



## **Proposed content for 2011 Census questionnaire**

### Criteria for inclusion of topics

The key requirement of the 2011 Census is to provide a robust estimate of the population count, and a benchmark for key population statistics, on a consistent and comparable basis for small areas and small population groups. To meet this requirement, ONS aims to maximise response rates in all areas and from all population sub-groups, and minimise differential non-response.

The specific criteria used by the ONS for judging the priority for topics to include in the 2011 Census are set out below:

- 1) User need – there is a strong and clearly defined user need. User need could be justified in terms of central government resource allocation, local or regional resource allocation, policy development or policy monitoring.
- 2) Small geographies or populations - there is clear requirement for data for small population groups and/or at detailed geographical levels
- 3) Lack of alternative sources – there are no suitable alternative sources of data
- 4) Multivariate analysis – there is a clear requirement for multivariate analysis
- 5) UK comparability – there is a need for UK-wide outputs
- 6) Continuity – there is a need to compare data with previous Censuses
- 7) Quality of data – the data collected must be of sufficient quality for outputs to be useful
- 8) Public acceptability – the collection of information should be acceptable to respondents
- 9) Respondent burden – the collection of information should not significantly increase the burden on respondents
- 10) Financial costs – the collection of information should not significantly increase the length of the questionnaire or coding costs
- 11) Operational requirements – the data collected assists other aspects of the 2011 Census operation eg coverage adjustment
- 12) Population base requirements – the data collected ensures respondents are counted at the appropriate address
- 13) Use for coding or derivations – the data collected improves the coding or derivation of other topics or the quality of responses for another topic
- 14) International recommendations – recommendations from the UN and Eurostat should be considered in determining Census content
- 15) Equality legislation – the selection of topics should not adversely impact groups protected by equality legislation. Where adverse impact occurs, this must be justified and all reasonable attempts must be made to mitigate adverse impact.

### ONS proposed content for three and four pages of questions

Table 1 summarises ONS current thinking on the likely content of the 2011 questionnaire for England and Wales for both three pages and four pages of individual questions in comparison to what was included in 2001. The table also outlines the ONS assessment of the strength of user need for each as published in March 2006 as well as the overall ONS categorisation of each topic. This was a result of the formal consultation on topics between May and August 2005 which generated over 2,000 responses from users. It should be noted that some of the ONS priorities have changed subsequently due to the increased user requirement to improve migration statistics.

**Table 1: ONS proposed content for individual pages**

Topic	2001	2011 3 pages	2011 4 pages	2005 consult	
				user need	ONS category
Name	✓	✓	✓	-	1
Sex	✓	✓	✓	-	1
Date of birth	✓	✓	✓	-	1
Marital status	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Student status	✓	✓	✓	-	1
Term-time address	✓	✓	✓	-	1
Second residence	*	✓	✓	2	2
Country of birth	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Address one year ago	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Month/year of entry into UK	*	✓	✓	3	2
Intended length of stay in UK	*	*	✓	-	-
Citizenship	*	✓	✓	2	2
Country of previous residence	*	*	*	2	2
Nationality	*	*	*	2	2
Country(ies) of parents birth	*	*	*	3	2
Change of country of usual residence	*	*	*	3	2
Place of birth	*	*	*	3	2
Ethnicity	✓	✓	✓	1	1
National identity	*	✓	✓	1	1
Religion	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Welsh language proficiency (Wales only)	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Language	*	*	✓	1	2
Health status	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Long-term illness/disability	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Nature of illness/disability	*	*	*	2	2
Carers	✓	*	✓	1	1
Qualifications	✓	*	✓	1	1
Economic activity status	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Occupation	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Self-employed	✓	✓	✓	2	2
Supervisor status	✓	✓	✓	2	2
Size of workplace	✓	*	*	3	2
Industry/name of employer	✓	*	✓	1	2
Workplace address	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Study place address	*	*	*	2	2
Transport to work	✓	✓	✓	1	1
Transport to place of study	*	*	*	2	2
Hours worked or part-time/full-time work	✓	*	✓	2	2
Income	*	*	*	1	2
Sexual orientation	*	*	*	1	3*

**Key:**

User need:

1=very strong user  
requirement

2=strong user requirement

3=limited user required

ONS overall categorisation of topics:

1=topics likely to be collected in 2011 Census

2=topics where further work is required before a  
decision is made on whether to collect them in the 2011  
Census

3=topics which will not be collected in the 2011 Census

Note: Users were not asked to express their requirements for information on date of birth or sex as these were considered to be core topics. Name is required for operational purposes so the user need for this topic was not evaluated. Information on student status and term-time address is used to accurately measure the usually resident population and therefore user need as not evaluated.

For further information on the response to the consultation see:

[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/consultations/2011Census\\_response.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/consultations/2011Census_response.asp)

One topic, sexual orientation, was assigned a special category of 3\*. This was to reflect the fact that, although the topic is not expected to be included in the 2011 Census, there was a clear and increasing user requirement for the information. A Sexual Identity Project was established in 2006 to meet user requirements for information on sexual identity. For further information on this project see:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/measuring-equality/sexual-identity/default.asp>

**Questionnaire Design and Content  
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