Who are we? What do we do?

- „Rada Języka Neutralnego"
- Open-source project: pronouns.page / zaimki.pl
- 14 languages, 50+ contributors, 380k+ users
- Słownik Neutratywów Języka Polskiego
- Korpus Niebinarnej Polszczyzny
- Niebinarny Spis Powszechny (Gender Census)
- Queer Calendar, Queer Terminology
- …

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Inclusive language
Gender-neutral language
Nonbinary language

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Nonbinary language

language elements (in English: mostly pronouns) used by and for nonbinary people to better express their gender

"[There are people] who don't fit immediately into male or female, and if that surprises you, you need to get out more" – Tom Scott [1][2]

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non-binary ✕

ˌnänˈbīnərē

10 / 5,000

Translations are gender-specific. **Learn more**

☆

No binaria *(feminine)*

🔊

No binario *(masculine)*

🔊

Gender-neutral language

language that avoids gendered phrases
or attempts to balance out androcentrism

androcentrism – a tendency to place masculine perspective
at the centre of one's world view

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Inclusive language

language that avoids excluding minoritised groups and bias against them, eg. racism, ableism, sexism, queerphobia

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Why do we even need any of it?

- language is the carrier of thoughts
- it can perpetuate and reveal hidden biases
- if we want to be an inclusive, progressive society, our language has to reflect that
- not everyone is a man. or a woman. or white. or rich. or able-bodied. or...
- simplification (eg. automated emails)
- friendlier atmosphere, trust, easier to come out
- stop reinforcing stereotypes
- just don't be mean 🙄

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Examples (gender)

- "firemen are saving people from a burning building" → fire fighters, fire brigade
- "KLM trains their stewardesses well" → flight attendants
- "the congressmen have voted on the XYZ bill" → congress members, congress
- "manpower" → staff, crew
- "man-made" → artificial
- "chairman" → chair
- "spokesman", "spokeswoman" → spokesperson
- asking for gender in forms → do you really need it?

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Examples (gender)

- "ladies and gentlemen!" → dear viewers, dear listeners, dear guests, dearly beloved, hello everyone
- "guys" → y'all, folks, everyone
- "he or she" → they
- [unknown] "man" / "woman" → person
- "the Latino community" → Latine, Latinx, Latin@
- "women" [in context of periods] → people who menstruate
- en.pronouns.page/dictionary

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Other languages and grammatical gender

Gender Neutral Pronouns: They're Here, Get Used To Them

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German

- "Studenten" → "Studierenden"
- "Autor" / "Autorin" → Autor*in, Autor:in, Autor_in, das Autory, de Autore, …
- Example neopronouns: xier / xies / xiem / xiem

📝 Beispiel-Nutzung in Sätzen:

- **Xier** ist so süß. 🔊
- Ist das **xies** Hund? 🔊
- Ich bin **xiem** erst kürzlich begegnet. 🔊
- Ich verstehe **xien** so gut. 🔊

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Dutch

- "Dames en heren" → Beste reizigers
- "Geachte heer, mevrouw" → Geachte klant
- Most popular nonbinary pronouns: hen/hun

📝 Gebruiksvoorbeelden in zinnen:

- Ik denk dat **hen** erg mooi is. 🔊
- Ik vroeg **hen** of ik **hun** potlood mag lenen. 🔊
- Dat huis is het **hunne**. 🔊
- **Hen** ziet **hunzelf** in de spiegel. 🔊

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Polish

- very gendered: not just 3rd person pronouns, but also 1st and 2nd person pronouns, nouns, verbs, adjectives…
- zrobiłem, zrobiłam → zrobiłom, zrobiłum, zrobiłxm, …
- inżynierka, inżynier → inżynierze, osoba inżynierska
- „zapomniałem hasła" → przypomnij hasło, reset hasła
- more info: zaimki.pl/english

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Examples (race, nationality, colonisation)

- n-word, "Oriental", Gypsy → Black, Asian, specific nationality, person of colour, Roma
- "third world" → developing countries, Global South
- "to jew", "to gyp" → to bargain, to defraud, to cheat, to swindle
- "the illegals" → undocumented immigrants

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Examples (queerphobia)

- "that's so gay" → lame
- "tranny" → trans woman
- "transwoman", "transman" → trans woman, trans man
- "he feels like a woman", "she identifies as lesbian" → she is a woman, she is a lesbian
- using "he" or "she" based on just appearance or name

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Examples

- "Merry Christmas" → Happy Holidays
- "master/slave databases", "master branch" → primary/replica, main branch
- "clean" → HIV negative
- "prostitute", "whore", "selling one's body" → sex worker
- "moron", "idiot", "debil", "crazy", "down" → stupid, asinine (but: criticize work, not the worker)
- "an autist" → autistic person, person with autism
- "wheelchair-bound" → a wheelchair user
- zaimki.pl/inkluzywny (Polish-only for now, you can help extend it)

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Why sharing pronouns is important?

- to simply know how to talk to/about someone
- it's not always obvious (neutral name, pseudonym, avatar)
- it's just like giving / asking for a name
- it normalises that for trans and nonbinary people

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General advice

- Don't assume
- Listen to the communities affected
- Educate yourself
- Don't beat yourself up, if you make mistakes

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If you want to support the project

- It's open source, you can just submit a PR
- Spread awareness (pronouns in email footer, events like this one, ...)
- Donate
- Just use inclusive language 😉

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Further reading

- zaimki.pl, en.pronouns.page, de.pronouns.page, nl.pronouns.page
- Meriam Webster: [on "singular they"](#), [on the word "nibling"](#)
- [American Psychological Association on "singular they"](#)
- [Inclusive communication in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union](#) (multilingual)
- [American Psychiatric Association: Definitions of Gender, Sex, and Sexual Orientation and Pronoun Usage](#)

Questions?