



Information paper

The 2011 Census: Assessment of initial user requirements on content for England and Wales

- Ethnicity, identity, language and religion

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1. Summary

In May 2005 ONS published a consultation document 'The 2011 Census: Initial view on content for England and Wales'. Responses were received from nearly 500 users, presenting arguments for the inclusion of around 70 topics (over 2,000 'topic responses').

Each topic was evaluated using the criteria detailed in the consultation document and a scoring system based on the criteria was used to rank the topics according to the strength of user requirement.

This paper provides a summary of the user requirements, and the scores given, for the following topics:

- Ethnicity and national identity
- Religion/belief
- Welsh language proficiency
- Language and English language proficiency

2. Ethnicity and National Identity: Total Score=91

2.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of ethnicity and national identity was placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed that this information would be collected in the 2011 Census.

There were over 120 responses received commenting on the subject of ethnicity and national identity, from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

2.2 User Need: Score=10

A wide range of potential uses of information on ethnicity and national identity have been identified from across the Census user community.

Information on ethnicity is used in the formulae for grant allocation by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Department of Health (DH). DH stated that *"the ethnicity indicators from both the 1991 and 2001 Censuses have been found to significantly explain need in the various models used in resource allocation"*. The information would also inform local resource allocation. Nottingham City Council stated that the information would be used to *"examine the incidence of various aspects of well-being and deprivation amongst different groups. This leads on to the allocation of resources, both from mainstream spending and other initiatives, e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities"*.

The information is also needed to enable public bodies to meet their statutory obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and Equal Opportunities legislation. These impose duties on all local and government organisations to monitor employment practices and to address the needs of ethnic minority groups. The information would also enable ODPM to monitor the impact of these pieces of legislation. They stated that *"the impact of legislative duty placed on all public authorities to promote race equality and in particular good relations between different racial groups can not be measured without data collected on different ethnic groups"*.

Information on ethnicity would also be used to inform policy development and monitoring. Respondents emphasised the use of ethnicity data to enable better understanding of the social and economic position of different ethnic groups, and to help to identify cases of social exclusion. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) stated that the information is used *"to demonstrate how we monitor and comply with our 'duty to promote' race equality, both as an employer and within our policies/functions"*.

Another key requirement for ethnicity data is to provide public bodies with a better understanding of the communities that they serve, informing the provision of services such as health, education, housing and social services. DfES stated that the data would be used *"to monitor participation in various DfES areas, e.g. schools' admissions"*. Dyfed-Powys Police stated that *"the communities that are served by the Dyfed-Powys Force are becoming increasingly diverse in nature and it is absolutely imperative that we understand the true nature of these communities so that our policing style can be continuously adapted and improved"*.

The information would also be useful for monitoring equality of opportunity and policy development, and would support and inform the work of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The CRE has a role to promote race equality and to enforce compliance with the Race Relations Act. They stated that *"for public*

bodies to continue to meet their statutory duties from 2011 it is essential that there is access to nationally accurate information about the ethnic makeup of the UK population. The Census remains the main data source for public bodies to measure their progress on race equality". The Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) will be set up in October 2007 and the CRE will be incorporated into the CEHR by 2009. Their work will include policy development and monitoring to promote equality of opportunity, as well as supporting claims of discrimination on the basis of these issues. The CRE stated that *"the Census output data is a crucial resource that the CEHR will need in order to effectively meet its aims and objectives"*.

The Co-operative Group Ltd suggested that information on ethnicity and national identity would be used by them to determine the location of their stores and the range of products offered. They stated that *"ethnicity influences market share and turnover, particularly in areas of high ethnic minorities where there is a competitive offer targeted at them"*.

A number of respondents expressed a requirement for a question on ethnic group to cover ethnic groups for which there is currently a lack of data and for which there is no tick-box in the current ethnic group classification, such as Gypsies and Travellers. ODPM stated that the collection of such information would *"enable those authorities responsible for providing accommodation, education and health services to ensure that the needs of the Gypsy and Irish Traveller community are accurately assessed and resources properly targeted"*.

A small number of responses were received in support of specific tick-boxes including Arabs, Latvians, and the Pahari speaking Kashmiri community. Respondents stated that the lack of a specific tick-box for their group constituted a lack of recognition which hindered both resource allocation and targeted service provision toward members of these groups.

The main reasons given for requiring a question on national identity were to allow respondents to more accurately describe their national identities and to allow respondents to identify with groups that do not currently have a specific tick-box in the ethnic group question. The Borough of Telford and Wrekin stated that *"issues of ethnicity and identity are more complex than the ethnicity response categories, in particular, suggested. The proposal to include additional questions on national identity and language is therefore another important development"*.

A large number of requests were also received for people to be able to identify themselves as Welsh. The Welsh Assembly Government stated that *"people who view their ethnicity or national identity to be Welsh should be able to indicate that at least as easily as those who view themselves as British or any of the other national identities pertaining to Britain"*. Plaid Cymru stated that *"it is clear that there is very strong demand in Wales for people to be able to express their identity/ethnicity as Welsh"*. This opinion was supported by a number of individuals and community groups.

A specific tick-box was also requested for Cornish. One individual suggested that the availability of information on Cornish would improve the targeting of resource allocation and service provision, stating that *"anecdotal evidence suggests that, in terms of housing, cultural provision, education and employment opportunities in Cornwall, the Cornish fare worse than the non-Cornish"*. It was also suggested that *"providing the opportunity for people to self identify as Cornish is now considered an important aspect of equal opportunities in Cornwall and promotes mutual respect in the community"*.

2.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score=10

Information on ethnicity and national identity would be required for small geographies as minority ethnic groups tend to be clustered geographically, often into small areas. Information is required at Output Area level to enable the uses identified in the User Need section of this report to be carried out effectively. London Borough of Newham stated that small area information would be used for *"ensuring that all groups are adequately provided services and for allocating resources specific to community needs"*. Birmingham City Council said that *"city or even ward averages/totals would give misleading results"*.

Questions on ethnicity and national identity would need to identify small population groups as many ethnic groups are very small. Luton Borough Council stated that *"although some of the groups are small, they form key minority groups within the borough whose needs need to be accurately assessed if service planning is to be effectively undertaken"*.

2.4 Alternative Sources: Score=7

Information on ethnicity is available from a number of surveys, such as the Labour Force Survey and the General Household Survey. However, this information is limited in the geographic detail available, particularly for smaller ethnic groups. The Equal Opportunities Commission suggested that a better alternative would be the proposed longitudinal survey of ethnic minorities. However, they also stated that *"the survey will not be able to cover the whole ethnic minority population, nor provide estimates of population size"*.

DH suggested that the next best alternative to Census data for them would be *"to encourage NHS and councils, through local strategic partnerships, to collect local information on a variety of mixed race individuals and communities as part of their Health Equity Audits and Race Equality Schemes"*. However, they also identified a number of problems associated with this, stating that *"individual NHS bodies and councils would not, readily if at all, be able to compare their population profiles and patterns of access to services with other parts of the country and with the national picture as a whole"*.

Information on ethnicity is also collected from the Pupil Level Annual School Census. This provides good information for pupils in maintained schools but currently excludes the independent sector and does not cover the adult population.

The majority of users feel that there is no alternative source that fully meets their requirements. DfES stated that *"surveys are insufficient to identify small groups in small areas and the Census is at present the only source of a reliable benchmark for equality issues"*.

2.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=10

Information on ethnicity and national identity would be analysed with most other Census variables. Birmingham City Council stated that *"multivariate analysis would be required for all key factors to give a good picture of communities"*. Analyses with qualifications, health and labour market variables are of particular interest.

2.6 UK Comparability: Score=7

Most users who responded to the consultation stated that information on ethnicity and national identity is required for the whole of the UK. This would enable the data to be analysed nationally in a consistent and comparable manner, and would support delivery of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

2.7 Continuity: Score=6

Information on ethnicity was collected in both the 1991 and 2001 Censuses. A question on national identity has not been included in any previous Census.

2.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a strong requirement for data on ethnicity and national identity. The main uses identified were to inform resource allocation and service provision, to meet statutory requirements under the Race Relations Act, and for monitoring equality of opportunity.

The majority of users requested that the data should be available at small levels of geography and this should be Output Area level if all users are to be satisfied. A number of alternative sources were identified, however these do not fully satisfy user requirements. A very strong case was made for using ethnicity and national identity data for multivariate analysis, and there is a strong requirement for the data to be available for the whole of the UK. A question about ethnicity was asked in the 1991 and 2001 Census, however no question on national identity has ever been included.

The concepts of ethnicity and national identity are interlinked and will be considered together. The increasing requirement for information on national identity means that extra information for this topic will be collected in 2011. Work is currently underway to establish the format that these questions should take and the requirements for, and acceptability of, categorisations used within these. Therefore, the topic of ethnicity and national identity remains in category 1.

3. Religion/Belief: Total Score=72

3.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of religion was placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed there was a clear case for including this topic in the 2011 Census.

Just under 50 responses were received commenting on the subject of religion or belief from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

3.2 User Need: Score = 8

A number of potential uses of information on religion have been identified from across the user community.

A resource allocation need has been identified by many users. The Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) states that the data will *"provide information on areas in which faith groups exist which will assist planning and allocation of resources"*. This use was also identified by the Home Office, a number of local authorities and religious groups and societies. Local authorities suggest the data can be used to target resource allocation to address the needs of specific faith groups, e.g. neighbourhood renewal funding, new deal for communities and funding for housing, education and social services. Other data users suggest the data helps focus healthcare for specific religious groups, provision of resources to local education authorities for religious studies, introducing faith based welfare, monitoring discrimination and the provision of chaplains.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) stated that information on religion is used to evaluate *"allegations of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief through current legislation covering employment and vocational training and future legislation covering education coming in later this year through the Equality Bill"*. The Department of Health (DH) commented that *"sound and consistent religion data is a means through which the NHS and social care can satisfy themselves that they are meeting their statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000"*. A number of local government authorities and religious groups also identify a need to assess and tackle discrimination and social exclusion, specifically in relation to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and other equal opportunities legislation.

Information on religious and non religious beliefs is required for policy development and monitoring aimed at assessing the needs of sections of minority groups across the census user community. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) said that the Census will provide key information for the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) to promote and monitor equality amongst people of different faiths and beliefs. CRE added that the information that the Census can provide on religion *"will be crucial for all public authorities to comply with the EU Employment Directive 2000"*.

ODPM claim that, *"It is vital that the questions should capture faith/religion. This is crucial to our understanding of the changing nature and diversity of our communities. Collecting information on just the ethnic origin of individuals will not provide an accurate picture of diversity"*. Local government users share this view and feel that religion can identify minority groups better than ethnicity. They continue by saying that this helps them to support social and community cohesion initiatives such as community plans. DfES use the data *"to support vulnerable minority groups who identify more with their religion than with their ethnicity"*.

The NHS require information on religion to provide NHS and social care planners with solid information on which they can review how best to cater and plan for peoples religious backgrounds. Local government authorities use the data to plan services such as where meals are provided by local authorities, hospitals, care homes and schools and to decide where religious buildings are required. A small need was demonstrated by other interested organisations to use the data to plan provision of goods and services and determine the best locations for retail outlets and marketing campaigns.

3.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score = 9

Users have requested data at both ward and Super Output Area level. Small area data is essential for targeted resource allocation and service provision to small religious groups within communities.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews claimed that "*Jews form less than 1% of the British population*". Groups that are small in number are often concentrated in small areas, therefore small area data is required to identify geographical concentrations of disadvantage that may be associated with particular groups.

3.4 Alternative Sources: Score = 5

Many users feel there is no reliable and comprehensive alternative to the Census for religion.

The range of alternative sources that users do suggest include, local surveys, national surveys such as the Integrated Household Survey, Labour Force Survey, Home Office Citizenship Survey, private surveys by companies such as Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) and data on membership from religious organisations and places of worship.

DH suggested that "*NHS and councils, through local strategic partnerships could be encouraged to collect local information on a variety of religions of individuals who try to access health and social services*". However, the impact of this option is that individual NHS bodies and councils would not be able to compare their population profiles and patterns of access to services with other parts of the country and the national picture as a whole, so this option is not really a viable alternative.

Generally, users recognise that some alternative sources of religion data do exist, but they have reservations about the quality of data that could be gained from these sources compared to the Census.

3.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score = 9

Information on religion would be analysed with a wide range of other Census variables to achieve the uses outlined in the user need section.

Analyses with ethnicity, economic activity and other labour market variables, qualifications, country of birth, household composition, migration, age, sex, marital status, health and other housing information are suggested by various users.

3.6 UK Comparability: Score = 5

DH stated that "*it would be most useful to establish a more authoritative and inclusive understanding of individuals' religious background across the UK as well as in different parts of the UK*". The Ministry of Defence requires data for the whole of the UK to provide a benchmark against which armed forces can be measured. Other users also require national data in order to build up an accurate picture of religious communities that are found in all parts of the UK and to allow comparisons for national initiatives consistently across the country. It is also

