

## AU PEACE AND SECURITY DEPARTMENT



### GENDER BITE TWO

Gender Concepts - *Part I*  
Sex and Gender

**June 2019**

Gender and sex: these terms are commonly confused, but understanding the difference is fundamental to understanding gender inequality.

## Let's take a closer look.

### What is sex?

The AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (AU-GEWE) offers the following definition: "Sex refers to biological and anatomical features men and women are born with."

The sex of an individual is therefore defined by genetic factors. While the male/female split is often represented as binary, this is not always the case. In some cases, children are born with both male and female characteristics – sometimes termed 'intersex'. Such children account for an estimated 1 in 1500 births.<sup>1</sup>

### What is gender?

According to the AU-GEWE, Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, as are other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis including class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, sexual orientation, age, etc.

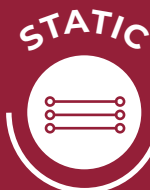
1. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/232363.php>

# | AT A GLANCE

## SEX



- Characteristics of males and females from birth



- No difference in time and place

## GENDER



- Constructed roles assignment to women and men



- Culture and time specific

# GENDER QUIZ!

Match the text on the **left** with its correct correspondent on the **right**.

In many cultures, men are traditionally expected to protect women

Men's voices generally change at puberty

Women are less frequently found in leadership positions

Women are thought of as caring and kind

Women have higher levels of oestrogen and progesterone, while men have higher levels of testosterone

Most men are physically stronger than women

GENDER

SEX

GENDER

SEX

GENDER

SEX

GENDER

SEX

GENDER

SEX

GENDER

SEX

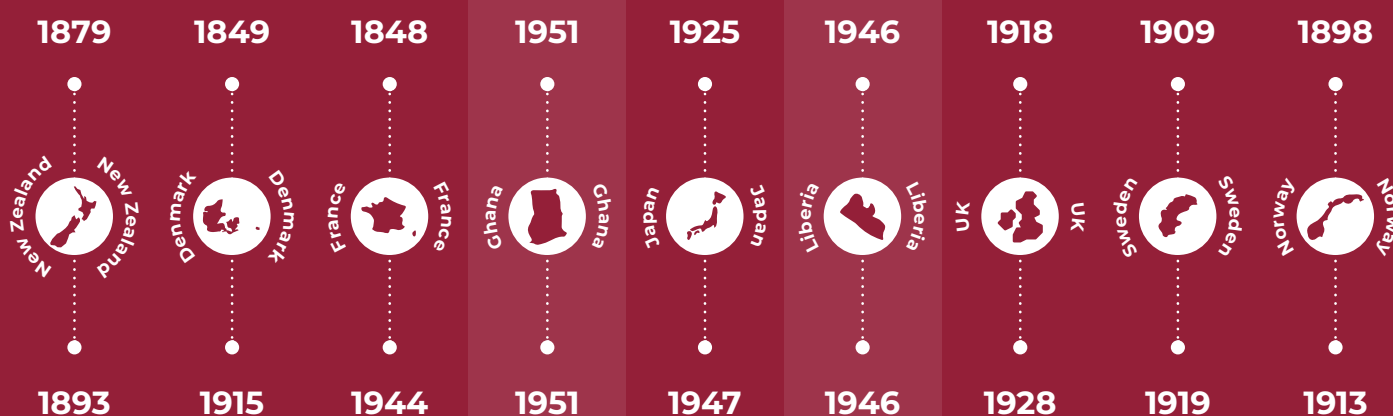


*Discuss it with your colleagues and motivate your choice. In the next Gender Bite, we will provide you with the correct answers.*

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE TIMELINE WORLDWIDE



#hevotes



#shevotes



## Next Gender Bite

**Gender Concepts Part 2:** Understanding gender equality, gender roles and stereotypes.



# SILENCING THE GUNS IN AFRICA

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