

Gendered Emoji Update III

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1. Background

Unicode Emoji 12.1 was recently released with 23 new gender variants of existing emoji, and an additional 5 sequences are slated for this year's update. While these new developments are obviously welcome, it is still disappointing that the UTC has once again decided against solving the problem of missing gender options in a systematic manner. It was particularly disheartening to see the gender variants of U+1F931 BREAST-FEEDING being snubbed after they had already been accepted as draft candidates. As such, a total of 14 emoji are still not accounted for.

2. Core Repertoire

Proposed Codepoint(s)	Name
<i>n/a</i>	PERSON DANCING <i>or</i> WOMAN DANCING
<i>n/a</i>	HEIR TO THE THRONE
1F472 200D 2640 FE0F	Woman with Chinese Cap
1F472 200D 2642 FE0F	Man with Chinese Cap
1F574 FE0F 200D 2640 FE0F	Woman in Suit Levitating
1F574 FE0F 200D 2642 FE0F	Man in Suit Levitating
1F930 200D 2640 FE0F	Pregnant Woman
1F930 200D 2642 FE0F	Pregnant Man
1F931 200D 2640 FE0F	Woman Breast-Feeding
1F931 200D 2642 FE0F	Man Breast-Feeding
1F9D5 200D 2640 FE0F	Woman with Headscarf
1F9D5 200D 2642 FE0F	Man with Headscarf
1F9D4 200D 2640 FE0F	Woman: Beard
1F9D4 200D 2642 FE0F	Man: Beard

As stated numerous times before, the missing dancing and royalty variants need to be encoded as atomic characters for internal consistency. The tentative approval of “Mx. Claus” for Emoji 13.0 (which I recommended against because no such figure exists in popular culture and a better solution may be found in the future) must not be taken as precedent for implementing PERSON DANCING and HEIR TO THE THRONE as ZWJ sequences as well.

3. Additional Sequences

It seems to me that the Unicode Technical Committee still has not fully grasped the concept of non-binary genders.

Characters like U+1F9D1 ADULT weren't encoded because some people don't always want to specify whether another person is male or female; they were encoded because some people **are** neither male nor female. While the former is certainly a valid use case, these options do not primarily exist for the benefit of cisgender people.

Starting in Emoji 12.0, a number of ZWJ sequences depicting couples holding hands were added to supplement characters originally encoded in 2010. Under the current system (and only counting RGI emoji), men can hold hands with men and women, women can hold hands with men and women, and enbies can hold hands with other enbies.

That is not how gender works.

Non-binary people have binary partners. Binary people have non-binary partners. U+1F9D1 is not a placeholder for "gender not found". It *is* a gender in the three-gender model that has been employed ever since version 10.0 of the standard.

It needs to be possible for MAN or WOMAN to occur in the same ZWJ sequence as ADULT, and all these sequences need to be recommended for general interchange just like the rest. This goes for kisses, couples with heart, families, and people holding hands. Anything less than that and the whole idea of gender representation that has been the UTC's proclaimed goal for the past three and a half years is a complete joke.

I know it's a lot of sequences, but this is what Unicode burdened itself with when it decided to recognise gender as an intrinsic property of human-form emoji. You made this decision voluntarily. There is no way around it.