

**Email Correspondence between a Member and the Labour Membership Equalities
Team 01.07.2019 -0 9.09.2019**

From: xxxxxx**Sent:** 01 July 2019 17:01**To:** labourmembership@labour.org.uk**Subject:**
Monitoring & Data collection on Gender & Sex

For attention of ***** , Equalities team

Dear ***** ,

I am writing to try to establish some clarity about the Gender question on the latest membership renewal form, which I received recently. I have had two telephone conversations with staff in the membership team. Both were friendly and helpful but unable to answer my questions, and they suggested I ask you.

I should probably say that although I am writing in a personal capacity, I am also the Secretary of my CLP Women's Forum; and both the Women's Officer and myself would like to have answers to the questions so that we can explain the situation to other women members.

The form quite rightly has a question that asks whether an individual is a member of an ethnic minority community with Yes/No as possible answer. Similarly the form then asks 'Do you have a disability?' Again with a Yes/No option. All absolutely clear, and vitally important, because it is a long standing principle in our movement that we cannot fight for greater equality if we don't have accurate ways of measuring progress, or indeed lack of it.

Then to 'Gender', which is not phrased as a question, but where there are five boxes to choose from: Man, Woman, Trans, Non-binary, Other
No advice is given as to whether members are expected to choose just one box, or multiple boxes.

So my questions are:

1. What is meant here by 'Gender'? Specifically, does it mean 'Gender Identity'?
2. If it does mean Gender Identity, why doesn't it say so? Clear definitions are important, especially when we know that in some situations 'Gender' is used as a synonym for Sex.
3. Previously, the Labour Party asked its members whether they were male or female. Is this new Gender question an **additional** question, or a **replacement** for the one aimed at determining sex?
4. If members have previously declared their sex, has that data been retained?
5. If members select just one of the boxes, in three out of the five possibilities to tick, there is no way of knowing whether individuals are female or male. Could you explain how that relates to identifying possible discrimination against or disadvantage to women on the basis on Sex, which like Race and Disability, is a protected characteristic in the 2010 Equality Act?
6. Has the Labour Party stopped collecting data on Sex?

Thanking you in advance for your help,
with best regards,
xxxxxx

From: [Labour Membership](#)**Sent:** 18 July 2019 12:31**To:** [~~~~~](#)**Cc:** [xxxxxx](#)**Subject:**
FW: Monitoring & Data collection on Gender & Sex

Hi ~~~~~,

I hope this email finds you well.

xxxxxx sent us the below email at the beginning of July and unfortunately I am unable to track who/where it was forwarded to.

I can see that you are on *****'s Out of Office and would appreciate it if you could get back to xxxxxx on the below points she has made/asked.

I have copied her into this exchange. Thank you.

Kind regards,

?????

Membership Services and Correspondence
The Labour Party

From: xxxxxxxxxx **Sent:** 01 July 2019 17:01**To:** Labour Membership
<labourmembership@labour.org.uk>**Subject:** Monitoring & Data collection on Gender
& Sex

This email originates external to the Labour Party network.

From: [xxxxxxxxxx](#)**Sent:** 02 September 2019 12:13**To:** [Labour Membership](#);
[~~~~~](#)**Subject:** RE: Monitoring & Data collection on Gender & Sex

Dear ~~~~~,

I hope you had a good summer.

I am contacting you again to see whether you could give me an indication as to when I might expect answers to the questions below on how the Labour Party currently records sex and/or gender.

You will see from the thread that after two phone calls with the Membership team, I was advised to write to ***** , as my questions concern Equality.

I did so on July 1st.

On 18th July, a further phone call to Membership established that although my email had been forwarded by Membership well within their time target for responses, it now appeared to have vanished from their system, and they were *'unable to track who/where it was forwarded to'*. I was told this was very unusual.

On the same day, 18th July, Membership forwarded my email to you with the request that you *'get back to xxxxxx on the below points she has made/asked'*.

It is now September, and I have heard nothing further, not even an acknowledgement of receipt. I appreciate that August can be a difficult time, with staff away on leave, but I would be grateful for a response.

Thank you in advance,

Best regards,

xxxxxxx

From: [~~~~~](#) **Sent:** 02 September 2019 14:18 **To:** [xxxxxxxxx](#); [Labour Membership](#) **Cc:** [>>>>>>](#) **Subject:** RE: Monitoring & Data collection on Gender & Sex

Dear xxxxxxx

Thank you for your email dated 1 July and apologies for the delay in getting back to you.

I asked my colleague >>>>>> to provide the best response to the questions you raised in your email. Her response is below:

The "Gender" questions you refer to clearly refer to gender and gender identity so the Party continues to log data on gender/ sex. Since around 2006 we have logged data on our membership systems for male, female and other (as well as unknown which is usually used where we have no data as an individual has not completed that part of the application form). All data previously captured has been retained and all new data is still inputted using those categories. During the Democracy LGBT activists said they did not want LGBT data captured on our systems.

I hope this answers your questions.

If you have any more questions further to this email, >>>>>> (CC) will respond when she returns from annual leave.

Best wishes

~~~~~

~~~~~

Head of Equalities, Stakeholders and Community Engagement

t. (redacted)

e. redacted@labour.org.uk

The Labour Party

Southside, 105 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QT

From: xxxxxxxxx**Sent:** 09 September 2019 16:09**To:** ~~~~~**Cc:** >>>>>**Subject:** RE: Monitoring & Data collection on Gender & Sex

Dear ~~~~~,

Thank you for your reply.

The answers to some of my questions have become conflated, and some of my questions have been missed altogether.

So can I, perhaps, refer you back to my originating email to ***** of 1 July 2019. Could you please have a look at the preamble to my questions to better understand the context for them?

In the interests of clarity, and to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding or misrepresenting the Labour Party's position on these important issues for women, I have attempted to translate your paragraph of answers into specifics under the six questions in my original email (in **bold**).

I have also attached a copy of the Gender question to which this Correspondence refers.

1. What is meant here by 'Gender'? Specifically, does it mean 'Gender Identity'?

You reply that you understand gender to mean 'gender **and** gender identity'. You then say that 'the party continues to log data on gender/sex.' You therefore imply that if somebody of the male sex self-identifies as a woman and ticks that box, that for statistical purposes, the Labour Party will count their sex as female.

1. If it does mean Gender Identity, why doesn't it say so? Clear definitions are important, especially when we know that in some situations 'Gender' is used as a synonym for Sex.

You do not seem to have explained why it says Gender rather than Gender Identity. In many situations Gender is used as a synonym for Sex so this is, at best, misleading.

1. Previously, the Labour Party asked its members whether they were male or female. Is this new Gender question an additional question, or a replacement for the one aimed at determining sex?

You are saying that this is a replacement question for the one that was previously, and clearly, aimed at determining sex.

1. If members have previously declared their sex, has that data been retained?

You have confirmed that the previous data with regard to the sex of members has been retained.

1. If members select just one of the boxes, in three out of the five possibilities to tick, there is no way of knowing whether individuals are female or male. Could you explain how that relates to identifying possible discrimination against or disadvantage to women on the basis on Sex, which like Race and Disability, is a protected characteristic in the 2010 Equality Act?

You have agreed that you have no way of knowing whether individuals are female or male, since a member can complete this form on the basis of either Gender (in the old-fashioned sense as a synonym for sex) or Gender Identity, self-selected. My question pointed to the fact that three boxes, Trans, Non-binary, Other, could be filled in by both sexes. Your answer indicates that in fact the other two boxes, Man and Woman, could also be filled in by either sex. You have not answered my question about the relationship between this data gathering and the identification of discrimination on the basis of sex as per the 2010 Equality Act. However, the implication is that this data could no longer be applied to those purposes.

1. Has the Labour Party stopped collecting data on Sex?

The Labour Party has stopped collecting data on sex, and has replaced that with data about Gender Identity.

Finally, I was interested to hear that LGBT activists do not want their data captured on Labour Party systems. In that context, why would the membership form ask for Gender details that include Trans and Non-Binary?

I would be grateful if you could confirm that my summary of your reply is as you intended. Or perhaps you could provide some further clarification?

I look forward to hearing from you or >>>>>> at your convenience.

With best regards,

xxxxxx