



Final Report of a Review of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard 2009

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Preface

This review was undertaken following a significant increase in the level of 'New Zealander' responses to the ethnicity question at the 2006 Census. During the census there was public debate about the format of the question and the purpose of the statistics. Partly as a result of this debate the number of 'New Zealander' responses to the ethnicity question increased from over 90,000 in 2001 to over 400,000 in 2006, making 'New Zealander' the third largest response group in the 2006 Census, after 'New Zealand European' and 'Māori'.

National naming in census ethnicity questions is not confined to New Zealand. In recent years, it has also appeared in other countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Although national naming featured notably in our 2006 Census, its emergence was evident as far back as 1981, and was noted in a previous review of ethnicity statistics completed in 2004.

This review has sought to improve and broaden our understanding of the issues surrounding national naming in the New Zealand census. Our aim is to ensure both the ongoing integrity of the official ethnicity statistics needed for public policy and the continuing support and trust of the New Zealand public who provide the data.

The review began in 2008. Following consultation with stakeholders and a programme of research, a draft report was published in April 2009. This report sought public feedback on Statistics New Zealand's views of the issues and some proposed options for managing them.

The final recommendations, which I have accepted, are presented in this report. There are contending views on how and what should be measured and reported. The key users of the statistics strongly support the need for consistent measurement. On the other hand, a significant body of survey respondents expressed preferences for changes to how the ethnicity question is formatted in the census. However, there is strong evidence that changing the format of the question poses significant risk for maintaining consistent measurement, particularly for those ethnic groups of most interest to public policy. Also, at this time, the outcome of national naming in the census is still not clear, given that it is currently not such an issue in other sources of official ethnicity statistics. On balance, my preference is to make minimal change now and to continue to monitor the trends and reassess the situation after the 2011 Census.

I would like to thank the various stakeholders who helped to frame this review and the many organisations and citizens who provided advice and feedback in response to the publication of the draft review report. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the review team, Paul Brown and Daria Kwon, whose efforts in researching the issues and gathering advice and input from a range of stakeholders has not only informed this review, but also laid a sound foundation for future review.



Geoff Bascand

Government Statistician

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1. Executive summary

This report documents a set of decisions made by the Government Statistician to address some issues related to gathering and reporting data on people's ethnicity in New Zealand.

The decisions in this report were informed by a consultation process involving experts, key producers and users of the statistics, and the general public; together with a programme of research that included a review of international practices and literature, analysis of New Zealand data and research of public attitudes.

Official ethnicity statistics are used to count population groups in New Zealand. The main groupings used for public policy are 'Māori', 'Pacific peoples' and 'Asian'. Others include specific groups within these populations (eg Chinese) as well as other ethnic minority groups.

Ethnicity statistics are used nationally, regionally and by communities to help identify demand for public policies, programmes and services, for tailoring their delivery, and for monitoring the results.

Central government agencies use ethnicity statistics together with other indicators of service demand, such as age, sex and socioeconomic status, for a number of purposes. For example:

- the health sector uses the statistics to allocate funding, tailor programmes and monitor results across ethnic groups
- local government agencies use statistics in planning and service delivery, particularly in regions experiencing significant demographic, social and economic change
- Māori and other ethnic community group service providers rely on official ethnicity statistics in planning and engaging with government agencies.

In the past two decades, Statistics New Zealand has endeavored to match the way we measure ethnicity in official statistics with the changing nature of ethnicity in our society and the way that the information is used. A persistent challenge has been accommodating people of European ancestry, whose ethnic identity has evolved with the increasing proportion of this population living in New Zealand for two or more generations.

The most recent Census of Population and Dwellings in 2006 resulted in an unprecedented increase in the number of people who reported a 'New Zealander' ethnicity in the 'Other Ethnicity' category. More than 400,000 people chose this response, increasing the 'New Zealander' population proportion from 2.5 percent in 2001 to 11.1 percent in 2006.

This increase was driven in part by a public debate during the census, which questioned the role of ethnicity in public policy and the way in which 'New Zealander' responses in the question were treated.

We are concerned about this public reaction to the ethnicity topic because, as well as indicating possible problems with our measurement process, it has the potential to undermine trust and confidence in the measure and even the census itself.

Some aspects of the census ethnicity statistics, notably the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories have now become inconsistent with previous censuses and other sources of ethnicity statistics, such as birth registrations. This is because of:

- a previous decision by Statistics New Zealand to allocate 'New Zealander' responses to the 'Other Ethnicity' branch of the standard classification (see Appendix 1 for a description of the classification)
- the large increase in 'New Zealander' responses in the 2006 Census
- the relatively low level of 'New Zealander' responses in other sources of official statistics.

Section 2 of this report presents the decisions made by Government Statistician in light of this review and the rationale that underlies them.

Section 3 summarises the review issues, which were developed through discussions with a range of stakeholders, a review of New Zealand and international literature and a programme of research (summarised in section 6).

Section 4 discusses the issues in more detail and the options that we considered in developing the proposals contained in the draft report. Section 5 outlines our evaluation of the proposals and the resulting recommendations, which provided the basis of the Government Statistician's decisions presented in section 2. Section 6 provides a brief description of the methodology we used to undertake the review.

A set of four appendices provide additional information. Appendices 1 and 4 provide details of the current official statistical classification and the review's terms of reference. Two other technical appendices provide reports of two research projects undertaken for this review, one relating to a study of inter-ethnic mobility between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses (appendix 2), and the other to the testing of some question options for the 2011 Census (appendix 3).

This final report updates a draft report published in April 2009, which sought public feedback on a set of preliminary proposals to address the issues. These proposals provided the basis of the recommendations for this report.

The findings of this report will be used initially in developing the ethnicity measure for the 2011 Census and, eventually, for ethnicity statistics across the entire Official Statistics System.

The Government Statistician thanks the many individuals and organisations that provided advice and made submissions to the review.

2. Decisions on the review recommendations

This section outlines the decisions made by the Government Statistician in light of the review findings and recommendations contained in section 5.

A. Ethnicity question

Decision 1: The current format of the ethnicity question in surveys (including the census) and in administrative settings should remain unchanged.

Decision 2: Statistics New Zealand should not add a 'national identity'-related measure to the 2011 Census.

B. Ethnicity classification

Decision 3: The current standard output classification (ie 'New Zealander' assigned to the 'Other Ethnicity' branch) should be retained and an alternate classification that groups the 'European' category with the 'Other Ethnicity' or 'New Zealander' categories should be added.

Decision 4: For data processing, the assignment of 'New Zealander' responses to the 'Other Ethnicity' category (as opposed to 'New Zealand European') may be waived for administrative collections with low levels of 'New Zealander' response and where implementation would impose considerable financial and business process costs.

C. Communication

Decision 5: Agencies that collect ethnic data should effectively communicate to the public and data collectors the purpose and nature of official ethnicity statistics.

D. Further research

Decision 6: Statistics New Zealand should lead a programme of ongoing research and monitoring of the ethnicity measure, with a view to reviewing the situation again after the 2011 Census.

2.1 Discussion of the decisions

The terrain for this review has been difficult to traverse because of the dynamic nature of the topic (which makes consistent statistical measurement over time challenging), the diversity of views among stakeholders about the proper role and uses of ethnic statistics in public policy, and the constraints that public attitudes and expectations impose on statistical measurement.

There was also general agreement among stakeholders that the statistical standard should give priority to ensuring robust and consistent measurement of those groups that are of prime interest to social policy, namely: Māori, Pacific peoples, and Asian.

There is also general agreement among stakeholders that this topic needs to be monitored to ensure that the Official Statistics System continues to deliver fit-for-use information. As a result of this review I have come to a view that minimal change should be made to the statistical standard at this time, given the strength of stakeholder views to maintain consistent measurement and the level of uncertainty about how patterns of

response will change in the future. Consequently, the thrust of this review is to hold the ground in terms of the current standard, to continue to monitor the statistical issues with an appropriate programme of research and analysis, and review the situation again when the results of the next census become available.

2.1.1 Ethnicity question

There was a common view among data users that the format of the ethnicity question should remain unchanged. This retention is fundamental to producing consistent statistics across the Official Statistics System and across time. Previous experience has demonstrated that even minor changes in question format can have significant and unintended statistical impacts. Furthermore, our research indicates that facilitating a 'New Zealander' response (for example, by introducing a tick-box) would result in the reduction of responses to the Māori, Pacific peoples, and Asian categories, which would impact on the prime public policy uses of the statistics. The census question testing programme indicated that the inclusion of a 'New Zealander' tick-box in the ethnicity question would result in a higher level of these responses. Our research showed that while over 90 percent of the growth in 'New Zealander' responses in 2006 came from people who were in the sole 'New Zealand European' group in 2001, contributions from the Māori, Pacific peoples, and Asian groups had the effect of reducing these populations between 0.9 and 2.0 percent over the five-year period between the censuses.

These views inform decision 1.

It is acknowledged that this recommendation may not seem to address the concerns expressed by some respondents who prefer greater visibility for the 'New Zealander' category in the census question. However, decision 5 will better inform respondents about the form of the question and how responses from this question will be used. Decision 2 reflects the results of the 2011 Census question testing research. The research showed no compelling evidence to support the inclusion of a national identity question because it does not appear to have a significant effect on respondent attitude or behaviour toward the ethnicity question.

2.1.2 Ethnicity classification

While there is a strong view among Official Statistics System stakeholders about the need for a standard approach to measurement, there is no consensus about one standard form of reporting. On the contrary, there appears to be at least two preferred formats. The first one is the current standard (ie 'New Zealander' assigned to the 'Other Ethnicity' category). The second preferred format assigns 'New Zealander' to the 'European' category, alongside 'New Zealand European'. The first format is useful for reports in contexts that require more explicit differentiation of ethnic identity, such as the census, where New Zealander respondents tend to express strongly that they do not identify with 'European'.

The second format is favoured by agencies and researchers undertaking social monitoring because it is an appropriate reference group for the analyses of social inequality and because it maintains the consistency of historical time series. Furthermore, in some cases, there is no practical alternative to reporting in this manner because in many administrative collections the level of 'New Zealander' responses is low relative to the census and they can't be distinguished from 'New Zealand European' responses. When data from these sources are combined with census data (such as in ethnic population projections) the 'New Zealander' category must be grouped with the 'European' one to produce meaningful statistics.

Decision 3 aims to accommodate these two requirements.

For administrative collections that contain relatively low levels of 'New Zealander' responses and where the preferred reporting format is for social monitoring purposes, there appears to be little benefit in fully implementing the 2005 standard. Perhaps, there is also good reason not to do so if it imposes significant business costs. Decision 4 acknowledges this situation and provides a waiver for agencies in this situation. If and when the 'New Zealander' reporting level becomes significant for any given collection, this arrangement should be reviewed.

2.1.3 Communication

Consultation, research and public feedback have all indicated that more effective communication of the rationale and purpose of official ethnic statistics is needed. However, effective communication may not likely deter public debate of the type that happened at the 2006 Census. In fact, the result of the public consultation phase suggests there may be media and public interest again at the 2011 Census. Even so, better communication will assist in differentiating issues of statistical measurement from political debate, and provide better support to those collecting and providing the data.

Official Statistical System agencies should seek to coordinate their communication, ensuring that common and coherent messages are presented.

2.1.4 Further research

At this time, the review could not resolve all the issues about the 'New Zealander' response. Consequently, the actions taken now should not limit future options. The conservative stance of this review is predicated on the uncertainty about the current direction of change and my wish to maintain consistency with the current standard. Therefore, we need to continue to monitor the issues and review the situation again in 2011, when the results of the 2011 Census are available. Decision 6 reflects this ongoing review requirement.

3. The issues

This section outlines the issues identified at the beginning of this review. They were developed through our initial research and through consultation with experts and key stakeholders.

We believe that there are two general issues that need addressing.

1. Public trust and confidence in official statistics.
2. The technical consistency of the ethnicity measure (this issue also affects the first).

3.1 Public trust and confidence

The public reaction to the ethnicity question in the 2006 Census concerns us because it has the potential to undermine trust and confidence in the ethnicity measure and even the census itself. If we're to continue producing robust official statistics, we need significant public support and acceptance of the need for the information and the way in which the data are collected.

The public debate during the census questioned the need to consider ethnicity in public policy and proposed a specific response category (tick-box) for people wishing to report 'New Zealander'. Some people urged respondents to record a 'New Zealander' response instead of any other ethnic response. Had this advice been more influential, the ethnicity results could have been rendered unusable.

Public trust and confidence in official statistics are based on acceptance and support. While at any given time and for any given official statistics topic, the public and users of statistics may have a range of views of the value and acceptability of the information, it's important to have an adequate base of support.

Specific issues on this topic relate to:

- the rationale and need for official ethnicity statistics
- the nature of the ethnicity measure and the labels used to describe ethnic groups
- the relationship of 'national' and 'ethnic' identities.

We discuss these issues in more detail in the next section.

3.2 Statistical consistency

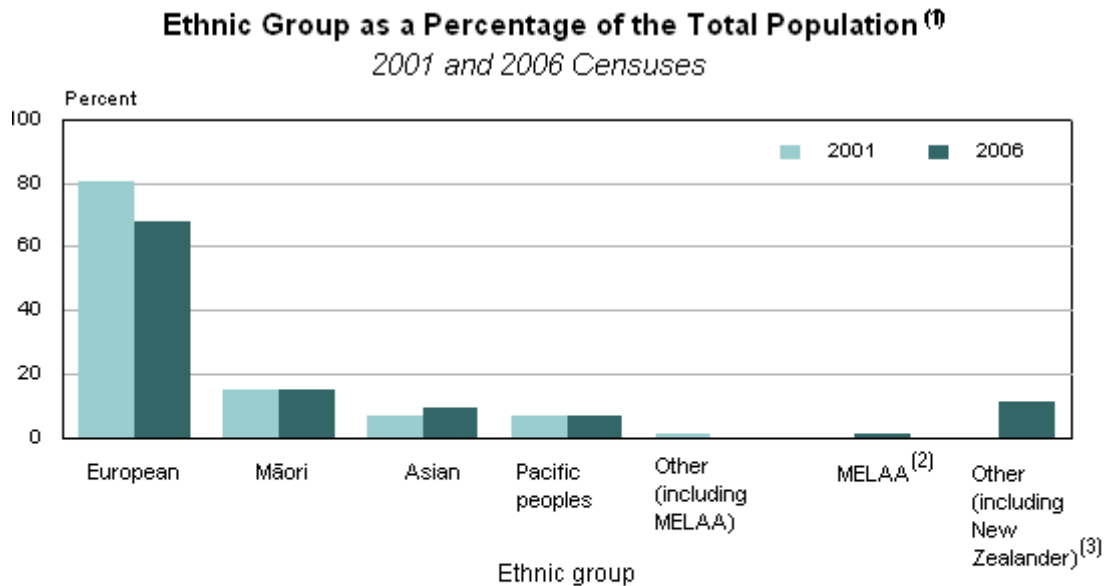
Some aspects of the census ethnicity statistics, notably the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories, have now become inconsistent with previous censuses and other sources of ethnic statistics. This is because of:

- a previous decision by Statistics New Zealand to allocate 'New Zealander' responses to the 'Other Ethnicity' branch of the standard classification
- the large increase in 'New Zealander' responses in the 2006 Census
- a relatively low level of 'New Zealander' responses in other sources of official statistics.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the problem. Figure 1 compares census results for 2001 and 2006, showing an apparently significant shift in the 'European' and 'Other' categories between the two censuses, largely because of the factors above (see footnote 3).

Figure 2 lists the 'New Zealander' response in a number of official statistical sources, illustrating that it is significant only in the census.

Figure 1



(1) People were able to identify with more than one ethnic group, therefore percentages do not add up to 100.

(2) MELAA, or Middle Eastern, Latin American and African, was introduced as a new category for the 2006 Census. Previously, 'MELAA' responses were allocated to the 'Other ethnicity' category.

(3) 'New Zealander' was introduced as a new response option for the 2006 Census. 'New Zealander' responses form part of the 'Other ethnicity' category. For 2006, 'New Zealander' responses had the largest contribution towards the 'Other ethnicity' category. For 2001, and previous censuses, 'New Zealander' was counted with the 'European' category.

Figure 2

Selection of 'New Zealander' Ethnicity Responses

Source	Percent
Census 2001	2.5
Census 2006	11.1
Birth Registrations (2006-08)	1.0
Death Registrations (2006-08)	1.0
Labour Force Survey (June 2008)	1.0
Housing NZ Applicants (2007/08)	1.4
NZ Crime & Safety Survey, 2006	3.0
NZ Health Survey, 2007	0.9

Our discussions with stakeholders revealed a number of other issues relating to the way in which ethnicity statistics are reported, including the 'Asian' group and ways to classify people into unique ethnic categories. We cover these in more detail in the next section.

4. Discussion of the issues

This section discusses in more detail the issues outlined in the previous section. It takes into account the findings of our research programme and the advice and feedback we received from the review consultation processes.

4.1 The rationale and need for official ethnicity statistics

A 2004 review of ethnicity statistics confirmed the continued relevance of ethnicity statistics for public policy. It noted that "data on ethnicity is required ... to measure and monitor differences in social well-being, social interaction and social change" (Statistics New Zealand 2004, p6).

The underlying rationale for official ethnicity statistics in New Zealand relates to the state's acknowledgement of and desire to address issues of social and economic inequality associated with ethnic group membership. This rationale aligns with that of a number of other countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia (Morning 2008, p243).

Around the time of the 2004 review, there was a series of vigorous public debates on the role of ethnicity in public policy in New Zealand, leading through to the 2005 General Election. The public debate during the 2006 Census probably echoed aspects of these prior debates.

As part of this review, we've reconfirmed the need for robust official ethnic statistics through consultation with central and local government agencies, regionally based social service providers, ethnic community group advocates, and policy researchers.

Ethnicity information is used at national, regional and community levels in identifying the demand for public policies, programmes and services and tailoring their delivery to ensure effective results. For example:

The health sector has long used ethnicity statistics in targeting services for ethnic groups experiencing inequalities in health. Indeed, ethnicity is part of the population-based funding model used in allocating service funding across the health sector. It's also used to monitor health results among ethnic groups when evaluating ethnicity-targeted policies and programmes.

Other central government social policy agencies rank ethnicity alongside other key service demand determinants such as age, sex and socioeconomic status, and use it to tailor programmes.

Local authorities use ethnicity statistics extensively in their planning and service delivery, particularly in regions experiencing significant demographic, social and economic change. A notable feature of change in the past five years has been the increasing ethnic diversity of the population at regional levels.

Māori and other ethnic community service providers rely on official ethnicity statistics for planning and engaging with government agencies.

We believe there is a demonstrated need (as established in the 2004 review) for robust and consistent official ethnicity statistics to help in monitoring the social and economic inequalities related to ethnicity.

4.2 The nature of the ethnicity measure and the labels used to describe ethnic groups

Ethnicity has been measured in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings in some form since the middle of the 19th century. There have been changes in the way it is defined and measured – until 1986 for example, the question was based on a race concept and people of mixed race were required to report their ‘proportion of blood’. So a member of the indigenous Māori population was classified as ‘Māori’ if they reported half or more Māori blood.

Following a 1983 Statistics New Zealand research report (Brown 1983), the race-based measure in the 1986 Census was replaced by one reflecting a ‘cultural affiliation’ concept (see 4.2.4). The 1986 question, while retaining the ‘Ethnic Origin’ title of the two previous censuses, instead asked respondents to ‘tick the box or boxes which apply to you’. This move reflected:

- changing public and user attitudes to the race-based measure
- demographic change (including trends of ethnic intermarriage in New Zealand society)
- an acknowledgment that respondents found it increasingly difficult to answer the question, and were instead effectively self-identifying.

The change was reinforced by two subsequent review reports (Statistics New Zealand 1988, 2004). The 1988 report established the self-identification standard, and the 2004 report, among other things, clarified the conceptual basis of the ‘ethnicity’ measure and established new standards for classifying multiple responses.

Currently, an ethnic group is defined in official statistics (Statistics New Zealand 2005, p2) as people who have some or all of the following characteristics:

- a common proper name
- one or more elements of common culture, such as religion, customs or language
- a unique community of interests, feelings and actions
- a shared sense of common origins or ancestry
- a common geographic origin.

This definition is based on the ‘cultural affiliation’ concept of ethnicity, which measures ethnicity in terms of the cultural identity or identities that people themselves choose. This contrasts with other possible measurement methods, such as the way that others might perceive a person rather than the way they perceive themselves; or measures based on apparent objective factors, such as specific ancestry or physical characteristics.

The cultural affiliation measure is, by its nature, based on the survey subject’s own evaluation (self-identification) – so changes in their preferences will mean variations in statistical measurement over time. This phenomenon is not limited to subjective cultural affiliation measures; it is also found in more apparently objective race- and ancestry-based measures (Brown 1983; Simpson & Akinwale 2007).

This dynamic nature of ethnicity therefore introduces some degree of variability to the measures, in addition to those arising from survey error and design. This is generally well understood and adequately managed by informed users of the information, but may detract from some others’ perceptions of its usefulness.

commonly employed. However, it is employed selectively, in the sense that people report only those aspects of their ancestry they know about and which they consider are central to their ethnic identity. These aspects are likely to reflect their socialisation experience as children (what their parents told them), but possibly are also modified by subsequent life experiences (e.g. school, work, marriage).

Since the 1916 Census, respondents have been able to report more than one ethnicity. New Zealand's long history of relatively high rates of intermarriage between ethnic groups was reflected in response patterns before 1986 and continues to be reflected in today's cultural affiliation-based measure. The proportion of people reporting multiple ethnicities in New Zealand appears to have been increasing over the 15 years between the 1991 and 2006 Censuses, from 4.3 percent to 10.4 percent.

Research we've done on the 'New Zealander' response group indicates its members overwhelmingly come from the 'New Zealand European' group. Over 90 percent of the growth of people who identified as 'New Zealander' at the 2006 Census came from people who identified as 'New Zealand European' only at the 2001 Census. It's not clear what motivates this apparent change of label, but analysis of 2006 Census data indicates that when the group who identify as New Zealanders (by itself or in combination with other ethnic labels) is compared to the total population, they are, on average, a little older, more likely to be male, more likely to be born in New Zealand, have higher incomes and education levels, and are more prevalent in the South Island. The geographic element may also reflect a higher prevalence of families who have lived in New Zealand over many generations. (Statistics New Zealand 2007a).

Some researchers have suggested that a hybrid ethnic group or identity has evolved or emerged (King 2001; Callister 2004). Certainly we've seen a growing ethnic diversity within New Zealand and a changing sense of national identity owing to major historical events and trends such as:

- New Zealand's participation in two world wars in the 1910s and 1940s
- changes in New Zealand's trading relationships with Britain and the European Community in the 1970s
- the evolving political relationship between the indigenous Māori population and the state
- changes in immigration policy in the 1980s
- increased overseas travel by New Zealanders since the 1980s.

Research we commissioned for this review and our cognitive testing of the census ethnicity question suggest a number of different types of 'New Zealander' response. These can be characterised by three broad groupings: one relating to how people understand their own ethnicity, another to how people relate to the response categories they are offered in the question, and another to how they perceive the purpose and use of ethnicity statistics. (UMR, 2009, p92)

In the first group, people tend to identify strongly as 'New Zealander', considering it to represent a unique national and ethnic identity. In the second group, some people think that none of the response categories offered in the question describe them well enough. In particular, the 'European' element of the 'New Zealand European' category is not sufficiently relevant to them because their family has lived in New Zealand for several generations and they consider that their roots are now here. Others in this group select it because they believe that none of the other responses offered are sufficient to describe their ethnicity, or simply to express their loyalty or connection to New Zealand. In the third group, some people think that drawing attention to ethnic diversity in official statistics can be socially divisive and prefer a 'one people' approach. Some others in

this group consider that ethnicity-targeted public policy is unfair, benefiting the recipient minority groups at the expense of their group.

This typology is tentative, and further review of these data and subsequent research may generate more useful and better founded models. However, it helps to illustrate the variety of understandings and motivators that underlie the 'New Zealander' response. Some support of it is provided in the findings of our census question development research (appendix 3) which also identified two groups who either have some concerns about the use of ethnicity data in public policy or who wish to express their strong connection to New Zealand.

We believe that New Zealanders' ethnic identities and the way in which they choose to represent themselves in official statistics will continue to evolve as a result of:

- continued immigration
- intermarriage between ethnic groups
- increasing generational attachment to New Zealand
- the way that groups participate in society and how society accommodates them.

In turn, the labels that New Zealand people of European descent choose to describe their ethnic identities will also continue to evolve.

4.3 The relationship of 'national' and 'ethnic' identities

It's common practice to connect the terms 'race', 'nationality' and 'ethnicity'. For example, dictionary definitions often use one or two of the terms when defining the third. However, academics and statisticians try to distinguish between them, generally associating:

- ethnicity with cultural practices and beliefs
- race with perceived physical traits
- nationality with geographic location.

Other distinctions associate race as a characteristic imposed by others and ethnicity as a voluntarily chosen characteristic. Common to all three is the notion of ancestry or community of descent (Hollinger, 1998).

The ethnicity definition used in New Zealand's official statistics derives from Smith (1986). While it does not explicitly refer to national identity, none of the elements precludes the use of a national identity type label as a label of ethnic identity. Indeed, the element referring to 'common geographic origin' tends to support such labels – and many of the ethnic categories used for reporting at the second and subsequent levels of the measure (see Appendix 1) are, in fact, labels of national identity in their countries of origin (eg Pakistani, Bangladeshi).

Nevertheless, a 'New Zealander' response to an ethnicity question is problematic in New Zealand because it's ambiguous and its use could negatively affect others who wouldn't normally use it in this context. It is ambiguous, because it can refer to either an ethnic identity or the national identity of all citizens of this country. So, when it's presented as a response to an ethnicity question, it's not clear if it represents the respondent's ethnicity or nationality. This means it's not possible for the statistician to decide on the weight to give the response or how it relates to other groupings of interest.

Because of this ambiguity, the explicit use of 'New Zealander' in a survey may also confuse or offend respondents who wouldn't normally use it to describe their ethnicity. For example, recent migrants could see it as a test of their loyalty, and indigenous Māori and other settled groups could consider it an unjustified use of a label that applies equally to them, but not in ethnicity terms.

Some Māori stakeholders have strong concerns about using 'New Zealander' as either a response or a reporting label in the ethnicity standard (as they did in the 2004 review). They consider that, in addition to the issues above, use of the 'New Zealander' label to report ethnicity raises issues about citizenship and sovereignty.

Many other countries have similar problems in accommodating their national identity labels in measuring ethnicity. For example:

labels such as 'British', 'Scottish', 'Welsh' and 'Irish' are problematic in the UK and the specific countries that comprise it

the 'Canadian' label has also posed problems in Canada. A public debate during Canada's 1991 Census had a similar statistical impact to the one that occurred during the New Zealand 2006 Census.

We believe that the 'New Zealander' response to the ethnicity measure is problematic because it also denotes the national identity of all New Zealand citizens. However, given that it is a preferred response to the census ethnicity question for a significant portion of the population, we also recognise that it needs to be accommodated adequately in both statistical measurement and reporting.

4.4 Statistical consistency

All stakeholders consulted during this review expressed the need to maintain statistical consistency, so that information is both comparable over time (e.g. in monitoring trends) and comparable between different sources (e.g. population base, health, education, housing). A similar view was expressed in the 2004 review.

In response to the statistical discontinuity that resulted from the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories in the 2006 Census (see Figure 1) we published some recommended interim guidelines for managing the discontinuity in anticipation of this review (Statistics New Zealand 2007b). The main recommendation was that the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories at level 1 of the classification (see Appendix 1) be combined for 2006 Census results. This would enable an adequate comparability of 2006 Census results with those of previous censuses and other sources.

The interim guidelines have been adopted by a number of users and have provided an adequate 'work-around' measure, despite being non-standard and ad hoc. However, other, more statistically sound and durable options can and should now be considered in the context of this review.

Given that New Zealand policy-makers mainly use official ethnicity statistics to address issues of inequality among the Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian groups, we could ask why we need to consider the 'New Zealander' group. The reason is that this group, along with the 'New Zealand European' and 'Other European' groups, forms the main comparative group for ethnicity-related inequality analysis and monitoring (e.g. Ministry of Health 2007, p3).

We believe there is a need to improve the consistency of ethnicity reporting at the highest level of the standard classification, as it relates to the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories.

4.5 Public understanding and communication

The public debate on ethnicity during the 2006 Census indicated that at least some groups had misgivings about the purpose of the topic or the way it was being measured.

It's important for this review that we separate the issues that are relevant to the statistical measurement in official statistics and those that relate to healthy public debate in a democracy. While official statistics must be relevant and useful to such debate, the nature of how they are measured should not become an issue of ongoing controversy. Failure to address such controversy promptly and effectively risks undermining public trust in official statistics.

The current 'New Zealander' response issue is mainly confined to the census (see 3.3). It doesn't feature to any great extent in other official statistics that measure ethnicity. Why, is not clear, as in collections where a 'New Zealander' response is accepted, the volume remains low or negligible. This suggests that the census itself may be a factor.

We know from previous experience that the census can act as a lightning rod for public policy issues. Recent examples include debates about the 'Children ever born' question in the 1981 Census, the 'Unpaid work' question in the 1986 Census and the 'Jedi' response to the 'Religion' question in the 2001 Census.

Some of the public debate about ethnicity measurement in the census may also reflect interest and concern about the state's role in framing the scope of public policy through official statistics. This is certainly an issue debated vigorously by academics and researchers (e.g. Robson & Reid 2001; Bromell 2008). Official statistics, by their nature and design, reflect a selective and apparently unwavering picture of the object of their view. If this object is dynamic and fluid, as is ethnicity, the light cast by official statistics may be considered a hindrance as well as a help. In particular, official ethnic statistics may be seen to make into 'concrete' categories that are fluid and subject to continued political negotiation.

While the stakeholders consulted had differing views on how specific issues should be addressed, there was universal agreement that effective communication is needed with users, data collectors and respondents about the purposes and rationale of the ethnicity measure to support the objective of producing robust and consistent statistics.

We believe there is a need to communicate more effectively to the public the purpose and nature of the standard ethnicity measure.

4.6 Some other issues

Stakeholders raised two other issues relating to ethnicity statistics that fall outside the scope of this review. We'll be considering them as part of a broader review of cultural identity statistics.

The two issues were:

- the need for ethnicity reporting that provides a more detailed breakdown of the 'Asian' group
- the need for an easily used classification that allocates individuals to one ethnic category only.

A number of stakeholders were concerned that the 'Asian' category at level 1 of the classification is too broad for some uses and needs to be broken down into more meaningful groups. For example, some health sector service providers noted the significant differences in health needs and service expectations within the 'Asian' category, particularly for recent migrants.

The second level of the standard classification (see Appendix 1) probably provides much of the detail needed to meet this need. This information is collected in the population census and in most health sector systems, so the issue, for most of the health sector at least, relates mainly to analysis and reporting.

A number of stakeholders were concerned about their desire and need to be able to report ethnic statistics in a classification that allocates people to a unique category, so that across the population people are counted only once. There are two broad reasons for this:

- The need to be able to compare and contrast different ethnic groups, which requires the respective populations to be partitioned.
- The need for general fairness, particularly in allocating resources where perceptions of possible double-counting can undermine the credibility of the allocation models, even if it's not statistically or financially significant.

If there is a significant overlap between two populations being compared (i.e. where some are members of both populations), it may be difficult to draw conclusions about the apparent statistical differences between them. Including the overlap members in both or one of the populations may diminish or over-exaggerate apparent differences, depending on how the issues under comparison are distributed across the three groups (ie each of the two non-overlap groups and the overlap group).

The current ethnicity standard enables individuals to report multiple ethnic identities. This practice acknowledges the fluid nature of ethnicity and the cultural identity concept that underpins the measure.

The overwhelming majority of New Zealand's population reports a single ethnicity (90 percent at the 2006 Census). About 9 percent report two ethnicities and 1 percent three or more. However, significant numbers of Māori, Pacific peoples and others who have historical and continuing high intermarriage rates provide multiple responses. For example, one half of the Māori population report two or more ethnic identities as do one-third of Pacific peoples.

The current standard uses two classifications:

- The 'Total response' classification counts the number of people who have reported each ethnic category, no matter how many they reported.
- The 'Single and combined response' classification allocates individuals to unique ethnic categories, reflecting the mix of responses they reported, if more than one.

After the 2004 review, a 'Prioritised' classification was removed from the standard. It allocated those individuals who reported multiple ethnicities to a unique category based on an arbitrary ranking of the ethnic responses. The classification was considered to lack an adequate theoretical basis and it increasingly under-counted Pacific peoples and other minority groups, as multiple reporting increased.

While there has been good take-up among users of the 'Total' response classification, the take-up of the 'Single' and combined one has not been so marked, and a number of agencies still use the now non-standard 'Prioritised' classification. The reasons appear to relate to both entrenched practice and difficulties in fitting the 'Single' and combined one to established information needs (e.g. consistent monitoring of health trends).

5. Recommendations to address the issues

In this section we review the options for addressing the issues that were outlined in the draft report and formulate recommendations. The recommendations do not necessarily reflect all the preferred options outlined in the draft report, since we have taken into account subsequent stakeholder and public feedback.

When addressing and evaluating official statistical issues like these, we take into account three principles to ensure that the statistics are both fit for use and sustainable. These are:

- relevancy (measuring the right thing)
- robustness (consistency and accuracy over time and between sources)
- minimising the burden of compliance (measurement that is acceptable to the public and does not place an unreasonable burden on respondents).

These principles help us to assess the benefits associated with any proposed change or improvement. However, decisions to make changes must also look at other factors such as financial costs and the risks of unforeseen outcomes. Our previous experience shows that changes often also have unintended consequences that negate the intended improvements. Consequently, the cost- benefit evaluation for change must be compelling.

In applying the relevancy and robustness principles, this report considers the specific uses of official ethnicity statistics in New Zealand – particularly the need for useful statistics on the main policy-relevant ethnic groups (Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian).

5.1 Maintaining statistical consistency

In the 2006 Census, the root cause of the statistical inconsistency in the ‘European’ and ‘Other Ethnicity’ categories was a decision we’d made after the previous review to move the ‘New Zealander’ response from the ‘European’ to the ‘Other Ethnicity’ branch of the classification. The decision was based on a view that the ‘New Zealander’ category did not appear to fit well enough with any of the existing major level 1 categories (Statistics New Zealand 2004, p10).

There are two main options for addressing the issue of maintaining statistical consistency.

- Do nothing.
- Modify the standard classification.

The ‘do nothing’ option means accepting the ‘work-around’ measure described in section 4. The problem with this is that it requires all users to apply an additional non-standard procedure to census-sourced statistics before they use them.

The ‘modify’ option would require the ‘New Zealander’ response to be returned from the ‘Other Ethnicity’ branch to the ‘European’ branch of the standard classification. Before the 2004 review, ‘New Zealander’ responses were included in the ‘New Zealand European’ category, along with other related responses such as ‘Pakeha’ and ‘Kiwi’.

Following publication of the draft report, a third option was proposed that involves modifying the standard to incorporate the current ‘work around’ measure. This would result in a standard with two forms of output classification, one (the current) which located ‘New Zealander’ responses under the ‘Other Ethnicity’ branch of the classification and the other (proposed) which combined the ‘European’ and ‘Other Ethnicity’ categories.

The case for the second ('modify') option was based on a view that the 'New Zealander' response group has much in common with the 'New Zealand European' group, and that it could be usefully located in the 'European' branch of the classification. This would restore statistical consistency to the 'European' and 'Other Ethnicity' categories at level 1 and lower levels of the classification, and reduce the need for the 'work-around' measure in the first option.

While there is a strong view among Official Statistics System stakeholders about the need for a standard approach to measurement, there is no consensus about one standard form of reporting. On the contrary, there appears to be at least two preferred formats. The first one that is contained in the current standard (ie 'New Zealander' assigned to the 'Other Ethnicity' category). The second preferred format assigns 'New Zealander' to the 'European' category, alongside 'New Zealand European'. The first format is useful for reports that require more explicit differentiation of ethnic identity, such as the census, where New Zealander respondents tend to express strongly that they do not identify with 'European'.

The second format is favoured by agencies and researchers undertaking social monitoring because it is an appropriate reference group for analyses of social inequality, and because it maintains the consistency of historical time series. Furthermore, in some cases, there is no practical alternative to reporting in this manner because in many administrative collections the level of 'New Zealander' responses is low relative to the census and they can't be distinguished from 'New Zealand European' responses. When data from these sources are combined with census data (such as in ethnic population projections) the 'New Zealander' category must be grouped with 'European' to produce meaningful statistics.

Choosing one of the two options would mean losing the utility of the other. Instead, we have decided to retain both to accommodate the two sets of requirements. A disadvantage of using two options is the risk of confusion to users from having two forms of statistical reporting.

Producers of official ethnicity statistics will need to ensure that both forms of the classification are available to users and that the different forms are explicitly labelled in reports. When used at level 1 of the classification, this grouping should be clearly identified as 'European and Other' or 'European and New Zealander', according to the actual composition of the grouping.

Users will decide which form of the classification to use according to their purpose. Users who wish to delineate more detailed distinctions of ethnic identification may wish to use the form of the classification that associates the 'New Zealander' group in the 'Other Ethnicity' category. This association gives stronger recognition of the non-European character of the 'New Zealander' response.

Users who wish to retain consistency across time series (eg social monitoring) may wish to use the form that associates the 'New Zealander' group with the 'New Zealand European' one in the European branch of the classification. This form of the classification should be used when comparisons are being made with other ethnic statistics that do not distinguish 'New Zealander' from 'New Zealand European' responses.

Recommendation: The current standard output classification (ie 'New Zealander' assigned to the 'Other Ethnicity' branch) should be retained and an alternate classification that groups the 'European' with the 'Other Ethnicity' or 'New Zealander' categories should be added.

For administrative collections that contain relatively low levels of 'New Zealander' responses and where the preferred reporting format is for social monitoring purposes,

there appears to be little benefit in implementing the requirement of the 2005 standard that 'New Zealander' responses be assigned to the Other Ethnicity branch of the classification. System changes required to implement this may also impose significant business costs. The situation is acknowledged and a waiver is accepted for agencies in this situation. If and when the 'New Zealander' reporting level becomes significant for any given collection, this arrangement should be reviewed.

Recommendation: For data processing, the assignment of 'New Zealander' responses to the 'Other Ethnicity' category (as opposed to 'New Zealand European') may be waived for administrative collections with low levels of 'New Zealander' response and where implementation would impose considerable financial and business process costs.

5.2 Treatment of the 'New Zealander' response in the census question and other sources

A significant group of respondents in the 2006 Census voiced concern about the format of the ethnicity question in relation to their response preferences. Options to deal with this issue are to:

- modify the ethnicity question (e.g. introduce a tick-box for 'New Zealander' responses)
- introduce other changes to the questionnaire to address the issue
- make no changes to the ethnicity question.

Most stakeholders consulted in this review were opposed to any change to the ethnicity question on the grounds that doing so would probably have unintended and unacceptable effects on the statistical results. As these effects have been observed and documented at previous censuses, we tend to support this view. Any changes need to be rigorously tested to determine both their effectiveness as instruments and their statistical impacts.

The results of our research of public attitudes and of respondent behaviour when completing the census question suggest that there is a significant degree of support for a 'New Zealander' response category. This is particularly so among people of European descent, but not limited to them. However, the research also indicates that people generally agree that the way that the statistic is measured should be relevant to the purpose of the information. Research subjects of European descent who preferred a 'New Zealander' response generally agreed that this response was probably not as relevant to the purpose of the information as a 'New Zealand European' response.

The results of research we undertook by linking individual responses from the 2001 and 2006 Censuses show that the increased level of 'New Zealander' responses in 2006 had a statistical impact on ethnic groups other than 'New Zealand European'. In particular, the increased level of 'New Zealander' responses at the 2006 Census had the effect of reducing the sizes of the Maori, Pacific peoples and Asian populations in the range of 0.9 percent to 2.0 percent. Details of these two studies are contained in appendices 2 and 3.

Public feedback following publication of the draft report indicated a range of views. One view strongly advocated the inclusion of an explicit 'New Zealander' response category, while opposing the inclusion of 'Pakeha'. Another group took the opposite view, advocating an explicit 'Pakeha' response category, while opposing 'New Zealander'. A third group argued for the continued use of 'New Zealand European'. The draft report did not include any proposal regarding the inclusion of a 'Pakeha' category, apart from

acknowledging that it had been used in a previous census and subsequently dropped because of negative reaction from some respondents.

Our preference is to keep the ethnicity question as it is on the basis that the proposed change would have unintended and unacceptable statistical impacts on the measurement of the Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian groups. We consider that our research indicates that the inclusion of a 'New Zealander' tick-box in the census ethnicity question would cause a significant number of people to report a sole 'New Zealander' response, who would have otherwise reported a 'non-European' response, with or without a 'New Zealand European' response. The effect of this would be to distort the existing series of official ethnic statistics in ways that would detract from their usefulness for the public policy purposes they were designed for.

No change to the current ethnic question will not prohibit the recording of a 'New Zealander' response, but means it will continue to be recorded via a specific write-in response, rather than a tick-box.

The current standard does not enable 'New Zealander' responses to be collected in administrative environments (e.g. hospital admissions); unless a write-in response is allowed, as in the census. For the above reasons, we again prefer to keep these arrangements unchanged.

Recommendation: The current format of the ethnicity question in surveys (including the census) and in administrative settings should remain unchanged.

A number of stakeholders have suggested that the issue might be better resolved by two other options:

- Providing more effective guidance to survey respondents and data collectors on the nature and purpose of the ethnicity question.
- Including in the census a question on a national identity-related topic to help respondents distinguish the ethnicity topic.

We strongly support the first suggestion, which was also raised in our research of public attitudes to the census question. Research subjects generally indicated a high level of support for the collection of official statistics in surveys like the census, but said they would be more comfortable about answering the ethnicity question if they had a better understanding of what it was used for. Public feedback on the draft report also supported this.

As part of our 2011 Census question development programme we investigated the feasibility and effect of adding a question on national identity or birthplace of parents before the ethnicity question. The results show that there was no compelling evidence that these two additional questions would improve the way the ethnicity question is answered. Further, the concept of national identity was not understood well by respondents. More information about the research is contained in an appendix to this report. We consider that the significant financial cost of adding such a question to the census would not be justified by the minimal and uncertain potential benefits.

Recommendation: Statistics NZ should not add a 'national identity'- related measure to the 2011 Census.

5.3 Improving public understanding and acceptability

This issue is not just about understanding the 'New Zealander' response; it's about the role of the ethnicity measure itself in public policy. We can take steps to improve public understanding and acceptance of the measure itself, but to achieve wider acceptance

and understanding of the use of ethnicity statistics, key stakeholders need to support the uses both proactively and reactively when they are the subject of public debate.

We appreciate that the public coverage of the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings provides an opportunity to showcase official social and population statistics. With this in mind, we'll ensure that the ethnicity measure gets due attention in the associated publicity programme. This will include explaining how the information is used and encouraging the public to respond to the measure. A key element will be effective communication with respondents who might echo the concerns expressed at the 2006 Census.

As part of implementing any changes to the standard resulting from this review, we'll work with other partners in the Official Statistics System to review the systems supporting agents who collect ethnicity data in administrative environments. We appreciate the importance of providing adequate information and the right messages in these situations to ensure that data collectors are properly supported in their tasks and members of the responding public have the information they need to comply.

We propose that agencies that collect official ethnicity statistics build on established communities of practice and good practice models, which function to coordinate data collection and information production effectively and efficiently. This includes a focus on the business processes that support the agents who collect the data.

Consultation, research and public feedback have all indicated that more effective communication of the rationale and purpose of official ethnic statistics is needed. More effective communication is not likely to remove public debate of the type that happened at the 2006 Census. In fact, the result of the public consultation phase suggests that there may well be media and public interest again at the 2011 Census. However, better communication will assist in differentiating issues of statistical measurement from political debate and provide better support to those collecting and providing the data.

Official Statistics System agencies should seek to coordinate their communication, ensuring that common and coherent messages are presented.

Recommendation: Agencies that collect ethnic data should effectively communicate to the public and data collectors the purpose and nature of official ethnicity statistics.

5.4 Further research

This review has not and cannot resolve all the issues concerning the 'New Zealander' response at this time. Consequently, the actions taken now should not limit future options. The conservative stance of this review is predicated on uncertainty about the current direction of change and our wish to maintain consistency with the current standard. We therefore need to continue to monitor the issues and review the situation again in 2011, when the results of the 2011 Census are available.

Stakeholder and public feedback following publication of the draft report reinforced the need for an ongoing programme of research and monitoring. Examples of proposed work include:

- the analysis of 2011 Census ethnicity results, profiling 'New Zealander' and any other emergent issues.
- the completion of a 2006-2011 inter-censal consistency study to examine inter-ethnic mobility patterns (replicating the 2001-2006 study).
- the analysis of inter-ethnic mobility from other data sources such as the Survey of Family, Income and Employment, and birth registrations.

- the development of a protocol and process for reviewing the response and reporting categories used in the official ethnicity standard.
- a review of the key public policy uses of official ethnicity statistics.
- a review of public attitudes to and understanding of official ethnic statistics.

Recommendation: Statistics NZ should lead a programme of ongoing research and monitoring of the ethnicity measure, with a view to reviewing the situation again in 2011.

6. Methodology

In conducting this review, we consulted a range of stakeholders, reviewed New Zealand and international literature and undertook a programme of research. The scope of literature review is reflected to some extent in section 7, although it represents only sources directly referred to in the report.

6.1 Stakeholder consultation

An ad hoc committee was convened to guide and support this review and a wider review of cultural identity statistics. The Review of Cultural Identity Official Statistics Steering and Working Group comprises representatives of the Ministries of Social Development, Health, Education, Justice, Pacific Island Affairs, Culture and Heritage, the Department of Labour, the Department of Internal Affairs, New Zealand Police and Te Puni Kōkiri.

Its terms of reference are described in Appendix 4.

We also sought advice and guidance from two expert standing committees that provide advice to Statistics New Zealand: the Māori Statistics Advisory Committee and the Programme of Official Social Statistics Advisory Group.

We sought broader stakeholder contributions and feedback in two stages.

The first stage comprised discussions with a group of about 20 stakeholders selected on the basis of the range of views they represented and their known expertise. They helped us to scope the issues that are the basis of this review and to identify a range of options to address the issues. Appendix 4 has a list of these stakeholders, and we thank them for their input and advice.

The second stage involved inviting public feedback to a draft report of the review published in April 2009. Publication of the draft report was accompanied by a media release which received good coverage throughout the country. As a result, two major daily newspapers carried editorials addressing the issues and there was subsequent public correspondence in a number of newspapers and on several Internet blogs. We received over 180 submissions from organisations and individuals throughout New Zealand.

The proposals contained in the draft report were reviewed in light of the feedback from the second stage and subsequent discussion with the review steering group stakeholders. This resulted in some changes to the proposals, particularly to one about the treatment of the New Zealander response in the output classification used for statistical reporting.

The feedback mainly addressed the proposals contained in the draft report. However, there were also some suggestions for further research and for the need for more consultation on reviews about the ethnic categories used in the question and in statistical reporting.

6.2 Research programme

The 2004 review contained a recommendation that a programme of research be undertaken to:

- assess the impact of the change in the treatment of the 'New Zealander' response

- assess the impact of a tick-box on the consistency of data
- examine other potential questions that might be used in the collection of ethnicity data (Statistics New Zealand 2004, p8).

Since then, we've undertaken and supported a number of projects to address this recommendation and are currently undertaking others in support of this review.

Three important research projects that have informed this review include:

1) Our 2011 Census question development programme which has included the testing of a 'New Zealander' tick-box for the ethnicity question and a question on national identity to precede the ethnicity question. This research also explored respondents' understanding of the ethnicity question. Findings from this and the other research projects are cited throughout this report and a more detailed description of the census question development research is contained in appendix 3.

2) A study of public understanding of and attitudes to the ethnicity topic, which we commissioned an independent research company, UMR Research Limited, to do. This study used qualitative research techniques to explore public understandings and attitudes. The findings are cited in this report.

The key findings (UMR, 2009, p5) were:

- The public's understanding of ethnicity generally supported the definition employed by Statistics NZ which is based on how people identify themselves culturally.
- Most people base their response on one or more of the themes contained in the official definition, the strongest being ancestry.
- The term 'New Zealander' was generally viewed as being distinct from ethnicity and was not linked to any physical characteristics. It was linked to tenure in New Zealand, affinity with New Zealand, being born in New Zealand, nationality and for a few, ancestry.
- The term 'national identity' was less clear-cut for some. However, perceived meanings placed it more akin to definitions of 'New Zealander', which related more to affiliation with a country, regardless of ethnicity.
- A general level of support of government collection of ethnicity statistics for planning and policy purposes and for informing public understanding of the make-up of New Zealand society.
- A general level of acceptance of the inclusion of an ethnicity question in the census and of the manner in which it is presented.
- A general support for improved communication to respondents about the purpose of the question.

A full report prepared by UMR is available on the Statistics New Zealand website www.stats.govt.nz.

3) A study of inter-ethnic mobility between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses that we undertook specifically for this review. This study involved linking individual records between the two censuses so that respective responses to the ethnicity question could be compared. This provided a basis to describe quantitatively the degree to which people changed their responses to the ethnicity question between the censuses and to examine the source and impact of the increased reporting of the 'New Zealander' response at the 2006 Census. The increased level of 'New Zealander' response that occurred at the 2006 Census after public debate gives some indication of the likely effect of other interventions that might also increase the 'New Zealander' response,

such as including a 'New Zealander' tick-box in the ethnicity question. A report of this study, outlining the findings and methodology, is contained in appendix 2.

Other research completed or supported after the 2004 review includes:

Statistics New Zealand, (2007). *Profile of New Zealand Responses, Ethnicity Question: 2006 Census*, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington. This analyses the socio-demographic characteristics of 'New Zealander' respondents and compares them with the total population. It concludes that while there are some minor differences (median age, income, sex, region), the 'New Zealander' population looks very much like the 'New Zealand European' one.

Callister, P., Didham, R., Newell, J., & Potter, D. (2008). *Family Ethnicity: Is it a useful concept and, if so, can we develop meaningful measures?*, Official Statistics Research Series, Vol 3, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington. This examines ways of assigning ethnicity to families, as opposed to individuals.

Kukutai, T., (2008). *Ethnic Self-prioritisation of Dual and Multi-ethnic Youth in New Zealand*, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington. This study evaluates the use of an ethnicity self-prioritising question in a youth survey. Results show that 20 percent of the survey population was unable or unwilling to select a single prioritised ethnic identity. This is a significant group, particularly among Māori and Pacific peoples, and illustrates the difficulty of putting people into one box.

Callister, P., Didham, R., & Kivi, A. (2009) (*forthcoming.*, *Who are we? The conceptualisation and expression of ethnicity*, Official Statistics Research Series, Vol 4, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington. This report is based on a literature review of New Zealand and international research and theory on the conceptualisation and expression of ethnicity. It traverses topics such as official construction of ethnicity by the state, ethnogenesis, transmission, mobility, indigeneity, genetics and the 'New Zealander' response phenomenon. It concludes that there is a continuing and vigorous worldwide debate on the nature of ethnic identity and how it should be measured, noting that there is little research on New Zealanders and what motivates the response.

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Appendix 1: Total response output classification: first three levels

- 1 European
 - 10 European not further defined
 - 11 **New Zealand European**
 - 12 Other European
 - 121 British and Irish
 - 122 Dutch
 - 123 Greek
 - 124 Polish
 - 125 South Slav
 - 126 Italian
 - 127 German
 - 128 Australian
 - 129 Other European
- 2 Māori
- 3 Pacific peoples
 - 30 Pacific peoples not further defined
 - 31 Samoan
 - 32 Cook Islands Maori
 - 33 Tongan
 - 34 Niuean
 - 35 Tokelauan
 - 36 Fijian
 - 37 Other Pacific peoples
- 4 Asian
 - 40 Asian not further defined
 - 41 Southeast Asian
 - 42 Chinese
 - 43 Indian
 - 44 Other Asian
- 5 Middle Eastern/Latin American/African
 - 51 Middle Eastern
 - 52 Latin American
 - 53 African
- 6 Other Ethnicity
 - 61118 **New Zealander**

Appendix 2: Inter-ethnic mobility between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses: the statistical impact of the ‘New Zealander’ response

Paul Brown (Principal Statistician, Statistics New Zealand) and Alistair Gray (Consulting Statistician, Statistics Research Associates Ltd)

Introduction

This report presents a selection of results from an intercensal consistency study using data from the 2001 and 2006 New Zealand Censuses.

During the 2006 Census there was public debate about the ethnicity question. The debate disputed the purpose of the statistics and argued for the inclusion of a tick-box for ‘New Zealander’ responses. Respondents who wished to record this response had to write it in under the ‘Other’ category. An image of this part of the questionnaire is shown in figure 3.

Over successive censuses since 1986, the level of ‘New Zealander’ responses to the ethnicity question has been increasing gradually. At the 1996 Census, a ‘New Zealand European’ tick-box was introduced to cater to people of European descent who wished to signify their New Zealand identity. This measure was initially successful and the level of ‘New Zealander’ responses increased slowly until the 2006 Census. Statistics New Zealand was reluctant to include a ‘New Zealander’ tick-box because of a need to preserve the consistency of the established time series. Further, there were concerns that ‘national naming’ responses like ‘New Zealander’ could undermine the integrity of the series because the term applies to the overwhelming majority of New Zealand citizens, regardless of their ethnicity.

The level of ‘New Zealander’ responses increased from 2.5 percent of the population at 2001 to 11.1 percent at 2006, representing over 400,000 people and ranking as the third largest response group behind ‘New Zealand European’ and ‘Māori’.

The results presented in this report focus on two research questions relevant to the 2009 Review of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard, namely:

- 1 Where did the ‘New Zealanders’ come from?
- 2 What impact, if any, did the increased level of ‘New Zealander’ responses have on the population counts of the other ethnic groups?

Methodology

This report is interested in the extent to which changes in the way that individuals respond to the ethnicity question at successive censuses result in them being assigned to a different ethnic category. An individual’s response to the ethnicity question may differ at successive censuses for many reasons. These reasons may reflect an error on the part of the respondent reporting their ethnicity, error in subsequent processing of the data, change in the way the data were collected (eg question wording or format change), or change in what the respondent has decided to report as their ethnicity. All these reasons, apart from the last, represent statistical error. The last, which reflects a considered decision by the individual, is referred to as ‘inter-ethnic mobility’.

In practise, statisticians find it difficult to distinguish these types of measurement errors from real ethnic mobility, so most estimates of ethnic mobility include some degree of measurement error as well.

In this study, respondent reporting and processing error is assumed to be negligible. A previous study of this type (eg Coope & Piesse, 2000) indicated low levels of discrepancy between reported responses to the ethnicity question on the census questionnaire and subsequent captured electronic data (ie a maximum of 8 percent of matched records which exhibited inconsistent ethnic responses). Improvements to data coding, and capture and processing systems since 1996 are expected to have reduced this source of error significantly. A major source of inconsistency in previous studies has been changes to the format and wording of the ethnicity question at successive censuses. The current form and wording of the census ethnicity question has remained unchanged since 2001, so this potential source of error has been effectively neutralised.

The manner in which ethnicity is measured in the New Zealand census permits respondents to record as many categories as they wish to adequately describe their ethnic identity. In 2006, 90 percent reported only one, about 9 percent reported two, and the remaining 1 percent reported three or more. For the purposes of this report, we use an investment portfolio metaphor to describe response behaviour. Given that people may report more than one ethnic identity, we may consider that they possess an ethnic portfolio comprising one or more identities. Over time and in different contexts they may chose to review the content of their portfolio by diversification (ie adding to it), divestment (ie subtracting from it), or sitting (ie make no changes). The act of diversification may cause the individual to move across statistical categories, which will generally increase the size of the population added. The act of divestment may cause the individual to move between statistical categories and will generally decrease the size of the population dropped. Diversification and divestment may occur singularly or in combination. This behaviour characterises inter-ethnic mobility in its broadest sense. This report is primarily interested in that manifestation of ethnic mobility that results in individuals moving between as opposed to across statistical categories (ie statistical category jumping), since this type of mobility results in a loss to one ethnic population and possibly a gain to another. Category jumping occurs as a result of divestment.

The population for this study was all people who were present in New Zealand at both the 2001 and 2006 Censuses. This excludes from the general (usually resident) population people who died or were born between the two censuses; people who left New Zealand after the 2001 Census and were not present at the 2006 one; and people who were not in New Zealand at the 2001 Census, but arrived since.

Data matching

The study dataset was constructed by linking the study populations at the two censuses using probabilistic matching techniques. The New Zealand 2006 Census usually resident population count comprised 4,027,947 people¹. The population eligible for this study comprised 3,293,635 people, representing 81.8 percent of the total usually resident population. The excluded people included 275,077 who were not born in 2001; 343,111 who were overseas in 2001; and 116,124 at the 2006 Census who did not

¹ The census night population was 4,143,280 people, but 115,333 of these were usually resident overseas.

specify their address at the 2001 Census. The 2001 Census usually resident population count was 3,737,278. These are the potential matches. However, some of these people will have died (around 140,000); some will have migrated and not returned: around 320,000 people were in the permanent and long-term category of departures in the five years between censuses, although some of these may have returned within the five years. So potentially, around 400,000 people will not be able to be matched, leaving around 3,300,000. This is close to the size of the 2006 eligible population.

Variables employed in the matching included sex, birth date, and geographic location (census area unit). Neither of respondent's name or address was used in the matching process.

Record matching processes must contend with two types of error. One results from accepting erroneous links and the other from failing to implement correct links. In a study of this type, which focuses on inconsistency, it is important to minimise the first type of error. Accordingly, the linking strategy employed sought to minimise this type of error.

The linking process between the two censuses was conducted in three stages. The first stage, using SAS, employed sex and birth date as matching variables, with area unit as a blocking variable. The area unit is the current address for the 2001 data and the address five years ago for the 2006 data. Essentially an inner join of the two files was carried out, and then the unique records were identified. This generated 2,118,455 exact matched people.

The second stage used QualityStage, an application designed to implement statistical data linking. The same matching and blocking variables were used, which linked another 798,397 records. The third stage took the residuals from the first pass of QualityStage and used age and country of birth as well as sex as matching variables. Consequently, the *linked dataset* comprises 2,280,742 matched people, representing a match rate of 72.6 percent of the study population.

Quality assurance

For previous intercensal studies, a random sample of 'matched' paper questionnaires from the two censuses was used to estimate the base match rate and to check other quality issues such as the coding of written responses which are not scanned. The most recent study (Coope & Piesse, 2000) undertook a manual check of a sample of census questionnaires which verified 89 percent of the electronically matched records. An initial investigation undertaken for the current study indicated that replication of this process would not be cost effective. General quality assurance of the 2001 and 2006 Censuses indicates continued quality improvement over the previous censuses, so our expectation is that the quality of the both the source data and the match for the current study is at least as good as the previous one, if not better. Also, the matching strategy described in the previous section was designed to minimise the frequency of false matches, which tend to overstate inconsistency and therefore ethnic mobility.

Ethnic classifications and categories used in this report

The New Zealand standard ethnicity classification takes two forms, 'Total response' and 'single/ combination', both of which are employed in the analyses presented in this report. The total response classification counts the frequency of each category. Since multiple responses are permitted, the sum of the categories may exceed the total population. This classification is used in this report to provide a general picture of ethnic population distribution and mobility.

The single/combination classification assigns individuals to a unique category. This classification is more difficult to use and present because of the large number of categories it contains. However, it provides an exact description of reported ethnic identity at the individual level and is used in this report to describe and analyse more detailed aspects of inter-ethnic mobility. This classification is particularly useful for distinguishing divestment behaviour which drives category jumping.

Table 1

Ethnic categories used in this report		
Category	Abbreviated label	Level in the standard classification
NZ European	nze	2
New Zealander	nzer	4
Other European	oeuro	2
Māori	maori	1
Pacific peoples	pacific	1
Asian	asian	1
Other	other	1
Not elsewhere classified	nec	1

The ethnic groups presented throughout this report shown in table 1, represent a selection of categories from the standard ethnicity classification which are relevant to the 2009 Review of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard. The 'nec' category contains cases where no response was provided or the response could not be assigned to a recognised ethnic group.

The Other European, Pacific, Asian, and Other categories represent aggregations of more detailed ethnic groupings, so the analysis of inter-ethnic mobility in this report does not take any account of ethnic mobility within these categories. The Other category, as used in this report, includes the first level 'Middle Eastern/Latin American /African' category, but excludes New Zealander.

Representativeness of the matched sample

The achieved match rate of 72.6 percent compares well with the 76 percent rate obtained in a previous 1991/96 study (Coope & Piesse, 2000). Nevertheless, results may be biased to a greater or lesser extent if the non-matched segment of the population exhibits different ethnic mobility behaviour from the matched population. Some indication of this may be provided by comparing key characteristics of the study and matched populations.

Figure 1 compares the age distribution of the 2006 total usually resident population, the study population, and the matched sample. It shows that the 20–40 year age group is proportionately under-represented in both the eligible (study) population and the matched population (linked dataset). The difference between the totally usually resident and eligible populations will reflect the exclusion from the eligible population of international intercensal migrants, who are more prevalent in this age group. The difference between the eligible population and the matched sample probably reflects the higher geographic mobility of this age group within New Zealand. Ethnic mobility is generally higher in this age group (see table 4), so its under representation in the matched population may result in some degree of understatement of inter-ethnic mobility rates in this report.

Figure 1

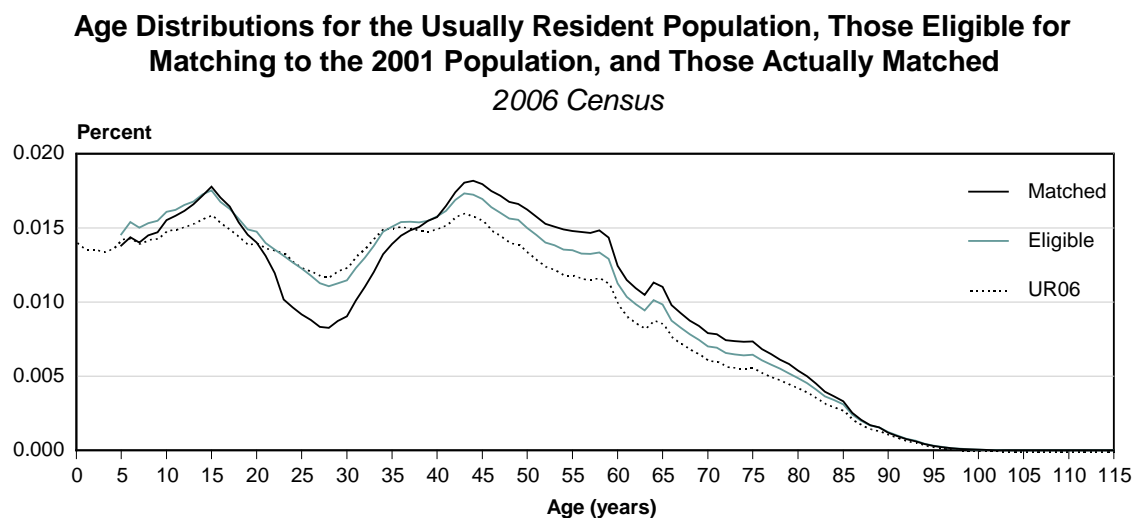
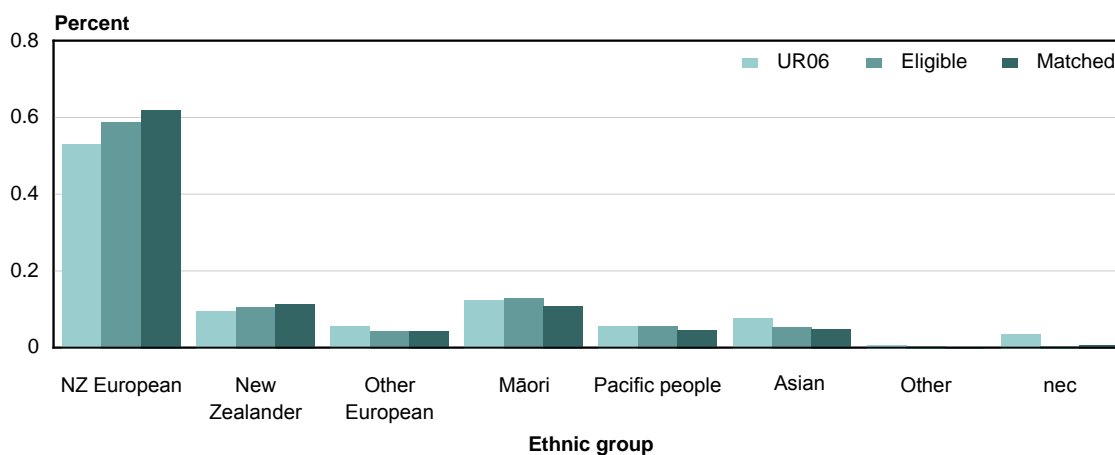


Figure 2 shows the ethnic group distribution of the 2006 total usually resident population, the study population and the matched population.

The Pacific and Asian populations are under-represented because of their younger age structures and external migration behaviour. The Māori population is under-represented because of its younger age structure. Overall, new migrants might be expected to exhibit less ethnic mobility than more settled populations, since their socialisation experience in New Zealand society will be less extensive. However, this may be offset by others who prefer to identify with a New Zealand nationality. The impact of the under-representation of the 20–40 year age group is harder to fathom, given the broadness of the group. Socialisation factors affecting this group include migration, entry to tertiary education, entry into the workforce, and marriage, all of which may affect ethnic mobility to a greater or lesser extent.

Figure 2

Ethnic Group Distributions for the Usually Resident Population, Those Eligible for Matching to the 2001 Population, and Those Actually Matched
2006 Census



Ethnic population distribution

Table 2 shows the population distribution across a selection of ethnic groups at the two censuses. These figures are based on the total usually resident population counts at the respective censuses, not the linked dataset.

Total response counts the total number of people reporting that response. The percentage figures are calculated against the total usually resident population, net of cases not elsewhere classified. Significant changes in the absolute and relative sizes of the New Zealand European, New Zealander, and Asian populations are apparent. Natural increase is a factor in the intercensal change for all the groups. However, the change in the Asian population is attributed mainly to the impact of net external migration. The relative changes of the New Zealand European and New Zealander populations are thought to be mainly attributable to inter-ethnic mobility. This report investigates this hypothesis.

Table 2

Ethnicity total response, 2001 and 2006						
	NZ European ⁽¹⁾	New Zealander	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian	Total ⁽²⁾
2001 (number)	2,611,425	91,578	526,281	231,801	237,459	3,586,731
2006 (number)	2,381,076	429,429	565,329	265,973	354,553	3,860,163
2001 (% total)	72.8	2.5	14.7	6.5	6.6	...
2006 (% total)	61.7	11.1	14.6	6.9	9.2	...
Intercensal change (%)	-8.8	368.9	7.4	14.7	49.3	7.6
Symbol: ... not applicable						

(1) New Zealander is not included.

(2) Total population who stated an ethnicity. Ethnicity 'not elsewhere classified' excluded.

General inter-ethnic mobility

The 2001–2006 intercensal consistency study enables the impact of the inter-ethnic mobility component of population change to be investigated. Table 3 shows inter-ethnic mobility estimates between the two censuses using the linked dataset.

The first two columns show the populations for each total response group at the successive censuses included in the linked dataset. This dataset contained a total of 2,240,508 records, excluding 40,234 not elsewhere classified (ie cases that did not respond to the question at either of the censuses or whose response at either of the two censuses could not be classified to a recognised ethnic group).

The gross flow column sums the flows in and out of each ethnic group and the net flow column shows the difference between the in- and out-flows. Comparison of the two illustrates that modest net flows may belie quite significant gross flows. The analysis in this report will focus on net flows because they indicate the impact of ethnic mobility on the observed size of the ethnic populations at any point in time.

Table 3

Inter-ethnic mobility of selected groups, 2001–06						
	2001	2006	Gross flow	Net flow	% Net flow 2001	% Annual net ⁽¹⁾
NZ European	1,732,797	1,541,964	365,424	-190,836	-11.01	-2.31
New Zealander	64,110	288,804	290,196	224,697	350.50	35.13
Other European	111,471	104,295	79,455	-7,176	-6.44	-1.32
Māori	268,914	274,848	65,013	5,937	2.21	0.44
Pacific	118,193	118,563	17,829	372	0.32	0.06
Asian	127,188	122,934	15,141	-4,254	-3.34	-0.68

(1) Geometric mean.

Note: Counts in this report have been rounded, so cell figures may not sum exactly to totals.

The net flow estimates in table 3 show that during the 2001–2006 intercensal period, the New Zealand European, Other European and Asian total response populations declined as a result of inter-ethnic mobility. On the other hand, the New Zealander, Māori and Pacific populations increased. The increase in the New Zealander population is quite notable and is consistent with the significant increase in the total usually resident population for this group at the 2006 Census.

The final column contains geometric means which approximate annualised impacts of the five-year net changes shown in the previous columns.

Table 4

Gross inter-ethnic mobility by age group, 2001–06				
Age group (years) 2006	No change	Change	Total	% Change
5–14	260,892	83,193	344,085	24.2
15–24	246,066	69,672	315,738	22.1
25–34	171,627	50,631	222,258	22.8
35–44	277,056	80,724	357,780	22.6
45–54	283,470	81,990	365,460	22.4
55–64	227,862	63,207	291,066	21.7
65–74	154,380	35,673	190,056	18.8
75–85	105,297	17,232	122,529	14.1
85+	30,969	4,275	35,244	12.1
Total	1,757,619	486,597	2,244,217	21.7

Table 4 shows how mobility varies by age group. Across all ages, about one-fifth of the population recorded a change of ethnicity relative to the seven categories used in this study (ie New Zealand European, Other European, New Zealander, Māori, Pacific, Asian, and Other.) There is also an age gradient from young to old, suggesting that as people age, their ethnic mobility declines. The higher level for the youngest group may reflect the influence of proxy responses of parents and caregivers. The significant drop for the 65–74-year group may reflect changed social interaction resulting from withdrawal from the labour force. As well as age factors, the gradient probably reflects some cohort and period factors. Older age-cohorts exhibit less multiple reporting than younger ones, with less potential for portfolio review. Māori, who generally exhibit higher rates of inter-ethnic mobility, have a younger age structure. Finally, the period effect of the New Zealander growth at the 2006 Census may have also affected the gradient.

Where did the New Zealanders come from?

Previous analysis of aggregate statistics (Statistics NZ, 2007) indicates that most of the growth of the New Zealander group between 2001 and 2006 can be attributed to people who changed from a New Zealand European response at the 2001 Census. Table 5 below confirms this and shows the contribution of people who reported New Zealand European only (sole-New Zealand European) at the 2001 Census to the growth of the New Zealander group at the 2006 Census. The sole-New Zealand European category accounted for 92 percent of the New Zealand European total response category in 2001, and focus on this category (as opposed to other combinations) facilitates analysis of ethnic divestment. The New Zealander categories shown in table 5 employ the single/combination classification which assigns each person to a unique category. Only categories which contain significant numbers are shown.

Overall, 92 percent of the growth in New Zealander responses at the 2006 Census can be attributed to people who at the 2001 Census reported New Zealand European only.

The bulk of the New Zealand European contribution went to the New Zealander only group. A significant contribution also went to the 'New Zealander and NZ European'.

Table 5

Contribution of sole-NZ European to New Zealander growth, 2001–06			
New Zealander (single/combined)	NZer growth 2001–06⁽¹⁾	Sole-NZ European contribution	Percent
Sole-NZer	195,858	186,723	95
NZer/NZ European	19,119	17,334	91
NZer/Māori	1,371	393	29
NZer/Other European	1,368	819	60
NZer/NZ European/Māori	3,285	768	23
NZer/Pacific	567	84	15
NZer/Asian	1,404	81	6
NZer/Other	-111	-45	42
Other non-NZE sources	1,833
NZer (total response)	224,697	206,157	92
Symbol: ... not applicable			

(1) NZer (total response) refers to matched dataset total, as shown in table 3.

While 92 percent of the growth of the New Zealander group came from the sole-New Zealand European group, the other 8 percent came from other groups. The impact of this on the Māori, Pacific and Asian groups is investigated in the next section.

Mobility in the Māori, Pacific, and Asian groups

Table 3 showed that the Māori and Pacific groups exhibited net population increase due to inter-ethnic mobility, while the Asian population exhibited net decline. This part of the analysis investigates the relative contributions of the New Zealand European and New Zealander populations to these changes.

Table 6 shows the mobility between the Māori, Pacific, and Asian total response groups and the sole-New Zealand European group. The in-flows in column 1 represent divestment from the respective ethnic groups in 2001 to the sole-New Zealand European group in 2006. The out-flows shown in column 2 represent diversification and divestment to these groups in 2006 from the sole-New Zealand European group in 2001. The third column shows the net effect of these counter-flows. All of the groups gained population increase at the expense of the sole-New Zealand European group (ie the out-flows exceeded the in-flows).

Table 6

Net impact of sole-New Zealand European on Māori, Pacific, and Asian ethnic groups, 2001–06						
	In-flow⁽¹⁾	Out-flow⁽²⁾	Net⁽³⁾	Population⁽⁴⁾	% Net	% Annual⁽⁵⁾
Any Māori>sole-NZE	17,391	28,653	11,262	268,914	4.19	0.82
Any Pacific>sole-NZE	3,441	4,356	915	118,191	0.77	0.15
Any Asian>sole-NZE	2,769	2,836	66	127,188	0.05	0.01

(1) In-flow to sole-NZE between 2001 and 2006.

(2) Out-flow from sole-NZE between 2001 and 2006.

(3) Net contribution of sole-NZE to the other group.

(4) 2001 matched population of other group, excluding ethnicity not specified.

(5) Geometric mean.

In stark contrast, table 7 shows that each of the Māori, Pacific, and Asian groups lost population to the sole-New Zealander group as a result of ethnic mobility. On an annual basis this equates to a loss to these groups of between 0.2 to 0.4 percent. It is also

notable that the magnitude of the net outflows to sole-New Zealander shown in table 6 exceeds the net inflows from sole-New Zealand European shown in table 7, for each of the respective groups.

Table 7

Net impact of sole-New Zealander on Māori, Pacific, and Asian ethnic groups, 2001–06						
	In-flow ⁽¹⁾	Out-flow ⁽²⁾	Net ⁽³⁾	Population ⁽⁴⁾	% Net	% Annual
Any Māori>NZer	8,292	2,997	-5,292	268,914	-1.97	-0.40
Any Pacific>NZer	1,521	474	-1,050	118,191	-0.89	-0.18
Any Asian>NZer	1,938	342	-1,596	127,188	-1.25	-0.25

(1) In-flow to NZer between 2001 and 2006.

(2) Out-flow from NZer between 2001 and 2006.

(3) Net contribution of NZer to other group.

(4) 2001 matched population of other group, excluding ethnicity not specified.

(5) Geometric mean.

These three groups account for about half of the growth of the sole-New Zealander population not accounted for by the sole-NZ European contribution (see table 5). The balance will come from other combined groups including New Zealand European, Other European, and Other.

Conclusion

This report has sought to address two research questions using matched 2001 and 2006 Census data. Where did the New Zealanders come from and what impact did that response have on other ethnic groups?

The results confirm that the overwhelming majority (over 90 percent) of 'new' New Zealander responses at 2006 were sole-New Zealand Europeans at the 2001 Census.

The results also lend considerable support to the notion that the New Zealander response in 2006 also exerted an influence on groups other than New Zealand European which are of public policy interest (ie Māori, Pacific peoples, and Asian). This influence is made even more notable given the apparent overall growth experienced by these groups resulting from mobility from the sole-New Zealand European category.

References

Coope, P, & Piesse, A (2000). "1991–1996 Inter-censal consistency study". Unpublished paper, Statistics New Zealand.

Statistics New Zealand (2007). *Profile of New Zealander Responses, Ethnicity Question: 2006 Census*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

Appendix 3: 2011 Census ethnicity question development programme

1. Introduction

As part of the development and design of the 2011 Census forms, research on ethnicity was carried out by the Statistics NZ questionnaire design team. This research was also an element of a wider programme of research undertaken as part of the Review of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard 2009.

This appendix is a report on only one aspect of 2011 Census questionnaire testing. A full questionnaire design report of all questions tested, along with a detailed description of methodologies, will be published in late 2010.

2. Objectives

The review sought to improve and broaden Statistics NZ's understanding of the issues surrounding national naming in the New Zealand census. Part of this review involved developing objectives to explore in questionnaire design testing for the 2011 Census. Key objectives were to build Statistics NZ's understanding of the current ethnicity question, the effects of changing or modifying the context of the ethnicity question by the addition of a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option or filter questions, and to provide some insight into respondents' motivations for choosing to identify as 'New Zealanders'.

Detailed testing objectives were developed to explore these issues. The objectives were to:

- build understanding of how respondents construct their ethnicity
- build understanding of motivations for identifying as a 'New Zealander' in the ethnicity question
- build understanding of how respondents define 'New Zealander' as an ethnicity
- assess the impacts of making no changes to the census ethnicity question
- assess the rate of 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the unchanged ethnicity question
- explore respondents' understanding of the unchanged ethnicity question and how they answer this question
- assess the rate of sole and multiple 'New Zealander' responses to the ethnicity question with the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option for targeted subgroups of the population
- investigate respondents' expectations for a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option in the ethnicity question
- assess the feasibility of the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option in the ethnicity question
- assess the impacts of changing the census ethnicity question
- investigate the effectiveness of national identity and birthplace of parents questions at filtering 'New Zealander' responses from the ethnicity question
- assess the feasibility of the national identity and birthplace of parents questions (ease of answering and sensitivity)

- assess the impacts of changing the context of the census ethnicity question
- build understanding of how respondents define 'New Zealander' in the context of national identity.

3. Methodology summary

To meet the objectives, a testing programme was carried out by the questionnaire design team between October 2008 and May 2009. A modified ethnicity question with a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option and two filter questions placed before the unchanged 2006 Census ethnicity question were developed and tested.

The testing programme largely used qualitative methodologies, including cognitive testing, mass completion testing, and focus groups. Six rounds of testing were conducted, including two rounds using te reo Māori / English forms. A total of 141 cognitive interviews, 445 mass completions, and 3 focus groups were conducted. A larger scale field test was also undertaken with a sample of 1,250 households, and followed up with telephone interviews with a sample of 93 respondents.

A table summarising the testing programme, and a more detailed methodology section describing the sampling process, the methods used, how the methods served the objectives, and some of the limitations of these methods, can be found in section 7.

4. Findings

4.1 Understanding ethnicity and the 'New Zealander' ethnic response

Key findings

- Connection to place, shared culture, shared ancestry or heritage, and physical characteristics were the main themes respondents described when constructing their ethnicity.
- Some common themes for choosing to identify as a 'New Zealander' were identified: a strong connection or loyalty to New Zealand, a lack of connection to other ethnic groups, and an opposition to the perceived use of ethnic information for benefit or for discrimination.
- At a broad level, respondents reported a strong identification and sense of connection with New Zealand as central to the definition of 'New Zealander' as an ethnic group. However, there was wide variation as to who could or should claim this label.
- Initial testing of the te reo Māori term for 'New Zealander' – 'Momo Niu Tireni' – indicated the term was not well known and was interpreted in varying ways.

Testing objectives

- Build understanding of how respondents construct their ethnicity.
- Build understanding of motivations for identifying as a 'New Zealander' in the ethnicity question.
- Build understanding of how respondents define 'New Zealander' as an ethnicity.

Summary of testing methodology

Across all of the cognitive and focus group testing of the ethnicity options, the questionnaire design team sought to understand how respondents constructed their ethnic identity. In cognitive testing, respondents were asked what they perceived the ethnicity question was asking, what they thought about when coming up with their answer, and their level of comfort with the ethnic group(s) they chose. After analysing information from the first cognitive testing round, a list of concepts that people think about when they construct their ethnicity was developed. This list was presented to respondents at the conclusion of the interview in subsequent cognitive testing rounds, and respondents were asked to rank the concepts to find the one that was most important in determining their ethnicity. A similar exercise using these concepts was also used in the focus groups. For those interviews where it was applicable, respondents were also asked what they thought 'New Zealander' meant as an ethnicity.

Findings

The ways respondents constructed their ethnic identities could be grouped into some common themes. These themes were connection to place, shared culture, shared ancestry or heritage, and physical characteristics:

- connection to place was often described as where a person was born or where they feel they belong, and included concepts of nationality, such as holding passports or having residency
- shared culture encompassed belief systems, customs and values, language and traditions
- shared ancestry or heritage included family background, bloodlines, genealogy, and lineage
- physical characteristics were generally described as race, colour, or genetic makeup.

These themes appear to align well with Statistics NZ's definition of ethnicity, with the exception of physical characteristics. Most respondents touched on one or two of these themes in their construction of ethnicity, with most touching on concepts that linked to the broad themes of connection to place, shared culture, and shared ancestry or heritage. In the ranking exercise, the majority of respondents identified ancestry and birthplace as most important in determining their ethnic identity. Respondents who identified as 'New Zealanders' were more likely to choose cultural affiliation as the most important factor in determining their ethnicity, compared with other respondents.

Respondents in cognitive interviews and participants in focus groups were asked to describe what they thought 'New Zealander' meant in the context of ethnicity.

Most respondents reported a strong identification with the place where you live – national pride and sense of connection to New Zealand – as central to the definition. While these were common themes, there were differences in opinion as to how these themes applied. This was most pertinent around birthplace and tenure in New Zealand. A number of respondents thought that a person needed to be born in New Zealand to call themselves a 'New Zealander', and for a couple this went a step further – a person is a 'New Zealander' if their family had lived in New Zealand for five, six, or seven generations. Other respondents thought one needed to grow up in New Zealand or live here for a certain length of time (this ranged from one year to a 'long time') to call themselves a 'New Zealander'. Some respondents thought that 'New Zealander' was not specific to any ethnic group, while others thought that it wasn't an ethnic group at all, or was a response option so a respondent didn't need to say what their ethnicity was. While not specifically probed about the type of person or other ethnic identity of those

who might respond as 'New Zealander', a number of respondents volunteered this information. Some respondents thought the term applied to everyone. Others thought that 'New Zealander' was an alternative response for 'New Zealand European', and a similar number thought people of mixed ethnic groups would call themselves 'New Zealanders', with one respondent thinking it might be for Māori that are 'half-caste' and another for first generation 'New Zealanders'.

'Momo Niu Tireni' was the te reo Māori translation for 'New Zealander', which was used in cognitive testing of te reo Māori / English forms. Most respondents in these tests were unfamiliar with this term. Respondents' understanding of the meaning of 'Momo Niu Tireni' varied. As with the testing of the term 'New Zealander', some respondents thought the term could apply to everyone, while others discussed more specific criteria. Some respondents thought that being born in New Zealand and living here were key: "*Nō konei. I whānau i konei, i tipu, i noho...*" ("From here. Born here, grew up here, lives here..."). Others added a caveat of being born here but not of Māori descent, or, not Māori or Pākehā. Others thought it applied to newer migrants to New Zealand, or to people who didn't like to use the term Pākehā or who would rather identify with 'New Zealander' than with their ethnicity.

For those who identified as 'New Zealander' in testing, their motivations could be grouped into themes:

- a strong connection or loyalty to New Zealand
- a lack of connection to other ethnic groups
- an opposition to the perceived use of ethnic information for benefit
- an opposition to the perceived use of ethnic information for discrimination.

Respondents could be motivated by one or any combination of these themes.

The majority of respondents interviewed who chose to identify as 'New Zealander' were motivated by a lack of connection to Europe, combined with their strength of connection to New Zealand. One respondent stated:

"We don't look to Europe as our home base, some people look to England to retrace their birthright, but a lot of us don't. You will find that many New Zealanders nowadays feel more close to Australia than Europe, it's more the 'Pacific outlook' as opposed to the 'European outlook.'"

Other respondents motivated by a lack of connection to other groups may come from a mixed ethnic background or have recent links to another country, but not feel a particularly strong connection to any of these:

"I consider myself a 'New Zealander' 'cause that's the group I relate best to. I'm half-German, but I don't really relate so much to Germany – I've never been there, so although ethnically maybe I'd be considered part-German, I identify more with New Zealand. I think it's a cultural thing as much as anything else."

For these respondents, 'New Zealander' is an emerging ethnic group that better describes the dominant ethnic group of New Zealand than 'New Zealand European' does.

Some respondents chose to identify as 'New Zealander' as recognition of a New Zealand national identity. One respondent stated:

"I consider myself a 'New Zealander', and my ethnic background would be Samoan and Chinese."

A respondent, who first identified as 'New Zealand Māori' and then subsequently chose to identify as 'New Zealander' when the option was offered on a flashcard, was

motivated because "we should all be the same, especially in such a small country...New Zealanders."

These respondents have shown that choosing a 'New Zealander' national identity was either in addition to or in place of other ethnic identities.

Among respondents opposed to the use of ethnic information, there were those who disagreed with dividing people into groups as they believed this leads to some groups getting benefits or special privileges over others. As one respondent put it:

"Some people have rights because they've got a teaspoon of blood, and others don't – I don't agree with it."

Others disagreed with dividing people into groups as they believe this can cause discrimination. During testing, one respondent discussed this theme. He stated:

"This whole ethnic group thing is just totally misguided, I'm really unhappy about this...We shouldn't be asking people their ethnic groups.... You start lining people up like that, it's ignorant."

In effect, there is an element of protest in choosing the 'New Zealander' ethnic response for those who are opposed to the use of ethnic information. Therefore, these respondents may be more likely to identify themselves solely as 'New Zealander'.

4.2 Unchanged ethnicity question

Key findings

- Most respondents reported having little difficulty answering the unchanged ethnicity question.
- Some overseas-born respondents were unsure how they were expected to answer the ethnicity question.
- A small number of respondents did not feel any of the responses listed on the form 'best described' them.
- Some respondents were not aware that they could give more than one response to the ethnicity question.
- Most respondents in the follow-up survey reported that they answered the ethnicity question the same way as in other collections.
- A number of respondents questioned in the follow-up survey reported that they did not know what the census ethnicity information was used for.
- The rate of 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the March 2009 census test was similar to that from the 2001 Census and to those found in other data collections (less than 2 percent). This write-in response rate is considerably below that of the 2006 Census.

Testing objectives

- Assess the impacts of making no changes to the census ethnicity question.
- Assess the rate of 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the unchanged ethnicity question.
- Explore respondents' understanding of the unchanged ethnicity question and how they answer this question.

Summary of testing methodology

The unchanged ethnicity question was tested in the first round of cognitive testing only and in the March 2009 census test. The follow-up telephone survey asked respondents

a series of questions about this version of the ethnicity question (including whether respondents answered the ethnicity question differently in other collections, did the ethnicity question prompt household discussion, and whether respondents understood the uses of census data). The unchanged ethnicity question was also tested using the filter questions in both cognitive testing and mass completions.

Findings

Nineteen cognitive tests with the unchanged ethnicity question were undertaken. No respondents who were presented with the unchanged ethnicity question chose to identify as a 'New Zealander' by writing in this response. A small number of respondents chose to identify as 'New Zealander' in cognitive testing where the ethnicity question followed one of the filter questions. These findings will be discussed separately in section 4.4.

Most respondents reported having little difficulty answering the unchanged ethnicity question. A small number of respondents expressed their discomfort with the 2006 Census ethnicity question, or with the response options listed. Some respondents born in European countries reported they had difficulty knowing whether to identify as NZ European or, for example, as 'British' or 'Irish'. For these respondents, there was no consensus on who should identify with the NZ European ethnic group. There was confusion around the length of time one had lived in New Zealand or your residency status. Two quotes emphasise this point:

"Being English I'm never sure how to answer this question. Am I 'English' or 'New Zealand European'? Because I see you've put DUTCH as an option that suggests to me that you'd rather I wrote English or British. But all this will change when my residency is through and I get a passport – then it will be easy. I'll be New Zealand European."

"This one I always have to think twice... I wasn't born here, I was born in England... do I call myself New Zealand European?... It depends what mood I'm in. Usually I would, I'm a New Zealand citizen now, I've got a NZ passport, so I guess it's not too cheeky. There would be an argument, if you really had to prove a point, where do you draw the line? I've been here forty odd years, so I guess I can say I'm New Zealand European."

A few respondents preferred to identify as 'New Zealand Māori' rather than Māori. One respondent elaborated on her preference for this description: "I'm New Zealand Māori, 'cause my Mum's British and my Dad's only a quarter Māori". Respondents may also be familiar with choosing a 'New Zealand Māori' ethnic response because this is a term commonly used in other ethnicity question response options. One respondent refused to answer the 2006 Census ethnicity question. When given the alternative of answering the ethnicity question which included the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option, this respondent stated that he would mark 'New Zealander' and campaign for others to do the same.

Some respondents were not aware that they could give more than one ethnic response. This was an incidental finding rather than something that was specifically being looked for. This finding is of note because census nevertheless gets substantively higher multiple response rates than other ethnic data collections.

A number of respondents who were questioned on the uses of ethnicity information in the follow-up survey stated they didn't know what ethnicity data was used for. Of those that did, community type measures, service provision, and statistics gathering were common themes describing the uses of ethnicity information. Respondents were also asked if the ethnicity question generated discussion in their household – for the majority, the answer was no. Among respondents who answered yes, a couple

discussed issues along the lines of “We are all Kiwis” and “New Zealand is one nation”. Both of these respondents gave a ‘New Zealand European’ response to the ethnicity question.

In the follow-up survey, respondents were also asked if they answer the census ethnicity question the same way they answer ethnicity questions in other collections. Most respondents reported that they answered the questions in the same way. A couple of respondents described the differences in the way ethnicity questions were asked across different collections, such as ‘Other Ethnicity’ not always being an option. One respondent reported that in certain surveys “they need people to say they are Māori”. Another respondent said they identified as ‘New Zealander’ “in the last census or the one before that”.

‘New Zealander’ write-in responses in the March 2009 census test were less than 2 percent of all responses. This proportion is lower than that of the 2006 Census (11.1 percent) and is more consistent with the rate of ‘New Zealander’ write-in responses in the 2001 Census (2.4 percent). The higher percentage of ‘New Zealand European’ responses given in the March 2009 census test was also closer to that given in the 2001 Census than in the 2006 Census, which seems consistent with the drop in ‘New Zealander’ write-in responses. These findings suggest that public debate can have a volatile effect on census, and that in the absence of current public discussion, ‘New Zealander’ response rates have dropped below those seen in the 2006 Census.

4.3 ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option

Key findings

- Rates of ‘New Zealander’ responses were higher when there was a ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option included in the ethnicity question.
- A few respondents chose ‘New Zealander’ as their sole ethnic response.
- A number of respondents did not initially notice the ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option.
- For a few respondents, the addition of a ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option was confusing and a few believed it was an invalid ethnic response.

Testing objectives

- Assess the rate of sole and multiple ‘New Zealander’ responses to the ethnicity question with the tick-box response option for targeted subgroups of the population.
- Investigate respondents’ expectations for a ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option in the ethnicity question.
- Assess the feasibility of the ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option in the ethnicity question.
- Assess the impact of changing the census ethnicity question.

Summary of testing methodology

The ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option was tested in cognitive testing and mass completions. In cognitive interviews, respondents were presented with either the unchanged ethnicity question or the ethnicity question with the ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option in the form. Those that were presented with the unchanged ethnicity question were also presented with the ‘New Zealander’ tick-box response option version of the question in the form of a laminated show card. This allowed the observation of

some of the differences in how respondents might answer these questions. Self-reporting about how respondents would hypothetically answer a question in a certain situation is highly subjective. Therefore, results from this exercise have been treated with an appropriate degree of caution, and readers should bear this in mind when reading the results from this exercise.

Respondents were observed answering the ethnicity question and asked questions about how they answered to explore understanding and ease of answering the question. Respondents were asked what they thought the term 'New Zealander' means, to help broaden understanding of how respondents define 'New Zealander' in the context of ethnicity.

The term 'Momo Niu Tireni' was tested as the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option in cognitive testing of te reo Māori / English forms. Respondents were questioned on their familiarity with this term. The New Zealand census forms are bilingual, therefore this was an important step in assessing the feasibility of this response option and the impact it might have on responses. In later testing rounds, mass completion testing with the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option was undertaken to give an indication about the uptake of the 'New Zealander' response option (sole and multiple response) among subgroups of the population that were of particular interest.

Findings

Thirty-seven cognitive tests with the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option in the ethnicity question were undertaken. Around one in five respondents chose 'New Zealander' as one of, or as their sole ethnic response. Around half of these respondents gave 'New Zealander' as their sole ethnic responses.

As noted in section 4.1, most respondents who were tested with te reo Māori / English forms were unfamiliar with the term used for 'New Zealander' - 'Momo Niu Tireni'. Only one respondent in cognitive testing of te reo Māori / English forms chose to mark 'Momo Niu Tireni' as one of their ethnic responses. This respondent stated that he would not have reported this response if it had not been offered as a tick-box.

Around half of the respondents in cognitive testing with the unchanged ethnicity question indicated that they would change their response when subsequently presented with the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option. The majority of these respondents reported that they would choose to mark 'New Zealander' in addition to the other options they gave, with only a few respondents reporting that they would give 'New Zealander' as their sole response if offered the tick-box option. One respondent who indicated she would give a sole 'New Zealander' ethnic response stated she would answer differently in a survey that she perceived ethnicity information was useful for a certain purpose, for example, in an education or health survey, and it was important to know if you were Māori, Pacific peoples, etc.

In targeted cognitive testing with Māori, around half of the respondents who identified as Māori chose 'New Zealander' as one of several options when subsequently presented with the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option. One respondent reported she would convert to a sole 'New Zealander' response. This respondent had initially given her ethnicity as 'Other Ethnicity' - 'New Zealand Māori'.

Cognitive testing found that a number of respondents didn't initially notice the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option. Some of these respondents noticed the option after they had already marked another response, and others didn't notice it until they were prompted or questioned about their answer. A couple of respondents stated that they thought that it was strange that both 'New Zealand European' and 'New Zealander' were on the form together, believing it needed to be one or the other. In targeted testing, a couple of respondents found the inclusion of a 'New Zealander' response

option confusing, and a couple commented that 'New Zealander' wasn't an ethnic group – it was a nationality or a geographical area. One respondent noted that the inclusion of a 'New Zealander' tick-box made her feel able to tick the 'New Zealand European' box, which she had previously interpreted as being only for those born in New Zealand. Reactions to the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option (as judged by the interviewers) showed a lot of variation, with almost equal numbers reacting positively and negatively to this option.

The 'New Zealander' tick-box response option was tested in a total of 268 targeted mass completions with Māori, Asian, Pacific, and overseas-born respondents in round 3. Fourteen respondents from targeted testing with Māori, Asian, and overseas-born respondents chose to mark 'New Zealander', with seven giving this as their sole ethnic response.

Three of these sole 'New Zealander' respondents exhibited characteristics typical of those who wrote-in 'New Zealander' in the 2006 Census (see *Profile of New Zealander Responses, Ethnicity Question: 2006 Census*), and the remaining four respondents were born overseas. Out of the 268 mass completions from this round of testing, 185 respondents were born overseas. All of the sole 'New Zealander' respondents born overseas were born in Asian countries, and were also tested at the same venue, suggesting that there may have been a group influence to mark the sole 'New Zealander' response option. There was a range in terms of the length of time these respondents had lived in New Zealand, with two recent arrivals (1 year), one medium-term (7 years), and one long-term (28 years). The respondents who had recently arrived in New Zealand would not have been present for the public debate about the 'New Zealander' tick-box.

In round 4, the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option was tested in mass completions. These tests were conducted in areas targeted as having a higher rate of respondents identifying as 'New Zealanders' in the 2006 Census than other parts of the country. A total of 68 forms were completed in these targeted tests. Twenty respondents chose to mark 'New Zealander', 16 of whom gave 'New Zealander' as their sole ethnic group. Of those who gave 'New Zealander' as one of several ethnic groups, other ethnic groups they identified included Cook Island Maori, Tokelauan, and Samoan. No respondent in this round chose to mark both 'New Zealand European' and 'New Zealander' as their ethnic group. Three respondents who solely identified with the 'New Zealander' ethnic group also stated they were of Māori descent.

In mass completion testing, very few respondents chose to mark both 'New Zealand European' and 'New Zealander' as their ethnic group. During cognitive testing, a number of respondents in previous rounds indicated that they would mark both of these options if presented with this question. The differences in these results could identify a weakness in this methodology, which relies on respondents reporting what they would do, rather than observing what they actually do. The mass completion exercise showed that people are more likely to choose just one of these options, which is further evidenced by instances where the respondent crossed out their original response and left only the 'New Zealander' response. This is also consistent with the finding that some respondents are not aware that they can give more than one ethnic response.

Respondents in the follow-up survey to the March 2009 census test were asked whether they expected to see 'New Zealander' listed as a tick-box response option in the ethnicity question, and whether they agreed or disagreed with this being an option that people could select on their forms. Results showed that most people didn't expect to see a 'New Zealander' response option on the form. Most people either agreed or were ambivalent that 'New Zealander' probably should be an available response option.

4.4 Filter questions

Key findings

- There was no evidence to suggest that either the 'national identity' or 'birthplace of parents' filter questions would have either a modifying or reinforcing effect on 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the ethnicity question.
- Respondents appeared to construct their ethnicity in slightly different ways based on whether they had been presented with the national identity or birthplace of parents filter question prior to giving their ethnicity.
- Most respondents interpreted national identity as referring to nationality; however, a number of respondents were unsure what national identity meant.
- Respondents generally described a 'New Zealander' (in the context of national identity) as someone living in New Zealand or being from New Zealand.
- A couple of Pacific respondents expressed sensitivity to the birthplace of parents questions.
- Negative impacts were identified for the birthplace question. This was due to the reduction of the tick-box response options for this question to make space for additional questions on the front page of the form.

Testing objectives

- Investigate the effectiveness of national identity and birthplace of parents questions at filtering 'New Zealander' responses from the ethnicity question.
- Assess the feasibility of the national identity and birthplace of parents questions (ease of answering and sensitivity).
- Assess the impact of changing the context of the census ethnicity question.
- Build understanding of how respondents define 'New Zealander' in the context of national identity.

Summary of testing methodology

The idea of additional filter questions before the ethnicity question is that it could modify the behaviour of respondents who answered 'New Zealander'. The filter question would allow respondents an opportunity to first state their affiliation with New Zealand, thereby freeing them to give the additional detail sought in the ethnicity question. Two filter questions were tested – national identity and birthplace of parents (see section 8 for the questions). Both of these options were identified by users as potential solutions to the 'New Zealander' issue.

The filter questions were tested in cognitive testing and mass completions. In cognitive testing, respondents were presented with one of the filter question options, followed by the unchanged ethnicity question. To accommodate the additional question(s) the response options for the birthplace question were reduced. See section 9 for the modified version of the front page of the form used for testing. By observing instances of 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the ethnicity question, and asking respondents whether the filter questions influenced their answers to the ethnicity question, some information on the effectiveness of the questions as filters was gathered. Respondents were observed while answering the questions and, were also asked about the ease of answering and sensitivity to assess the feasibility of the questions. For the national

identity option, respondents were asked what they thought 'New Zealander' meant in the context of national identity. This question was asked to build understanding about how respondents define national identity, and to compare this with how respondents define 'New Zealander' in the context of ethnicity. Two versions of the national identity question were developed. The first was an open-ended question: 'What do you consider your national identity to be?'. The second version asked the same question but provided two tick-box response options: "'New Zealander' or 'Other'. Please state".

In the fourth round of testing, targeted mass completions of the filter questions were undertaken in areas that were identified as having higher rates of respondents who gave a 'New Zealander' write-in response in the 2006 Census. As in cognitive testing, the filter questions in round 4 were placed before the unchanged ethnicity question. The purpose of this testing was to get an indication of the number of respondents who might write in a 'New Zealander' ethnic response despite the inclusion of the filter question. The filter questions were also included in round 3 of targeted mass completions with Māori, Pacific, and Asian respondents. However, they were tested for feasibility as questions, not as filters, and so were positioned after the unchanged ethnicity question.

Findings

4.4.1 National identity

A total of 49 cognitive tests with the national identity filter question were undertaken. Four respondents gave a 'New Zealander' write-in response to the ethnicity question. While numbers were small, this was a higher proportion than that seen in the March 2009 census test. Cognitive testing of the national identity filter question with respondents who identified with Māori, Asian, and Pacific peoples ethnic groups suggested that this filter question would not encourage these respondents to write in a 'New Zealander' response to the ethnicity question.

Nearly all respondents reported that they did not think that the national identity question had any influence on their answer to ethnicity. A couple of respondents talked about being more comfortable answering the ethnicity question after having answered a question on national identity. For example, one respondent noted that having said his national identity was Indian, he felt more comfortable putting Sikh as his ethnicity. This could indicate that respondents could give more detailed responses to ethnicity from the inclusion of this question. One respondent who gave 'New Zealander' as their ethnicity stated that the national identity question encouraged them to give this response. When conceptualising ethnicity after answering a question on their national identity, respondents appeared more likely to discuss 'concrete' themes around race, skin colour, and appearance.

Overall, respondents were likely to interpret the national identity question as referring to nationality, passport and/or country of birth, although some saw national identity as being a combination of nationality and other cultural factors. A number said that this question made them feel proud. Some respondents expressed that they were unsure what the difference between ethnicity and national identity was. It was noted that those who did not immediately identify as 'New Zealander' found this question more difficult.

Respondents who received the second version of the national identity question (ie including a 'New Zealander' tick-box) were asked specifically what they understood the term 'New Zealander' to mean in the context of a national identity question. There were various answers: "home"; people who live in New Zealand or are from New Zealand; and as a term that can describe "lots of different groups of people". For a couple of respondents who identified as Māori, there was a sense that while non-Māori might "feel" like 'New Zealanders', Māori "just are".

In articulating the differences between the national identity question and the ethnicity question, responses could be grouped into three themes. Some respondents described national identity as their current status or how they live at the present time, as opposed to ethnicity, which is more stable and refers to a person's broader background. Another group of respondents thought the question on national identity was a broad one that was inclusive of a wide group of people, while they thought the ethnicity question was more of a subnationality question to try to gather more detail on this wider group. Other respondents made the distinction between nationality and biological concepts such as blood or race. Those respondents who wrote-in 'New Zealander' as their ethnicity (and one New Zealand European who supported the term 'New Zealander' being included but seemed to respond 'New Zealand European' out of habit) stated there was a difference between the two questions, yet elected to give the same answer to both.

Mass completion testing of the national identity filter question was undertaken with 47 respondents in round 4. Only one respondent from this testing gave a 'New Zealander' write-in ethnic response. This is similar to the rate from the March 2009 census test.

There was a high non-response rate to the open-ended national identity question (version 1) from the round of targeted mass completion testing with Māori, Pacific, Asian, and overseas-born respondents in round 3. This suggests the concept of national identity is not well understood with these groups. Non-response to this version of the national identity question with those targeted as likely 'New Zealanders' in round 4 was much less, but still high. Respondents did not seem to have too much difficulty answering the second version of this question with the tick-box response options.

There was some evidence from cognitive testing and mass completions of increased non-response to respondents' birthplace when the question had fewer response options (a result of reducing response options for this question to make space on the form for the national identity question). In addition, the findings suggested that some respondents would give less specific answers to the birthplace question (such as UK) without the prompt of 'England' in the list of response options.

4.4.2 Birthplace of parents

A total of 36 cognitive tests with the 'birthplace of parents' filter question were undertaken, with one respondent writing in 'New Zealander' as her ethnicity. This respondent commented that she puts 'New Zealander' on all forms, "even at A&E". A couple of respondents verbalised during discussion their preference for a 'New Zealander' ethnicity but did not write this in as a response. These respondents did not believe that the filter questions influenced their answer to the ethnicity question.

Nearly all respondents answered that their response to ethnicity was not influenced by their response to the questions on the birthplace of their parents. Further probing of a couple of respondents who said their answer to ethnicity was influenced by the birthplace of parents questions appeared to show that they meant the birthplace of their parents was something they considered in determining their ethnicity, but that if the these questions weren't there they would still answer ethnicity in the same way.

Respondents discussed more cultural themes such as heritage, culture, beliefs, history, how they have been brought up, and their background, in their conceptualisation of ethnicity following the birthplace of parents filter question. Physical characteristics (skin colour, blood, and race) and references to place (birthplace, place one originates from, noting that Europe is far away) were also discussed.

Respondents were asked to describe the difference between the birthplace of parents question and the ethnicity question, to better understand how these were being interpreted and to explore whether the birthplace of parents question modified respondents' behaviour in answering the ethnicity question. The majority of respondents

regarded these questions as very different – birthplace was based on fact and didn't necessarily determine ethnicity. Other distinctions made were along the lines of birthplace being a physical place that did not necessarily determine ethnicity, and that ethnicity went back further than where one's parents were born. A couple of respondents, however, thought there was no difference between asking about parents' birthplace and their own ethnicity.

The majority of respondents did not express any negativity towards the birthplace of parents question being included in the form, and most reported that they had no difficulty answering this. One respondent commented, "I'm ok about that... but... I think of people who are adopted. I had a daughter who was adopted out and she isn't able to ask me where her father was born."

A couple of the respondents from the targeted testing with Pacific peoples talked about being reminded of parents who had passed away. One of these respondents commented that "it's nice to be reminded of them", however, another respondent was unsure whether to provide information about a father who had passed away. The respondents who had discussed issues around the death of parents indicated that this question was difficult to answer for that reason. A couple of respondents also commented on the relevance of the questions, with one respondent being hesitant to answer and commenting, "Why should parents be involved in this?" and another respondent stated that he did not feel these questions were relevant.

Mass completion testing of the birthplace of parents filter question was undertaken with 61 respondents in round 4. Two respondents gave write-in responses of 'New Zealander' to the ethnicity question following the birthplace of parents' question in mass completion testing. As with national identity testing, this is a similar write-in response rate to that of the March 2009 census test. One of these respondents commented in the feedback section of the mass completion form "Regard myself as a 'New Zealander', as all my family."

The non-response rate to the birthplace of parents question in mass completion testing is comparable to that of other topics included in the census. The types of responses to this question were in line with expectations. Non-response could be attributed to not knowing the birthplace of mother and father, or not wanting to answer this question for some reason. Non-response might be reduced by the inclusion of a 'don't know' response option.

As with the national identity question, there was evidence from cognitive and mass completion testing of higher than expected non-response, and less specific responses, to the birthplace question.

Summary of filter question findings

There appeared to be some differences in how respondents conceptualised ethnicity based on which filter question preceded the ethnicity question in cognitive testing. In conceptualising ethnicity, some respondents who had been given the national identity form talked about concrete themes around race, skin colour, and appearance. Alternatively, some respondents who had been presented with the birthplace of parents filter questions discussed more cultural themes. When respondents described the differences between ethnicity and the filter question, the national identity filter question appeared to have more strength of association with the ethnicity question.

While it is clear that respondents acknowledged differences in the concepts of national identity, birthplace of parents, and ethnicity, this did not appear to affect how they answered the unchanged ethnicity question. Overall some respondents in cognitive and mass completion testing still elected to write in a 'New Zealander' ethnic response.

While the questions were generally understandable and easy for respondents to answer, some issues were identified, and potential data quality impacts to the birthplace question were also identified as a consequence of the introduction of these questions on the front of the census form. Cognitive testing of the birthplace of parents questions suggested that some Pacific respondents might find these questions sensitive, and testing of the national identity filter question suggested a number of respondents were unsure what national identity was. These issues would need to be further tested to determine the feasibility of the questions.

There are a number of complexities inherent in understanding the effect of filter questions. As is discussed in the detailed methodology section (section 7), qualitative research and some of the methods employed have some limitations. The research undertaken on the filter questions has some value in giving an indication about the effectiveness of these questions, however further research is needed to be more definitive about these effects and any impacts they may have.

5. Conclusions

Questionnaire design testing on ethnicity sought to improve and broaden Statistics NZ's understanding of the issues surrounding national naming in the New Zealand census. The findings from this testing have built our understanding of the current ethnicity question, the effects of modifying the ethnicity question by the addition of a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option or filter questions, and given some insight into respondents' motivations for choosing to identify as 'New Zealanders'. A substantive amount of qualitative testing on ethnicity has been undertaken to explore these issues. Key results relevant to these objectives are:

- The majority of respondents seemed to be comfortable answering the unchanged ethnicity question. However, a small number of respondents did not feel any of the responses listed in the ethnicity question best described them and some overseas-born respondents were unsure how they were expected to answer the question. Some respondents were unaware they could give more than one response to the ethnicity question. The rate of write-in 'New Zealander' responses to the unchanged ethnicity question was more in line with the rate from the 2001 Census than the 2006 Census. Respondents' understanding of ethnicity appeared to align well with Statistics NZ's definition of ethnicity.
- Rates of 'New Zealander' responses were higher when there was a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option included in the ethnicity question. A few respondents chose 'New Zealander' as their sole ethnic response, a small number of whom were born overseas. 'New Zealander' as an ethnic group is understood by respondents in many different ways and a few respondents did not believe it was a valid ethnic group.
- Testing of the national identity and birthplace of parents filter questions did not show any compelling evidence of the effectiveness of these questions at filtering 'New Zealander' write-in responses from the ethnicity question. It is acknowledged that further testing of the filter questions is needed on a larger scale in order to be more definitive about whether the filter questions may have an effect.
- There were different motivations for choosing to identify as a 'New Zealander'. Some common themes were identified: a strong connection or loyalty to New Zealand, a lack of connection to other ethnic groups, and an opposition to the use of ethnic information for perceived benefit or discrimination. Most respondents described a strong connection to

New Zealand and a lack of connection to other ethnic groups as motivators.

There are known impacts to the use of ethnicity information in research and policy as a result of change to the ethnicity question over time. In questionnaire design, making changes to questions and introducing new questions have potential impacts on respondent understanding and data quality for existing questions. Statistics NZ takes a conservative approach in changing questions, because of the need for time series data.

6. Summary of testing programme (in chronological order)

	Summary of testing	Testing methods/Ethnicity options tested
Round 1 (English)	14–30 October 2008 29 cognitive interviews Conducted in Wellington and Christchurch Predominantly respondents from the 'European' branch of the ethnicity classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> Unchanged ethnicity question (show card of question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option question) Ethnicity question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option
Generational attachment testing	November 2008 8 cognitive interviews Conducted in Wellington Predominantly respondents from the 'European' branch of the ethnicity classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> Birthplace of parents filter question 2006 Census ethnicity question
Round 2 (English)	8 December 2008–18 February 2009 24 cognitive interviews Conducted in Wellington and Rotorua Predominantly respondents from the 'European' and 'Māori' branches of the ethnicity classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> Ethnicity question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option National identity filter question v1 National identity filter question v2 Birthplace of parents filter question
Round 1 (te reo Māori / English)	27 January–24 February 2009 8 cognitive interviews Conducted in Wellington and Gisborne Predominantly respondents from the 'Māori' branch of the ethnicity classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> Unchanged ethnicity question
Round 3 (English)	19 March–29 March 2009 268 mass completions – conducted with 5 targeted groups: overseas born, Pacific, Asian, Māori, and a mixed workplace group 25 cognitive interviews Conducted in Auckland Respondents were from a range of ethnic groups covering the main groupings of European, Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian, and MELAA ethnic groups	<i>Cognitive testing</i> National identity filter question v2 Birthplace of parents filter question <i>Mass completion testing</i> Ethnicity question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option
March 2009 census test	24 March 2009 Approximately 1,250 randomly selected households in the Canterbury region Response rate of 57% of sampled dwellings Predominantly respondents from the 'European' branch of the ethnicity classification	<i>Field test</i> Unchanged ethnicity question
Round 2 (te reo Māori / English)	1 April–15 April 2009 18 cognitive tests Conducted in Wellington Predominantly respondents from the 'Māori' branch of the classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> Ethnicity question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option
March 2009 census test follow-up survey	8 April–17 April 2009 Sample of 93 respondents from the March 2009 census test, with a response rate of 84% Predominantly respondents from the 'European' branch of the ethnicity classification	n/a
Round 4 (English)	29 April–4 May 2009 36 cognitive interviews 176 mass completions 3 focus groups Conducted in Timaru, Dunedin, Balclutha, and Invercargill Predominantly respondents from the 'European' branch of the ethnicity classification	<i>Cognitive testing</i> National identity filter question v2 Birthplace of parents filter question <i>Mass completion testing</i> Ethnicity question with 'New Zealander' tick-box response option National identity filter question v1 Birthplace of parents filter question

7. Detailed methodology

Qualitative research is very useful for exploring questionnaire design issues in combination with other quantitative research. While quantitative research is appropriate for answering questions like 'how many?' or 'how much?', qualitative research is used for collecting a wider breadth of information. Qualitative research helps discover the underlying motivations, feelings, values, attitudes, and perceptions that people have.

A common criticism of qualitative research is that it cannot be generalised to a wider population and therefore, is very limited in use. Qualitative research is not designed to provide statistical generalisations; however, it is able to make some analytical generalisations. In qualitative research, some generalisations about people's behaviour and what motivates them can be made about the relevant segments of the population being interviewed.

Another limitation of qualitative research is that the environment in which the research takes place is not 'natural'. Key factors of the artificial environment are the presence of the interviewer/facilitator, and the context in which the testing is conducted. The relationship between the interviewer/facilitator and respondent(s), and the way questions are phrased may lead a respondent to answer in a particular way. Respondents may be influenced by what they think the interviewer/facilitator is expecting, or express an opinion because they have been asked, but really hold no strong opinion either way.

In addition, this testing takes place outside of the census 'proper' environment. An example of this is the absence of campaigns, such as the campaign to write-in 'New Zealander' in the ethnicity question in the 2006 Census.

As a result of these limitations, respondents may not answer as they would in a 'normal' situation. These factors have been considered in the development of the objectives, the selection of respondents, and the methodology employed. These limitations are acknowledged and where appropriate discussed in the findings of this report.

Selection of respondents

Respondents in qualitative research are more likely to be compliant respondents because of the voluntary nature of the testing. In addition to general recruitment of respondents through newspaper advertising, the testing programme was undertaken with a sample of respondents who were purposively selected to represent a relevant range of respondent types, including Māori, Pacific, Asian, and overseas-born respondents. In order to target these groups, assumptions about membership in a group based on participation in certain activities or being in a certain place were made. Examples are targeting a university marae, an English language school, and a Pacific church. There were difficulties finding willing participants for the targeted Māori testing. 'New Zealander' type respondents were targeted based on the areas of geographic concentration of those who wrote-in 'New Zealander' in the 2006 Census. Te reo Māori/English forms testing was targeted based on ability to use te reo Māori, rather than having Māori ethnicity.

The nature of targeting means there can be biases in the types of respondents tested or not tested. In addition, not all respondents targeted for an ethnic characteristic may in fact choose this label for themselves. When referring to results from this targeting, it has been made explicit that the testing was targeted at these respondents, and results are reported based on how respondents chose to identify themselves in the test census forms. Information about respondents' birthplace, birthplace of their parents, and Māori descent have been used to provide additional contextual information about respondents.

Cognitive testing

Cognitive testing was used in all six testing rounds, with a total of 141 cognitive interviews conducted in 14 territorial authorities around the country. This method was used to test the unchanged ethnicity question, the unchanged ethnicity question preceded by one of two filter questions, and the ethnicity question with a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option.

Cognitive testing is an assessment technique used to test how well questions function in practice. In particular, ascertaining the degree of alignment between what the statistician wants to measure and what the respondent understands when they provide their answers. This technique provides rich, detailed information and is very useful for exploring respondents' cognitive thought processes, understanding of terms used, and motivations for responses.

The cognitive testing involved one-to-one interviews with respondents who completed a census form while being observed and asked questions by the interviewer. The interviewer noted responses given and used concurrent and retrospective questioning to learn more about respondents' cognitive thought processes. Respondents were also invited to discuss any issues or comments they had throughout the interview.

Care has been taken to ensure that as much as possible, the probing questions asked did not lead respondents to answer in a particular way. A total of twelve interviewers were used in this testing, and debriefs were held during and after each round to check how the question lines worked in practice and to ensure that to the best of their abilities, interviewers were consistent in their interactions with respondents and their reporting on their findings.

Mass completions

Mass completions were used in the third and fourth rounds of testing only. Mass completion testing was conducted in eight territorial authorities, with a total of 445 tests undertaken with 16 different groups.

Mass completion testing is used to test questions with targeted groups of people. In a typical mass completion, respondents complete a short version of the form in a group setting without input from Statistics NZ staff. While no probing questions are asked, the responses given can give an indication of how well different questions might work with different groups of people.

Three different versions of a short form were tested using mass completions:

- 3 a national identity filter question followed by the unchanged ethnicity question
- 4 a 'birthplace of parents' filter question followed by the unchanged ethnicity question
- 5 the ethnicity question with a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option.

Respondents completed only one version of the mass completion form. All three versions also included other census questions such as age, sex, and marital status, again to obtain additional information about the characteristics of respondents.

The first two variants allowed the gathering of some information about the rates of 'New Zealander' write-in responses following the filter questions for targeted groups. This built understanding of the effectiveness of these questions as 'filters'. The third variant allowed the gathering of information for targeted groups on the rates of sole and multiple responses to the 'New Zealander' tick-box response option. This gave insight into the impacts of the changed questions for different subgroups of the population. The

third variant of the mass completion form included the national identity and birthplace of parents questions later in the form, following the ethnicity question. This allowed some evaluation of the feasibility of the filter questions as questions in their own right rather than solely as filters.

Conducting this testing in groups means some respondents may observe and be influenced by how other group members answer questions. This can also be the case for the census however.

Focus groups

Focus groups were used in the fourth round of testing only. Three focus groups were conducted with groups of between 10 and 12 participants.

A focus group is a discussion among a group of people. Focus group testing can be used to explore attitudes and experiences within a group dynamic. This technique allows participants to be able to react and build on comments, and for the facilitator to be flexible and explore issues as they arise.

The focus groups used in this testing involved a facilitator guiding a semi-structured discussion exploring the group's thoughts on ethnicity, national identity, and birthplace of parents. This was followed by a card-sorting exercise in which group members identified the most relevant concept when constructing their ethnicity from the list of concepts developed in previous cognitive testing. Given the impact of the 'New Zealander' campaign in 2006, this exercise helped build understanding about how people construct and negotiate their identity when they are part of a group.

The interactive nature of this group testing can mean that participants may not feel comfortable expressing their opinions and socially sensitive topics may not be widely discussed. Some participants may dominate the discussion, and participants may be influenced by other group members. The success of focus groups relies heavily on the ability of the facilitator, and they do not allow for in-depth individual probing.

Field test

Field tests can be used to test questions on a larger scale. The March 2009 census test involved approximately 1,250 randomly selected households in the Canterbury region. It aimed to trial parts of the process which had been refined, including Internet initiatives, field collection strategies, and proposed minor changes to the census forms. The unchanged ethnicity question was trialled and the results analysed.

The field test provided information on the rate of 'New Zealander' write-in responses to the unchanged ethnicity question in the current environment. This allowed an assessment to be made about the impact of the campaign which was conducted at the time of the 2006 Census, encouraging respondents to write-in 'New Zealander'-type responses. It also provided a baseline to compare results from other tests.

The March 2009 census test was conducted in the Canterbury region and the sample is not representative of the general population. The response rate was 57 percent of dwellings within the total sampled areas. Unlike the census, the March 2009 census test was not compulsory.

Follow-up survey

Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of 93 respondents from the field test.

Follow-up surveys can be used to get feedback from respondents on particular aspects of a survey, such as the implementation of new collection initiatives or how the forms worked in practice.

The March 2009 census test follow-up survey included a section on ethnicity. This consisted of structured questions about respondents' expectations for a 'New Zealander' tick-box response option to be included in the ethnicity question, and about the level of interest in the ethnicity question. These questions built understanding of the impacts of changing versus not changing the ethnicity question. Respondents were also asked about how they answered the ethnicity question in different contexts (such as education and health), to further understand the construction of ethnicity and ethnic mobility.

Respondents were contacted for the follow-up survey between two and four weeks after the March 2009 census test. This means there were likely to be some memory recall issues. There was a response rate of 84 percent. Again, the sample surveyed is not considered to be representative of the general population, nor of the census test sample.

9. Figure 2: Modified front page of form to allow space for a filter question

New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings

Help us plan for the next census. Fill in an Individual Form for every person staying at a dwelling included in the Census Test on the night of 24 March 2009.

Your answers in this test will help us to improve the forms and procedures for the 2011 Census.

Only people authorised by the Statistics Act 1975 are allowed to see your individual information. They must use it only for statistical purposes.

INTERNET ID

D I S

S D

M B

0 0 0

P E R

ID chgd

Pr Env

Posted

Individual Form

Version N

for census online go to www.census.govt.nz

call the Helpline toll-free on 0800 CENSUS (0800 236 787)

1 How to answer

- use a blue or black pen
- mark your answers like this:
- if you make a mistake, do this:
- print your answers in CAPITAL LETTERS like this: S H O R T L A
N D S T R E

6 How long have you lived at the address you gave in question 5?

less than one year or number of years

9 Which country were you born in?

New Zealand → go to 11

or other. Please print the present name of the country:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

2 What is your full name?

first names

family name

7 Where did you usually live on this date 5 years ago?

not born 5 years ago

at the address I gave in question 5

in New Zealand at another address. Print that address as fully as you can:

• street number • flat number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• street name

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• suburb or rural locality

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• city, town or district

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

or NOT living in New Zealand. Print the country you were living in:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

10 If you live in New Zealand but were not born here, answer this question.

When did you first arrive to live in New Zealand?

month if known (eg 11) year (eg 1945)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

3 Are you?

male female

Mark your answer like this:

8 Tonight, which address are you staying at?

at the address I gave in question 5

at another address. Print the address you are at including, if possible, all of these:

• street number • flat number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• street name

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• suburb or rural locality

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• city, town or district

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

11 What do you consider your national identity to be?

Mark the space or spaces which apply to you

New Zealander

other. Please state:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4 When were you born?

day (eg 30) month (eg 5) year you were born (eg 1956)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

5 Where do you usually live?

Students and overseas residents: see the Guide Notes for more information.

Print the full address of that dwelling. Give all of these, if possible:

• street number • flat number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• street name

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• suburb or rural locality

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• city, town or district

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

• country

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

12 Which ethnic group do you belong to?

Mark the space or spaces which apply to you.

New Zealand European

Māori

Samoan

Cook Island Maori

Tongan

Niuean

Chinese

Indian

other such as DUTCH, JAPANESE, TOKELAUAN. Please state:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

13 If you have given a New Zealand address in question 5 → go to 14

otherwise → go to 3 on the back page

Appendix 4: Terms of reference and consultation

A) Extract from the Terms of Reference of the Review of Cultural Identity Official Statistics, Relating to the Ethnicity Statistical Standard Review

A secondary objective of the review is to complete a revision of the official ethnicity statistical standard. The revision will be limited to the treatment of the 'European', 'New Zealand European' and 'New Zealander' categories in the standard. This reflects an outstanding issue from a previous review completed in 2004 and needs to be dealt with immediately, so that any changes can be included in the 2011 population census. Any other substantive issues relating to ethnicity that arise will be managed within the general context of the cultural identity review. Submissions pertaining to ethnicity will be considered in relation to the technical aspects of the current standard and its operational requirements. The revision will aim to produce a solution to problems thought to exist with current ethnicity measurement practice capable of enduring beyond the 2011 Census.

B) Targeted stakeholder discussions

Meetings were held with individuals from:

Auckland University Centre of Methods and Policy Applications in the Social Sciences

Auckland University of Technology

Department of Internal Affairs' Office of Ethnic Affairs

Local Government New Zealand

Manukau City Council

Massey University, Albany, Sociology

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Social Development

New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils

New Zealand Federation of Islamic Associations

Northern District Health Boards Support Agency

Otago University Wellington School of Medicine

Partnership Health Canterbury

Race Relations Commissioner

Southland District Council

Venture Southland

Victoria University of Wellington Institute of Policy Studies

Waikato University Population Studies Centre

Waipareira Trust