

TANAKA Taro

From: info@voorzij.nl
Sent: 14 March 2021 22:36
To: Registry OHCHR; IE Sexual Orientation And Gender Identity OHCHR
Subject: [External] Submission to the report on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity

This submission is made by Voorzij

Voorzij is a foundation representing feminists in the Netherlands who share concerns about LGB rights in relation to gender identity theory. If you have any questions regarding our response, we can be reached at: info@voorzij.nl

1. Has the State adopted, in public policy, legislation or jurisprudence, working definitions of gender and related concepts (for example gender theory, gender-based approaches, gender perspective, gender mainstreaming) aiming to address violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity? If so, please give examples, with commentary as needed to explain context, scope and application.

- a. if that is the case, has the State carried out evaluations, assessments or evidence-gathering about the impact of the implementation of such actions and, if so, what are the main trends identified?*
- b. if that is not the case, please provide information as to the reasons.*

Answer:

Discrimination based on gender is forbidden by the Constitution of the Netherlands. In 2019 the State modified the category of gender to include gender characteristics, gender identity and gender expression. None of these terms are defined further. Due to the use of gender instead of sex, it is no longer allowed to make a distinction between those of a biological sex and those who claim to possess the gender identity of that sex. Previously it was already prohibited to distinguish between biological sex and transsexuals who had changed their legal registration of sex.

In February 2021, the State agreed to add the Dutch words “seksuele gerichtheid” to the Constitution as an explicit category on which discrimination is prohibited. In an earlier version of the proposal, the words homo- and heterosexuality were used. Although the justification for this change claims that this term better matches the more universal interpretation of “sexual orientation”, this Dutch phrasing seems to lend itself to overinterpretation and could extend to fetishes as well as pedophilia, bestiality and polygamy. The possibility of overinterpretation is all the more present due to, again, a lack of a workable definition. The only boundary the bill included, was that the sexual orientation in question should not be illegal, to prevent pedophilia and bestiality to become protected orientations.

Both of these modifications to the Constitution have been criticized by government officials for the broad terms and lack of clear definitions. However, this has not resulted in modifications, nor has it deterred the State from ultimately accepting these proposals into law. No proper research appears to have been done. Supposed feminist and human rights organizations support the changes and offer little in the way of opposition.

4. Is comprehensive sexuality education taught in schools?

- a. if yes, please provide information as to the respective programs. Please provide examples (e.g. copies of curricula, citations to policies).
- b. if not, are there efforts deployed by the State to establish and promote comprehensive sexual education, which incorporates diverse sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives? What have been the obstacles to adopt such policies or programs? Also, is the State adopting any alternative measures?

Answer: Since 2012 education on sexuality and diversity is part of the core goals of Dutch elementary schooling. Prior to that, sexual education was taught in high school. Rutgers, the Knowledge Center on Sexuality, provides educational materials targeted at the different age groups of elementary school. These include models such as the “genderbread man” (see [here](#)), which teaches numerous unproven falsehoods about identity and sexual orientation: the complete separation of identity from the sexed body, referring to masculinity and femininity as the scale for man- vs. womanhood, and the split attraction model that posits a separation of sexual and romantic attraction.

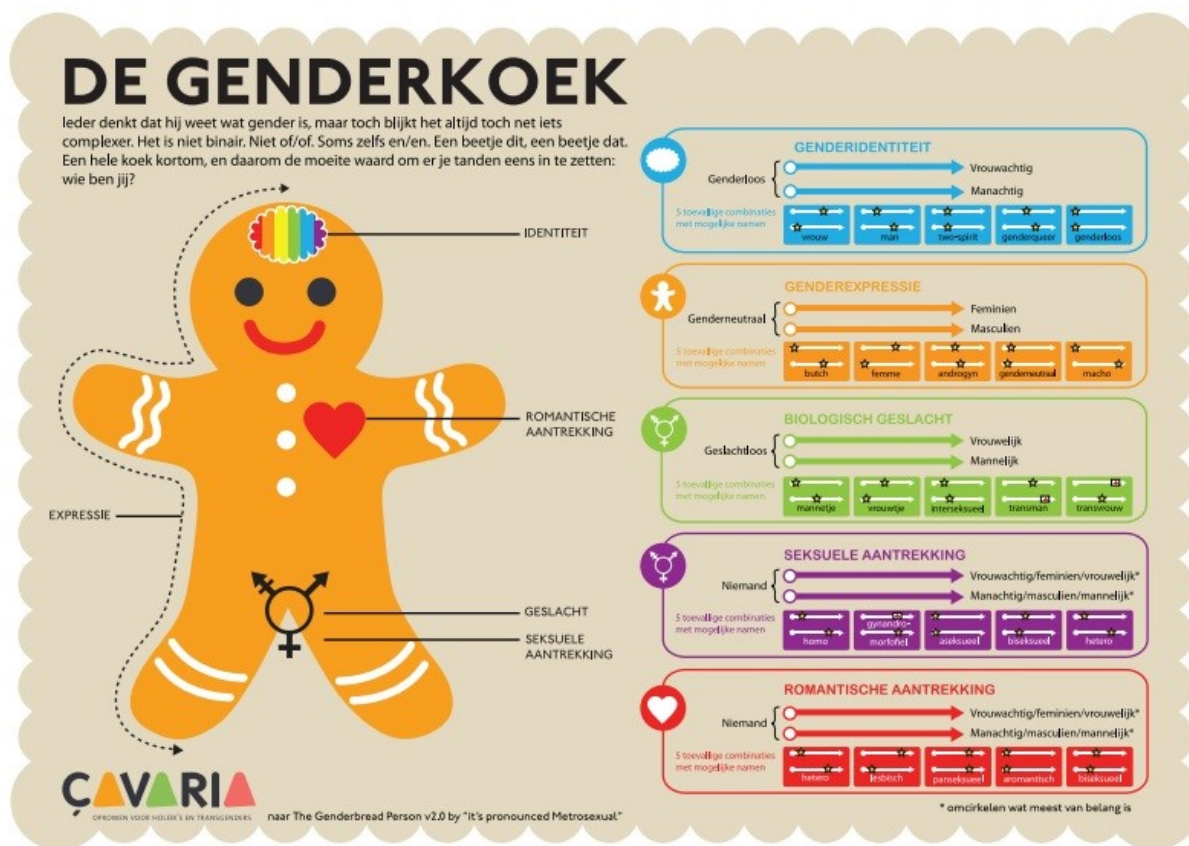


Image 1. Illustration of the genderbread man with Dutch text. Highlights identity, gender, expression, romantic and sexual attraction as separate aspects of the breadman.

Despite including goals about teaching children about sex stereotypes about men and women, the material also includes these same stereotypical illustrations to indicate what boys and girls are.

Ik ben een jongen en ik ben een meisje!



Image 2. The text reads: "I am a boy and I am a girl!"

Another example is the website "[iedereen is anders](#)" (everybody is different), a project of the ministry of Population Health, Well-being and Sport, and lobby and human rights organizations Movisie, COC Nederland and Stichting 113. The website aims to educate youth on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex conditions. It includes a frequently asked questions section, which features the question "could I be transgender?". [The answer](#) lists preferring clothes of the opposite gender as a possible indicator of transgender identity. The website also features unproven claims about male and female brains as the root of gender identity and thus "being born in the wrong body" as the cause of transgenderism, and downplays the effects of puberty blockers and sex change trajectory.

General Statement:

Since too much is mixed up in terms of content and concept in the questions on this submission, we would like to make some general comments on this, which do not directly answer the question, but are essential for the debate in our eyes.

We would like to point out emphatically that a large part of all lesbian, gays and bisexual (LGB) people, among which some of us count ourselves, do not support "gender theory" and furthermore consider it to be very dangerous, misogynistic and homophobic.

Gender Theory states that people can be born in the "wrong body." That people can feel they are a different sex than the one "assigned at birth".

Indeed, the expression "assigned at birth" is a phrasing which has initially been used to refer to those with intersex conditions, which are often conflated with transgenderism, but are a group of around 40 variations of sexual development. Intersex conditions do not represent different biological sexes, as all bodies are organised around producing one of two types of gametes (eggs or sperm). In other words, the existence of intersex conditions/DSDs/VSDs reinforces that biological sex is binary, and does not disprove it. We believe that this conflation between intersex conditions and transgenderism by proponents of gender theory is deliberate and can also be detrimental to those with intersex conditions.

Proponents of gender theory also assume that there is an infinite number of genders and sexual orientations.

It does not make sense to tell children that they can be “born in the wrong body”. This has been abandoned by many charities in other countries. We do not teach disabled children, for example, that they are “born in the wrong body”. It also introduces a quasi-religious element to the notion that some people suffer from gender dysphoria (more recently termed “gender incongruence”), as if there is something akin to a gendered soul that ended up in the wrong body as its host. It is also concerning that many of the children choosing to transition suffer from autism or ADHD, or have other comorbid conditions such as anorexia, anxiety or OCD. Teaching children that they are “born in the wrong body” leads to many pitfalls.

This theory denies all biology and science. Moreover, it renders the concept of "sexual orientation" meaningless, since sexual orientation refers to biological sex. People can be sexually attracted to either the opposite sex, the same sex, or both. However, if it is no longer possible to define sex and what that means, sexual minorities will likewise be unable to define their sexuality. Accordingly, it will be impossible to legally protect lesbians, gays, or bisexuals from discrimination and violence because it will no longer be possible to legally define them. So, according to the theory, everyone could theoretically be lesbian, gay or bisexual. However, in the truth of biology, this is not the case.

Gay men are attracted to other males (men), just as lesbian women are attracted to other females (women). They are attracted to the same biological sex. If, for example, a biological man "feels" like a woman according to Gender Theory, he in fact is and remains still a biological man. Lesbian women are not sexually attracted to him. It is important to separate this! As an example, a heterosexual male with a beard and a penis can self-identify as a lesbian, and his female partner can also refer to herself as a lesbian. This erases the existence of female homosexuals, i.e. lesbians.

The same applies to the status of women. When they can no longer be recognized as a class defined by their sex, sex as the foundation of women’s oppression is erased. Anyone can identify as a woman, inherently suggesting that anyone can identify out of being a woman and the oppression it carries as well. This ignores the inescapable nature of gendered crimes such as femicide, inaccessibility of reproductive care such as abortion, domestic violence and human trafficking. Furthermore, protections against these forms of violence, for example in the form of shelters for women fleeing domestic violence, are rendered unsafe because members of the male oppressor class can gain entry on the basis of gender identity.

We demand a public debate about the dangers that we, lesbians, gays and bisexuals, see in gender theory. A discussion about this is widely suppressed in politics and society. When we talk about the dangers, we are often called transphobic and excluded from debates. When we say we are attracted to the same biological sex, as described above, we are also portrayed as transphobic. However, the sexual orientation of homosexuals by its very nature excludes those of the opposite biological sex. So according to supporters of Gender Theory, as homosexuals we would have to force ourselves to have sexual contact with people of the opposite biological sex in order to not be transphobic, or at least pretend that we are willing to. It is important, for the protection of LGBTs, that this is discussed publicly. Homosexuals have been subject to death threats or threats of violence on social media for speaking openly about this.

Accordingly, we want to state here that we do not see LGBTs and Ts as a community with exactly the same concerns and interests. The interests of LGBTs are in certain areas opposed to the interests of some supporters of gender theory, i.e. the T. This is also very important to note in order for an overview to be developed of the rights and protections afforded by different countries and the interests of different minority groups.

Another big danger we see, especially for young LGBTs, are laws around self-ID, as well as those on access to so-called "gender reassignment surgeries". These laws have already been implemented in Switzerland.

There is already a growing number of detransitioners at this time. That is, people who saw themselves as trans but now no longer do. Many report internalized homophobia in childhood and adolescence driving

them to feel they were supposed to be of the opposite sex. Indeed, it has been proven that many lesbian, gay and bisexual people may suffer from gender dysphoria in childhood that resolves itself by adulthood.

Additionally, women are exposed to sexualization by society, from which they can supposedly escape by transitioning to the opposite sex. People who do not fit into society's prevailing gender roles (e.g., men are strong and don't cry, women are quiet and emotional) in their childhood and adolescence, as many LGBs also report, are at increasing risk of being seen as trans by parents and institutions. They internalize these ideas and their sense of self is built around the idea of themselves as the opposite sex. Linked to this are often life-changing medical interventions into the healthy body, combined with a lifetime of taking hormones. The long-term effects of these treatments are as of yet unknown.

There are numerous other effective strategies and possibilities for children and adolescents affected by gender dysphoria to be treated. In our opinion, medical surgery should be a method of last resort. It is of great importance that there is more social education about this. Conversion therapy legislation in certain jurisdictions has led to an affirmation only approach being adopted (i.e. affirming only that the patient is transgender). There appears to be limited scientific evidence for this model and some detransitioners report that it has led them to be affirmed as being transgender. This affirmation strategy allows for insufficient examination of possible root causes of experienced gender dysphoria or incongruence, such as a history of sexual trauma or simply struggles with same-sex attraction. It is also of huge concern that parents now face prison sentences in some countries for refusing to affirm their child.

There have been several recent developments with regard to transgender medicine - WPATH has backtracked from its previous position on affirmation only and admitted that its recommended treatment is simply a set of guidelines. Both Thomas Steensma and Annelou de Vries, creators of the so called 'Dutch protocol' for paediatric transition used in numerous countries have [urged caution with regard to its use](#) - the cohort of patients has greatly increased and is now mostly made up of biological females, rather than biological males as in the past. They have admitted to not understanding the cause of the sudden spike in female patients and stressed that this warrants further investigation.

Another major issue for us is safe spaces. It is important for LGBs to have their own spaces where they can be among themselves and exchange ideas. We also see these spaces in danger because of gender theory. If biological men can identify as women, it gives them access to, for example, exclusive lesbian spaces. Lesbians can no longer feel safe there and discuss important topics among themselves, since there is always the possibility that biological men are present as well.

We do see that trans people are exposed to discrimination and violence and that they must be protected from this, but this must not happen in such a way that LGB rights and women's rights, that have been fought for, suffer and are weakened. We are in favor of creating safe spaces for trans people, but not to abandon having the safe spaces created by homosexuals and women.