

CENSUS ADVISORY GROUP

2011 CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT

AG(08)12

Summary

This paper provides an update on questionnaire length, content and differences across the UK; outlines the ONS recommendation on the collection of information from short-term migrants; and provides an update on question development.

Advisory group members are asked to:

- Note that the 2011 Census questionnaire will include questions for up to six usual residents
- Note that the ONS is now recommending the inclusion of a question on number of bedrooms
- Note the changes to differences in questionnaire content across the UK
- Note the ONS recommendation on the collection of information from short-term migrants
- Note the work carried out on question development

1 Questionnaire length

A final decision on the need to include questions for up to six usual residents rather than five (as was the case in 2001) was made in May 2008 for England and Wales. Therefore, there will be a 32-page household questionnaire for 2011 with four pages of individual questions for six usual residents (with an additional eight pages to record household members, visitors, relationships between household members, housing questions and to provide help for those in special circumstances). It should be noted that questionnaires in multiples of 8 pages are the most cost-effective in terms of printing and collation.

2 Questionnaire content in England and Wales

The ONS has now also recommended the inclusion of the topic of number of bedrooms for the 2011 Census in England and Wales. Further question testing developed a suitable question which will provide information to be used to measure overcrowding. The inclusion of all topics in the 2011 Census is ultimately subject to the approval of Parliament.

3 Questionnaire content across the UK

NISRA now proposes to include the topics of national identity, place of study and travel to place of study and exclude the topic of second residences for the 2011 Census in Northern Ireland.

GROS now proposes to include the topic of national identity and exclude citizenship for the 2011 Census in Scotland.

Therefore the inclusion of national identity is now harmonised across the UK whilst citizenship is not. Both NISRA and GROS will include the topics of place of study and travel to place of study in the 2009 Rehearsal but exclude second residences whereas ONS will include second residences but exclude place of study and travel to place of study.

4 Inclusion of short-term migrants in the Census in England and Wales

The ONS is recommending that full Census returns are collected from anyone who has been, or expects to be, in the UK for three months or more (in comparison to six months used in 2001) and that a question on intended length of stay in the UK is included for those who have been in the UK for less than twelve months. This recommendation is based on a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research including a national postal test with a sample of 10,000 people, a postal test in Northampton (as a region of reasonably high migration) with a sample of 10,000 people, focus group research and interviews conducted by the National Centre for Social Research, ONS cognitive testing, ONS Omnibus testing and third party research.

The key research questions are presented below along with a brief summary of the research findings for each question.

| Key Research questions | Research findings |
|--|--|
| 1. Will response rates to the 2011 Census be affected by the inclusion of a question on intention to stay in the UK? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results from the postal surveys amongst the general population showed no statistically significant drop in response rates when the usual residence cut-off was lowered to one month and a question on intention to stay was included. |
| 2. Will short-term migrants respond to the 2011 Census? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results were mixed as to whether short-term migrants would respond to the census. The qualitative evidence indicates that they are willing to respond but are surprised that they should be included in the census. Very few short-term migrants responded to the postal survey but there is no way of knowing how many short-term migrants were actually included in the sample. |
| 3. Are short-term migrants willing to answer a question on intention to stay? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the results showed that short-term migrants will answer an intention to stay question. |
| 4. How accurate are the data provided in the intention to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall the evidence suggests that some respondents, particularly those with no fixed |

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|---|---|
| stay question? | <p>plans may have some difficulties with the current intention to stay question. However, most short-term migrants will select an answer based on the 'best fit' choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evidence suggests that it should be possible to distinguish usual residents from short-term migrants through an intention to stay question based on respondents' intentions at the time of the census. |
| 5. Is the most appropriate cut-off for collecting information on short-term migrants one month intended stay in the UK or three months intended stay in the UK? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not substantial evidence to inform the decision on whether a one month or three month usual residence cut-off should be used. However, the National Centre for Social Research suggests it would be feasible to reduce the cut-off from six months to three months. Below this threshold, people are not considered to be short-term migrants and there is a risk of not capturing them even if they were working or studying. |

The National Statistics Centre for Demography Advisory Board discussed and supported the recommendation to include short-term migrants in the Census. There was a lively debate on the intended length of stay question and whether length of stay could be more effectively modelled from the question on month/year of entry into the UK. Modelling had been considered by ONS as an alternative approach; however there were concerns because of the need for the data to be of an appropriate quality at a local level. It was noted a modelling approach was not ruled out by the inclusion of the intended length of stay question.

5 Question development

Some examples of questions that are new or have been redeveloped for the 2009 Rehearsal are contained in the Annex.

Question testing

Cognitive question testing was completed in July 2008. The ONS also included some questions in the Omnibus Survey during May and June 2008 to further investigate issues regarding intended length of stay in the UK, language and religion. As previously mentioned, two postal tests took place in July 2008 which were also used to inform the development of questions.

Quality review

In July 2008, the current version of the 2009 Rehearsal household questionnaire was subject to a quality review. Reviews were sought from four sources:

- Don Dillman, a professor at Washington State University who has published numerous research papers into questionnaire design.
- Emma Farrell, Assistant Director, Data Collection Methodology Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- National Centre for Social Research, the largest independent social research institute in Britain
- Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), a department of the University of Essex which carries out research for UK and other national government departments, the EU and commercial organisations.

All apart from ISER responded to the review, which generated around 120 comments. There were a large number of useful suggestions for changes to the questionnaire. Some of the main findings from the quality review included concerns over:

- The layout of the front page (eg number of different font sizes used, position of address correction panel, section headings, mix of one column and two column approach)
- Visual guides (eg page titles, style of headings, size of numbers in 'go to' arrows)
- The pages on household members and visitors (eg position of completion instructions, categories of usual residents)
- Navigation of the questionnaire (ie non-sequential route when visitors in household)

The received comments were discussed and around half of the proposed changes were agreed. The amendments arising from the quality review have been used to formulate the final version of the household questionnaire for the 2009 Rehearsal.

Other

The 2009 Rehearsal household questionnaire has been through a Plain English check and comments were also received from the accessibility team of the Central Office of Information.

Further work

There will be a round of whole questionnaire testing in the Spring to validate the final changes made to the 2009 Rehearsal household questionnaire.

Timetable

An updated timetable for the development of the Census questionnaires is outlined below:

| Year | Date | Event |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| 2008 | October | Questionnaires for 2009 Rehearsal finalised |
| | November | Topics for 2011 Census announced in White Paper |
| | November | Publications on 2011 Census topics and questions (part 1) |
| 2009 | March | Publications on 2011 Census topics and questions (part 2) |
| | Spring | Whole-of-questionnaire testing |
| | October | Census Rehearsal |
| 2010 | January | Questionnaires for 2011 Census finalised |
| | Spring | Census questionnaires approved by Parliament |
| 2011 | Spring | Census day |

Elizabeth McLaren
Questionnaire Design and Content
October 2008

Annex: Questions for 2009 Rehearsal

Number of bedrooms

H10 How many of these rooms are bedrooms?

- Include all rooms built or converted for use as bedrooms, even if they are not currently used as bedrooms

Number of bedrooms

Type of central heating

H11 What type of central heating does this accommodation have?

- Tick all that apply, whether or not you use it
- Central heating is a central system that generates heat for multiple rooms
- No central heating
- Gas
- Electric (including storage heaters)
- Oil
- Solid fuel (for example wood, coal)
- Other central heating

Marital/civil partnership status

4 On 11 October 2009, what is your legal marital or same-sex civil partnership status?

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> In a registered same-sex civil partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Separated, but still legally married | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated, but still legally in a same-sex civil partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced | <input type="checkbox"/> Formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed | <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership |

Month/year of entry into UK

8 If you were not born in the United Kingdom, when did you most recently arrive to live here?

➤ Do not count short visits away from the UK

Month

Year

Intended length of stay in UK

9 If you arrived before 11 October 2008 ➔ Go to **11**

If you arrived on or after 11 October 2008 ➔ Go to **10**

10 Including the time you have already spent here, how long do you intend to stay in the United Kingdom?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months or more but less than 12 months
- 12 months or more

Citizenship

11 What passports do you hold?

➤ Tick all that apply

- United Kingdom
- Irish
- Other, write in

- None

Long-term illness/disability

14 Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

➤ Include problems related to old age

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No

Second residences

12 Do you stay at another address for more than 30 days a year?

- No ➔ Go to **14**
- Yes, write in other UK address below

Postcode

OR Yes, outside the UK, write in country

13 What is that address?

- Armed Forces base address
- Another address when working away from home
- Student's home address
- Another parent or guardian's address
- Holiday home
- Other

Language

18 What is your main language?

- English ➔ Go to **20**
- Other, write in (including sign languages)

19 How well can you speak English?

Very well Well Not well Not at all

Note: In Wales, the first response category in the main language question will be 'English or Welsh'

National identity and ethnicity

15 How would you describe your national identity?

➔ Tick all that apply

- English
- Welsh
- Scottish
- Northern Irish
- British
- Other, write in

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16 What is your ethnic group?

➔ Choose **one** section from A to E, then tick **one** box to best describe your ethnic group or background

A White

- English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background, write in

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B Mixed / multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, write in

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C Asian / Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background, write in

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D Black /African / Caribbean / Black British

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, write in

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E Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group, write in

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Note: In Wales, the first two response categories in the national identity question will be reversed; and the 'Welsh' and 'English' will be reversed in the ethnicity question.

Address one year ago

21 One year ago, what was your usual address?

➤ If you had no usual address one year ago, state the address where you were staying

- Same as Person 1
- The address on the front of this questionnaire
- Student term-time/boarding school address in the UK, write in term-time address below
- Another address in the UK, write in below

Postcode

OR Outside the UK, write in country

Hours worked

42 In your main job, how many hours a week do you usually work?

- 15 or less
- 16 - 30
- 31 - 47
- 48 or more