

## Some tips on better including non-binary people

1. Many non-binary people use gender neutral pronouns. Pronouns are the way someone refers to you. The most commonly used pronouns are 'she/her/hers', normally used for women, and 'he/him/his', normally used for men. Non-binary people may use the singular 'they/them/theirs', or other gender neutral pronouns such as 'ze/hir/hirs'. If you don't know someone's pronouns, ask!
2. It's important not to make assumptions about people when you meet them. We're used to assuming that everyone we meet will identify as a man or a woman – but this isn't the case. You can't always tell someone's gender identity simply by looking at them!
3. Many non-binary people use gender neutral titles – the most common one is 'Mx'. See if you can add 'Mx' to the title options on your forms and websites.
4. Lots of non-binary people are frustrated with only ever having the options 'man' or 'woman' available on forms. Check out our non-binary guidance on how to make your forms inclusive:  
[www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary](http://www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary)






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Scottish Trans Alliance is the Equality Network project to improve gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion in Scotland.

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## Non-binary



Creating change together  
LGBTI equality in Scotland

# What do we mean by non-binary?

Some people feel that their gender identity cannot be simply defined using the terms 'man' or 'woman'. Instead, they experience their gender in another way. Typically, we refer to this group of people as being 'non-binary'. The term non-binary refers to a person:

identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman', as fluctuating between 'man' and 'woman', or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

In Scotland, the 'gender binary' is a big part of how we understand ourselves and others. The gender binary is the dominant idea in Western society that there are only two genders ('man' and 'woman'), that all people are one of

these two genders, and that the two are opposite. However, some people simply don't think about their gender in this way. This has been true in many cultures around the world throughout history, and is becoming increasingly visible in today's Scotland.

There are many diverse ways of identifying as a non-binary person, and language and terms are changing all the time. Some other common terms include; genderqueer, genderfluid and agender. If you haven't heard a term someone is using to describe their gender, just ask what it means to them!

Being non-binary is not about your physical body. Physical bodies are often seen as also fitting into a binary – of all 'male' or all 'female' sex characteristics. In fact there can be many variations of people's sex characteristics, and people who wouldn't typically be perceived

as male or female due to theirs are known as intersex people. Being non-binary is not the same as being intersex – it is about having a gender identity that is not described simply by using the words 'man' or 'woman', rather than having sex characteristics that do not fit society's perception of 'male' or 'female' bodies. A person can be non-binary no matter what physical body they have.

Although non-binary identities may be new to you, it's really important to respect everyone's sense of themselves. Taking the time to learn more about non-binary people and their experiences may make it easier to understand genders outside of the 'man' and 'woman' binary we've come to expect. You can find out more about non-binary at: [www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary](http://www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary)