

2016 Census of Population and Housing: Submission Form for Content or Procedures, 2016

Before completing this form

Pre-submission reading: Before making a submission, please read the following information paper [Census of Population and Housing: Consultation on Content and Procedures, 2016 \(cat. no. 2007.0\)](#). This paper sets out initial proposals from the ABS on content and procedures for the 2016 Census and invites comment from the public.

Preparing your submission: Submissions for the inclusion of a new topic or the modification of an existing topic require detailed justification against the following criteria to facilitate assessment:

- The topic is of current national importance.
- There is a current need for data on the topic for small population groups and/or at the small area level.
- There are no other suitable alternative data sources available for the topic.
- The topic is suitable for inclusion in the Census.
- There is likely to be a continuing need for data on the topic in the following Census.

If you wish to make a submission on any aspect of the Census, you will need to complete the following form. **A separate submission will be required for each topic or aspect** of the Census you wish to address.

We advise that you look at the questions being asked and prepare your submission before starting your form. **The on-line submission form does not have a save function.** Therefore once you start you will need to complete it, or start over if you exit out of the form, unless you have saved your content in another location.

Lodging submissions

Please lodge your submission for the 2016 Census content or procedures using either this submission form or the online version at <https://secure.abs.gov.au/census/submissions.NSF>

Please return the completed form to 2016census@abs.gov.au (if completed electronically). If you are submitting a paper version of this form, please return it to:

2016 Census Submissions
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2616

Due Date

The submission period is open from 6 November 2012 - 31 May 2013.

Help

If you have any queries about the submission process please visit www.abs.gov.au/census, email 2016census@abs.gov.au or telephone 1300 135 070.

Contact details

Q1. Please provide contact details of the person to contact regarding this submission.

Note: These details must be completed as anonymous submissions will not be considered. * Denotes mandatory fields

Name: Submitted by economic Security4Women (eS4W) on behalf of the Gender Statistics Advisory Group (GSAG)

Title (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, etc): Ms

First name*: Dalma

Surname*: Jacobs

Postal address*:

PO Box/Apartment, Flat or Unit No (if any): PO BOX 591

Street No.:

Street Name:

Suburb: NORTH SYDNEY

State/Territory: NSW

Postcode: 2059

Country, if not in Australia:

Phone number: 07 3720 2500

Mobile number:

Email address*: dalma@dalmajacobs.com

Q2. Do you agree to allow the ABS to publicly refer to the information provided in this submission as a statement of your, or your organisation's, views on the relevant topics or procedures?*

Note: The ABS may make public the views put forward in this submission. However, the ABS will not publish the names of persons or organisations making submissions unless you have given permission to do so.

Please select a response below:

Yes, I agree

No, I do not agree

Preliminary information

Q3. Are you are completing this submission as a*:

Please select a response below:

- Private individual not representing any organisation? ▶ **Go to Q7**
- Representative of an organisation or government department? ▶ **Go to next question**

Q4. What is the name and address of your organisation?*

Note: For organisations with offices at more than one location please indicate the address where your head office is located.

Name of organisation: economic Security4Women (eS4W) submitting on behalf of the
ABS Gender Statistics Advisory Group (GSAG)

Address of organisation*:

PO Box/Apartment, Flat or Unit No (if any): PO BOX 591

Street No.:

Street Name:

Suburb: NORTH SYDNEY

State/Territory: NSW

Postcode: 2059

Country, if not in Australia:

Q5. What is your position in the organisation?

Position Title: Australian Federation of Graduate Women (AFGW) representative

Designation/Level/Role: eS4W Council Member and member of GSAG

Q6. Which sector best describes your organisation?

Please select a response below:



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- X Government Sector / Australian Government (GSAG)
- Government Sector / State / Territory
- Government Sector / Local
- Private sector (fewer than 20 employees)
- Private sector (20 or more employees)
- X Other (please specify): (eS4W) (AFGW)
Non Government Organisation (fewer than 20 employees)

Submission for the 2016 Census of Population and Housing

Please answer, in as much detail as possible, the following questions:

Q7. Does this submission relate to*:

Please select a response below:

- A new topic? ▶ **Go to next question**
- Change to an existing topic? ▶ **Go to next question**
- The exclusion of a topic? ▶ **Go to Q16**
- Some other aspect of the Census? ▶ **Go to Q19**

Q8. What is the name of the topic?*

Note: Please use the topic names listed in *Census of Population and Housing: Consultation on Content and Procedures, 2016* (cat. no. 2007.0), if appropriate. Please specify other topics.

Sex

Q9. Please define the topic and/or describe modifications you are proposing to this topic for the 2016 Census.*

Sex

The question on sex in the Census (refer question 3 in the 2011 Census questionnaire) provides only the options of 'male' or 'female'. This limits the responses that can be provided by the sex and/ or gender diverse community.

GSAG understands that the ABS is currently reviewing the *Sex Standard* and considering the development and implementation of a new *Gender Standard*. In light of this, a consideration of the option of including an 'other' category in the Census may be warranted.

In addition, GSAG understands that the ABS has been involved in consultations with the Attorney-General's Department regarding the development of the *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Gender* that outline the responsibilities for Departments and Agencies to recognise gender diversity in the work that they do. These new requirements, although yet to be approved, warrant consideration of an 'other' category in the Census collection of sex/ gender information.

Further, given the distinction between sex and gender, the ABS may like to give consideration to the use of gender in future collections.

Q10. Criteria 1: The topic is of current national importance.*

Note: What specific purposes will the data be used for? Please consider the following when addressing this criteria:

- Uses in policy-making, long-term planning, social and economic applications.
- What benefits will flow from this data.
- The consequences if this topic was not included in the 2016 Census.
- In particular, please consider what activities could not take place or would be significantly reduced or degraded in quality.

Sex

The changes proposed to the sex question would be useful as it would allow policy makers to determine the raw number of gender diverse people residing in Australia (of those that choose to identify as 'other'). This will then determine if there is a case for new policies in this area dependent on the size and assessed level of disadvantage in this community, as will be determined by answers in the rest of the Census questionnaire (for instance, on income).

The *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Gender* require that changes to the collection of sex and gender information be implemented within three years of the endorsement of the Guidelines. While these Guidelines are yet to be approved, the ABS will also be required to implement these changes, which could possibly during the 2016 Census collection.

The expansion of the sex category also reduces the possibility of discrimination as a result of sex and/or gender status as a result of Government statistical collections.

Q11. Criteria 2: There is a current need for data on the topic for small population groups and/or at the small area level.*

Note: Please consider when addressing this criteria:

- At what geographic level will data from the topic be required?
- For which population groups will the data from the topic be required?

Please specify why the data would be useful at this level.

Sex

The collection of sex information in statistics is valuable to GSAG. For the sex and/or gender diverse community, the collection of information on indeterminate sex will potentially allow for targeted Government policy in this area. While it would not be bound by geographic location, the collection will provide information on the urban spread of the sex and/or gender diverse community and answer critical questions like:

- Do sex and/ or gender diverse people reside in urban or rural areas of the country?
- What is the average age of sex and/or gender diverse people?
- What is the average socio-economic status and employment status of sex and/or gender diverse people?
- Are relationship and family status affected by sexual and/or gender diversity?



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Q12. Criteria 3: There are no suitable alternative data sources available for the topic.*

Are there any alternative data sources available for the topic? If yes, please specify and consider the following in relation to these data sources when addressing this criteria.

- Why are these data sources not appropriate for the purposes indicated in the first criteria?
- Will these data sources provide high quality data for the entire population, and/or for small population groups and/or at the small area level?
- Name of alternative data source and organisation responsible if known.

1. Sex

GSAG understands that through the *Sex Standard*, the ABS collects information based on biological differences in sexual characteristics, and at times allows for an additional category of 'intersex or indeterminate'. This however only allows for the identification of a difference based on biology and not sociological determinants.

It is widely known that the Census is often used as a self-identification tool for community members. For instance, many gay and lesbian respondents to the 2011 Census identified as being of married status even though this type of marriage is not legally recognised in Australia. Allowing for the self-identification of sex and/or gender diversity in the Census would provide an indication of the number of people who are comfortable enough with their identity to reveal it in the Census. To our knowledge, this information is not available elsewhere in ABS collections, and other data sources provide only limited information

Q13. Criteria 4: The topic is suitable for inclusion in the Census.*

Note: Please consider when addressing this criteria that Census topics should not:

- Upset people by invading their privacy to an unacceptable degree. The information you will get from such a topic would be subject to bias and will affect other data used and collected in conjunction with it.
- Be subjective (i.e. likely to have varying interpretations for individuals, such as "How would you rate your overall health status").
- Seek information which may not be generally known such as "where was your maternal grandmother born".
- Be complex to code or difficult to process. You should consider the way answers would need to be classified.
- Require people to remember things they are unlikely to be able to, for example "What was your income five years ago".
- Seek opinions or attitudes.
- Require more than one or two questions to obtain the required information.
- Require an overlong explanation or instructions to ensure an accurate answer. If the type of question needed cannot be understood with minimum of explanation, it is not suitable or appropriate for inclusion in the Census.

Sex

The inclusion of 'other' in this category is not likely to be an onerous addition to the Census and does not require much additional space. We recognise that there is the potential for some respondents who are not members of the sex and/or gender diverse community to mark 'other' for different reasons, however the number is likely to be small if a short explanation is included in the paragraph.

For respondents that are concerned about privacy and identifying as sex and/or gender diverse, they still have the option of marking 'male' or 'female' or refraining from answering the question.

Overall, the addition of the 'other' category is likely to be beneficial and inclusive for the sex and/or gender diverse community and have little impact on respondents that fall outside of that category.

Q14. Criteria 5: There is likely to be a continuing need for data on the topic in the following Census.*

Note: Please consider the following when addressing this criteria:

- Will there still be a need for data on this topic at the time of next Census in 2021, and into the future?

Sex

Should there be a growing social acceptance and understanding of the sex and/or gender diverse community, as promoted through Australian Government efforts to reduce discrimination based on gender identity, the data will provide useful insights on the number of people self-identifying, and if this increases with wider social acceptance.

Q15. Please also consider the following points in relation to the topic and include in your submission*:

- What data output items will be required for the topic? (Please provide details of the output categories required and, if appropriate, ranges/descriptions for each category.)
- What cross-classifications will be needed with other Census topics?
- Could this topic be included on a 10-yearly cycle rather than a 5-yearly cycle?

Sex

As described previously, inclusion of an 'other' category under the sex question should be permanent content in the Census. It would not require any cross-classifications with other questions, although the data from this question, when combined with other Census questions, will provide valuable insights into the socio-demographics of this community.

Q16. Is there any topic which you consider should be excluded from the 2016 Census?

Please select a response below :

- No ▶ **Go to question 19**
- Yes ▶ **Go to next question**

Q17. What is the name of the topic which you consider should be excluded from the 2016 Census?

Note: Please use the topic names listed in *Census of Population and Housing: Consultation on Content and Procedures, 2016* (cat. no. 2007.0, if appropriate. Please specify other topics.

Q18. Why do you think that this topic should be excluded from the 2016 Census?

Q19. Would you like to provide any further comments on the proposals for the 2016 Census?

No

Q20. Would you like to attach a file to support your submission?

- Yes, I would like to attach a file
- No, I would not like to attach a file

Acknowledgement

Once the ABS has received your submission, we will send you or your organisation a letter of acknowledgement, either by post or email.

What happens after submissions close?

Following assessment of submissions, final recommendations on the nature and content of the 2016 Census will be discussed with the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) in late 2013. The ABS will then make a submission to the Government, including recommendations on the nature and content of the 2016 Census. A decision on the content of the 2016 Census is expected to be known by the end of 2014. People who have provided submissions will be advised of the outcome.

Thank you for your interest in the 2016 Census