

Towards LGBTI+ sensitive justice systems for children in Europe

LGBTI+ Glossary*

This LGBTI+ glossary provides definitions of key concepts and expressions that are used throughout the policy brief and can accompany the reader.

The definitions and explanations provided below are intended to be a support for professionals working with children: the appropriate use of language and terminology that do not offend and/or feed internalised bias and stereotypes is one of the first steps for meaningful inclusion and protection of LGBTI+ and children’s rights.

Expression/Word	Definition	Example
SEX	‘Sex’ is assigned at a person’s birth and usually determined by their physical bodies	Mary was born with a female reproductive organ, so she is assigned as ‘female’ at birth.
GENDER	Gender refers to social roles ascribed to someone. Gender and sex do not always conflate	Since Mary was assigned female sex at birth, there are expectations she will act according to the female gender ‘rules’, and have interests considered ‘womanly’.
SEXUALITY	A continuum of feelings and attractions, within which a person understands their sexual and intimate bodies	Jo can express his sexuality by how he presents himself to the world and by how he acts intimately
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Usually defined by whom a person is emotionally, romantically, and/or erotically attracted to	Mary’s sexual orientation is ‘homosexual’ because she is a woman attracted to women (same gender).
GENDER IDENTITY	The gender a person identifies with, regardless of their assigned sex or gender	Jo was assigned female at birth and socially prescribed as ‘woman’. But Jo identifies as a man, so Jo’s gender identity is male.

* This glossary has been created using the following sources: the glossary on the TGEU website at <https://tgeu.org/glossary/>; Ghattas, D.C., Standing up for the human rights of intersex people – how can you help?, ILGA & OII, 2015; Dyer, H., The Queeriodic Table: a celebration of LGBTQ+ culture, 2019.

LESBIAN	Someone who identifies as a woman and is attracted (sexually and/or romantically) to other women	Mary is a woman attracted to women, so she considers herself lesbian.
GAY	Man who is attracted (sexually and/or romantically) to another man	Markus is a man attracted to men, so he considers himself gay/
HOMOSEXUAL	Person (woman or man) who is attracted (sexually and/or romantically) to another person of the same gender	Mary and Markus' sexual orientation is 'homosexual' because they are attracted by people of the same gender.
HETEROSEXUAL	Person (woman or man) who is attracted (sexually and/or romantically) to another person of the opposite gender	Anne's sexual orientation is 'heterosexual' because she is a woman and she is attracted by men.
BISEXUAL	Person (woman or man) who is attracted (sexually and/or romantically) to persons both from the same or opposite gender	Tom is a man attracted both by women and other men, so he considers himself bisexual.
TRANSGENDER (trans, as a common abbreviation)	Someone whose true gender identity is different to the gender they were assigned at birth based on their sex. Gender is an internal experience and not a person's sex characteristics Thus, someone might identify as transgender and decide to undertake or not a process of transition to align their body and appearance to their gender identity	Jo was assigned female at birth and socially prescribed as 'woman'. But Jo does not identify as a woman, and he identifies as a transgender man
TRANSGENDER MAN/ BOY OR TRANS MAN/ BOY OR FTM (Female to Male)	These are terms that may be used by people who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as men Some may prefer to simply be called men, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers	Jo was assigned female at birth and socially prescribed as 'woman'. But Jo does not identify as a woman, and he identifies as a transgender man.
TRANSGENDER WOMAN/ GIRLS OR TRANS WOMAN/GIRL OR MTF (Male to Female)	These are terms that may be used by people who were assigned male at birth but identify and live as women Some may prefer to simply be called women, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers	Andrea was assigned male at birth and socially prescribed as 'man'. But Andrea does not identify as a man, and she identifies as a transgender woman.
GENDER TRANSITION	Transition includes some or all of the following personal, medical, and legal steps: telling one's family, friends, and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/ or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person	Andrea and Jo decided to take the steps towards changing their gender. They therefore went through a gender transition.

INTERSEX	Intersex individuals are born with sex characteristics (such as chromosomes, genitals, and/or hormonal structure) that do not belong strictly to male or female categories, or that belong to both at the same time. 'Intersex' stands for the spectrum of variations of sex characteristics that naturally occur within the human species. It also stands for the acceptance of the physical fact that sex is a spectrum and that people with variations of sex characteristics other than male or female do exist	Johnny is intersex, born with XXY chromosomes, which means that their body naturally produces the testosterone level of an adult woman and high estrogen levels, and with very small testicles, small penis and breasts. Medical standards assume that the majority of XXY humans are male. As a result, Johnny was treated with testosterone as early as 8 and raised as a boy, but never identified themselves as male nor female
CISGENDER	Someone whose gender identity is aligned with the sex assigned at birth	Mary is cisgender because she was assigned a female at birth, and she identifies as a woman.
QUEER/OTHER IDENTITIES (+)	'Umbrella' term for multiple gender identities, sexual orientations, and other minorities within the LGBTI+	If Andrew says "I am queer", it means that they are part of a group of the LGBTI+ community and/or they do not identify in any specific gender identities assigned by society.
NON-BINARY	An umbrella term to refer to all gender identities which somehow differ from the notions of women and men. A non-binary or genderfluid or genderqueer person is a person whose gender is not fixed and whose gender identity moves within a spectrum Some genderqueer people use neutral pronouns like "they" and "them"	Sacha does not identify themselves either as female or as male. They identify themselves as non-binary or gender fluid and would like to be addressed with the pronouns "they/ them".
PREFERRED PRONOUNS	Set of personal pronouns a person prefers to be called by. In English, the most common are she/her, he/him, they/them	Andrew's preferred pronouns are they/ them, so we should say: "Andrew told us that their favourite fruit is strawberry."
HATE CRIME	A criminal act with a bias motive Hate crimes include intimidation, threats, property damage, assault, murder or any other criminal offence where the victim, premises or target of the offence are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support or membership of a protected group The two essential ingredients of a hate crime are that: a) a criminal offence has occurred and b) the offender had a bias motive	Ahmed is assaulted and beaten on the street by a group of men who while beating him would insult him for his queer/feminine appearance and for being gay.

	Hate crimes against LGBTI persons are criminal acts with a bias motive, where the victim, premises or target of the offence are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support or membership of an LGBTI group	
HATE SPEECH	It refers to public expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred, discrimination or violence towards a minority group – for example, statements made by political and religious leaders or other opinion leaders circulated by the press or the Internet which aim to incite hatred Hate speech may or may not be a crime depending on local legislation.	The leader of the opposition party makes a post on her facebook page that is verbally violent against transgender people and incite her followers to use derogatory language and hatred towards them.
HOMOPHOBIA	Irrational fear of, and aversion to, persons perceived as homosexual, based on prejudice, or unfamiliarity/ lack of information	Mary and her girlfriend have troubles finding a new apartment because people turn them down when they realise that they are a lesbian couple.
BIPHOBIA	Irrational fear of, and aversion to, persons perceived as bisexual, based on prejudice or unfamiliarity/lack of information	
TRANSPHOBIA	Irrational fear of, and aversion to, persons perceived as transgender based on prejudice	Jo cannot get a job because employers do not want to hire a transgender person.
TO MISGENDER	To use an incorrect pronoun (different than the one preferred by the person) intentionally or unintentionally to refer to someone	Jo is an openly transgender man, and his pronouns are he/him/his, but at work there is still some colleagues that address him using the pronouns she/her.
HETERONORMATIVITY	Assumption that there are only two genders (man and woman), and the only acceptable form of couple is between a man and a woman	When someone believes that Mary and her girlfriend should not be allowed to marry and raise children because they are two women in a romantic relationship.

Authors:

Global Initiative on Justice with Children and Child Friendly Justice European Network

Lead Contributor :

Silvia Randazzo (Independent Child Justice Expert)

Other Contributors:

Isabela Hümmelgen and Kruthika Ravindrareddy (Central European University),
Eva Gangneux (CFJ-EN), Marcos de Barros (Terre des hommes)

Editors:

Cédric Foussard (Terre des hommes), Mariama Diallo (CFJ-EN)
and Silvia Randazzo (Independent Child Justice Expert)

This Challenge Paper is a product of a joint collaboration of the Child Friendly Justice European Network and the Global Initiative on Justice with Children. The idea to develop this Paper emerged as a direct outcome of the 2021 World Congress on Justice with Children, where a special focus was given during the European Plenary Session and Thematic Workshop to the challenges that LGBTI+ Children face in Europe.

The following Network members endorse this Paper: CICS-Nova (Portugal), Children and Young People’s Centre for Justice (Scotland), Defence for Children International (Belgium, Greece and The Netherlands), Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk e.V. (Germany), Hrabri telefon (Croatia), Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights (Austria), Terre des hommes (Hungary) and Young in Prison (The Netherlands). The Paper is also endorsed by Missing Children Europe (Belgium) and Penal Reform International (International).

The authors would like to express a special word of gratitude to experts Prof. Angela Dwyer (University of Tasmania), Aurore Vanliefde (KU Leuven) and Ujjwal Dubey who contributed their valuable time in advising the team on gender-related aspects.

They would also like to thank Terre des hommes Foundation-Lausanne, the Institut International des Droits de l’Enfant and their pro bono partner Baker McKenzie for their support in drafting this Policy Brief.



For more information or any questions related to the Global Initiative on Justice with Children, please contact:

Cédric Foussard

Coordinator, Global Initiative on Justice with Children

@ cedric.foussard@tdh.ch

For more information or any questions related to the CFJ-EN, please contact:

Mariama Diallo

Coordinator CFJ - European Network

@ mariama.diallo@cfjnetwork.eu

📞 +32 2 203 79 08

🌐 www.cfjnetwork.eu

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The CFJ-EN is part of the legal entity and enjoys the support of:



c/o Defence for Children International Belgium ASBL
30 rue du Marché aux Poulets, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Company number: 0447.397.058 | RPM: Bruxelles | IBAN: BE89 0682 1223 2185

Date of publication: December 2022 - Cover illustration (Edited): Jorm S ©Shutterstock - Graphic Design: Olivia Olbrechts



This document has been produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents herein are the sole responsibility of project partnership and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

ISBN:978-2-931126-75-2

Number of registration to the Royal Library of Belgium: D/2022/14,132/24D