Proposal for Fully Gender-Inclusive Emoji

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Submitted: 2017-06-28

1. Background

Last year's Emoji 4.0 update introduced the concept of gender to the world of Unicode. Before said version of TR 51 became a reality, I wrote to the UTC twice (L2/16-169, L2/16-193) about its flaws, remarking that the stated goal of allowing improved gender representation would be utterly impossible to achieve without introducing a third gender option and without enabling gender variants for all human-form emoji rather than just for the arbitrary selection of characters that were deemed gender-worthy by members of the Consortium at the time. Unfortunately, my comments did not lead to any changes in the emoji documentation whatsoever, resulting in a terribly restrictive binary gender model with random omissions that only serves to further perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and outdated, conservative world views.

Later, the UTC approved the encoding of three explicitly gender-neutral emoji (Hunt, L2/16-317) that would complete the already existing male and female family member set. The optimist and rationalist in me assumed this finally meant that the approval of all gender-neutral emoji and the addition of the few missing gender variants would follow quickly, and that the UTC had realised that a binary gender model based solely on clichés is not suitable – it is the only assumption that made sense considering the UTC's decision. But alas, U+1F9D1 ADULT, U+1F9D2 CHILD, and U+1F9D3 OLDER ADULT remained the only third-gender emoji and the missing binary gender options weren't considered either for Emoji 5.0.

As well as leaving feedback on various public review issues, I also wrote to the Emoji Subcommittee several times about this glaring problem:

- *The Fourth Comment on Gendered Emoji* (2017-03-11)
- *Filling the Gaps in the Emoji 5.0 Repertoire* (2017-03-14)
- *Revised Proposal to Fill the Gaps in the Emoji 5.0 Repertoire* (2017-03-30)
- *Response to Feedback on My Latest Proposal* (2017-04-21)
- *Request for Clarification of Gendered Emoji Situation* (2017-06-10)

Since I did not receive any responses to my last two submissions to this date, I am now forced to write this proposal without knowing the ESC's current intentions so I apologize if this document turns out to be redundant in parts.

2. Overview of Proposed Emoji

The following table illustrates quite well why the current Unicode gender repertoire does not make any logical sense. Available gender options are marked with a ✓, while excluded gender options are marked with a ✗.

Concept	Male	Neutral	Female
Child	✓	✓	✓

Adult	✓	✓	✓
Older adult	✓	✓	✓
Health worker	✓	✗	✓
Student	✓	✗	✓
Teacher	✓	✗	✓
Judge	✓	✗	✓
Farmer	✓	✗	✓
Cook	✓	✗	✓
Mechanic	✓	✗	✓
Factory worker	✓	✗	✓
Office worker	✓	✗	✓
Scientist	✓	✗	✓
Technologist	✓	✗	✓
Singer	✓	✗	✓
Artist	✓	✗	✓
Pilot	✓	✗	✓
Astronaut	✓	✗	✓
Firefighter	✓	✗	✓
Police officer	✓	✓	✓
Sleuth	✓	✓	✓
Guard	✓	✓	✓
Construction worker	✓	✓	✓
Royalty	✓	✗	✓
Turban	✓	✓	✓
Guā pí mào	✓	✗	✗
Headscarf	✗	✗	✓
Beard	✗	✓	✗
Blond hair	✓	✓	✓
Tuxedo	✓	✗	✗
Veil	✗	✗	✓
Pregnancy	✗	✗	✓
Breast feeding	✗	✓	✗
Christmas	✓	✗	✓
Mage	✓	✓	✓

Fairy	✓	✓	✓
Vampire	✓	✓	✓
Merperson	✓	✓	✓
Elf	✓	✓	✓
Genie	✓	✓	✓
Zombie	✓	✓	✓
Frowning	✓	✓	✓
Pouting	✓	✓	✓
No good gesture	✓	✓	✓
OK gesture	✓	✓	✓
Information desk	✓	✓	✓
Raising hand	✓	✓	✓
Bowing	✓	✓	✓
Face palm	✓	✓	✓
Shrug	✓	✓	✓
Face massage	✓	✓	✓
Haircut	✓	✓	✓
Walking	✓	✓	✓
Running	✓	✓	✓
Dancing	✓	✗	✓
Bunny ears	✓	✓	✓
Steamy room	✓	✓	✓
Climbing	✓	✓	✓
Lotus position	✓	✓	✓
Levitating in business suit	✓	✗	✗
Golf	✓	✓	✓
Surfing	✓	✓	✓
Rowboat	✓	✓	✓
Swimming	✓	✓	✓
Ball	✓	✓	✓
Weight lifting	✓	✓	✓
Bicycle	✓	✓	✓
Mountain bicycle	✓	✓	✓
Cartwheel	✓	✓	✓

Wrestling	✓	✓	✓
Water polo	✓	✓	✓
Handball	✓	✓	✓
Juggling	✓	✓	✓

There is absolutely no discernible pattern here. My best guess is that the list of gender variants is purely based on what individual people on the Consortium personally consider "normal" human behaviour, but even that theory does not fully hold up because the same list that includes men dressed up as playboy bunnies and women wearing a turban simultaneously excludes men in wedding dresses and women with beards. In any case it is undeniable that the current list is discriminatory because it pretends that people of certain genders can only dress and behave in certain ways, and it prohibits a significant number of people from using emoji that reasonably represent their identity, which is the exact opposite of what the UTC claimed to be working towards with Emoji 4.0. As it currently stands gender representation in Unicode is worse than ever before. This is not inclusion; this is tokenism.

The ESC did publish its own document concerning the matter (Davis, L2/17-071) and presented it at UTC #151. However, the only consequence of this proposal (action item 151-A103) seemed to be that the UTC now intents to better document the gender situation rather than make any substantial improvements to it.

In short, I propose the addition of all emoji that are represented by a ✖ in the above table, amounting to 3 new characters and 32 new ZWJ sequences (Fitzpatrick variants have not been counted). Note that the table only shows the ideal situation that should be the case according to UTS 51. In reality however absolutely no-one has bothered yet to make their neutral emoji actually neutral and instead just duplicated one of the other genders at random. (I say "at random" but it is obvious that many genders were assigned according to false stereotypes.) Because of that this proposal is not as straight-forward as most others because I am essentially asking for the addition of emoji that have the same meaning and same visual appearance of already existing ones, while said existing emoji need to have their established meanings changed accordingly.

For example, while U+1F931 BREAST-FEEDING is intended to be gender-neutral and has a gender-neutral CLDR short name, all implementations that already support it render it with the same physical features as U+1F469 WOMAN (long hair, red lips etc.), making the current default *de facto* female. Vendors would therefore need to design a new neutral glyph for the default and move the current default glyph to the proposed female version.

Because there only are three neutral emoji the majority of users likely have no idea that there are supposed to be gender-neutral variants at all, so vendors are currently under no pressure to correct their designs. This is made worse by the fact that the three genderless characters that do exist just represent the most generic, featureless people possible and not actually any useful concepts, gestures or emotions. The approval of the 19 explicitly neutral options missing (dancing, crown, Christmas, and ZWJ professions) would force vendors to also turn their other currently binary defaults into neutrals as to not confuse their users. It would make no sense to offer three different variations for one half of all human-form emoji but only two for the other half. This discrepancy is currently not as apparent to users because emoji that are missing one of the binary genders are a small minority, and binary genders are what most people care about.

General disclaimer: This proposal is not to be interpreted as '*this is how things <u>must</u> be done*' but rather '*if I cannot prevent you from going through with this, here is the least destructive way to do it*'. My original opinion from one year ago that gender has no place in Unicode remains unchanged. Implementing three gender options for all emoji without exceptions is the only way to minimize the damage that has already been done, but it can never solve the underlying problem in the long run.

The three new characters are for cases where a gender pair has been encoded as atomic characters:

- PERSON DANCING, to complement DANCER and MAN DANCING
- PERSON WITH CROWN, to complement PRINCESS and PRINCE
- PERSON WITH CHRISTMAS HAT, to complement FATHER CHRISTMAS and MOTHER CHRISTMAS
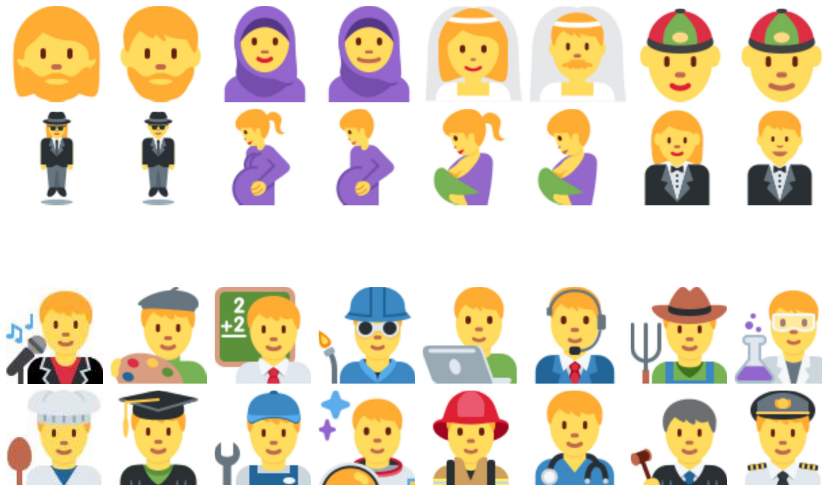

While PERSON WITH CROWN and PERSON WITH CHRISTMAS HAT could theoretically also be encoded as ZWJ sequences, I do not recommend this approach. Doing so would imply that the neutral option is some kind of unimportant, hacked-in afterthought; then we would need to decide whether the man or the woman is the "real" default, and there is no answer to that question. Also, requiring a larger amount of codepoints and bytes in memory to seemingly *remove* explicit gender connotations from an emoji is counterintuitive and inconsistent with the rest of Unicode Emoji.

PERSON WITH CHRISTMAS HAT is an unfortunate compromise since there does not exist a non-binary equivalent to Father Christmas to my knowledge. I would never have proposed this character if U+1F936 MOTHER CHRISTMAS hadn't been approved for Unicode 9. MOTHER CHRISTMAS was encoded not by popular demand but because of a perceived gender bias in emoji, which is why the addition of a third-gender Christmas humanoid now also becomes necessary. I have decided against calling it 'Parent Christmas' because no such figure exists. While Santa Claus's wife can at least claim to be present in a small selection of Christmas stories, I have unfortunately never come across a holiday special starring a genderqueer Santa type.

PERSON DANCING is a strange case as well. With the addition of U+1F57A MAN DANCING it became clear that the UTC considers U+1F483 DANCER to be female-only despite this causing compatibility problems with Japanese carrier emoji, where KDDI offered an image that looked much closer to today's MAN DANCING. I would much rather prefer DANCER returning to its genderless origins and instead a new female dancer being defined, but I don't see that happening. Several vendors have changed the genders of many of their emoji before, but DANCER is one of the most popular and widely-used emoji in existence. Seeing how Apple effectively single-handedly defines all emoji definitions nowadays and Apple says that U+1F483 is a woman, it is much easier to encode a new

neutral dancing emoji, even if it leads to the awkward situation of having *de jure* two neutral dancers, one male dancer, and no female one.

The 32 remaining emoji are to be implemented as ZWJ sequences. The 16 professions that were first introduced in Emoji 4.0 use the usual *person+object* syntax, only with ADULT replacing MAN/WOMAN to form neutral humans. The remaining concepts make use of ♀ and ♂ to denote gender variants of the same character, with the unmarked base being (re)defined as neutral. Again, emoji gender changes have occurred numerous times in the past and most of the characters that are still missing gender options aren't exactly user favourites (or are so new that hardly anyone is aware of their existence yet), so this should not cause too many problems.

3. Identification

3.1. CLDR Short Names

Character or Sequence	CLDR Short Name
PERSON DANCING	Person Dancing
PERSON WITH CROWN	Person with Crown
PERSON WITH CHRISTMAS HAT	Person with Christmas Hat
MAN WITH GUA PI MAO + FEMALE SIGN	Woman with Chinese Cap
MAN WITH GUA PI MAO + MALE SIGN	Man with Chinese Cap
BRIDE WITH VEIL + FEMALE SIGN	Woman with Veil
BRIDE WITH VEIL + MALE SIGN	Man with Veil
MAN IN TUXEDO + FEMALE SIGN	Woman in Tuxedo
MAN IN TUXEDO + MALE SIGN	Man in Tuxedo
MAN IN BUSINESS SUIT LEVITATING + FEMALE SIGN	Woman in Suit Levitating
MAN IN BUSINESS SUIT LEVITATING + MALE SIGN	Man in Suit Levitating
PREGNANT WOMAN + FEMALE SIGN	Pregnant Woman
PREGNANT WOMAN + MALE SIGN	Pregnant Man
BREAST-FEEDING + FEMALE SIGN	Woman Breast-Feeding
BREAST-FEEDING + MALE SIGN	Man Breast-Feeding

PERSON WITH HEADSCARF + FEMALE SIGN	Woman with Headscarf
PERSON WITH HEADSCARF + MALE SIGN	Man with Headscarf
BEARDED PERSON + FEMALE SIGN	Bearded Woman
BEARDED PERSON + MALE SIGN	Bearded Man
ADULT + STAFF OF AESCULAPIUS	Health Worker
ADULT + SCALES	Judge
ADULT + AIRPLANE	Pilot
ADULT + EAR OF RICE	Farmer
ADULT + COOKING	Cook
ADULT + GRADUATION CAP	Student
ADULT + MICROPHONE	Singer
ADULT + ARTIST PALETTE	Artist
ADULT + SCHOOL	Teacher
ADULT + FACTORY	Factory Worker
ADULT + PERSONAL COMPUTER	Technologist
ADULT + BRIEFCASE	Office Worker
ADULT + WRENCH	Mechanic
ADULT + MICROSCOPE	Scientist
ADULT + ROCKET	Astronaut
ADULT + FIRE ENGINE	Firefighter

The following existing emoji need to have their short names updated to reflect the necessary gender changes.

Emoji	Old Name	New Name
MAN WITH GUA PI MAO	Man with Chinese Cap	Person with Chinese Cap
BRIDE WITH VEIL	Bride with Veil	Person with Veil
MAN IN TUXEDO	Man in Tuxedo	Person in Tuxedo
MAN IN BUSINESS SUIT LEVITATING	Man in Suit Levitating	Person in Suit Levitating
PREGNANT WOMAN	Pregnant Woman	Pregnant Person
BREAST-FEEDING	Breast-Feeding	Person Breast-Feeding
PERSON WITH HEADSCARF	Woman with Headscarf	Person with Headscarf

3.2. CLDR Keywords

Keywords for all emoji proposed here are for the most part identical to those of the characters they derive from, just with all references to gender adjusted accordingly.

Emoji	Keywords
PERSON DANCING	dance	dancing

PERSON WITH CROWN	crown | fairy tail | fantasy
PERSON WITH CHRISTMAS HAT	Christmas | celebration
Woman with Chinese Cap	gua pi mao | hat | woman
Man with Chinese Cap	gua pi mao | hat | man
Woman with Veil	bride | veil | wedding
Man with Veil	groom | veil | wedding
Woman in Tuxedo	bride | tuxedo | woman
Man in Tuxedo	groom | man | tuxedo
Woman in Suit Levitating	business | suit | woman
Man in Suit Levitating	business | man | suit
Pregnant Woman	pregnant | woman
Pregnant Man	pregnant | man
Woman Breast-Feeding	baby | breast | nursing
Man Breast-Feeding	baby | breast | nursing
Woman with Headscarf	headscarf | hijab | mantilla | tichel | bandana | head kerchief
Man with Headscarf	headscarf | hijab | mantilla | tichel | bandana | head kerchief
Bearded Woman	beard
Bearded Man	beard
Health Worker	doctor | healthcare | nurse | therapist
Judge	justice | scales
Pilot	pilot | plane
Farmer	farmer | gardener | rancher
Cook	chef | cook
Student	graduate | student
Singer	actor | entertainer | rock | singer | star
Artist	artist | palette
Teacher	instructor | professor | teacher
Factory Worker	assembly | factory | industrial | worker
Technologist	coder | developer | inventor | software | technologist
Office Worker	architect | business | manager | office | white-collar
Mechanic	electrician | mechanic | plumber | tradesperson
Scientist	biologist | chemist | engineer | mathematician | physicist | scientist
Astronaut	astronaut | rocket
Firefighter	firefighter | firetruck

4. Factors for Inclusion

A. Compatibility

Not applicable.

B. Expected Usage Level

Let me preface this section by stating very clearly that this factor should not and cannot apply to this proposal in exactly the same way it does to most others. None of the emoji proposed here are original ideas; they are just variants of existing ones that complete the set of explicitly gendered emoji that has been steadily growing since Unicode 9. If the 184 gendered emoji that exist in Unicode today have been approved, there is absolutely no reason to reject any of the 35 suggestions in this document. Any argument against them can only result from personal prejudice and biases.

The enormous collection of gendered emoji was not added because users strictly wanted them, but because the UTC felt that women were unfairly represented in the set at the time. This could have easily been fixed if vendors had employed some simple glyph changes, but the UTC opted to make gender an inherent, fundamental property of emoji instead. Yes, there were calls for a female runner or a female police officer – I am not denying that –, but there most definitely was no reason for three distinct flavours of U+1F6A3 ROWBOAT.

For some gendered emoji it's not even possible to track down proper proposals. MOTHER CHRISTMAS for instance was first vaguely discussed in L2/15-048 (Parrott, '*Adding gender counterparts to emoji list?*'), suddenly reappeared in L2/15-054R5 (ESC, '*Emoji Additions: Animals, Compatibility, and More Popular Requests*') as a recommendation to the UTC, and was then swiftly encoded one year later as U+1F936 in Unicode 9. No evidence for the potential popularity or usage level of this character was ever provided; at least my search did not reveal any publicly available documents with this information.

The instructions for emoji proposals state that emoji will not be accepted just because they further a cause but only *despite* of it (if approved at all). Luckily for the authors of L2/16-160 ('*Expanding Emoji Professions: Reducing Gender Inequality*') this disclaimer was written *after* most of the gendered emoji had already been formally added to Unicode. I have seen no official admissions by members of the Unicode Consortium that Emoji 4.0 was a mistake in retrospect, so I have no choice but to assume that the same criteria and processes that led to 'man with bunny ears partying' also still apply to the emoji I propose in this document. I am not asking the UTC to accept any emoji on blind faith without justification; I am asking the UTC to be consistent in their own actions. I am asking the UTC to treat all people as equal, whether their existence aligns with individual members' personal views or not. If MOTHER CHRISTMAS can be added because she appears in a handful of Christmas stories then Unicode has no excuse to reject emoji that represent real identities of real people in the real world. If it can be unanimously agreed that fairies, zombies, and vampires deserve proper gender representation right from the get-go then transgender people should not have to be begging on their knees for months to receive the same treatment. The longer one thinks about the current Unicode gender situation the more ridiculous and insulting it becomes.

And again, I am not advocating for representations of each and every minuscule aspect of human nature in plain text. I merely want the UTC to actually respect those representations that they themselves claim to care about, and in the case of gender this means distinct options for male, female, and neutral. If this proposal will not be accepted then I request the UTC to cease adding any gender variants for any new emoji in the future, as well as formally deprecating all gender variants

added in the past. You cannot have it both ways.

Nevertheless, here are various Twitter users expressing their discontent with the way emoji and gender currently interact. While some of the frustration is directed at specific implementations and not directly at Unicode, said implementations ultimately just are a result of official Unicode documentation. Previously gender-inclusive fonts like Noto Color Emoji were changed to be explicitly gendered because Unicode recommends fixed genders for many emoji, and default glyphs aren't implemented as neutral because Unicode treats the neutral option as second-class to male and female, even going so far as calling it "typical duplicates" in tallies, so vendors see no need for a third gender.

Lynn ◆
@chordbug

Folgen

why did they ever add gender to emoji. why did they unearth Hell

Ry
@CostcoBlack

Folgen

.@AppleSupport is the new iOS update going to have a pregnant man emoji or nah?

Andrej
@drejp55

Folgen

I'm sick and tired of these assumed gender roles..like wtf society we have an emoji for pregnant women but NOT for pregnant men??? Fuck you!

hella wowzers max @freezydorito · 18. Mai
there's a very Bad interview on how they tried to represent gender on a more progressive way _after they added gender on the first place_

Original (Englisch) übersetzen

💬 1   🔁 1   ♡ 6   ✉

🌞 🏖 **eevee** 🏖 🌞
@eevee

Folge ich

Antwort an @freezydorito

i have extremely a lot of words about how fucked up emoji gender is

jaksa
@fear_the_man

Folgen

🤷 wow they dont have a pregnant man emoji wow tranphobic much 😠😠

hella wowzers max
@freezydorito

Folgen

Oh cool you took the emoji and sprinkled gender all over them

hella wowzers max @freezydorito · 17. Mai
Antwort an @freezydorito

The unicode standard allows for gender neutral emoji to exist and be the default yet nobody is doing that don't @ me

hella wowzers max
@freezydorito

Folgen

UNICODE: oh people are complaining about the pregnant men emoji
UNICODE: don't worry we will address this
UNICODE: fuck we are so great

Original (Englisch) übersetzen

Please:

❌ don't justify the addition of emoji because they further a "cause", no matter how worthwhile
❌ don't include specific code points (U+XXXXX) for proposed characters
❌ don't include a filled-out Proposal Summary Form.
❌ don't use this process for Proposing Existing Characters as Emoji

A proposal may be advanced *despite* a "cause" argument — if other factors are compelling — but will not be advanced *because* of it.

F a k e Unicode @FakeUnicode · 5. Apr
It seems difficult to depict breast-feeding as an emoji without two people, and both artistic renderings do so. unicode.org/emoji/charts/e…

Original (Englisch) übersetzen

| 40 | U+1F931 | | breast-feeding |
| 41 | U+1F931 | | breast-feeding: ligh |

💬 4   🔁   ♡ 1   ✉

@furt1v3ly

Folgen

Antwort an @FakeUnicode @mark_e_davis und 2 weitere

Any chance of proposing gender variants for this emoji? :-)

@GlitchyCat

Folgen

Antwort an @GlitchyCat @homomculus

"We should add gender ZWJ sequences for female doctors and such" Nice!
"All human emoji will now be gendered on our platform" No!!!

@GlitchyCat · 26. Mai

Antwort an @GlitchyCat @homomculus

"let's improve gender diversity representation" 👎👎👎
"by explicitly gendering them all male or female & removing non-gendered designs" 🤦‍♀️🤦‍♀️🤦‍♀️

Aaron Hemgesberg
@Humanberg

Folgen

Why is there only a female pregnant emoji? 😐😐😐😐😐😐😐

.cpp.js
@ialexi

Folgen

unicode only has two gender modifiers what is this bs

worm on a string
@lodeddiper

Folgen

🤷‍♀️ i just updated my phone the other day bc i hadnt in literal months... can someone tell me why there's no pregnant man emoji 😤😔🤔

Bara Booshie
@ItsBooshie

Folgen

why isn't there a male pregnant emoji

kelly
@KellyIsntJelly

Folgen

Mildly offended by the lack of a male pregnant emoji. Why is no one in an outrage over this? Fucking emojis.
#PregnantMaleEmoji 🤰

cinnamon tography
@krizpp

Folgen

i wish there was a gender neutral shrug emoji

Dyl
@Lunatoons25

Folgen

Antwort an @_taylortots_ @onigirimixtape

Had no idea there was a pregnant woman emoji. Which leads me to wonder where the pregnant man emoji is??? #Equality #Its2017People

@longisland_mom

Folgen

I feel so. Trapped. By the emoji gender binary

Michal Bryxí
@MichalBryxi

Folgen

You can have gender aware emoji for policeman, barber, facepalm, running... But not for pregnancy? 🤔 buff.ly/2qkLqJw

h v i n c e n t
@modgethanc

Folgen

all these equal gender emoji but no gender neutral emoji 🤷‍♂️🤷‍♀️

Opa-Opa
@Opaopa13 · Folgen

Antwort an @Opaopa13 @umaamuumaamu

Obviously for nb/nc folx, but even just: We don't make people prefix their text with their gender, why force that on emoji? It's pointless!!

Sailor Ura-Nic 💜 💛 🖤
@Nicali4444 · Folgen

I could use the 🧑 emoji, but frankly, the ¯_(ツ)_/¯ is more gender neutral and also it's just better

RvLeshrac
@RvLeshrac · Folgen

Antwort an @BabelStone @FakeUnicode

Remember that time all emoji were gender-neutral blobs and we didn't have to deal with this bullshit?

@SamirTalwar · Folgen

Didn't need binary-gender-specific emoji with the old Android ones either.

&rew
@so_it_gohs · Folgen

smdh why isnt there a pregnant man emoji

C Max
@studmuffin4cm · Folgen

Is it wrong for me to be upset they dont have a pregnant male emoji 😂

Joe Fedewa
@tallshmo · Folgen

Antwort an @hallstephenj @jaduino

The blobs are what emoji should be. No gender. Generic skin color. Just emotions.

Tony M
@TonyMilano43 · Folgen

@Apple where is the pregnant boy emoji 😒 🤰🤰🤰

mike 🏩 😶
@vermicelli · Folgen

Antwort an @kathytafel

google emoji used to be blobs of indeterminate gender until they changed them for cross-platform compat. we're moving backwards on this.

Zac Caprous
@Zac_coolprous · Folgen

Also there is an emoji of her pregnant, but where is the man pregnancy emoji? It's 2017 man

Not only do people want to use gender combinations that currently are not possible under Emoji 5.0, they also want to include emoji in their messages that don't specify gender at all, which only becomes feasible once neutral variants of all humans are widely available, which in turn can only realistically happen if more explicitly neutral emoji than just ADULT, CHILD, and OLDER ADULT exist. It makes no sense to assign a gender to an abstract gesture or emotion unless you are talking about a specific person and somehow that person's gender is relevant to the topic at hand.

Emoji always have the same meaning regardless of their gender display. It is expected that the emoji proposed here will be used in exactly the same way as their already existing counterparts, and I see no reason why these new emoji wouldn't be used with a similar frequency to the old ones once they become widely supported by fonts and keyboards. The usefulness of all emoji that this proposal wishes to modify and expand upon has already been proven by various individual proposals in the past.

C. Image distinctiveness

There are hardly any visible differences between gender-specific versions of the same emoji, especially at standard display sizes. The emoji proposed here are sadly no exception to that, as this is an unavoidable problem when trying to represent something non-visual like gender in a purely visual medium. Vendors can easily reuse their designs for ADULT, MAN, and WOMAN and apply

different accessories to form the missing glyphs.

D. Completeness

The overview table in section 2 should have made it quite obvious that Emoji 5.0 is riddled with inexplicable holes.

- **46** concepts are available as three genders
- **19** concepts are available as only two genders
- **8** concepts are available as just one single gender

6 of those 27 restricted emoji are compatibility characters from the original Japanese carrier emoji sets and Wingdings/Webdings. However, 29 of the 46 fully-inclusive emoji also originate from those sources so it cannot be argued that the variants proposed here are any less important or urgent than those already encoded. All emoji I propose show normal, regular people whereas the existing Unicode gender pairs also include simple gestures (HAPPY PERSON RAISING ONE HAND, SHRUG, FACE PALM etc.) and, strangely enough, what essentially amounts to inanimate objects (ROWBOAT).

E. Frequently Requested

This is a difficult point to address because we are essentially dealing with a niche audience here. Everybody knows what a carrot or a butterfly is but many people are completely unaware of the existence of non-binary genders or even the entire concept of transgender, especially in the West. Knowledge of the significance of a moon cake for instance is also limited to a very specific group, but this group at least makes up a considerable percentage of the world population. It is estimated that up to 0.6% of United States citizens are transgender. If we extrapolate this number we get roughly 45 million transgender people worldwide, and the amount of non-binary people is lower than that still. Meanwhile, the recently approved Nazar is a frequent sight in at least eighteen different countries, one of them the second-most popular nation India.

The search for requests is made even more difficult by the fact that, as mentioned previously, all the emoji proposed here already exist, just with different genders. Of course, I did find numerous examples of people requesting better gender representation on Twitter and included a selection of tweets above. Furthermore, reactions to the approval of ADULT and co. showed that many people welcome the addition of gender-neutral emoji. I am sure that those same people would also like to see the third gender option be expanded to more than just generic, featureless people. I could not find any specific expressions of these wishes anywhere else, though. I also suspect that I am the only person who has been pestering the UTC regularly for improvements. Let's just say that the set *(cares about gender) ∩ (cares about emoji) ∩ (knows that Unicode makes emoji)* is quite small.

That being said, I believe that this factor is another one that cannot be handled in the usual way for this proposal. Seeing how the vast majority of the Emoji 4.0 additions came to be despite a complete lack of visible public support, it would only be fair to give this proposal a bit more leeway as well. Besides, I am certain that I have already shown more user requests for 'pregnant man' than 'man gesturing no' could ever hope to gather.

5. Factors for Exclusion

F. Overly Specific

While I personally think that having any gender options at all is too overly specific, the Unicode Consortium evidently does not agree with me. Three has been agreed upon by the UTC as the number of necessary genders.

G. Open-ended

The number of gender variants per emoji will always remain three because the neutral option is intended to encompass everything that is not 100% male or 100% female. There are presently no plans to propose distinct gender options for different non-binary genders, or to differentiate non-binary genders from the absence of gender.

The UTC must keep in mind that all future human-form emoji additions need to be equipped with the full range of gender options as soon as they are released. As stated in the past, this only applies for characters that represent people who are old enough to know their gender, i.e. not infants.

H. Already Representable

With the exception of the three emoji proposed as atomic codepoints, all emoji listed in this document are sequences of already existing Unicode characters. However, all major emoji vendors have so far respected the canonical list of human-form ZWJ sequences and do not support any of the missing variations. Therefore they all need to be added to the emoji data so that vendors will implement them.

I. Logos, Brands etc.

Not applicable.

J. Transient

Humans have assigned genders to themselves for millennia. Despite widespread belief otherwise, non-binary genders are not a recent invention but have also existed in some way or form for just as long in several unrelated cultures all around the world, for example the Zuni, the Lakota, the Mohave, the Zapotec, the Navajo, the Bugis, Native Hawaiʻians, Samoans, Tongans, as well as various other peoples on the Indian subcontinent, in Africa, and in the Middle East, to just name a few.

In Western culture, the number of openly transgender and non-binary people will only increase in the future as being trans becomes more acceptable in society – albeit very slowly – and as broader ranges of the population become aware of new, more accurate scientific theories of gender that supersede those ancient schools of thought which cannot reasonably describe human nature, giving more closeted people the opportunity to come out more safely. People are also increasingly rejecting the archaic binary model of gender and care less and less about old stereotypes and traditional societal roles, regardless of their own gender identity. All of this means that more and more people will be using genderless emoji and emoji that break with common tropes as time goes on.

K. Faulty Comparison

All gendered variants – whether already existent or not – are equally important, which is why none must be excluded. If the UTC cannot agree that this statement is true, thereby implying that some genders are more important than others – that some humans are more important than others – then they must also admit that Emoji 4.0 was released in error and should never have existed.

6. Sort Location

The standard sort order for existing gendered emoji is `neutral < male < female`. The proposed set simply fills all gaps following this pattern.

7. Other Information

The only way to differentiate genders in emoji is by employing exaggerated stereotypes, e.g. hair length, face shape, and breast size. Some of the proposed emoji may therefore be hard to design for vendors because they don't always show any visible hair or breasts. For the general user who may care about selecting the "correct" gender this can lead to small issues, although the fixed order of gender sets on keyboards should make it obvious which is which nonetheless. More detailed fonts like Apple Color Emoji or the native Facebook set are inherently better suited to display these subtle characteristics.

The largest contrast within an existing gender pair occurs between DANCER and MAN DANCING, which might as well be two completely unrelated emoji as it stands now. For the PERSON DANCING sample glyph in this proposal I have chosen DANCER's style because it is more iconic and expressive. It may be advisable to also adapt MAN DANCING to look more similar to DANCER once PERSON DANCING has been added so that users can more easily recognize the connection.

For the majority of this document I have been talking about non-binary people, or "enbies", as if they were some homogeneous mass. Obviously reality is far too complicated to be described in a minutely accurate manner in just a few thousand words, and it is definitely too complicated for a character encoding standard. Some non-binary genders are in an intermediate state between male and female, some are wholly separate from that spectrum. Some people have several genders at once, some have none at all, and some change their gender from time to time or based on their surroundings. Some have conscious control over their gender while others don't. Some gender concepts from around the world can't be translated at all to our Western society in a way that's immediately comprehensible, which is why it becomes questionable whether Unicode's three-gender model can ever truly represent gender at all. What gender entails and what it means varies immensely from culture to culture and from person to person. Human gender is unbelievably complex and I am not in the slightest qualified to talk about it in any more detail than that, but I will try to supply additional educational material should the UTC see the need.

This document also serves as your periodic reminder that gender is not in any way related to physical biology. Men can breast-feed, even cisgender men can breast-feed. In fact, mammary glands are the defining feature of all mammals. If you think that men cannot get pregnant, I would like to introduce you to Thomas Beatie (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Beatie), just one of many counter-examples. If you think that cis men cannot get pregnant, then you will surely appreciate the case of "Rob", a man who identifies as male, was assigned male at birth, has a penis and testicles, but also possesses a fully functional uterus which would allow him to bear a child (http://www.cosmopolitan.com/lifestyle/news/a36344/man-discovers-he-has-a-working-womb-and-uterus/).

Furthermore, the fact that anyone can wear any clothes regardless of their gender is probably not even worth mentioning at this point. Clothes do not have gender; people do.

It is incredibly sad that emoji vendors are forced to represent such a colourful aspect of the human condition in simplified, abstracted pictographs that didn't need it in the first place. Gender has nothing to do with physiology or clothing or hair style or make-up, but tragically those are the only ways to tell the difference between men, women, and enbies so that a mass audience as broad as the entire population of Earth can understand it at a glance.

If there is one piece of advice I can give to emoji vendors when it comes to gender display it's the following:

> Don't try.

Nothing purely visual you can come up with will ever even scratch the surface of acceptable gender representation, believe me. Simply display all gender variants of the same emoji identically to each other if you can. Discard any '⚷♀' and '⚷♂' you come across. Use the same glyph for DANCER as for MAN DANCING and PERSON DANCING. You cannot win at this.

8. Images

Note that some of the proposed emoji will initially look identical to existing ones because all human-form emoji as of now are either explicitly gendered or look gendered despite not being supposed to.

The 35 sample glyphs included in this proposal have been adapted from Twemoji (https://github.com/twitter/twemoji), a free and open-source emoji set created by Twitter, inc. (List of contributors: https://github.com/twitter/twemoji/graphs/contributors). Twemoji graphics are licensed under CC-BY 4.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which means they can be altered and redistributed for commercial and non-commercial purposes as long as the original creator is properly attributed and no additional legal or technical restrictions have been applied to the material.

Most files have been manipulated to create alternate male/female/neutral versions by switching out facial features and hair dues. The following emoji were left untouched:

- man with Chinese cap
- woman with veil
- man in tuxedo
- man in suit levitating
- pregnant woman
- woman breast-feeding
- woman with headscarf
- bearded person

9. References

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- Wikipedia. "*Gender in Bugis society*". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_in_Bugis_society

- Wikipedia. "*Māhū*". *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81h%C5%AB*
- Wikipedia. "*Fakaleiti*". *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fakaleiti*
- Wikipedia. "*Faʻafine*". *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fa%27afafine*
- Wikipedia. "*Genderqueer*". *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genderqueer*

Documents discussed:

- Charlotte Buff. "*Comment on Document L2/16-160 Concerning Emoji Gender Pairs for Professions*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2016/16169-gendered-prof-cmt.pdf)
- Charlotte Buff. "*Another Comment on Gendered Emoji*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2016/16193-gendered-emoji-2.pdf)
- Paul D. Hunt. "*Proposal to enable inclusive emoji representation*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2016/16317-gender-inclusive-emoji.pdf)
- Mark Davis et al. "*Gender-Neutral Human form Emoji*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2017/17071-gender-neutral-humanform.pdf)
- Katrina Parrott et al. "*Adding gender counterparts to emoji list?*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15048-gender-cntrprt.pdf)
- Emoji Sub-committee. "*Emoji Additions: Animals, Compatibility, and More Popular Requests* (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15054r5-emoji-tranche5.pdf)
- Rachel Been et al. "*Expanding Emoji Professions: Reducing Gender Inequality*" (http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2016/16160-emoji-professions.pdf)

As far as I know, the following documents never reached the UTC but were only discussed with the document registrar and the Emoji Subcommittee:

- Charlotte Buff. "*The Fourth Comment on Gendered Emoji*" (http://share.randomguy32.de/esc-doc/gendered-emoji-yet-again.pdf)
- Charlotte Buff. "*Filling the Gaps in the Emoji 5.0 Repertoire*" (http://share.randomguy32.de/esc-doc/gendered-emoji-proposal-only.pdf)
- Charlotte Buff. "*Revised Proposal to Fill the Gaps in the Emoji 5.0 Repertoire*" (http://share.randomguy32.de/esc-doc/gendered-emoji-proposal-only-new.pdf)
- Charlotte Buff. "*Response to Feedback on My Latest Proposal*" (http://share.randomguy32.de/esc-doc/gendered-emoji-response.pdf)
- Charlotte Buff. "*Request for Clarification of Gendered Emoji Situation*" (http://share.randomguy32.de/esc-doc/gendered-emoji-enquiry.pdf)

Tweets used:

- https://twitter.com/ASquad/status/856171328105324546
- https://twitter.com/ChildishShamiro/status/877920161474334720
- https://twitter.com/CostcoBlack/status/868287538703863809
- https://twitter.com/GlitchyCat/status/867939425379991552
- https://twitter.com/Humanberg/status/866021403803430912
- https://twitter.com/Iodeddiper/status/864442156362149889
- https://twitter.com/ItsBooshie/status/877593641111257088
- https://twitter.com/Lunatoons25/status/863270259972812801
- https://twitter.com/MichalBryxi/status/868213654650580994
- https://twitter.com/Nicali4444/status/870125374134513665
- https://twitter.com/Opaopa13/status/865601163009327106
- https://twitter.com/RvLeshrac/status/843267542001049600
- https://twitter.com/SamirTalwar/status/868043059883323392

- https://twitter.com/TonyMilano43/status/867049782853947394
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- https://twitter.com/adargueta/status/862500886895112192
- https://twitter.com/bryan_martin/status/837141233126486016
- https://twitter.com/chaleurhumaines/status/864046600762658816
- https://twitter.com/charade_s/status/855317241809612801
- https://twitter.com/chordbug/status/861341480891420675
- https://twitter.com/drejp55/status/841752905157902336
- https://twitter.com/eevee/status/865109857615073281
- https://twitter.com/fear_the_man/status/877120639546642432
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- https://twitter.com/studmuffin4cm/status/868678616925716480
- https://twitter.com/tallshmo/status/854482468224761861
- https://twitter.com/vermicelli/status/833725990966853632