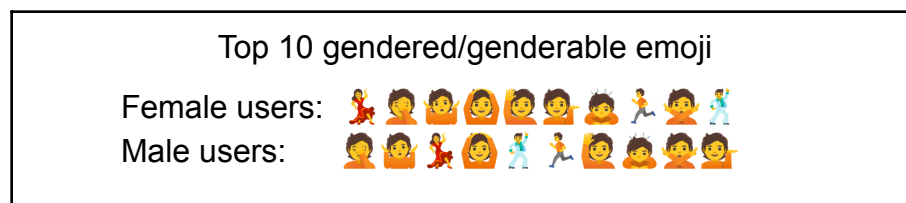Re: ESR Report for UTC #182 (2025Q1)

From: Jennifer Daniel on the behalf of the ESR

Date: 2025-01-14

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1. Public Feedback

ReportID: ID20241222083316

Based on actual usage and not perceptions of what constitutes gender, 🕺💃 are in a sense ungendered emoji: both are used by everyone, regardless of gender.

> Top 10 gendered/genderable emoji
>
> Female users: 💃🙆🙆🙅🙆🙆🤷🏃🙇💃
> Male users: 🙆🙅💃🤷🙇💃🏃🙆🙇💃🙆

Women use the male dancer emoji 🕺 four times more often than expected, and men use the female dancer emoji 💃 1.4 times more often than expected[1]. As a result, future gendered emoji are not under serious consideration at this time. These additions needlessly encode gender into technical artifacts.

Why a ballet dancer if a ballet slipper emoji already exists? Since the addition of the ballet slipper in 2018 (L2/18-113) the connection between tone and ballet equipment was missing from the original documentation. Also, this problem is not limited to ballet, see L2/24-038. Without resorting to adding skin tone or gender modifiers to objects, the ESR is recommending the addition of this new dancer and sees it as an improvement, not merely duplicative to the existing ballet slipper. This decision is informed by empirical usage data and the metaphorical, cultural, and visual affordances of this new emoji, not purely its literal meaning.

To clarify: this character will sit in the keyboard alongside all the other people based emoji and not as a gender variant to the existing dancers.[2]

Action Item for Michelle Perham, ESR: Forward to the submitter of public

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[1] Baseline: all non-dancing gender-modifiable emoji. 9% of women's gendered emoji do not match their own gender compared to 16% of males' emoji. For dancers, this is 36% and 23% respectively. Source: 2018 Twitter data collected as part of Emoji Skin Tone Modifiers: Analyzing Variation in Usage on Social Media (2020) Robertson, Magdy and Goldwater

[2] This path was explored and did not advance, see L2/19-231

feedback ReportID [ID20241222083316] the ESR WG comments in Section 1 of document L2/25-008.

2. Emoji 17.0 🔮

The next version of the Unicode Standard, Version 17.0 is now final with 8 new characters and additional sequences as recommended in L2/24-226R.

While generating data files it was discovered that L2/24-226R and L2/24-252 erroneously referenced U+1FD91 rather than U+1F9D1 as intended; the correct code point is being used for all added sequences.

3. Frequently Asked Questions - "Redesigning" Emoji 🤔

Sometimes the general public is interested in why an emoji looks a certain way. These inquiries can range from something as simple as why the lotus emoji includes a lily pad to something more complex such as how a flag emoji gets updated. The ESR is actively auditing design variations to improve interoperability and a new section has been added to the Unicode Blog on the topic of flag design changes. We'll continue to update the UTC as the working group moves forward.

Lotus Emoji						
Apple Color	Noto Color	Samsung One UI	Fluent Emoji	WhatsApp	Twemoji	Facebook

4. Update on Intake 🧭

With the upcoming Emoji update (17.0) scheduled to roll out in 2025, all people emoji will now have gender and skin tone support. Consequently, the ESR is exploring a temporary pause on "people" emoji proposals for a finite number of years. This will enable the ESR to further research this space more thoroughly to inform future decisions, explore new encoding strategies, audit the existing set of emoji to improve interoperability, and focus on new proposals that meet the criteria for inclusion.