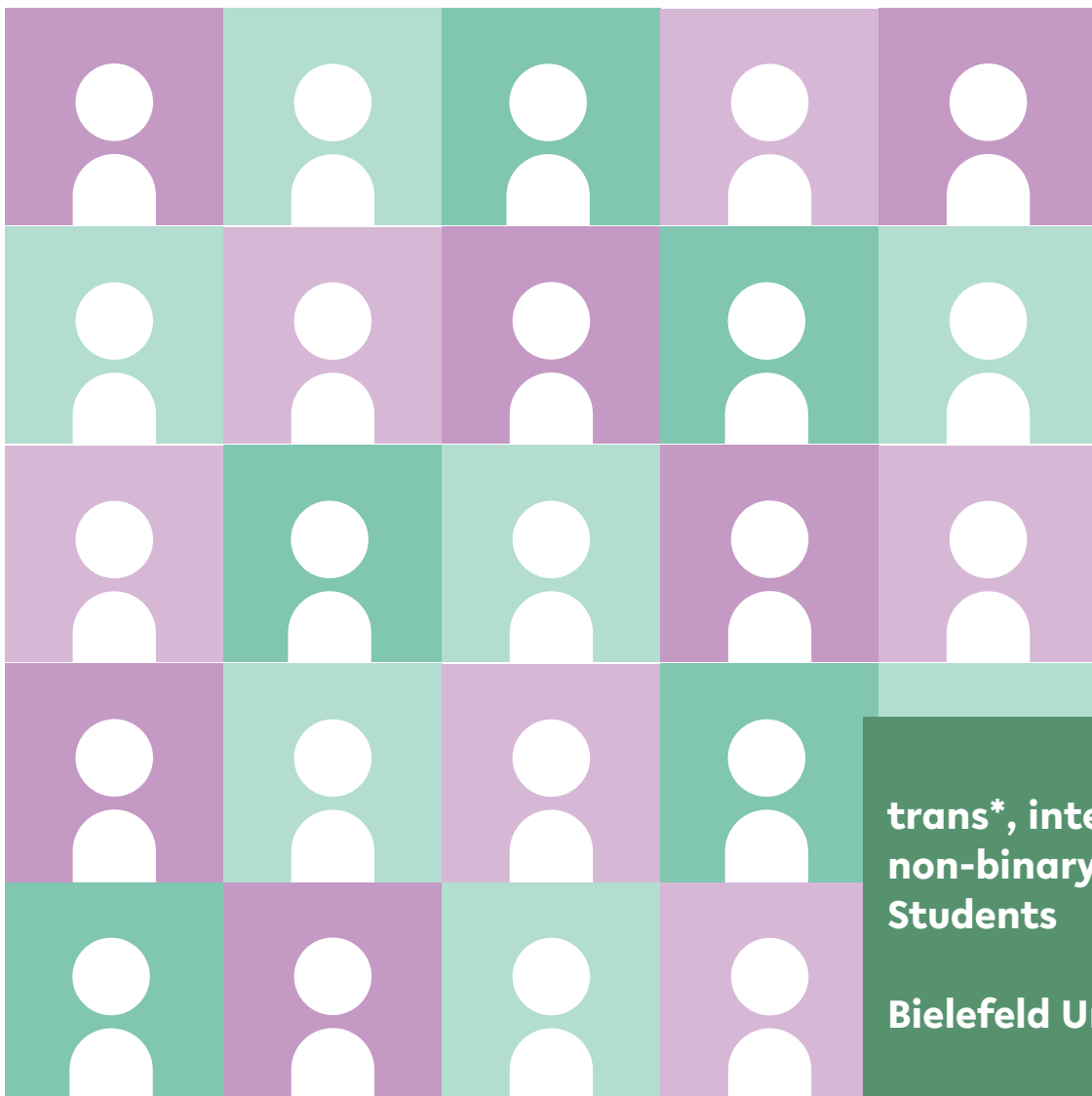


# TIN\*Discrimination -aware Teaching

A Handout for Lecturers



trans\*, inter\* and  
non-binary  
Students

Bielefeld University

## Introduction

TIN\* is an abbreviation for trans\*, inter\* and non-binary people. As an umbrella term it includes all people who do not adhere to the binary gender order. TIN\* subsumes a broad spectrum of gender identities and gender expressions, but what they have in common is their marginalisation in our heteronormative society. Universities contribute to that marginalisation of TIN\* students, both structurally and interpersonally. Due to the differing legal structures, the barriers TIN\* students face differ from each other but in all cases, they are consequential for students' daily life (at university). Lecturers generally have no control over these varied consequences, but as they implicate students' life at university, lecturers should be aware of the issues. On a base level this simply means being aware of problems and potential solutions or workarounds.

## Teaching in person and online: Names, Addressing, Outing

Since the winter term 2021/22 it's been made possible to change one's name and e-mail address (which includes one's name), before a legal change in name or gender marker, to reflect one's personal preference. This means that TIN\* students can use the name they use in their daily lives in the ekvv, Lernraum and LernraumPlus as well as on course lists. This is a first step to prevent public outings of TIN\* students, however it does not stop the possibility of outings altogether, especially as many students are yet unaware of the possibility to change one's name and e-mail address.

Lecturers can act as a multiplying factor here, by disseminating the information to their students. Especially in first year courses, this information is essential, as it is mandatory to enrol using one's legal name and gender. Even students who change their name like this might still be outed against their will. Official papers, like student ID, diplomas and transcripts, as well as certain digital spaces, will continue to use the student's deadname (see glossary) even after the name change.

This means that at the latest, lecturers will be confronted with a student's deadname during the identity check for Prüfungsleistungen, like exams or other assessments. As a lecturer you cannot avoid these kinds of situations, but you can face them with compassion and sensibility.

## When are what changes possible for TIN\* students?

	Change possible at any time	Change only possible after legal changes*
Diploma	No	Yes
Student ID	No	Yes
Name in Outside-facing Computerised Systems (IDM, Student Office, Examination Office)	No	Yes
Gender Marker (Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female)	No	Yes
E-Mail Address (Change of original address)	No	Yes
Gender Marker (To Diverse / Not Specified)	Yes	Yes
E-Mail Address (Alternate Address)	Yes	Yes
Name in Internal Digital Computerised Systems	Yes	Yes

\*As the legal proceedings as specified in the TSG can be lengthy, Bielefeld University changes name and gender marker before the legal change, as long as it is documented that proceedings have commenced.

## Excursion: Legal situation of trans\*, inter\* and non-binary people in Germany

In Germany there are four legal options for the gender marker: diverse, female, male and the option to leave the field empty. At birth, sex<sup>1</sup> is determined through the physical examination of the new-born. If

<sup>1</sup> The sex/gender distinction was first used by feminist scholars to bring light to the ways gender differences are not naturally-biologically determined but stem from historical practices of social conditioning. Since then the distinction has been criticised for itself naturalising a biologicistic dichotomy of embodied gender that ignores the ways gendered bodies and our understanding of them is always determined by a cultural lens. (See Judith Butler (1999): Gender Trouble for further reading).

intersexuality, following the medical definition, is diagnosed upon birth, the gender marker can remain undetermined or diverse can be used.

Legal changes to the gender marker and surname are regulated by the [Transsexuellen Gesetz](#) (TSG) and the [Personenstandsgesetz](#). The TSG regulates the process of name and gender marker change for trans\* people. The basis for the change is the assessment and decision of two different experts. This process is quite expensive (on average 1.868€), lengthy, dependent on residency status and many trans\* people experience this process as humiliating and psychologically draining. The Personenstandsgesetz is relevant for inter\* people. To change their name and gender marker they need to present the diagnosis of intersexuality after the medical definition. There is no established legal procedure for non-binary people but the [Bundesgerichtshof](#) decided in 2020 that the TSG can be interpreted in a way that includes the transition from female/male to diverse. The process then is the same as it is for trans\* people.

The TSG in particular has been criticised for decades and large parts of it have been declared unconstitutional by the [Bundesverfassungsgericht](#)<sup>2</sup>. The version, as it exists today, is mostly criticised due to the compulsory examination by so-called experts as they make the procedure unnecessarily long, bureaucratic, costly and debilitating. TIN\* people and their supporters instead demand a new law that would centre TIN\* people's self-determination and agency. Apart from the length of the current process, the financial and psychological burden may stop trans\* and non-binary students' from taking the official route to change their name and gender marker.

In July 2022, the federal government presented its draft for a law to replace the TSG. The new law is supposed to simplify the process of changing name and gender marker of trans\*, inter\* and non-binary people, centring self-disclosure. However, the law will not be passed until Q4 2022 at the earliest and will not be implemented before the second half of 2023.

## Space at university: Toilets, Changing Rooms & Showers

Toilets, changing rooms and showers are spaces that satisfy basic human needs. Most university members casually go to "take a leak" several times a day, and those who partake in university sports courses, visit the UniFit or the swimming pool, will use the changing rooms and showers without much hesitation. For TIN\* people, these commonplace, everyday experiences can present themselves very differently. The spaces mentioned follow a highly binary logic. The gender separation they establish turns them into spaces for TIN\* people that are associated with stress, insecurity and even the risk of verbal or physical assault. Non-binary people must currently subordinate themselves to the binary logic of these spaces. People who identify within the binary as women or men may find it easier to adhere to the binary spatial order, but nonetheless all TIN\* people run the risk of being read in such binary spaces as not-belonging, as wrong, as 'other' and consequently having to explain themselves. The fear of being called-out in these spaces, which might escalate to physical violence, might keep TIN\* people from using these very basic and everyday facilities at university.

## What can I do as a lecturer?

- Be aware that TIN\* students may also be exposed to verbal and/or physical violence in public spaces off campus.
- Discriminatory statements towards TIN\* people by students should not be allowed to stand unquestioned, but should be challenged.
- Use your position as a disseminator and contact your students by e-mail before the start of the semester. Point out the possibility of changing your name in Prisma. At the same time, you can also encourage students to tell you which name and pronoun they want to use during the course.
- When introducing yourself at the beginning of the course, mention which pronouns you use yourself.
- If you take attendance at the beginning of the course, rely on a round of introductions rather than your course list. Encourage students to introduce themselves with the name and pronouns they prefer. If you use name tags, ask your students to add pronouns to them as well. Stating one's pronouns should not be compulsory. If people do not appear on your list, ask the student privately to

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<sup>2</sup> Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes (2021): Jahresbericht der Antidiskriminierungsstelle, S. 55.

give you their matriculation number. This will allow you to give credit to the correct person. Point students (again) to the possibility of changing their name in Prisma.

- Call students by their first and last names instead of using the title (Mr/Ms XX), especially if you are unsure of the correct form of address.
- Include your preferred pronouns in your e-mail signature.
- Pay attention to using gender sensitive language.
- If you use Zoom or other external software, include your own pronouns in the name display field and encourage students to do the same. Tell them to use the name they actually want to be addressed with. If a name appears that you do not recognise, ask the student privately via the chat function to give you their matriculation number.
- Accept requests from e-mail addresses that are not directly associated with the Bielefeld University. Not all students will be aware that they can set up an alternate e-mail address with their preferred name. Point out this possibility.
- Be aware of how far your classroom is from an all-gender toilet. If a student arrives late or leaves (for a longer time) during the session, it may be because it takes much longer for that person to quickly 'step out'.
- Before exams address the discrepancy caused by being able to change one's name, while student IDs still show deadnames. Offer TIN\* students who are affected to contact you beforehand so that you can carry out the identity check personally. Raise awareness amongst your colleagues and student assistants about a possible discrepancy during the exam.
- If during an exam, the appearance and surname differ from the identity papers, this should not be commented on in front of fellow students. As a lecturer, you have the option to make a note of the person and check the information afterwards, in order to secure the person's security and privacy in the moment.

## TIN\* Glossary:

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### Agender

Agender people do not feel they belong to a specific gender identity or reject the concept of gender for themselves altogether.

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### Cis, cisgender

Cisgender (cis: Latin for on this side) is the term used to describe people whose sex ascribed at birth is the same as their gender identity. Being cis adheres to the dominant societal norm. This means that in our heteronormative society it is assumed that all people are cis.

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### Coming Out

In a heteronormative society, heterosexuality and being cisgender are assumed to be the norm for all people. This means that people who do not conform to this norm (e.g. lesbians or trans\* people) have to declare their sexuality or gender identity. This process is called coming out.

Most people have an "internal coming out" to themselves when they become aware of their own sexuality or gender identity. The ability to come out to family, friends or in professional circles depends strongly on the expected acceptance by these groups. If a person's sexuality or gender identity is disclosed without their consent, this is called outing. For the concerned person outings are invasive, stressful and violating. In some contexts, they can also put the person's safety and life at risk.

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## Deadname

(The term) deadname describes the name a TIN\* person was given at birth but which they have since discarded. It often has a gender and identity connotation which the TIN\* person rejects by choosing their own name. The use of the (discarded) deadname is to be considered psychological violence, especially if it is continuous and intentional. Deadnaming is a form of misgendering. Not all TIN\* people choose a new name and therefore have a deadname. Either way, it is always inappropriate to ask for or research it.

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## Diverse

Since 01.01.2019, diverse - in addition to female and male - is the third (positive) gender marker permitted in Germany. It primarily serves to ensure that inter\* people do not have to be assigned to a binary gender or - as was already possible - have their gender marker remain blank (negative gender entry). The TSG also allows non-inter\* people to claim a diverse gender marker for themselves. Apart from being a legal category, diverse is also a gender identity.

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## Dyadic

Dyadic or endo-sex is a term used to describe individuals whose physical sex markers conform as closely as possible to the medical norms of masculinity or femininity. It is the opposite of inter\*.

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## Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity is a system of social order that sets heterosexuality as the social standard. This is linked to the idea of the normality of heterosexual desire, the binary of gender and the cohesion of anatomy and gender identity. The setting of norms creates power relations. Other sexualities and gender identities are hierarchically subordinated, excluded and socially sanctioned.

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## Inter\*, intersex

Inter\* (lat. between) people can neither be clearly assigned to the normative idea of masculinity nor femininity. This can be hormonal, chromosomal or due to the formation of internal or external genitalia. Being inter\* says nothing about a person's gender identity. An inter\* person can describe themselves as inter\*, but also, for example, as a woman or non-binary, etc.

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## Gender identity

Gender identity refers to a person's self-designation and -assignment to a gender. This may correspond with the gender assigned by others at birth (→ cisgender) or, as in the case of trans\* people, it may not.

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## Misgendering

Misgendering is the assignment of a gender (e.g. through pronouns, forms of address, gendered terms) that does not correspond with the gender of the person being referred to. Misgendering can happen intentionally or unintentionally. Intentional misgendering is a form of psychological violence towards the misgendered

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person. Using the birth name that a person has given up is called deadnaming and is also a form of misgendering.

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### Neopronouns

German does not have a grammatically third, non-binary gender. The German "es" is used for objects, while the plural "sie" is like the feminine pronoun. Some non-binary people's solution is therefore to create new pronouns that work for their gender identity. No neopronoun has established prominence or dominance yet; the choices are highly individual. Examples for neopronouns are "xier", "dey" or "hen".

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### Non-binary

Non-binary refers to a gender identity or gender identities that do not fit into the binary idea of gender. Non-binary does not describe a specific mixture of characteristics, but is a self-designation.

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### Trans\*, transgender

Trans\* (lat. across, beyond) is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not correspond with the gender ascribed to them at birth.

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## Ressourcen

### Uni intern

- General Informationen: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/gleichstellung/fuer-alle/studentinnen/tin>
- Name Change: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/bits/services/zugang/account/anleitung/rufname/>
- Alternative E-Mail Address: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/bits/services/kommunikation/e-mail-und-kalender/anleitung/aenderung-anzeigename-und-adresse/index.xml>
- Queer Solidarity Group (bottom page): [www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/zll/gemeinsam-statt-einsam/](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/zll/gemeinsam-statt-einsam/)

### How to address people & neopronouns

- Article about Neopronouns in German-speaking areas: <https://fm4.orf.at/stories/3025024/>
- Digital Collection of Neopronouns (made by users): <https://de.pronouns.page/pronomen>



## Contact

Sian Birkner  
Gender Equality Office  
[sian.birkner@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:sian.birkner@uni-bielefeld.de)

Pia Ortwein  
Department P/O 6 - Diversity  
[diversitaet@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:diversitaet@uni-bielefeld.de)

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