Why we ask the sex question.

Every 10 years since 1790, the U.S. Census Bureau has counted everyone who lives in the country, as required by the U.S. Constitution. The census collects basic information, including age, sex, and race, for every person. The count is happening now and everyone will be asked to complete the 2020 Census online, by phone, or by mail.

The sex question provides important statistics.

Responses to census questions provide a snapshot of the nation. We ask about the sex of each person to create statistics about males and females. In 2010, for example, we learned that women made up 50.8 percent of the population. We also learned that the male population grew at a slightly faster rate (9.9 percent) than the female population (9.5 percent) in the decade between 2000 and 2010.

The data collected from the sex question is used in planning and funding government programs and in evaluating government programs and policies to make sure they fairly and equitably serve the needs of males and females. These statistics are also used to enforce laws, regulations, and policies against discrimination in government programs and in society.

Responding to the sex question is easy.

A question on sex has been included since the first census in 1790. All 2020 Census questions that involve personal characteristics are based on self-identification. When you complete your census, select the box for the biological sex you identify with.

For more information, visit:

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