



**FAQ** *(Frequently Asked Questions)*  
**FOR THE TRANSITION  
PROCESS IN  
TRANSGENDER  
PEOPLE**





## 1. What is Sex and Gender?

**The sex** is a set of bodily and genital sexual features, as well as some secondary sex features. The sex is assigned by birth as a biological determinant in accordance with the apparent anatomy.

**The gender** is a social and cultural manifestation of identity established by the social idea of perception in terms of what it means to be a man, a woman, neither or a combination of both.

**The gender identity** is a manifestation of one's innate feeling of self, or in other words, a personal gender identity. Gender identity is not visible to the others.





## 2. What is the transition process in transgender people?

**The transition** is a process through which transgender people align their inner and outward gender features with their gender expression. The transition helps transgender people express their gender identity up to a degree that they themselves determine. The transition can be performed by medical confirmation of gender, by a legal recognition of gender, social transition, or perhaps it can assume a combination of several steps which vary from one individual to another and not all transgender people decide to take all steps in their transition process. The transition is a long and complex process, and an exclusively subjective one, given that it is primarily based

on personal needs, expectations and perception of oneself.

## 2.1 Medical confirmation of gender

### The medical confirmation of gender

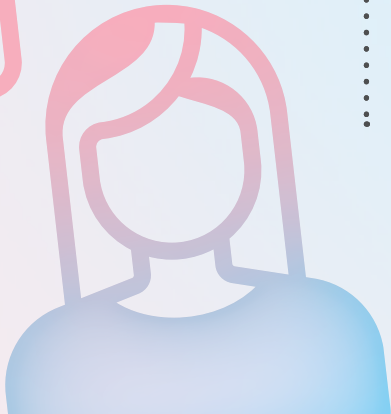
is in actual fact an alignment with the inner and outward gender features of one's own gender identity by means of prescribing hormonal therapy and performing surgical procedures. Along the way, this process might include psycho-social support, hormonal therapy, surgical interventions or a combination of several medical interventions and treatments.

Throughout this process, transgender people alter their physical features in accordance with their gender identity.

## 2.2 Legal recognition of gender

### The legal recognition of gender

is in actual fact a process by which transgender people can change personal data that refer to gender classification in their personal identification documents. This process may include several legal proceedings, such as change of name and surname, change of sex sign or change of the National Identification Number. According to the existing legal framework in the Republic of North Macedonia, the name and surname can be changed; however, given that there is still no legal framework for legal recognition of gender, it is not possible to change the sex sign and the National Identification Number.



### 3. Social transition

Some steps that can be taken throughout the process of transition pertain to processes related to the environment in which one lives, works and expresses themselves. These steps may involve sharing with family members, friends and family, use of the chosen name and the appropriate pronouns, as well as changing the data in the personal identification documents by means of the legal recognition processes.

## 4. Medical confirmation of gender

Every transgender person who wished to commence with the **transition process for medical confirmation of gender** is in need of a medical team (which includes a General Practitioner, psychiatrist/psychologist, internist, as well as an endocrinologist and a gynecologist). This entire team must be sensitized to work with transgender people and be fully well familiarized with the key needs and problems that the transgender community faces. The medical team is responsible for monitoring the transition governed by professional principles and the individual needs of the transgender person. You, alongside with the medical team, determine the most adequate steps of the transition.

## 4.1 Psycho-therapeutic counseling and support

Psychotherapy is a treatment based on conversations between the psycho-therapist and the clients, with the purpose of improving one's wellbeing and mental health, eliminate and control disturbing symptoms, emotional difficulties and disorders. The psycho-therapist provides a supporting environment which enables you to speak openly about the reasons that you believe have a need for counseling and psychotherapy. During psychotherapy, awareness regarding your inner being is developed, as well as your emotions, thoughts and behavior. Psychotherapy helps you learn how to respond to challenging situations utilizing healthy management skills.

Research has shown that the majority of people who are a part of a psychotherapeutic process, experience relief in symptoms and are better able to function in their day-to-day lives. The benefits also include less health issues, increased work satisfaction rates and a more functional solving of relationship problems.

Make an appointment with a psychotherapist you would feel free to be open and honest with, given that the success of the therapy depends on that. Follow the agreed-on plan with the psychotherapist and work on the tasks and exercises between sessions, if the therapist has suggested so.

## 4.2 Hormonal therapy

The **hormonal therapy** treatment is an integral part of the medical transition, by which a transgender person takes hormones in order to align their body with the gender they identify with. The hormonal therapy can have a key role in the process of physical and psychological transition in transgender people. The hormonal therapy treatment is individualistic, depending on the goals and possibilities of the individual, the ratio between the risk and the benefit, the existence of other medical conditions, as well as the social and economic circumstances.



## Steps to commence a hormonal therapy treatment

Every transgender person who wishes to commence hormonal therapy has to determine the steps and their possibilities for transition alongside with the medical team. Given that the hormonal therapy for transgender women differs from the one prescribed to transgender men, the steps to commence the treatment differ as well.

**Transgender woman or trans woman** is a term that refers to people assigned with male sex at birth, however they identify as women. Some of them prefer to be referred to as women, without any additional clarifications. It is best for you assert and choose the term of your preference.

## Hormonal therapy treatment in transgender women

In order to start with hormonal therapy, you first need to make an appointment with your General Practitioner (GP), who is going to refer you to a psychologist/psychiatrist for a finding and an opinion. This process is individualistic and lasts depending on the psychiatrist's personal assessment and the results of the tests that the psychologist performs. Having obtained the finding, the GP refers you to an internist that examines you and then refers you to an endocrinologist. The endocrinologist performs a full blood count test, cerotype and hormonal status. Based on the results, the endocrinologist determines the required dosage and issues a Report, based on which your

GP prescribes your therapy. Taking the hormonal therapy must be closely monitored by experts and must be taken in accordance with the prescribed plan.

**Transgender man or trans man** is a term that refers to people who were assigned a female sex at birth, however they identify as men. Some of them prefer to be referred to as men, without any additional clarifications. It is best for you assert and choose the term of your preference.

## **Hormonal therapy treatment in transgender men**

In order to start with hormonal therapy, you first need to make an appointment with your General Practitioner, who is going to refer you to a psychologist/psychiatrist for a finding and an opinion. This process is individualistic and lasts depending on the psychiatrist's personal assessment and the results of the tests that the psychologist performs. Having obtained the finding, the GP refers you to a gynecologist who examines you and then refers you to an endocrinologist. The endocrinologist performs a full blood count test, cerotype and hormonal status. Based on the results, the endocrinologist determines the required dosage and issues a Report, based on which your GP prescribes your therapy.

## 5. Community support and useful contacts

If you feel the need of taking some of the transition steps and you do believe that you are ready to start with the transition process, ask for advice based on experiences from your close friends, contact and talk to other transgender people or people in civil organizations who work with the LGBT community, ask for support, counseling, directions and contacts from professional people with expertise who do have working experience with transgender people and are fully sensitized regarding the issued and needs of transgender people.

TransFormA is an initiative by the community of transgender people that focuses on protecting transgender people's rights and their representation with dignity. You can contact TransFormA for counseling and referrals.

Contact: [transformamk@gmail.com](mailto:transformamk@gmail.com)



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