Update on Immigration and Ethno-cultural Content and Testing for the 2021 Census

Jarod Dobson
Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division
Statistics Canada

2018 Pathways to Prosperity Conference
November 22-23, 2018

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Presentation overview

- Census content determination framework and schedule
- Immigration questions - issues and testing options
    - Place of birth
    - Place of birth of parents
    - Immigrant status / year of immigration / citizenship / admission category
- Ethno-cultural questions - issues and testing options
    - Ethnic origin
   - Population group (visible minority)
    - Religion

Census content determination framework dimensions
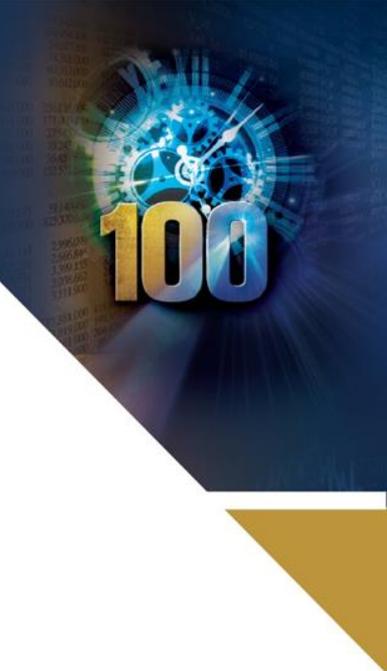
Dimension	Elements
Census data users' needs	• Strength of census data users' needs • Size of population of interest • Suitability (and availability) of alternative sources • Comparability over time.
Respondent considerations	• Burden on Canadians • Privacy concerns • Sensitivity of questions / topics.
Operational considerations	• Cost • Ability to generate high-quality data • Operational feasibility.

Content determination process: Schedule of activities
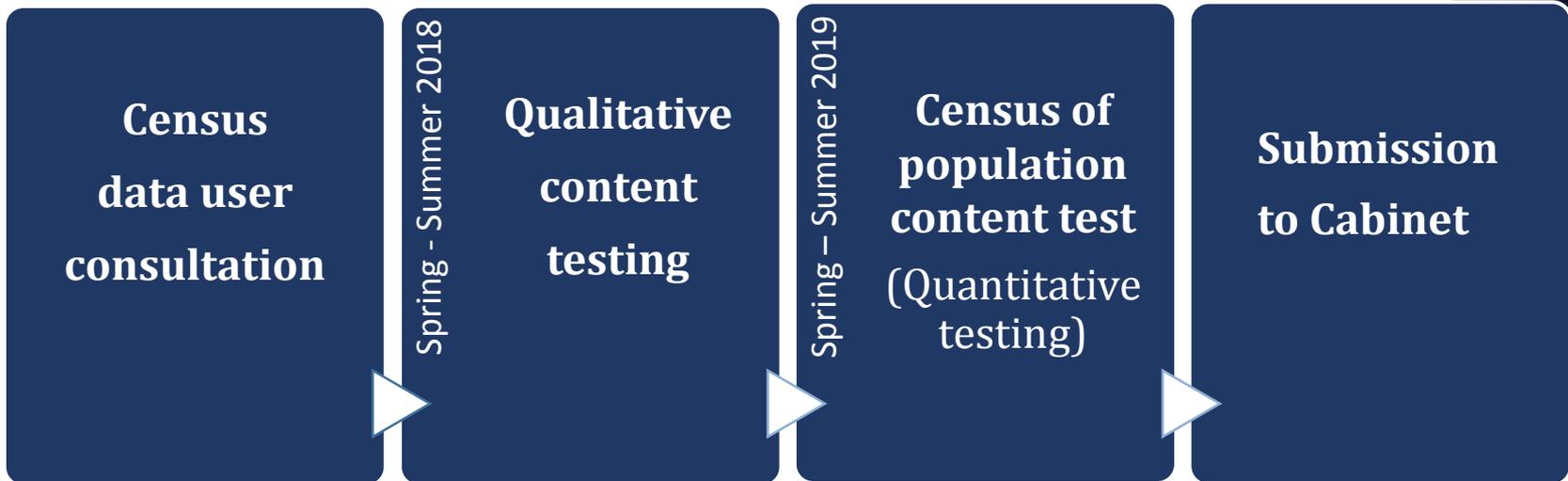
Census data user consultation	Spring – Summer 2018	Qualitative content testing	Spring – Summer 2019	Census of population content test (Quantitative testing)	Submission to Cabinet

Immigration questions – Issues with the 2016 questions and proposed testing options

Place of birth
Place of birth of parents
Citizenship
Immigrant status / year of immigration / admission category

Place of birth of parents: Question on the 2016 Census

24. Where was **each of** this person's parents born?

Select or specify country according to present boundaries.

> **Parents of John Doe**

a) **Father**

○ Born in Canada

○ Born outside Canada — specify country:

b) **Mother**

○ Born in Canada

○ Born outside Canada — specify country:

Issues with the place of birth of parents question

- Terms 'Father' and 'Mother' are not gender neutral and not inclusive of all family types (e.g., same sex couples, multiple parents)
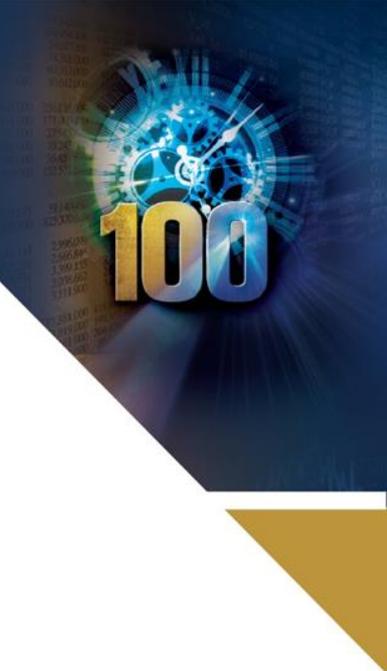
Place of birth of parents:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test

- One test version asking whether:
    - All of the respondent's parents were born **in** Canada
    - All of the respondent's parents were born **outside** Canada (and the country or countries they were born in)
    - One parent was born **in** Canada and one born **outside** Canada (and the country the parent was born in)

- A second test panel with the same format and answer categories as the 2016 question, but replacing the terms 'Father' and 'Mother' with 'Parent A' and 'Parent B'.

Immigrant status / year of immigration / citizenship:

Questions on the 2016 Census

13. Of what country is this person a citizen?

Indicate **more than one** citizenship, if applicable.

"**Canada, by naturalization**" refers to the process by which an immigrant is granted citizenship of Canada, under the *Citizenship Act*.

> John Doe

☐ Canada, by birth

☐ Canada, by naturalization

☐ Other country — specify:

Immigrant status / year of immigration / citizenship:

Questions on the 2016 Census *(cont.)*

14. Is this person now, or has this person ever been, a **landed immigrant**?

A "**landed immigrant**" (permanent resident) is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities.

> **John Doe**

○ No

◉ Yes

15. In what year did this person first become a landed immigrant?

If exact year is not known, enter best estimate.

> **John Doe**

Year

Example: 1974

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Issues with the citizenship, immigrant status, and year of immigration questions

- Possible misunderstanding of questions by respondents
    - For example, immigrants who have lived in Canada for many years and become Canadian citizens indicating that they have never been landed immigrants.
    - Also, immigrants reporting their year of arrival in Canada vs. their year of immigration.

- Possible under-reporting of non-Canadian citizenships

Citizenship / immigrant status / year of immigration:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test

- Revised citizenship questions – instead of one question on citizenship, there would be two.
    - The first question asks if the respondent is a Canadian citizen by birth, Canadian citizen by naturalization or not a Canadian citizen.
    - The second question asks if the respondent is a citizen of any other countries and, if so, which countries.

Citizenship / immigrant status / year of immigration:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test (cont.)

- For the first test panel, the questions on immigrant status and year of immigration would be removed (replaced with administrative data from IRCC).

- The second test panel would look similar to 2016, but with additional skips.
  - For example, the question on immigrant status would not be asked to those people indicating that they are 'Canadian, by birth' on the first citizenship question.
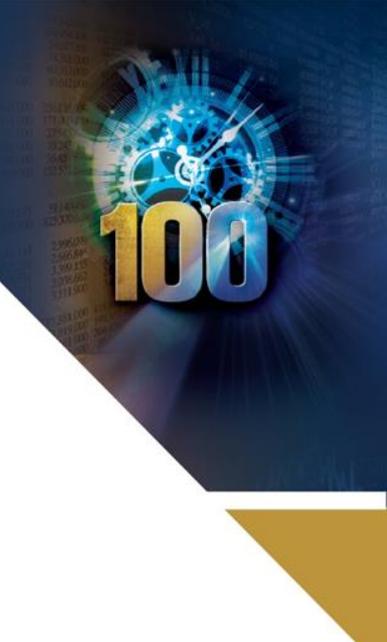
Benefits and challenges of replacing Census questions with administrative data

- **Benefits**
  - Reduced response burden
  - Improved data quality
  - Potentially able to add new content to the 2021 Census from the IRCC administrative data
- **Challenges**
  - No records before 1952
  - Low linkage rates for immigrants between 1961-1972
  - Comparability with past census results could be affected
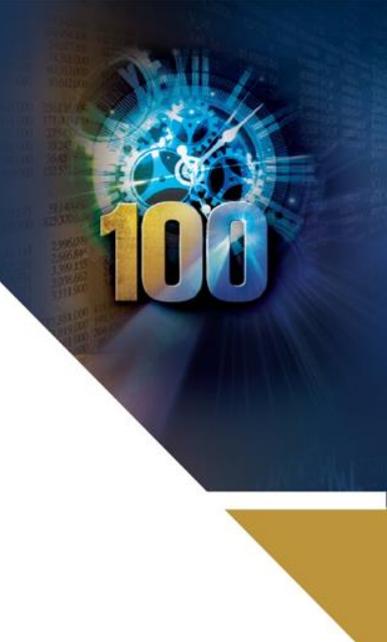
Ethno-cultural questions – Issues with the 2016 questions and proposed testing options

Ethnic origin
Population group (visible minority)
Religion

Ethnic origin:
Question on the 2016 Census

17. What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's **ancestors**?

An ancestor is usually more distant than a grandparent.

For example, Canadian, English, Chinese, French, East Indian, Italian, German, Scottish, Cree, Mi'kmaq, Salish, Métis, Inuit, Filipino, Irish, Dutch, Ukrainian, Polish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Korean, Jamaican, Greek, Iranian, Lebanese, Mexican, Somali, Colombian, etc.

This question collects information on the ancestral origins of the population and provides information about the composition of Canada's diverse population.

> **John Doe**

Specify as many origins as applicable.

Issues with the ethnic origin question

- "Wordiness" of the question (question + definition of an ancestor + 28 examples + reason why we ask the question) makes the question difficult to read and respond to for certain persons.

- Examples help respondents understand the question, but they can also influence their responses.
  - Changes in the list of examples can have an effect on comparability over time.

Ethnic origin:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test

- Removal of text stating that 'An ancestor is usually more distant than a grandparent' and explaining why the question is asked.

- First test panel removes all examples of ethnic or cultural origins from the question itself.
  - Instead, the following instruction is included: "Ancestors may have Indigenous origins, or origins that refer to different countries, or origins that may not refer to different countries."
  - Examples are replaced with a link to a page with 300-400 different examples of ethnic or cultural origins.

- Second test panel has the same approach as the first test panel, but includes a few (10) examples of different types of origins (Indigenous origins, origins referring to countries, origins not referring to countries).

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Population group (visible minority): Question on the 2016 Census

19. **Is this person:**

Select more than one answer or specify, if applicable.

This question collects information in accordance with the *Employment Equity Act* and its Regulations and Guidelines to support programs that promote equal opportunity for everyone to share in the social, cultural, and economic life of Canada.

> **John Doe**

☐ White

☐ South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)

☐ Chinese

☐ Black

☐ Filipino

☐ Latin American

☐ Arab

☐ Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, etc.)

☐ West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)

☐ Korean

☐ Japanese

☐ Other — specify:

Issues with the population group question

- Sensitivity of the question and specific wording of some of the categories.
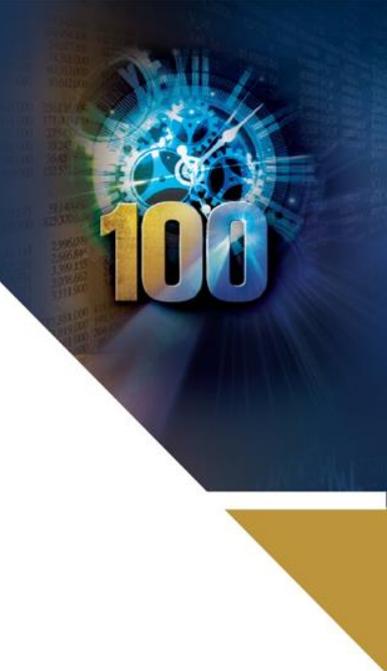
Population group:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test

- Test panel with different question asking the descent of the respondent

- Will investigate whether the output from this question can be combined with data from other questions (e.g. ethnic origin) to re-create the categories used for the administration of the *Employment Equity Act*.

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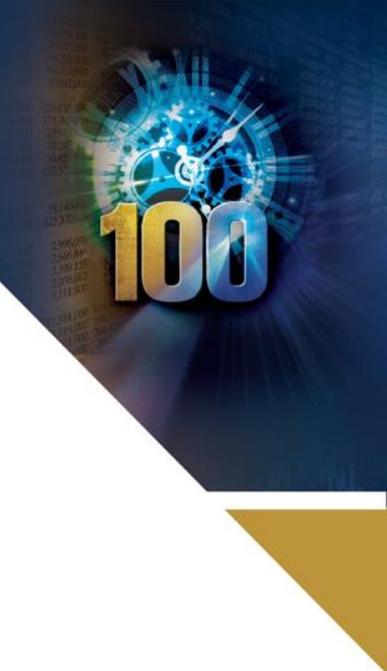
Religion:
Question on the 2011 National Household Survey

31. What is this person's religion?

Indicate a specific denomination or religion even if this person is not currently a practising member of that group.

For example, Roman Catholic, United Church, Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Muslim, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Greek Orthodox, etc.

> **John Smith**

Specify one denomination or religion only.

OR

☐ No religion

Issues with the religion question

- Similar to ethnic origin, there have been concerns about how the examples used in the religion question influence responses.

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Religion:
Testing options for the 2019 Content Test

- First test panel removes all examples of denominations or religions from the question, replacing the examples with a link to a page with around 100-150 different examples of denominations or religions.

- Second test panel includes roughly the same examples as the 2016 question, while also including a link to a page with the 100-150 different examples of denominations or religions.

THANK YOU!