

Guideline: Representing Gender Diversity in Human Research

Gender balance in participant selection criteria

Researchers should endeavor to recruit the representative number of *men* and *women* as research participants unless the researcher can provide a valid scientific justification for targeting or favouring one group only.

Identifying and acknowledging non-binary gender identities

If a project is gender-relevant or has an explicit gender dimension, research design should acknowledge the existence of non-binary gender identities, such as transgender*, and strive to identify and include them in its scope.

Sex vs. gender

Researchers should note that **sex*** is assigned at birth and refers to anatomical or biological characteristics of a person, while **gender** is more of a cultural construction that can be expressed; therefore, it is closely linked to **gender identity***, which may or may not be aligned with a person's sex assigned at birth. For definitions of specific non-binary terms, please visit [TENI website](#).

When designing demographic questions in surveys, researchers should note the distinction between sex and gender and include additional options for answering questions relating to gender of the survey participants, who may or may not identify as male or female. For example:

Q: What is your sex (assigned at birth)?

A: (a) male; (b) female

Q: What is your gender (or gender identity)?

A: (a) male; (b) female; (c) other (*with option to identify*)

The use of language in relation to non-binary gender identities

Researchers should ensure that they use appropriate terms in relation to non-binary people, which express respect and understanding. The Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) provides a comprehensive list of terms and their definitions at [TENI website](#)

*For full definition and explanation, please visit [TENI website](#)