time!** If you would like to apologise, make it short & not putting pressure on person to comfort you.

# Transition

*Not: transing or transgendered or transed*



## *Why do some people not medically transition?*

- Choice - Some trans\* people do not want medical care, some may take hormones for a short time for certain changes.
- Access - Access to healthcare for trans\* people is difficult in the majority of countries. Exceedingly long waiting lists. High cost of hormones and surgeries. Discrimination from GPs.
- Safety - For some, transitioning may not be safe. Or they may be carrying trauma and stigma from society and others.



# What is Gender Dysphoria?

*NHS definition: “Gender dysphoria is a term that describes a sense of unease that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.”*

*In the UK a trans person has to have a diagnosis of gender dysphoria to receive any treatment.*

*Before 2013 it used to be coined “gender identity disorder” and is no longer classed as a mental illness.*

## UK Law

Have to have diagnosis to receive any treatment.

## Outdated

Has began to be considered outdated, as it centres the experience in the negative.

## Not Universal

Not an inherent part about being transgender.

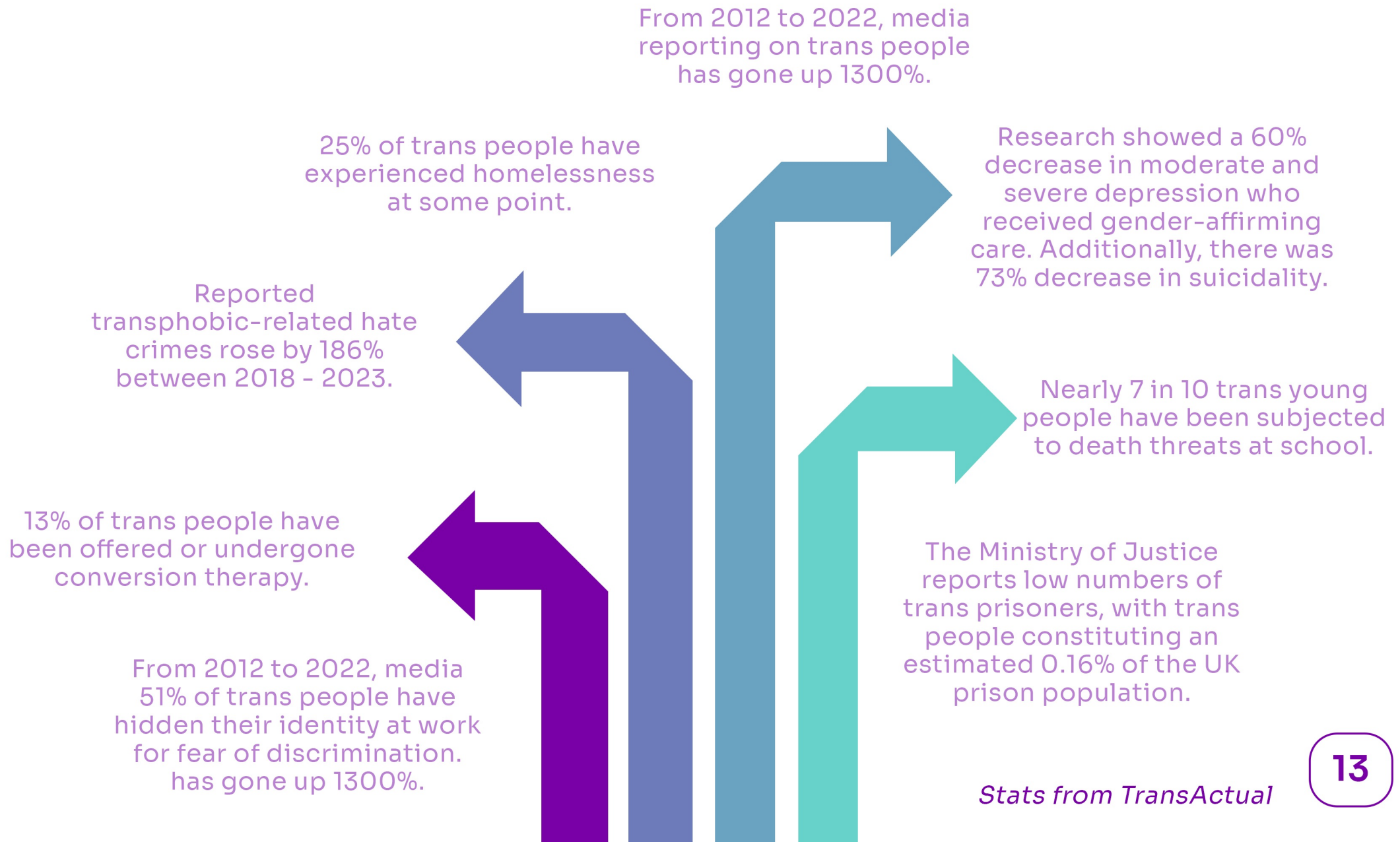
## Various

Feelings may be due to: voice, body, genitals, hair, pronouns, etc.

## Spectrum

For those that experience it: may feel like wanting to tear your skin off or a subtle discomfort.

# Some Stats





# Myth-busting

Trans people are part of an minority group, estimated to be 0.05% of the population. As a group we are subject to disadvantage and derision.

The concept of 'sex-based rights' is a very new one. Feminists have historically focused on equal rights – rights that people are entitled to by virtue of being human.

Many Western countries allow self-ID, including Denmark, Finland and Ireland. None of these have recorded an increase in crime.

## MYTH: “Trans rights undermine women’s sex-based rights.”

As people who experience misogyny alongside cis women, trans women and trans men have always been a part of feminist struggles.

## MYTH: “Allowing trans people to self ID would let predatory men into women’s spaces.”

Current and historical records of assault indicate that there are easier ways for predatory men to access women than going through transition.

## FACT: There is more to sex and gender than XX and XY chromosomes.

Sex is more complicated than your GCSE biology textbook would have you believe. This fact is borne out by the existence of intersex people. In fact, it’s incredibly complicated.

## FACT: Being trans is not the same as cross-dressing.

Clothing tells us some information about people, but not all. Cross-dressers pose no more risk than the average person, and statistically much less risk than some faith leaders.

# What not to say to a trans\* person.

## *What you can say instead.*

### DON'T SAY

This is difficult for me.  
I'm going to get it wrong.

How did you know you were  
born in the wrong body?  
(There aren't 'wrong' bodies.)

What's your REAL / birth name?

Have you had THE surgery?  
(Most people do not talk about  
their genitals socially.)

What are your preferred  
pronouns?

### INSTEAD SAY

I will start learning your  
pronouns / using your name.

What steps might you want to  
take as part of your transition?  
And how can I support you?

How did you choose your name?  
(For those you know better.)

I know medical transitioning can  
be difficult, let me know if I can  
be of any support.

What are your pronouns?  
What pronouns do you use?

*If in doubt, do not ask a trans person what you would not ask a cis person.*

*It's okay to make mistakes, or feel unsure - but it is not the person's job to educate you.*