

BeLonG To Youth Services

Submission to the Review of the Gender Recognition Act (2015)

Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual &
Trans Young People in Ireland



Submitted:

5th February 2018

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Table of Contents

	Page Number
Executive Summary	3
I. Introduction	6
II. Background to BeLonG To's Recommendations	
A. Consultations with Trans and Non-Binary Young People	7
B. Practice-based expertise and relevant research	10
III. BeLonG To's Recommendations	11
IV. Conclusion	14
Appendix 1. Notes of Consultations with youth members of Individuality in 2016.	15
References	20

Executive Summary

BeLonG To is the national organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender¹ and Non-Binary² (LGBT+) young people. Since we work in equal partnership with young people, we prepared for our submission to Government on the review of the Gender Recognition Act by consulting 48 trans and non-binary youth members of BeLonG To at nine meetings in 2016 and 2017. We also consulted our National Network of LGBT+ youth services and drew on international research and the expertise of national and international colleagues regarding the best interests of trans and non-binary children and young people.

This executive summary provides a brief overview of BeLonG To's Recommendations to Government on the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015. See further details in other sections of the submission below.

1. Trans and non-binary young people who are 16 and 17 years of age:

BeLonG To recommends that the best interests of trans and non-binary young people who are 16 and 17 will be achieved by:

- a) Ireland following the example of Malta and Norway and permitting 16 and 17-year-olds to independently receive gender recognition (without needing to have the consent of their parents/guardians.)
- b) Allowing trans and non-binary young people who are at least 16 years of age to have access to gender recognition certificates on the same basis of self-declaration and through the same administrative process as over-18s.

2. Trans and non-binary young people who are under 16 years of age:

In most cases, trans and non-binary young people under 16 years will have the consent and support of their parents when they apply for gender recognition. BeLonG To recommends the following to meet the best interests of trans and non-binary children and young people under 16 years:

- a) Trans and non-binary young people under 16 years, with the consent of their parents, should receive gender recognition on the basis of self-declaration and through an administrative process as with adult applicants.

¹ We use Transgender (Trans) as an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were given at birth. There is no research on the number of trans young people in Ireland but in New Zealand, researchers found 1.7% of high school students were trans, and a further 2.5% were unsure of their gender, see T.C. Clark et al, Health & wellbeing of transgender high school students: results from the New Zealand adolescent survey (Youth '12) *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 55 (2014) 93-99.

² We use Non-Binary as an umbrella term for any gender that is not exclusively male or female. Non-binary people may identify as both male and female or they may not identify with a gender. Some non-binary people see themselves as trans.

In rare situations when parents do not give consent, BeLonG To recommends that, in the best interests of trans and non-binary children, Ireland follows the example of Malta. Malta allows a young person under 16 years to apply for gender recognition even if their parents/guardian do not give consent. The MGRM (the national LGBT organisation) is funded by Government to provide family support through MGRM's Rainbow Support Services.

- b) BeLonG To recommends that in the Irish context, the best interests of a trans or non-binary child who does not have the consent of their parents would be determined by the courts with safeguards to ensure the child's wishes and voice are upheld. This would also be in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In cases where parents do not provide consent, a vital role would also be played by statutory services such as the guardians ad litem³.
- c) BeLonG To recommends that statutory services such as child protection, guardians ad litem and family support meet the best interests of trans and non-binary children by developing specialised internal expertise and resources regarding gender recognition and that they also provide the relevant awareness training to all staff who work with children and young people.

3. Non-Binary Young People:

BeLonG To recommends the following to meet the best interests of non-binary children and young people:

The Gender Recognition Act be revised to be inclusive of non-binary young people. To be inclusive, the following gender markers should be available on gender recognition certificates and other Government identity documents: M for Male, F for Female, X, and NB. NB would indicate Non-Binary and X would indicate Gender Not Specified.

4. Intersex young people

BeLonG To notes that the *Organisation Intersex International Europe* states that the main problem faced by intersex people in Europe is that 'healthy intersex bodies' are seen as a 'medical problem' to be fixed by medical means, including 'normalising' surgery¹.

BeLonG To recommends that:

During the period of the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015, Government initiate a Working Group focussed on examining the human rights violations that may be experienced by intersex children and young people in Ireland.

³ BeLonG To is working to create a family support service for our youth members and their families in regard to gender recognition.

5. Equal Status Acts

BeLonG To recommends that Ireland follow the example of Malta, and revise the Equal Status Acts to include the following grounds as protected:

Gender identity, to extend protection specifically to transgender and non-binary people.

Gender expression, to protect people in relation to their external expression of their gender identity (through, for example, their clothing, hair, voice or behaviour.)

Sex characteristics. The 'sex characteristics' ground would protect intersex people.

6. Other government identity documents.

BeLonG To recommends that all other government identity documents be changed in line with the revisions to the Gender Identity Act.

7. Other government policies

BeLonG To recommends that all government departments, especially Education and Health, develop policies to ensure the full implementation of the revisions to the Gender Identity Act.

8. No Financial Barriers

BeLonG To recommends that the Gender Identity Act (and other Government identity documents) be financially accessible to all.

I. Introduction

BeLonG To is the national organisation for LGBT+ young people. Our vision is a world where LGBT+ young people are equal, safe and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. BeLonG To's mission is to work with LGBT+ young people as equals to achieve our vision through youth work, changing attitudes, and research.

BeLonG To has a network of more than 20 youth groups in Dublin and around Ireland that provide vital support to LGBT+ young people. We engage with LGBT+ young people aged 14-23 and their families, professionals working alongside young people, and all those who support and can be supported by the vision and mission of BeLonG To Youth Service. BeLonG To's model of youth work practice is adapted from Critical Social Education. Our key approaches include:

- Providing youth services for LGBT+ young people which are safe, positive and fun environments where they can explore issues affecting them.
- Empowering young people to become agents of social change to tackle the issues they face.
- Working towards changing national policy and society when tackling these issues.

In 2015, the Oireachtas passed the Gender Recognition Act. Many aspects of the act were ground-breaking internationally; for example, the provision for transgender people to receive gender recognition based on self-declaration, and without being required to undergo assessment or medical treatment. But, from the perspective of transgender and non-binary young people, there were significant limitations with the Gender Recognition Act 2015. Fortunately, the legislation included a process of review starting two years after the law was commenced.

BeLonG To's approach to developing recommendations for the review of the 2015 Act was based upon our equal partnership with young people, in particular our youth members who are transgender and non-binary. In BeLonG To, the core values of equal partnership are:

- a) Young people have the right to identify options/choices and choose the most appropriate one for them in any given situation.
- b) Young people have the right to self-determination (make own choices.)
- c) Young people have the right to confidentiality in their relationship with youth workers.
- d) Young people have the right to develop their own values and attitudes.
- e) Young people have the right to develop the capacity to analyse critically the world around them and to take action in response.
- f) Young people have the right to challenge the youth worker and to be challenged by the youth worker in areas such as attitudes expressed and ways of behaving.

- g) Young people have the right to be treated as equals (Hurley & Treacey 1993²)

BeLonG To's practice of having an equal partnership with young people involves the following understanding of roles and responsibilities:

1. People have different roles, but all roles are respected equally.
2. Responsibilities should be shared as much as possible.
3. We are all equal, but we're not the same (different areas of expertise and life experiences.)
4. We are all working for the same goal, and are equal in the process.
5. (Mutual Learning) Youth Workers have a responsibility to develop young people.
6. (Mutual Learning) Young people have a responsibility to engage Youth Workers.
7. There is an open dialogue between Youth Workers, Volunteers, Students and Young people, without fear or consequences.
8. There must be honest recognition of work that is not equal partnership based.

II. Background to BeLonG To's recommendations

A. Consultations with Trans and Non-Binary Youth Members

From October 2016 to November 2017, BeLonG To held 9 consultations on gender recognition with members of IndividualiTy, our group for young people who are transgender or non-binary or who are questioning their gender identity. The discussions were facilitated by BeLonG To staff. The first consultation was co-facilitated with the then CEO of TENI. Youth workers in BeLonG To's National Network were also consulted and they in turn consulted with the trans and non-binary young people who are members of their youth services around Ireland.

BeLonG To's approach to these consultations is grounded in our commitment to equal partnership with the youth members of our services. This means, for example, young people have the right to self-determination, to develop their own values, to have their capacities developed by youth workers, to share responsibilities, to engage in open dialogue and to be treated as equals.

A total of 48 young people, aged 14 – 23, participated in the discussions about gender recognition. We invited young people to share their feedback on the current law, their dreams for legal gender recognition in Ireland and their feedback on drafts of our recommendations. They also talked about their experiences and their hopes for Irish family life, Irish society more broadly and for institutions that have a significant impact on their lives, such as schools. The following summarises the main points raised by trans and non-binary youth members of BeLonG To.

Summary of Key Points from the Consultations

Below is a summary of the key points made by young people at the consultations in October and November 2016. The summaries were corrected and their accuracy confirmed at a consultation with IndividualiTy members in April 2017. The rough notes from the consultations in 2016 can be found below in Appendix 1.

Youth members of IndividualiTy were first asked: 'What barriers do trans and non-binary young people face under the current law? In summary, they said:

- It is drastically more difficult for 16–17-year-olds.
- When you're 16-17, your parents need to be reasonably educated to understand the forms.
- Completely impossible and unfair for under 16s denying them their gender because they are "too young".
- Children over 14 years should not need parental consent.

- Upset there are no opportunities for non-binary gender.
- Difficulties going abroad, having to explain yourself at airports.
- Problems with schools.
- Job discrimination.

Youth members of IndividualiTy were asked: 'How would a better gender recognition law benefit trans and non-binary young people? In summary, the young people replied:

- We would be more accepted by our schools.
- Makes a big difference to your mental health
- It is important for our safety and security.
- Gives validation to trans people.
- Legally it's much simpler if everything matches.
- Involve and support non-binary people.
- Makes travel easier.
- Feel more comfortable in society.
- Makes me feel a part of this country.
- Makes me feel accepted.
- Makes people feel more equal in the eyes of the law.
- Equal rights due to having gender marker agree with self.

Young people in IndividualiTy were then asked to imagine their ideal types of gender recognition law. This is a summary of their ideas:

- ✓ Gender recognition needs to be more accessible in every way possible for 14 - 17s.
- ✓ There should be self-determination for 14-18s, with no medical role.
- ✓ The application process should be accessible, with forms that are simple to fill in.
- ✓ The application process should not involve the courts.
- ✓ There should be recognition of non-binary people: male, female and other or X, or NB (non-binary.)

B. Practice-based expertise and relevant research

BeLonG To's recommendations also draw upon our frontline work with trans and non-binary young people. This has shown us the serious risks to the welfare and mental health of trans and non-binary young people. We have witnessed huge increases in the numbers of young people coming to BeLonG To in crisis, particularly among under-18s. Our dedicated youth workers in Dublin and around Ireland have been working all out to provide resilience, suicide and self-harm prevention programmes. Our response now includes a new partnership with Pieta House to provide specialised counselling for young people on self-harm and suicide.

BeLonG To's practice-based expertise related to the best interests of trans and non-binary children has been validated by Irish research studies. For example, the *LGBTIreland study*, funded by the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention and conducted by Dr Agnes Higgins of the School of Nursing in Trinity College. The report was launched in 2016, by former president, Dr Mary McAleese. It showed that, compared to the general youth population in Ireland, trans and non-binary youth experience disproportionate rates of self-harm, suicidal thoughts and behaviour and severe or extremely severe depression, anxiety and stress³.

BeLonG To also notes that the Children's Rights Alliance's Report Card 2017⁴ gave a grade of C+ regarding the situation of LGBT+ young people in Ireland. The Report Card stated that gender recognition is very difficult to access for under-18s. The Children's Rights Alliance recommended that, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child⁵, the views of trans young people need to be heard during the review of the act.

In the hope of finding relevant examples for how the Gender Recognition Act would be improved, BeLonG To commissioned a brief review of gender recognition laws worldwide⁶. This indicated that Australia and New Zealand have some relevant provisions. European countries, such as Malta and Norway, offer pertinent models for how the Irish law could be improved to provide better access to young people. BeLonG To then consulted with experts in Malta and Norway on how their laws worked in practice.

III. BeLonG To's Recommendations

In writing these recommendations, BeLonG To drew on the concerns and ideas of our trans and non-binary youth members, and on professional expertise about the best interests of children. We developed drafts of the recommendations and brought each draft to be reviewed by members of IndividualiTy, BeLonG To's group for trans and non-binary young people. Drafts of the submission were also brought to our national network, our staff team, our board of directors and others with expertise in child welfare. The final draft of the recommendations was agreed with members of IndividualiTy.

Trans and non-binary young people who are 16 and 17 years of age

In Norway⁷ recent legal and policy changes mean that young people aged at least sixteen years have equal access to gender recognition on the same basis as adults. In Malta, the *Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act* was passed unanimously by parliament in 2015. Section 1 of the act states that: "Minor" means a person who has not yet attained the age of sixteen years.⁸

Recommendation 1. Trans and non-binary young people who are 16 and 17 years of age:

BeLonG To recommends that the best interests of trans and non-binary 16 and 17-year-olds will be achieved by:

- a) Ireland following the example of Malta and Norway and permitting 16 and 17-year-olds to independently receive gender recognition (without needing to have the consent of their parents/guardians.)
- b) By Ireland allowing trans and non-binary young people who are at least 16 years of age to have access to gender recognition certificates on the same basis of self-declaration and through the same administrative process as over-18s.

Trans and non-binary young people who are under 16 years of age

Norway's new policies provide that trans young people under the age of sixteen can receive gender recognition if they have the consent of one parent⁹. There is a designated role for local child welfare services to then assess whether this is in the best interests of the child. In Norway, this child welfare role is fulfilled by the 'County Governor'¹⁰.

In Malta, the *Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act* states that:

'7. (1) The persons exercising parental authority over the minor... may file an application in... Civil Court... requesting the Court to change the recorded gender and first name of the minor in order to reflect the minor's gender identity.

(2) ... the Court shall:

(a) ensure that the best interests of the child as expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child be the paramount consideration: and

(b) give due weight to the views of the minor having regard to the minor's age and maturity.'¹¹

In Malta, a young person under 16 years may apply for gender recognition without parental approval. Child welfare service would be involved, in Malta they are known as the Foundation for Social Welfare¹². The Foundation has seconded social workers to work with the family support service in Rainbow Support Services in the MGRM (the national LGBT organisation.) The MGRM do not yet know of a case in which a young person under 16 years has applied for gender recognition without the consent of their parents and with the involvement of child welfare. MGRM are cautious about a path that may lead to a child entering foster care and instead they offer their family support service, in the Rainbow Support Services.

In BeLonG To's experience, most parents are very supportive of their trans and non-binary children. In the exceptional circumstances in which a parent(s) / guardian(s) of a young person under the age of 16 do not agree with their child receiving gender recognition, BeLonG To would view this situation as one in which there is an urgent need for family support. This is required both to provide support to the parents and to ensure that the young person is safe and protected from harm. Youth members of BeLonG To have been strongly requesting that they have access to a skilled and knowledgeable service to support them in addressing family difficulties related to gender recognition⁴. Our youth members have also expressed grave concern that, in their experience, this expertise does not currently exist in statutory services that work with, for example, child protection, family support and mental health. These and other statutory child welfare services all have vital roles to play when a young person does not have the support or consent of their parents in applying for gender recognition.

⁴ BeLonG To is working to create a family support service for our youth members and their families in regard to gender recognition.

Recommendation 2. Trans and non-binary young people under 16 years:
BeLonG To recommends the following to meet the best interests of trans and non-binary children and young people:

- a) Trans and non-binary young people under 16 years, with the consent of their parents, should receive gender recognition on the basis of self-declaration and through an administrative process as with adult applicants.

In rare situations when parents do not give consent, BeLonG To recommends that, in the best interests of trans and non-binary children, Ireland follows the example of Malta. Malta allows a young person under 16 years to apply for gender recognition even if their parents/guardian do not give consent. The MGRM (the national LGBT organisation) is funded by Government to provide family support through MGRM's Rainbow Support Services.

- b) BeLonG To recommends that in the Irish context, the best interests of a trans or non-binary child who does not have the consent of their parents would be determined by the courts with safeguards to ensure the child's wishes and voice are upheld. This would also be in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

'Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law¹³.

In cases where parents do not provide consent, a vital role would also be played by statutory services such as the guardians ad litem.

- c) BeLonG To recommends that statutory services such as child protection, guardians ad litem and family support meet the best interests of trans and non-binary children by developing specialised internal expertise and resources regarding gender recognition and that they also provide the relevant awareness training to all staff who work with children and young people.

Non-Binary Young People

Other countries offer useful examples for how Ireland might proceed in terms of the recognition of non-binary people. Malta¹⁴ recently introduced the X gender marker for birth certificates, as a non-declaration of gender¹⁵. Malta will soon allow an X gender marker on government ID cards and passports. In Australia¹⁶, the government provides for the use of an X gender marker (in addition to M

and F) to mean a gender that is 'Indeterminate / Intersex / Unspecified'. In New Zealand¹⁷, the gender markers utilised by the government are M, F and X. In New Zealand, X means 'indeterminate/unspecified.' BeLonG To's consultations with our trans and non-binary youth members led to a consensus that, in addition to M, F and X gender markers, BeLonG To should recommend access to an NB gender marker to signify non-binary.

Recommendation 3. Non-binary young people

BeLonG To recommends the following to meet the best interests of non-binary children and young people:

The Gender Recognition Act be revised to be inclusive of non-binary people. To be inclusive, the following gender markers should be available on gender recognition certificates and other Government identity documents: M for Male, F for Female, X, and NB. NB would indicate Non-Binary and X would indicate Gender Not Specified¹⁸.

Intersex young people

BeLonG To notes that Organisation Intersex International Europe (OII Europe) states that 'the main problem' faced by intersex people is that 'healthy intersex bodies' are seen as a 'medical problem that needs to be fixed by surgical, hormonal and other medical means', including what is called 'normalising' surgery¹⁹. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture includes this topic in their remit. The UN *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture* stated that intersex children are being subjected to surgeries without the full and informed consent of the child or their parents²⁰.

Recommendation 4. Intersex children and young people

BeLonG To recommends that:

During the period of the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015, Government initiate a Working Group focussed on examining the human rights violations that may be experienced by intersex children and young people in Ireland.

Recommendation 5. Equal Status Acts

BeLonG To recommends that Ireland follow the example of Malta, and revise the Equal Status Acts to include the following grounds as protected:

Gender identity, to extend protection specifically to transgender and non-binary people.

Gender expression, to protect people in relation to their external expression of their gender identity (through, for example, their clothing, hair, voice or behaviour.²¹)

Sex characteristics. The 'sex characteristics' ground would protect intersex people.

Other government identity documents

Our consultations with youth members revealed that they were concerned about whether requirements for other identity documents, such as passports and change of name by deed poll would be updated in a timely manner to take account of any revisions to the Gender Identity Act 2015.

Recommendation 6. Other government identity documents:

BeLonG To recommends that all other government identity documents be changed in line with the revisions to the Gender Identity Act.

Other government policies

Youth members of BeLonG To have long reported very difficult experiences in the education system and in health care, including mental health and health care for transgender young people. These difficulties have been well documented in recent Irish research²² and also emerged as serious youth concerns in the consultations that took place in 2017 as part of the ***LGBTI+ Youth Strategy*** led by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Recommendation 7. Other government Policies

BeLonG To recommends that to provide for the best interests of trans and non-binary children and young people welfare all government departments, especially Education and Health, develop policies to ensure the full implementation of the revisions to the Gender Identity Act.

Financial barriers to gender recognition

Youth members of BeLonG To reported in the consultations that they faced financial barriers in relation to gaining gender recognition, for example fees to change their names by deed poll.

Recommendation 8. No Financial Barriers

BeLonG To recommends that to provide for the best interests of trans and non-binary children and young people the provisions of the Gender Identity Act (and other Government identity documents) be financially accessible to all.

IV. Conclusion

BeLonG To is honoured to submit these recommendations to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to assist with their review of the Gender Identity Act 2015.

We also very much appreciate the opportunities that are emerging for our youth members through the forthcoming LGBTI+ Youth Strategy, led by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

If any aspect of our submission requires clarification, BeLonG To would be pleased to respond to any queries. And, trans and non-binary youth members of our IndividualiTy youth group are eager to meet with the Working Group to discuss the recommendations.

Appendix 1.

Notes of Consultations with Trans and Non-Binary Youth Members of BeLonG To in 2016.

A. Notes of First Consultation with Individuality on Gender Recognition

5th October 2016

Facilitated by Lisa McKenny and Broden Giambrone

Q.1. Why does legal gender recognition matter to you?

1. Safety and security
2. Makes a big difference to your mental health
3. Legally its much simpler if everything matches.
4. It is important for trans peoples safety.
5. Gives validation to trans people
6. Useful for when people say you are a 'garlic bread gender'.
7. Pull up paper seems legit
8. Ability to get passports changed
9. Makes travel easier
10. Makes me feel a part of this f*cking country.
11. Makes me feel accepted.
12. Makes people feel more equal in the eyes of the law.
13. Equal rights due to having gender marker agree with self.
14. Better mental health
15. Safety and validation.

Q.2. What barriers do you face by not having legal recognition?

1. People who travel a lot find it difficult (you must have 2 years' proof of your gender)
2. Non-binary people can't get recognised.
3. If you pass, having to explain why your birth cert/passport doesn't match in airport etc.
4. Difficulty obtaining passport /driving licence etc.
5. The 16-17 GRC process is difficult.
6. Going abroad.
7. Schools "WTF"
8. Job discrimination
9. Non- binary people can't get recognition
10. Young people can't get gender recognition.
11. Bathrooms, changing rooms – my body my choice...

12. Certificates (leaving cert, junior cert).
13. Age
14. Education. when your 16-17 your parents need to be reasonably educated to understand the forms
15. Under 18 and under 16
16. Non-binary
17. Certificates in birth name
18. Drivers licence
19. 16-17 painful process
20. Problems in school
21. Airports
22. Job discrimination.
23. Under 16
24. Remove gender markers from unnecessary documents.
25. Less of a pain for under 18 e.g. no need for a million different forms from doctors.

B. Notes of Second Consultation with IndividualiTY members

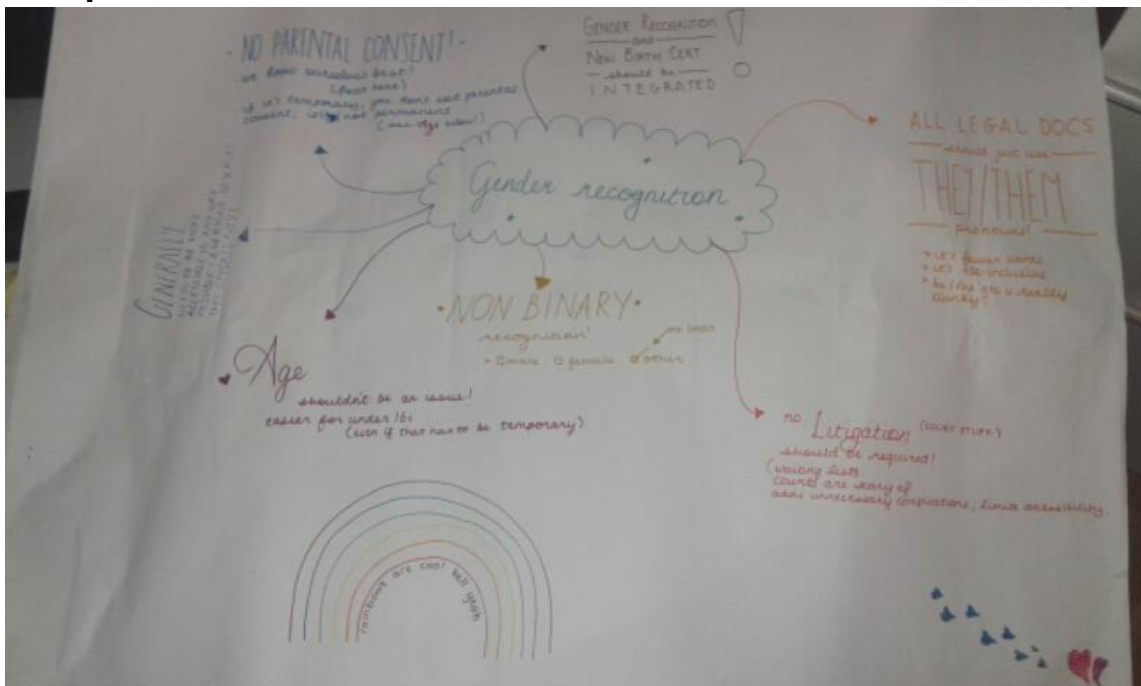
9th November 2017

Facilitated by Lisa McKenny

"Blue sky" thinking:

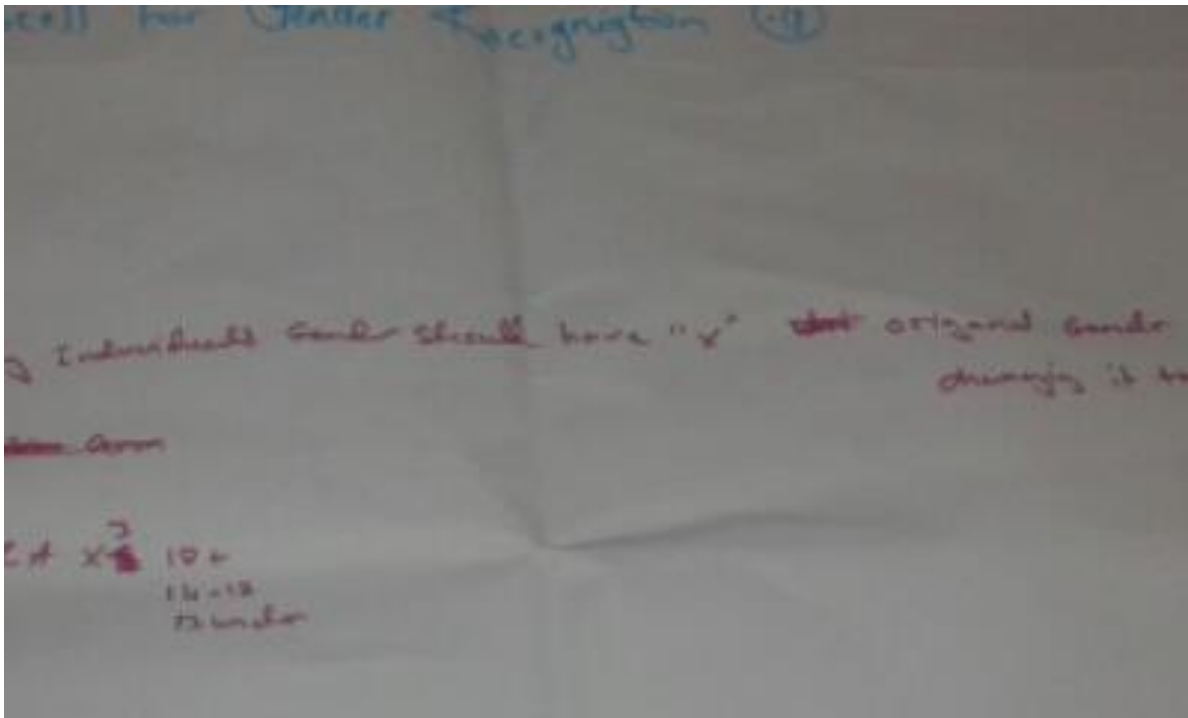
What the young people would like to see with gender recognition.

Group 1



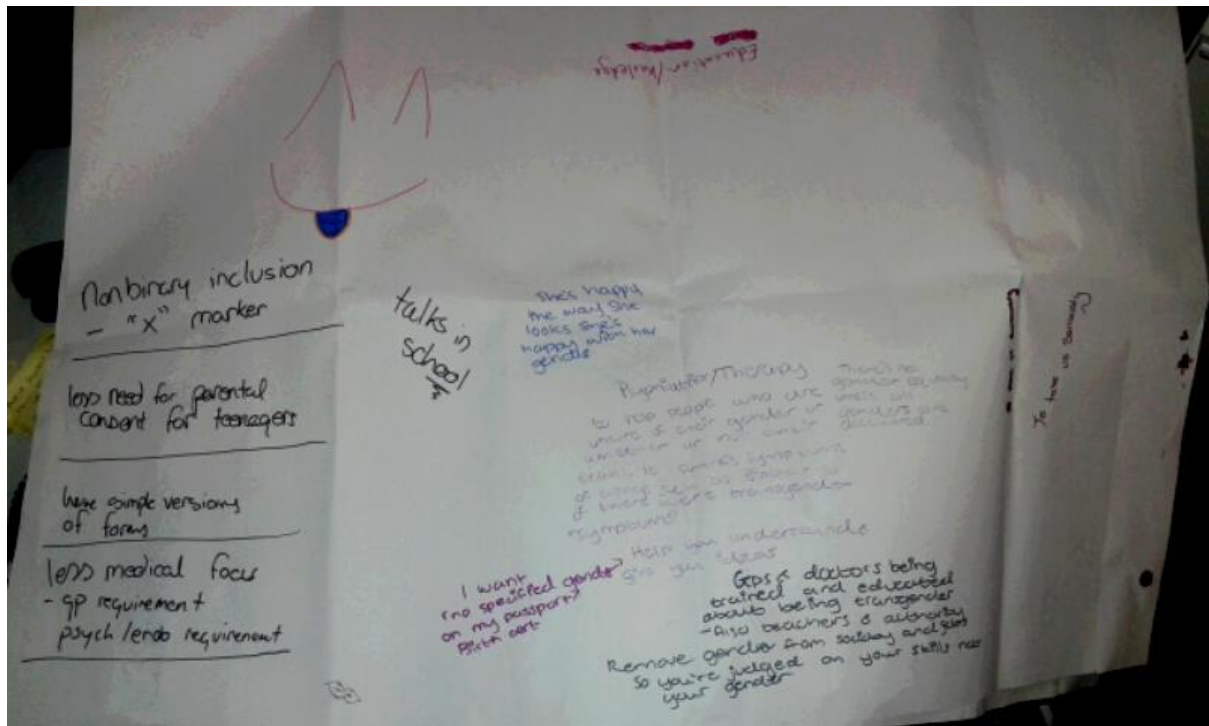
- Age shouldn't be an issue easier for under 16s (even if that must be temporary)
- Non-binary recognition e.g. male / female / other
- Generally, needs to be more accessible in any way possible
- Everyone deserves this opportunity
- No parental consent – we know ourselves best
- If its temporary, you don't need parental consent it is not permanent (age look at)
- Gender recognition and new birth cert should be integrated
- All legal documents should just use they/them pro-noun.... This means fewer words, it's all inclusive, he/she etc. is clunky.
- No litigation (court stuff) should be required (waiting lists courts are scary and adds unnecessary complications; limits accessibility).

Group 2



- Gender non-conforming individuals gender should have x.
- Original gender at birth changing it to F/M/X
- GRA X3 (18+) and (14-17) and then (13) under (don't dream it love is love Be it love each other)

Group 3



- Non-binary inclusion and x marker.
- Less need for parental consent for teenagers
- Have simple versions of forms
- Less medical focus e.g. GP requirement / psych / endo.
- Talks in schools
- Psychiatrist / therapy to help people who are unsure of their gender or whether their i.e. there's symptoms of things such as bi-polar so if there were transgender 'symptoms' help you understand and give your ideas.
- GPs and doctors being trained and educated about being transgender
- Teachers and authority figures remove gender from society and jobs so you are judged on your skills not your gender.
- There is no gender equality unless all genders are accounted for.
- To take us seriously
- Education/knowledge
- 'she's happy the way she looks she's happy with her gender'.....
- I want no specific gender on my passport / birth cert.

Group 4



- 'You will always be a girl to me 'I don't want to hear this anymore.
- Support and understanding for those **not** wanting bottom surgery
- Younger recognition. parental consent etc.
- More support and information for parents.
- Spreading information into the mainstream.
- Non-binary options
- Make easier like by a lot
- Temporary recognition for people under the age of 18 which the can be solidified or confirmed once you turn 18
- Not having to pay for a second birth cert.

References

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- ³ Higgins, Agnes, Doyle, L, Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F & Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: National study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender & intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: www.belongto.org, and Peter Dunne & Cearbhall Turraoin (2015) *It's Time to Hear Our Voices. National Trans Youth Forum Report 2015*. www.teni.ie
- ⁴ Children's Rights Alliance, *Report Card 2017*, pages 83-85. www.childrensrights.ie
- ⁵ *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*, Ombudsman for Children's Office: <https://www.oco.ie/education-and-human-rights/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child/>. Lina Henzel et al. (2016). *Back me up! Rights of trans children under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Transgender Europe. Available at <http://tgeu.org/children/>. Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights. (2015) *Human rights and intersex people*. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806da5d4>. R. Kohler, J Ehrt et al (2016) *Legal Gender Recognition in Europe*. 2nd revised edition. Transgender Europe. Available at http://tgeu.org/toolkit_legal_gender_recognition_in_europe/
- ⁶ Helen Byrne (November 2016.) *Overview of Gender recognition worldwide. Report for BeLonG To*.
- ⁷ Norway, *Law on Change of Legal Gender*: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2016-06-17-46>. In Norway, the relevant child protection authority is the County Governor: <https://www.fylkesmannen.no/en/About-us/>
- ⁸ See Malta, *Chapter 540, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act XI of 2015, as amended by Acts XX of 2015 and LVI of 2016*. <http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=12312&l=1>
- ⁹ Norway, *Law on Change of Legal Gender*: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2016-06-17-46>. In Norway, the relevant child protection authority is the County Governor: <https://www.fylkesmannen.no/en/About-us/>
- ¹⁰ On the role of the County Governors of Norway, see: <https://www.fylkesmannen.no/en/About-us/>

¹¹ See Malta, *Chapter 540, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act XI of 2015, as amended by Acts XX of 2015 and LVI of 2016*. <http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=12312&l=1>

¹² On Malta's Foundation for Social Welfare, or social work service, see <https://fsws.gov.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx>

¹³ UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

¹⁴ Proposal announced by the Malta Minister for Social Dialogue in February 2017 http://meae.gov.mt/en/Pages/Media/Press_Releases/PR170450.aspx#

¹⁵ And we note that the recent consensus statement from intersex advocates from Australia and New Zealand says, 'as with race or religion, sex/gender should not be a legal category on birth certificates or identification documents for anybody.' *Darlington Statement: Joint consensus statement from the intersex community retreat in Darlington, March 2017*, p. 3, <http://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Darlington-Statement.pdf>

¹⁶ For Australia, see: <https://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Documents/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.pdf>, p.4.

¹⁷ For New Zealand, see, for example: <https://www.passports.govt.nz/what-you-need-to-renew-or-apply-for-a-passport/information/>

¹⁸ It is recommended by ILGA Europe and Organisation Intersex International Europe, that the X gender marker should be available to all children and parents, and not limited to those with intersex variations. See, Dan Christian Ghattas, *Standing up for the human rights of intersex people – how can you help?* (2015) ILGA Europe and OII Europe p. 22, https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/how_to_be_a_great_intersex_ally_a_toolkit_for_n_gos_and_decision_makers_december_2015_updated.pdf

¹⁹ ILGA Europe and OII Europe (2015) *Standing up for the human rights of intersex people – How can you help?* Page9. Available from: https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/how_to_be_a_great_intersex_ally_a_toolkit_for_n_gos_and_decision_makers_december_2015_updated.pdf

²⁰ (United Nations) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*. See: http://antitorture.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Gender_Report_A_HRC_31_57_E-5.pdf

²¹ See *Yogyakarta Principles Plus 10. Additional principles and state obligations on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics to*

complement the Yogyakarta Principles. As adopted on 10 November 2017, Geneva. www.yogyakartaprinciples.org

²² Higgins, Agnes, Doyle, L, Downes, C; Murphy, R; Sharek, D; DeVries, J; Begley, T; McCann, E; Sheerin, F & Smyth, S (2016). *The LGBTIreland report: National study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender & intersex people in Ireland*. Dublin: www.belongto.org, Peter Dunne & Cearbhall Turraoin (2015) *It's Time to Hear Our Voices. National Trans Youth Forum Report 2015*. www.teni.ie and Department of Children and Youth Affairs (no date) *A consultation with Gender Non-Conforming Children and Young People*.