

Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

Census of Population and Housing

I write to you in my capacity as Chief Executive Officer of Family Planning NSW, Australia's leading provider of reproductive and sexual health services.

As you may be aware, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) recently identified eight new and existing topics for further testing and potential inclusion in the 2021 Census of Population and Housing (the Census). Non-binary sex and/or gender identity and sexual orientation are among those topics being considered.

The ABS aspires to be a high quality, objective, and responsive national statistical service. The Census allows us to understand the cultural, economic and social diversity of our communities, providing information about the population across small geographic areas and long-time trends in key aspects of the lives of Australians. Census data underpins government funding and informs government decisions in a range of areas, including healthcare and social services.

An LGBTI-inclusive Census that captures sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex data is crucial in fostering an evidence-informed environment for LGBTI health policy development in terms of prioritising, planning and analysis. This is essential in addressing the health needs of LGBTI people. Improving awareness about the LGBTI community, including through collection of national statistics, is a prerequisite of inclusion¹.

¹ OECD. Society at a glance 2019: OECD social indicators. 2019. [Cited 2019 June 11]. p.39. Available from: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/c64c3d3f-en.pdf?expires=1560216922&id=id&acname=guest&checksum=8661D2C4E730933F12992CA38DE26387>



We respectfully ask that you consider these issues when the ABS makes its recommendations to Government on the additional questions to be included in the 2021 Census. Without the inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex questions in the upcoming Census in 2021, Australia will need to wait until 2026 for all citizens to be appropriately included in the Census, and this is too long.

Australian policy makers and service providers need Census so insights to inform health and social services for all Australians, including LGBTI people. Countries such as New Zealand and UK are ensuring that this data is captured, and we hope very much that you will support this to happen in the next Census.

Many thanks for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ann Brassil', written in a cursive style.

Adj. Prof Ann Brassil
CEO, Family Planning NSW

20 June 2019