



# **Final recommended questions for the 2011 Census in England and Wales**

## **National identity**

**October 2009**

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## 1. Summary

A previous information paper '*Recommended questions for the 2009 Census Rehearsal and 2011 Census: national identity*', documented the development of the national identity question prior to December 2008. Since that point ONS has conducted a final phase of testing, to refine and finalise questions in preparation for the 2011 Census. The relevant findings from this testing are incorporated in this updated information paper, which presents final question recommendations for national identity in the 2011 Census in England and Wales. These recommendations are subject to Parliamentary approval which we hope to obtain by the end of 2009.

Question development for the 2011 Census began in 2005. An iterative and comprehensive process of user consultation, evaluation and prioritisation of user requirements, and qualitative and quantitative question testing has been carried out to inform the decisions on the questions to be included in the 2011 Census.

Consultations with key users of census data in 2005 and 2007 revealed significant demand for the inclusion of a national identity question in the 2011 Census, with the greatest demand coming from local and regional government. Overall, 58 per cent of respondents to the 2007 consultation on ethnicity, identity, language and religion expressed a requirement for information on national identity. Respondents to the consultations helped to recognise a number of ways in which the new information would improve the quality of output data, including the following:

- Improving the acceptability of the ethnic group question
- Providing a richer understanding of society

A variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been employed to test the questions recommended for inclusion in the 2011 Census. Qualitative question testing on national identity has been conducted by the data collection methodology branch in ONS through a programme of cognitive testing running since February 2005. Quantitative question testing has been conducted at various intervals since May 2006 using a variety of methodologies. Five question options have been tested:

- What do you consider your national identity to be?
- What is your national identity?
- Which national identity (ies) do you feel most connected to?
- Which national identity or identities do you feel most connected to?
- How would you describe your national identity?

Following the programme of question testing it was decided that the phrasing 'How would you describe your national identity?' combined with a 'tick all that apply' instruction was the format that best conveyed the subjectivity of the question, whilst allowing multiple responses, and was understandable to respondents with different levels of English ability. Testing also found that the national identity question worked well with tick boxes for the four nations of the UK as well as 'British' and 'Other'.

The questions presented over the page are those for England and Wales that are recommended for the 2011 Census subject to Parliamentary approval.

### National identity – England

**15** How would you describe your national identity?

➔ Tick all that apply

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

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### National identity – Wales (English version)

**15** How would you describe your national identity?

➔ Tick all that apply

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

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### National identity – Wales (Welsh version)

**15** Sut fydddech chi'n disgrifio'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?

➔ Ticiwch bob blwch sy'n berthnasol

- Cymro/Cymraes
- Sais/Saesnes
- Albanwr/Albanes
- Gwyddel/Gwyddeles o Ogledd Iwerddon
- Prydeiniwr/Prydeinwraig
- Arall, nodwch

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## 2. Introduction

The next Census will take place on 27 March 2011. The proposed topics to be included were announced in the 2011 Census White Paper published in December 2008. To access the White Paper and read further information about how the content of the 2011 Census was determined, please refer to the ONS website at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/2011-census-questionnaire-content/question-and-content-recommendations-for-2011/index.html>

Question development for the 2011 Census began in 2005. An iterative and comprehensive process of user consultation, evaluation and prioritisation of user requirements, and qualitative and quantitative question testing has been carried out to inform the decisions on the questions to be included in the 2011 Census. The questions for England and Wales have been developed with the Welsh Assembly Government and through close collaboration with the census offices of Scotland and Northern Ireland. A key aim of this collaboration is to minimise differences between questionnaires across the UK, though it is recognised that differing circumstances will sometimes require different solutions. A paper on the UK differences in census questions will shortly be available on the ONS website.

This paper outlines the development of the national identity question for England and Wales, including the Welsh language version. There are equivalent papers which present the recommendations for each of the other questions within the ethnicity, identity, language and religion (EILR) topic area. Questions on the following topics have been recommended:

- National identity
- Ethnic group
- Religious affiliation
- Main language
- Spoken English proficiency
- Knowledge of Welsh language (Wales only)

These questions complement the suite of migration questions that have been recommended:

- Country of birth
- Usual address one year ago
- Passports held (as a proxy for citizenship)
- Month and year of arrival to the UK
- Intended length of stay in the UK

A previous information paper '*Recommended questions for the 2009 Census Rehearsal and 2011 Census: national identity*', outlined user requirements and documented the development of the national identity question prior to December 2008. Since that point ONS has conducted a final phase of testing, to refine and finalise questions in preparation for the 2011 Census. The relevant findings from this testing are incorporated in this updated information paper, which presents the final question recommendations for national identity in the 2011 Census. These recommendations are subject to Parliamentary approval which we hope to obtain by the end of 2009.

### 3. Background

National identity is subjective and self-perceived, more so than any identity question asked on a recent census. With the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there has been an increase in national consciousness with many people wanting their 'national' identity to be acknowledged.

ONS first considered the question of national identity following public and political concerns that the ethnic group question in the 2001 Census for England and Wales did not provide a tick-box for respondents to identify themselves as 'English', 'Welsh', 'Scottish' or 'Northern Irish' but only allowed for 'British' whereas people could record themselves as 'Scottish' in the 2001 Census in Scotland. A national identity question was first introduced as part of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2001.

Further research concluded that classifying ethnic groups was best achieved separately from national identity. In 2003 ONS published '*A Guide for the Collection and Classification of Ethnic Group Data*', recommending that wherever possible a national identity question should be asked as a companion to the ethnic group question. The publication is available at [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic\\_group\\_statistics/downloads/ethnic\\_group\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic_group_statistics/downloads/ethnic_group_statistics.pdf)

## 4. User requirements

The inclusion of questions in the census must be supported by a clear user requirement for the information. The user consultation process for the 2011 Census began in 2005 with a formal three month general topics consultation. A summary of the consultation responses relating to national identity can be found at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about/consultations/closed-consultations/consultation-on-2011-census---responses/index.html>.

In addition to this another formal three month consultation exercise was carried out between December 2006 and March 2007 (referred to throughout the paper as the 2007 consultation) to refine the user requirements for information on ethnicity, identity, language and religion for the 2011 Census. The report of the 2007 consultation can be found at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/consultations/eth-group-national-identity/index.html>

### 4.1 Requirement for national identity

Table 4.1 below displays the requirements expressed for information on national identity in the 2007 consultation. The greatest demand came from local and regional government where 67 per cent of respondents indicated a requirement.

**Table 4.1:** Requirements for information on national identity from the 2011 Census

Organisation Type	Number of responses	Yes (%)	No (%)
Central & devolved government	22	50	50
Experts, community & special interest groups	114	57	43
Local & regional government	81	67	33
Local service providers	40	45	55
All respondents	257	58	42

Overall, 58 per cent of respondents expressed a requirement for information on national identity, including a wide variety of organisations and interest groups. The explicit requirement was therefore lower than for ethnic group, language or religion. However, a strong implicit requirement became apparent with regard to the improvements that the national identity question would bring for responses to the ethnic group question. Respondents to both consultations helped to recognise two key ways in which the new information would improve the quality of output data:

- Improving the acceptability of the ethnic group question
- Providing a richer understanding of society

#### 4.1.1 Improving the acceptability of the ethnic group question

The 2001 Census drew strong opinion from people that wished to express a more detailed identity than just 'British'. The lack of such options was one of the greatest areas of discontent amongst user groups.

Burton *et al* suggest that 'It will probably be important that the ethnic group classification question should follow one on 'national identity' covering identification



with any of the four countries of the UK and/or with British. This is intended to ensure more stable responses...for example, from Scots who wish to assert their Scottishness (and will thus have been already provided an opportunity to do so) to the subsequent ethnic group categories' (Burton *et al* 2008:29) The potential scale of this issue is better understood when considering that in 2001, 87 per cent of respondents to the census identified themselves as White British.

Amongst respondents to the 2007 consultation from Wales, the proportion who required a national identity question in the 2011 Census was 75 per cent. The Welsh Assembly Government (2005) commented that 'people who view their ethnicity or national identity to be Welsh should be able to indicate that at least as easily as those who view themselves as British or any of the other national identities pertaining to Britain'. A Welsh local authority added that 'Many thousands of Welsh people felt annoyed that they were prevented from stating their Welsh identity [in the 2001 Census]. I would strongly lobby that this was included in the next Census.' This opinion was supported by a number of individuals and community groups. There have been similar requests from English and other sub-UK identities.

Another advantage of introducing the national identity question is the reduction of coding costs for the ethnic groups question by minimising written-in responses of English, Welsh, or Scottish, of which there were 1,577,298 in the 2001 Census in England and Wales.

ONS decided that it would be problematic to break the 'British' tick-box down into separate categories in the ethnic group question as an alternative to the national identity question because:

- ONS has determined that a single response question is most appropriate for ethnic group<sup>1</sup> and there is a risk, supported by results from cognitive question testing (Homes and Murray 2008), that respondents might want to tick more than one option if for example they cannot choose between identifying as English or British
- There is not enough space on the census questionnaire to include full national identity descriptors for all ethnic groups in England and Wales (for example, 'Indian, Indian British, Indian English, Indian Welsh, Indian Scottish, Indian Northern Irish')
- Adding only two ethnic minority tick-boxes alongside four White UK tick-boxes could give the impression that undue emphasis was placed on monitoring the ethnic majority population at the expense of ethnic minorities
- It may not be acceptable or equitable to deny ethnic minority groups the opportunity to identify with particular UK national identities

Burton *et al* also argue that a national identity question will 'ensure more stable responses... from minorities who wish to assert their Britishness' (Burton *et al* 2008:29) The 2007 consultation identified that there was also a desire for ethnic minority populations to express their affiliation with England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Britain, particularly among those who were born in the UK.

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see ethnic group question recommendation paper:  
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/2011-census-questionnaire-content/question-and-content-recommendations-for-2011/index.html>

In the 2001 Census there were no specific tick-boxes to record British national identities for those who are not White. In England and Wales 70,000 people wrote Black British under 'Other Black' to express their Britishness. Evidence also suggests that respondents may be happier to express their ethnic group if they can also express their national identity. Without this opportunity there is a risk that large proportions of the ethnic minority population could refuse to answer this question or the census as a whole.

Some user groups expected a question on national identity to increase response rates as a result of improved questionnaire acceptability and accuracy. An English local authority (2007) believed that a question on national identity 'would increase the response rate from certain sections of the community, for instance second or third generation Asian immigrants who may wish to record their national identity as British or English but their ethnic background as Asian.'

#### **4.1.2 Providing a better understanding of society**

As well as making the questionnaire more acceptable to respondents the national identity question has the potential to meet user needs more directly.

For example some stakeholders wanted national identity information about people with particular identities within the UK (such as the Cornish, Scottish and Welsh), in terms of where they live and how they identify themselves. A national identity question will also allow for the first time a fuller understanding of the intersection of British, Northern Irish and Irish identities.

A need has also been identified for further analysis of ethnic minorities:

The notion of 'hyphenated' British was incorporated in Black British and Asian British but whilst it might have been interesting to see how many people identified themselves in this way it is not possible to do so because the hyphenated British are conflated with Black and Asian. Thus we have no means of knowing whether a respondent ticking 'Asian or Asian British and then Indian saw themselves primarily as Indian or British Indian'...[These] answers do not lend themselves to the type of analysis that academics in fields of ethnic and racial studies might wish to make – thus depriving us of the opportunity to elaborate a more rounded analysis of issues relating to ethnic identity.' (Moore and Hickman 2007:3)

The national identity question may also provide some scope for disaggregating ethnic categories such as 'African' or 'Pakistani' or for identifying groups that span states, for example Kurdish. One local authority (2007) stated that:

'National identity data would greatly improve our understanding of the composition of, for example, the 'Other White' ethnic grouping...and, for example, Somalis within the Black African category.' Another consultation respondent commented that 'National Identity may identify significant groups in the UK which have not been recognised effectively in the past, for example, Kurds. [This information] could provide a rich dataset to complement country of birth since it is how people view themselves rather than a fact e.g. a person born in Turkey might rather write in Kurdish than Turkish or British.'

However ONS recognises this may be limited with most ethnic minorities identifying with a UK identity only.

Finally, as Burton et al argue, 'the extent to which people identify with different countries of the UK and express such national identities, whether or not living in the countries concerned, is of interest in its own right to researchers both concerned with nationality and with the complementary and complex nature of identification.' (Burton et al 2008:29)

The opportunity for multiple responses provides a means for people to identify with more than one nation. One use of this information is to examine whether those identifying as British are also likely to identify with one of the constituent nations and vice versa. And it was noted by a city council (2007) that 'an expression of national identity, where different from birthplace, could provide one measure of social and community cohesion.' A London Borough (2007) believed that 'information about the national identity of our population would be useful, particularly in relation to issues such as citizenship and community cohesion.'

## 5. Methods of question testing

A variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies has been employed to test the questions recommended for inclusion in the 2011 Census.

### 5.1 Qualitative testing

Qualitative question testing on national identity has been conducted by the data collection methodology (DCM) branch in ONS through a programme of cognitive testing running since February 2005.

#### 5.1.1 Cognitive testing

DCM was commissioned to carry out a programme of cognitive question testing on census questions. The aim of this testing was to develop questions that collect accurate and meaningful information that meet user requirements, minimise the burden on respondents and are designed to conform as closely as possible to best practice of questionnaire design. The testing was split into the following phases:

- Pre-testing for the 2007 Census Test (February 2005 – April 2006)
- Whole Questionnaire Testing for the 2007 Census Test (June 2006 – August 2006)
- Testing with Somali respondents in Wales carried out by Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) (June – July 2007)
- Testing for 2009 Census Rehearsal
  - **Wave 1** (November 2006 to January 2007)
  - **Wave 2** (April to May 2007)
  - **Wave 3** (July to September 2007)
  - **Wave 4** (October and November 2007)
  - **Wave 5** (January to March 2008)
  - **Wave 6** (April to July 2008 )
  - **Mini-wave conducted by WAG** (September 2008)
  - **Welsh language testing, Wave 1** (October to November 2007)
  - **Welsh language testing, Wave 2** (June to July 2008)
- Testing for 2011 Census
  - **Wave 7** (March to April 2009)
  - **Whole questionnaire testing – English language** (June to July 2009)
  - **Whole questionnaire testing – Welsh language,** (June to July 2009)

#### 5.1.2 'White Welsh/British' focus groups in Wales

Six focus groups on the subject of national identity and ethnic group were conducted by the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales during December 2007, specifically with respondents who self-identified as 'White'. These covered various ages and socio-economic backgrounds in Cardiff, Carmarthen and Wrexham.

### 5.2 Quantitative testing

Analysis on the performance of the national identity question has been conducted for several quantitative tests since June 2006.

### **5.2.1 Lambeth Postal Test**

In June and July 2006, a test of postal enumeration procedures was carried out in the London Borough of Lambeth. Although this test was designed to test field procedures, it also allowed the opportunity to analyse and evaluate the performance of the questions. A response rate of 25 per cent was obtained and 366 household questionnaires were inputted, giving 787 individual respondents. Some of this data was analysed to help inform the development of the national identity question prior to the 2007 test.

### **5.2.2 2007 Postal Test**

The ONS questionnaire design and content (QDC) team ran a postal test of 10,400 households across England in April 2007. Although the main objective was to test issues related to questionnaire length, it also provided valuable information on the acceptability and understanding of definitions and questions, particularly new questions such as national identity. The national identity question included was 'what do you consider your national identity to be?' with a 'tick all boxes that apply' instruction.

### **5.2.3 2007 Census Test**

A large scale census test was carried out covering 100,000 households in England and Wales on 13 May 2007. The test took place in Bath and North East Somerset, Camden, Carmarthenshire, Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent. This allowed the opportunity to test new and updated questions. The national identity question included was 'what do you consider your national identity to be?' with a 'tick all boxes that apply' instruction.

A detailed evaluation of the 2007 test questionnaire can be found on the national statistics website at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/2011-census-questionnaire-content/2007-test-questionnaire/index.html>

### **5.2.4 2008 Postal Test**

In July 2008 two postal surveys were carried out, each with a sample of 10,200 households, one across England, and the other in Northampton. The main purpose was to test any impact on response rates of including a question on intended length of stay in the UK.

The test also allowed valuable analysis to be conducted on the performance of the questions developed for the 2009 rehearsal. The national identity question included was 'how would you describe your national identity?' with a 'tick all that apply' instruction.

### **5.2.5 March 2009 Postal Test**

In March 2009, a postal test was conducted with the primary aim of assisting the development of questions relating to the student population. 20,000 questionnaires were sent to three separate sample areas. 10,000 were sent to a random sample of households in England, 5,000 were sent to Durham City and 5,000 were sent to an area of central Norwich. The latter two areas were chosen because they are known

to have a high concentration of students, along with a number of other characteristics desirable for testing.

### **5.2.6 July 2009 Postal Test**

In July 2009, a postal test was conducted with the primary aim of testing the questions relating to ethnicity and identity. 27,000 questionnaires were sent to areas of England selected for characteristics that were desirable for the purposes of the test.

### **5.2.7 Opinions (Omnibus) survey question testing**

The Opinions (Omnibus) survey is an ONS run, multi-purpose survey based on interviews with a monthly sample of around 1,200 adults (aged 16 and over) in private households. It currently forms part of the Integrated Household Survey. One adult is selected from each household to answer the questions. It differs from the census in that all interviews are carried out face-to-face by members of the general field force of interviewers in ONS.

Between September and December 2007, the census division of ONS requested the addition of a national identity question to this survey. Respondents were asked the question 'what do you consider your national identity to be?' and chose their answer from showcards displaying 'English' 'Welsh' 'Scottish' 'Northern Irish' 'British' and 'Other'. If respondents chose 'Other' they were asked to specify their national identity in their own words. In addition, a short statement which defined the term 'national identity' was provided with the question and respondents were subsequently asked whether the statement was useful to them in answering the question.

## 6. Development of the question

This section provides a detailed description of how the question evolved from the beginning of testing through to the finalisation of the question. It uses evidence gathered from all the strands of research described above.

The starting point for question development was the question used in the Labour Force Survey (figure 6.1).

**Figure 6.1** National identity question asked on the Labour Force Survey (England)

**What do you consider your national identity to be? Please choose as many or as few as apply**

**English**  
**Scottish**  
**Welsh**  
**Irish**  
**British**  
**Other**

### 6.1 Understanding of concepts

#### 6.1.1 Interpretations of national identity

National identity can be taken to mean affiliation to a nation<sup>2</sup> and as such is subjective and self-perceived. The concept of national identity should be treated as separate from both citizenship – which involves bureaucratic or legal statuses – and ethnicity. Although these concepts may be strongly associated, citizenship and ethnicity are not necessary conditions for holding a particular national identity.

Cognitive testing revealed similar interpretations of the term ‘national identity’ by respondents throughout all waves. Some equated it with their factual legal status, their country of birth, nationality or citizenship. For example:

‘... national identity I closely associate with nationality ... National identity that’s my nationality, that’s how I see it.’ (Wave 1)

‘Country you come from and what passport you have.’ (Wave 4)

This factual interpretation was more often adopted by those who were born outside the UK and/or for whom English was not their first language. For some, the term ‘national identity’ was new to them.

In contrast, other respondents emphasised the emotional and subjective nature of national identity. For example:

‘ ... where they feel more sort of like associated with ... yeah.’ (Wave 2)

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<sup>2</sup> Miller (1995) characterises a nation as community connected to a particular territory, with a history (and a future), that is involved in collective activity and distinct from other communities by its common public character

*'What country, or I suppose a nation, it doesn't have to be a country, a country or group of people you, sort of, associate yourself as being a member of regardless of where you were born ... It's a personal thing ... it's subjective rather than [something] you can prove.'* (Wave 5)

In line with this, Welsh language testing also found that respondents viewed 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol' ['national identity'] as a subjective concept, based on what nationality a person 'considered' themselves to be. For example:

'Anodd esbonio ... wel beth ych  
chi'n meddwl yw eich  
cenedligrwydd.'

['Hard to explain ... well, what  
you think your nationality is.']

(Wave 1, Welsh Language Questionnaire Development)

Often the two interpretations of national identity overlapped. The following quote demonstrates how some respondents recognised that national identity related to their passport(s) or their nationality, but also made reference to how they felt:

'The country to which I identify myself to ... where I was born and ... the country that I call home really, I would say... and I know I belong there.'  
(Wave 2)

Mention was also made of national pride and allegiance to a country or a country's sports team. For example:

'Proud of being Irish, where you're born and raised.' (Wave 3)

'I think we define national identity by which football team you support really.'  
(Wave 4)

Testing showed that those who were unclear about the concept of national identity, particularly those who were not born in the UK and/or for whom English was not their first language, used the response categories available to help them understand and answer the question:

'The options given there kind of guide you to understand what is being asked.'  
(Wave 1)

Testing of the Welsh language question also found that the response options assisted those respondents who were unsure of the term 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol' ['national identity'] to make sense of it. For example:

'Hunaniaeth genedlaethol ...  
ddim yn rhywbeth ych chi'n  
defnyddio bob dydd ... oh Cymro,  
Cymraes ...'

['National identity ... not  
something you use every day ...  
oh Welsh man, Welsh woman  
...']

(Wave 1, Welsh Language Questionnaire Development)



### 6.1.2 National identity vs ethnic group

The concept of national identity is distinct from that of ethnicity. Typically nations arise from ethnic communities although as a result of immigration many are now multi-ethnic. To reflect this, the national identity question has been developed to record national identities independently from ethnic group. However, for some there may be a strong association between national identity and ethnicity.

Cognitive testing demonstrated that respondents thought that there was a relationship between the national identity and ethnic group questions, but although there was a shared understanding, they were ultimately seen as referring to separate concepts. In contrast to the national identity question, the ethnic group question was seen to be more about a person's heritage or genetic origins. National identity was seen as changeable, whereas ethnicity was fixed.

'National identity is more to do with where I live and perhaps laws that affect me, whereas ethnicity is actually my genetic make-up, it's what I was born with and can't change.' (Wave 4)

'... I think there are loads of people who are British, or Welsh, or whatever, but then they've got, you know they're Asian as well.' (Wave 5)

While acknowledging this difference, some people found it difficult to explain why. For example:

'Different, but if you asked me to explain it I couldn't really.' (Wave 5)

Respondents in focus groups held in December 2007 in Wales welcomed the combination of a national identity question and an ethnic group question, with most being able to differentiate between the two concepts.

### 6.1.3 National identity vs citizenship

As mentioned previously, citizenship need not determine national identity, although the concepts may remain linked in people's minds.

The distinction between citizenship and national identity is synonymous with the difference between a state and a nation. Miller (1995) defines a nation as 'a community of people with an aspiration to be politically self-determining' and a state as 'the set of political institutions that they may aspire to possess for themselves'. Although they may often occupy the same physical space this is not always the case and a state may be multinational (for example, the UK or the former USSR) or a nation may be divided between two or more states (for example, Germany before reunification in 1990) or may exist as minorities within several states (for example, the Kurdish nation).

Respondents who participated in cognitive testing recognised that there was a relationship between the national identity question and the citizenship question. However, there were mixed views as to how similar or different the questions were, and whether the answer given to each question should be the same or not.

Respondents often noted that answering the national identity question encompassed an emotional and subjective aspect, while the citizenship question asked about their legal or factual citizenship status, which passport they held or could hold:

*'... I see the passport is something that my parents applied for me when I was little ... and obviously that's something I use to get about, but like, being connected to it, living in England all my life, this is what I count myself as being connected to.'* (Wave 5)

## **6.2 Question phrasing**

### **6.2.1 Subjectivity of national identity**

A key characteristic of a nation is that its members *feel* that they share something in common with each other. This relates to Benedict Anderson's idea of nations as 'imagined' political communities – imagined because they are too large for face-to-face contact with most fellow members (Anderson 1983). The modern nation is therefore built around a sense of national identity rather than any direct or immediate interaction.

Given the potential confusion with citizenship it is important that the question is phrased in such a way to make this subjectivity clear. In the LFS for example, interviewers are told that if respondents ask them for a definition of national identity, they should reply that it is whatever it means to the respondent and that interviewers should never attempt any judgement of their own.

### **6.2.2 Why it is a multiple response question**

The proposed national identity question is a multiple response question, to provide information for different combinations of national identities.

In the 2007 consultation, a few data users commented that because the national identity question allowed multiple responses, it would be difficult to analyse and interpret. Some also felt that respondents may have difficulty answering the question.

However, ONS is aware from other surveys that many Britons have dual identities, for example, feeling both British and Welsh or British and Scottish (Heath *et al* 2008). When ONS tested a single response version of the national identity question in 2001 some respondents had difficulty choosing a category because they held dual identities. It would therefore be unacceptable and potentially divisive to expect respondents to identify with a single nation and so a national identity question needs to allow a multiple response.

The question phrasing in the census therefore needs to make it clear that the question allows multiple responses without obscuring the meaning of national identity. All tested versions of the question have offered the opportunity to tick more than one response. However, while early versions of the English language question explicitly stated 'Tick all boxes that apply', for cognitive testing Waves 4 and 5 this instruction was removed as the question wording implied that the reporting of more than one identity was permitted. The instruction was reinstated for Wave 6 testing.

During cognitive testing, many respondents were pleased to see that they were allowed to record multiple national identities. Focus group respondents in Wales, for example, were pleased to see that they were able to multi-tick, particularly if they felt that they had a dual national identity such as 'British' and 'Welsh'.

Some respondents expressed uncertainty over the difference between 'English' and 'British', or whether there was a difference. These respondents included people who

were born in the UK and might choose to self-define in either way, as well as people who were non-UK born. For example:

‘I never know whether to put British or English because there doesn’t really seem to be any difference ... I don’t really think for me.’ (Wave 5)

‘That’s an interesting question. Am I English or British?’ (Wave 6)

However other respondents were clear about the distinction between the identities:

‘I’m not British, I’m English ...’ (Whole Questionnaire Testing)

‘It’s a separate nation, so it should be a separate identity really.’ (Whole Questionnaire Testing)

### 6.2.3 Options tested

ONS tested several different combinations of question phrasing and question instructions with the intention of emphasising the subjectivity of national identity and making it clear that respondents could give more than one response. These combinations were:

- What do you consider your national identity to be?  
✓ all the boxes that apply.  
*Alternative instruction:*  
Tick all boxes that apply.
- What is your national identity?  
✓ all the boxes that apply.  
*Alternative instruction 1:*  
Tick all the boxes that apply.  
*Alternative instruction 2:*  
Tick all boxes that apply.
- Which national identity (ies) do you feel most connected to?
- Which national identity or identities do you feel most connected to?
- How would you describe your national identity?  
Tick all that apply

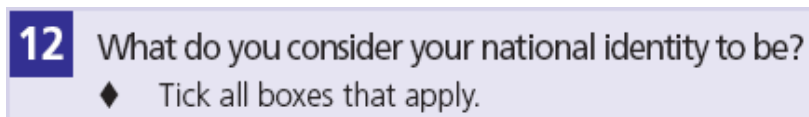
Two Welsh language questions have been tested:

- Beth, yn eich barn chi, yw’ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?  
Ticiwch bob blwch sy’n berthnasol  
[What do you consider your national identity to be?  
Tick all the relevant boxes]
- Sut fydddech chi’n disgrifio’ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?  
Ticiwch bob blwch sy’n berthnasol  
[How would you describe your national identity?  
Tick all the relevant boxes]

### 6.2.3.1 What do you consider your national identity to be?

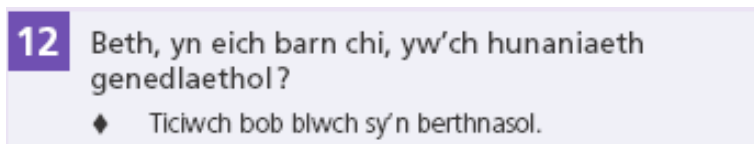
ONS began testing with the question ‘What do you consider your national identity to be?’ (Figure 6.2) – phrased in line with the original LFS question – with an instruction to ‘tick all boxes that apply’.

**Figure 6.2:** Question with phrase ‘What do you consider your national identity to be?’



The Welsh language version – ‘Beth, yn eich barn chi, yw’ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?’ (Figure 6.3) – was tested in Wave 1 of the Welsh language questionnaire development. The instruction ‘Ticiwch bob blwch sy’n berthnasol’ was included which literally translates to ‘Tick every box/all boxes that is/are relevant’.

**Figure 6.3:** Question with phrase ‘Beth, yn eich barn chi, yw’ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?’ [What do you consider your national identity to be?]



The Wave 3 report suggested that respondents did not notice the ‘Tick all boxes that apply’ instruction, as no one ticked more than one box. This was despite some respondents expressing their ‘Britishness’ and another national identity to the interviewer. For Wave 1 of the Welsh Language Questionnaire Development Testing all respondents ticked only one response box. This may reflect a tendency for Welsh speakers to have a strong singular Welsh identity rather than any phrasing issues, or that respondents had not noticed the instruction.

The question was also asked in the 2007 Census Test. One in ten respondents ticked more than one box (Table 6.4). The most common combinations were English and British in England (8 per cent) and Welsh and British in Wales (7 per cent).

**Table 6.4** – Summary of responses to national identity question in 2007 Census Test (England and Wales)

National identity	England (%)	Wales (%)	England and Wales (%)
English only	57	9	51
Welsh only	1	63	9
Scottish only	1	0	1
Northern Irish only	0	0	0
British only	21	12	20
Irish only	1	0	1
Other	5	1	4
English and British	8	1	7
Welsh and British	0	7	1
Other multicode responses	1	3	2
Missing tick	5	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

One issue experienced with this question was that it ran over two lines and with the instruction to ‘tick all that apply’ its length placed pressure on the additional space available for new ethnic group categories.

### 6.2.3.2 What is your national identity?

From the second round of preliminary cognitive testing and before much of the testing of ‘What do you consider your national identity to be?’ ONS considered a version of the question that simply asked ‘What is your national identity?’ (Figure 6.5) in an attempt to shorten the question and make it more direct. However this was possibly the least subjective phrasing and ONS rejected it for this reason.

**Figure 6.5:** Extract of question with phrasing ‘What is your national identity?’



### 6.2.3.3 Which national identity (ies) do you feel most connected to?

The third version of this question, tested in Waves 4 and 5, asked ‘Which national identity (ies) do you feel most connected to?’ (Figure 6.6). The term ‘connected to’ aimed to emphasise the subjective nature of national identity as distinct from the objective concept of citizenship. The plural ‘(ies)’ was included so that the option to select more than one response was implied in the question, thus removing the need for the ‘Tick all boxes that apply’ instruction.

**Figure 6.6:** Extract of question ‘Which national identity (ies) do you feel most connected to?’

14 Which national identity(ies) do you feel most connected to?

The word ‘identities’ was given in full for the second part of Wave 5, replacing the bracketed ‘(ies)’ (Figure 6.7).

**Figure 6.7:** Question with phrase ‘Which national identity or identities do you feel most connected to?’

15 Which national Identity or Identities do you feel most connected to?

### ***Misinterpretation of ‘connected to’***

The change in question wording to ‘feel most connected to’ introduced a more explicit reference to the emotional nature of national identity. To explore the effectiveness of this phrase respondents were interviewed in the Opinions (Omnibus) Survey of September, November and December 2007. They were shown a card for the question on national identity and asked what they considered their national identity to be. The show card included an explanation that national identity is a description of the nation(s) or country(ies) you feel most connected to.

They were then asked ‘The previous show card included a statement telling you that national identity is a description of the nation(s) or country(ies) you feel most connected to. How useful was that statement?’ The responses available were ‘Very useful’, ‘Somewhat useful’, or ‘Not useful’. Around four in ten respondents said it was not useful, four in ten thought it was somewhat useful and two in ten thought that it was very useful.

Wave 5 of cognitive testing explored how this term was interpreted by respondents. The testing showed that for most people born in the UK and with English as a first language there seemed to be a clear understanding of what the term ‘connected to’ meant. Like the term ‘national identity’ the emotional aspect was acknowledged:

‘If you feel more connected to Welsh, or Scottish.’ (Wave 5)

‘Where you feel most at home, which country you feel strongest about.’  
(Wave 5)

However one UK-born respondent interpreted the term in a different way to that intended:

'Relate to, probably also mix with on a daily basis. I work and I'm always surrounded by British people rather than my own, who are Pakistani. Who you feel closer to, or can understand more.' (Wave 5)

Respondents who were not born in the UK, had only lived in the UK for a relatively short-duration, or who did not speak English as a first language gave similar interpretations of the term 'connected to'. The term seemed problematic and generally did not work as intended among non-UK born respondents. Respondents were unsure of what the question was asking and therefore how they should respond.

The following respondent decided not to answer the question as they were not clear about what information the term 'connected to' was trying to obtain. They thought this question could also pose a problem for other people born outside of the UK.

'I don't really understand that. Is it the people you relate with? I'm not sure if that's what it means ... I don't understand this 'connected to' ... Is it friendship? Is it people I go out with? You know, it's not very clear ... I don't understand this sentence.' (Wave 5)

One respondent who was born outside the UK appeared to interpret this question as 'people from which countries do you feel you have an emotional connection with?' This individual ticked 'British', 'English' and 'Other' and wrote in 'Nepal' and 'Russia'.

Another respondent thought the question was asking for an answer about which other identity or identities were similar to their own:

'Spanish is very near to Italian, life is very similar, work, weather ... very close to Italian.' (Wave 5)

It is also important to note that although a translation of the question using 'connected to' was not tested in the Welsh language, ONS concluded that this question would not translate well into Welsh. An explanation of the problems with translation is provided in Annex A.

### ***Failure to multi-tick***

In waves 4 and 5, the 'tick all that apply' instruction was omitted in order to save space on the questionnaire. When answering the question which used the 'connected to' wording respondents did not appear to realise that they could give more than one identity. In Wave 4 only one person chose to tick multiple options ('Welsh' and 'British') and the second identity, 'British', was added later while reviewing the questionnaire, rather than at the actual time of completing the question.

In Wave 5 testing some respondents who reported multiple identities said they were unsure as to whether they should have done:

'Can I tick more than one? Well, it says identities so I guess I can.' (Wave 5)

'I would identify myself equally, [Northern Irish and British] so I hope it's OK to tick both.' (Wave 5)

Other respondents did not realise that the option to report more than one national identity was implied in the question. When they realised they could include another



response following further probing or reviewing of the questionnaire by the interviewer, some said they would have done so:

'If I had noticed that I would have ticked English and then wrote Southern Irish as well.' (Wave 5)

Several respondents pointed out that an instruction would be beneficial:

'If you might expect people to tick more than one then it should definitely say so.' (Wave 5)

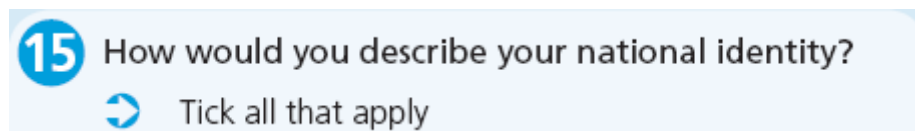
'I would always tick one box, unless it says tick whichever apply ... you assume it just requires one answer.' (Wave 5)

Following this testing ONS decided that the 'Tick all boxes that apply' instruction needed to be included.

#### 6.2.3.4 How would you describe your national identity?

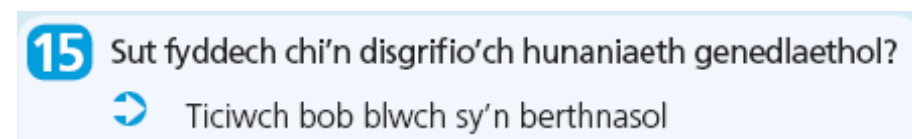
In light of these issues for Wave 6 ONS changed the question to the also subjective but less ambiguous: 'How would you describe your national identity?' and included the instruction to 'Tick all that apply' for Wave 6 testing in the English language (Figure 6.8).

**Figure 6.8:** Question with phrase 'How would you describe your national identity?'



The Wave 2 Welsh Language Questionnaire Development Testing was conducted with a Welsh translation 'Sut fyddech chi'n disgrifio'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?' [How would you describe your national identity?] with the instruction 'Ticiwch bob blwch sy'n berthnasol' which literally translates to 'Tick every box/all boxes that is/are relevant'. (Figure 6.9)

**Figure 6.9:** Question with phrase 'Sut fyddech chi'n disgrifio'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?' [How would you describe your national identity?]



In response to this version of the national identity question there was a greater incidence of multiple ticking, although most people did not report more than one identity. One respondent, who was torn between choosing one of two relevant identities, did not notice the instruction until after answering the question.

Another respondent who did read the instruction pointed out that he did not feel comfortable selecting more than one identity:



'... even though it says tick all that apply it still feels a bit weird, it feels uncomfortable thinking about ticking both ... (Wave 6)

A couple of respondents chose to tick more than one box. Some ticked both 'English' and 'British'. One respondent explained:

'Because I'm English but also British ...' (Wave 6)

Some ticked both 'Welsh' and 'British', adding that they were pleased that they were allowed to do so as they felt that they couldn't choose one over the other. Respondents from focus groups in Wales were also pleased to see that they were able to multi-tick in the national identity questions, particularly if they felt that they had a dual national identity such as 'British' and 'Welsh' for example.

Generally, no problems arose in Wave 2 of the Welsh language version of this question. As with Wave 1 Welsh language testing, on the whole respondents felt that 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol' ['national identity'] was a subjective concept, based on what nationality you 'considered' or 'felt' yourself to be.

The majority of the respondents ticked one box (i.e. 'Cymreig' [Welsh]), and one respondent from outside of the UK ticked 'Other'. One respondent ticked both 'Cymreig' [Welsh] and 'Prydeinig' [British].

Most of the respondents had not noticed that they could tick more than one box, but said that ticking more than one was not a consideration for them. Whole Questionnaire Testing of this question in the Welsh language also found that most of the respondents had not noticed the instruction. And again, only a few of those respondents said that they would have chosen more than option if they had seen the instruction.

### **Question phrasing recommendations**

It is recommended that the question is phrased 'How would you describe your national identity?' with an instruction to 'Tick all that apply'.

The Welsh language question should use the same question phrasing as the English language version 'Sut fydddech chi'n disgrifio'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?' ['How would you describe your national identity?'] with the instruction 'Ticiwch bob blwch sy'n berthnasol' included ['Tick all boxes which are relevant']

## **6.3 Response categories**

### **6.3.1 Tick-box categories**

The starting point for the 2011 categories in the national identity question was those used in the Labour Force Survey question (Figure 6.10). This question did not have separate 'Northern Irish' and 'Irish Republic' categories, but rather one 'Irish' category.

**Figure 6.10:** First national identity question tested

1 What do you consider your national identity to be?  
◆ ✓ all the boxes that apply.

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

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

However, with an 'Irish' response option included in the ethnic group question, inclusion of 'Northern Irish' in the national identity question would not interfere with comparability. In fact it would be unacceptable if Northern Irish was not listed with the other UK identities. So from Wave 1 onwards a 'Northern Irish' category was introduced (Figure 6.11).

**Figure 6.11:** Question with Northern Irish tick-box

13 What do you consider your national identity to be?  
◆ Tick all boxes that apply.

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

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

The 'Irish' category was included in the first seven versions of the question but was removed in Wave 3 (Figure 6.12). It was removed because within the UK the option was not used by enough people to justify the space that a tick-box required on the questionnaire. It was felt that respondents could use the write-in box to report their Irish identity.



and the Isles of Scilly which make up just 1 per cent of the whole population of England and Wales.

In the 2007 Census Test, which took place in Bath and North East Somerset, Camden, Carmarthenshire, Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent, eight of the 92,898 (less than 0.1 per cent) respondents wrote in their national identity as Cornish.

Several Cornish respondents participated in Wave 3 of the English language questionnaire testing. Frequently respondents were aware of their Cornish identity, but decided to tick 'British' or 'English' instead. For example:

'I'm happy to say England but there are a lot of people around here who would say Cornwall.' (Wave 3)

'We might make a joke about it because we do feel Cornish, but we wouldn't write it in.' (Wave 3)

'I contemplated writing Cornish, but I think that's a bit ambiguous.' (Wave 3)

One respondent did decide to write in 'Cornish'.

As there are tight space constraints and given these findings, ONS decided that the write-in space would be adequate for measuring those with a Cornish identity.

### 6.3.2 Welsh language tick-box descriptors – adjectives or nouns?

In the 2001 Census, as there was no tick-box for 'Welsh' in the ethnic group question, many respondents wrote 'Cymro/Cymraes ydw i' [I'm a Welsh man/ Welsh woman'] using the noun rather than the adjective 'Cymreig' ['Welsh'], which is for describing things rather than people. Nouns were used in the tick-boxes in the first wave of Welsh language testing to test respondents' interpretation of the questions on national identity and ethnic group (Figure 6.13).

**Figure 6.13:** Version of Welsh Language Question with nouns

**12** Beth, yn eich barn chi, yw'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?

◆ Ticiwch bob blwch sy'n berthnasol.

Cymro/Cymraes

Sais/Saesnes

Albanwr/Albanes

Gwyddel/Gwyddeles o Ogledd Iwerddon

Prydeiniwr/Prydeinwraig

Arall, ysgrifennwch isod

['What do you consider your national identity to be?  
Tick every box/all boxes that is/are relevant' 'Welsh man/Welsh woman', 'English man/English woman', 'Scottish man/ Scottish woman', 'Northern Irish man /Northern Irish woman', 'British man/ British woman', 'Other, write-in below']

The first wave of Welsh language testing showed that respondents who were initially unsure of the meaning of the term 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol' ['national identity'] were enlightened by the response options. Respondents also frequently used the nouns 'Cymro/Cymraes' when explaining their understanding of 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol':

'Pwy dw i'n teimlo ydw i fel person...a Cymro ydw i...os oedd yr opsiwn ddim yna baswn i wedi ticio arall ac ysgrifennu 'Cymro'. Rhywbeth sydd yn naturiol, rhywbeth ych chi'n teimlo. Cymro dw i.'

[Who I feel as though I am as a person...and I'm a Welsh man. If the option wasn't there I would tick other and write in 'Welsh man'. Something which is natural, something which you feel. I'm a Welsh man.]

(First Wave, Welsh Cognitive Testing)

The use of nouns also seemed to instil strong feelings of 'national identity' – for example 'Cymro dw i' ['I'm a Welsh man']. Furthermore, one respondent commented that the adjective, 'Cymreig' is used to describe something, such as a Welsh song, Welsh poetry, but 'Cymro' [the noun] 'yn mynd wrth wraidd y peth' ['gets to the heart of it'].

Despite the positive response to the use of the nouns in the first wave of testing, one problem arose. The use of the male and female forms in the ethnic group question had caused the question to overlap the bottom margin of the page, and there was less white space visible in the question wording. Therefore in the second wave of testing the use of adjectives were tested, for example 'Cymreig' ['Welsh'], 'Seisnig' ['English'], and so on (Figure 6.14).

**Figure 6.14:** Version of Welsh Language Question with Adjectives

**15** Sut fydddech chi'n disgrifio'ch hunaniaeth genedlaethol?

➔ Ticiwch bob blwch sy'n berthnasol

- Cymreig
- Seisnig
- Albanaidd
- Gwyddelig Gogledd Iwerddon
- Prydeinig
- Arall, nodwch

\_\_\_\_\_

[How would you describe your national identity?' 'Tick every box/all boxes that is/are relevant', 'Tick all that apply'; Welsh', 'English', 'Scottish', 'Northern Irish', 'British', 'Other note/enter, write-in']

Adjectives are often used in formal forms in Wales to describe national identity and ethnic group. It could be argued that the adjectives are 'describing' the nouns 'national identity' and 'ethnic group' rather than the 'person'. The use of adjectives avoids having to use male and female forms of the nouns and therefore takes up less space on the page.

The use of adjectives did not appear to cause any problems for respondents in the second wave of Welsh language testing, and there were no spontaneous comments about the use of 'Cymreig' [describing 'Welsh' identity] rather than the use of 'Cymro/Cymraes' ['Welsh man/Welsh woman']. However, a few respondents naturally used the nouns when describing their identity.

ONS decided to recommend the use of the adjectives rather than nouns in the rehearsal questionnaire for the national identity and ethnic group questions. This recommendation was based on the fact that there was a shortage of space in the ethnic group question to include the male and female forms of the nouns, the use of adjectives did not appear to be an issue for respondents in the second wave of testing

However, it was decided that the use of nouns and adjectives together (that is, nouns for the national identity question, and adjectives for the ethnic group question) would be tested for the Welsh language Whole Questionnaire Testing. This was based on the findings that:

- respondents tended to spontaneously use the nouns when describing their identity in the first and second wave of testing, and interestingly one respondent in the second wave of testing (which was testing the use of adjectives) wrote in their national identity as a noun, and wrote in their ethnic group as an adjective;
- it could be argued that the use of adjectives to describe the noun 'ethnic group' is more acceptable in the ethnic group question which refers to a more objective and less changeable concept. By contrast the national identity question instils more subjective feelings of a person's national 'identity' that the nouns are more appropriate;
- lack of space was not an issue for the use of nouns in the national identity question;

Welsh language Whole Questionnaire Testing found (as in the earlier waves of testing) that respondents spontaneously used the nouns when describing their national identity (none of the respondents used the adjectives while describing their national identity). Although there were no spontaneous comments on the use of nouns in this question, a couple of respondents said that they were glad to see a 'national identity' question with 'Welsh man/woman' as an option. And a couple of respondents were asked about the use of nouns and adjectives in the national identity and ethnic group questions. Both of these respondents were happy with the response options. All of the respondents could answer the question without any difficulty.

### Welsh adjective/ noun recommendation

It is recommended that the Welsh language question uses nouns for response options.

### 6.3.3 Recording non-UK national identities

All waves of cognitive testing of the national identity question were tested with individuals who were born outside the UK, or who had lived in another country at some point in their lives, as well as with UK-born respondents. Findings showed that the write-in space is suitable for recording non-UK national identities.

Respondents frequently made use of the 'Other' tick-box and the opportunity to write in an identity not listed as a tick-box option. A variety of national identities were reported over the testing periods, including: Australian, French, Hong Kong, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Polish, Somali, South African and Spanish. Writing in an identity not listed did not seem to be a problem:

'I just looked at the answer so I saw English, Welsh, Scottish, British, so I just put Spanish.' (Wave 6)

For Waves 2 and 3 the indentation of the write-in boxes was reduced to bring them in line with the tick-boxes. The reason for the realignment was to try to get respondents who wrote in their national identity to also tick the 'Other, write in' box, as this was sometimes missed. This change also increased the number of write-in boxes available. Cognitive testing after this change found that respondents were less likely to miss the 'Other' box.

Table 6.15 shows the most common unique (not including variations of spelling or phrasing) write-in responses in the 2007 Census Test. These accounted for around one-quarter of write-in responses (26 per cent), giving an indication of the range:

**Table 6.15:** Most common write-in responses by percentage in 2007 Census Test

Write-in	Percentage
Australian	4
Indian	4
French	3
Italian	3
German	2
Polish	2
Spanish	2
Japanese	2
Chinese	2
European	2

Table 6.16 shows the most common unique (not including variations of spelling or phrasing) write-in responses in the 2008 Postal Test. These accounted for around half of write-in responses (47 per cent). The 'Irish' tick-box was removed between the 2007 Census Test and the 2008 Postal Test, accounting for the increase in write-in responses of 'Irish'.

**Table 6.16:** Most common write-in responses by percentage in 2008 Postal Test

<b>Write-in</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Irish	13
Indian	6
American	5
Italian	5
Chinese	3
Cornish	3
European	3
French	3
German	3
Polish	3

The first version of the Welsh language question used 'Arall, ysgrifennwch isod' ['Other, write in below']. This was changed to 'Arall, nodwch' ['Other, note/enter']. The verb 'nodi' ['to note'] is often used in Welsh language forms to replace ysgrifennwch ['write in']. The decision to use the shorter version was taken for the whole of the questionnaire. It was selected as the best option as it is shorter and could help with space constraint issues in the census questionnaire.

#### **6.3.4 Tick-box ordering**

Research has demonstrated that the order of the tick-boxes used in national identity questions has a statistically significant effect on responses given. Specifically, whether British is presented first or last affects the answers given, particularly in England where it affects whether respondents tick English or British (Haseldon and Jenkins 2003).

This was corroborated in cognitive testing. One respondent ticked 'Welsh' because he came across it first as he looked down the list, but really would have preferred to describe himself as British:

'I think because it had the options and I read down, and British wasn't at the top, I said 'English', 'Welsh', yes, 'Welsh'.' (Wave 2)

Testing in 2003 found that the order of the categories did not seem to affect the number of choices made but did affect which was chosen if there was only one; the first category listed was most likely to be endorsed (Haselden L and Jenkins 2003). Cognitive testing found that if 'British' was put before the other nationalities more people were likely to tick British than any other nationality, particularly among the English. For example:

'If 'British' had been at the top, I probably would've ticked 'British' first without thinking, but then I probably would've changed it to 'English' if it had given me that option.' (Whole Questionnaire Testing)



Some of the other nationalities, particularly the Welsh, felt more strongly and actively looked for a Welsh tick-box option in the list.

'I do often consider writing British but because the option for 'Welsh' was there it was easy because I would consider myself Welsh before British, and probably not really perceive being British as a national identity.' (Wave 3)

As the question is included at least partly to satisfy a desire to identify as Welsh in Wales, English in England, and so on, it is recommended that the nation in which the household is located is listed first. This is consistent with the Scottish ethnic group tick-box order, the English ethnic group tick-box order and the LFS national identity question.

The remaining options will be placed in decreasing order of expected frequency (that is 'Scottish' before 'Northern Irish') to reduce respondent burden, followed by 'British' and then 'Other'.

#### **Response category recommendations**

It is recommended that the question includes tick-boxes for the four UK nations, 'British' and an 'Other' tick-box. It is also recommended that English should appear as the first tick-box category in the question for England and Welsh first in the question for Wales, followed by 'Welsh'/ 'English', 'Scottish', 'Northern Irish', 'British' and 'Other'.

### **6.4 Response rates**

ONS found good response rates to the national identity question in quantitative testing which suggested that the question is generally understandable and acceptable to respondents.

#### **6.4.1 2007 Postal Test**

In the 2007 Postal Test, response frequencies to the national identity question were in line with expectations. English was by far the most common response, followed by British, and over 12 per cent had chosen multiple responses. The test was not conducted in Wales which accounts for the low frequency of 'Welsh' responses.

**Table 6.17:** National identity response frequencies from 2007 Postal Test

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent %</b>
Missing tick/no response	211	3.3
English	3,742	57.6
Welsh	50	0.8
Scottish	49	0.8
Northern Irish	7	0.1
British	1405	21.6
Irish	54	0.8
Other	163	2.5
Ticked multiple responses	821	12.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>6502</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The non-response rate (respondents who neither ticked one of the boxes, nor wrote anything in the write-in field) of 3.3 per cent was similar to those for related topics.

**Table 6.18:** Non-response rates for questions related to national identity in 2007 Postal Test

Question	Non-response rate (%)
National identity	3.3
Ethnic group	2.5
Religion*	6.6
Country of birth	3.5
Citizenship (Passports)	2.4

\* The religion question had a 'this question is voluntary' instruction so a higher non-response rate was expected.

#### 6.4.2 2007 Census Test

The 2007 Census Test returned a non-response rate to the national identity question of 1.8 per cent.

**Table 6.19:** National identity response frequencies for 2007 Census Test

Response	England	Wales	Total Frequency	Per cent %
Missing tick/no response	1,509	110	1,619	1.8
English	45,916	1,056	46,972	51.1
Welsh	476	7,500	7,976	8.7
Scottish	541	55	596	0.6
Northern Irish	161	9	170	0.2
British	16,812	1,447	18,259	19.9
Irish	1,018	49	1,067	1.2
Other	5,989	143	6,132	6.7
Ticked multiple responses	7,824	1,234	9,058	9.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>80,246</b>	<b>11,603</b>	<b>91,849</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Non-response rates to national identity were highest among those who recorded ethnicity as Black African (10 per cent) and lowest among those who recorded ethnicity as White English (at less than one-quarter of 1 per cent)<sup>3</sup>.

The non-response rate for the national identity question compared favourably to those for related topics.

**Table 6.20:** Non-response rates for questions related to national identity in 2007 test

Question	Non-response rate (%)
National identity	1.8
Ethnic group	3.8
Religion*	7.3
Country of birth	1.3%

<sup>3</sup> NB The 2007 Census Test ethnic group question had an 'English' ('Welsh' in Wales) tick-box and an 'Other British' tick-box.

\* The religion question had a 'this question is voluntary' instruction so a higher non-response rate was expected.

### 6.4.3 2008 Postal Test

The 2008 Postal Test returned a national identity question non-response rate of 1.4 per cent.

**Table 6.21:** Response frequencies for national identity question in 2008 Postal Test

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent %</b>
Missing tick/no response	153	1.4
English	6,921	63.7
Welsh	80	0.7
Scottish	109	1.0
Northern Irish	31	0.3
British	1,983	18.2
Other	399	3.6
Ticked multiple responses	1,175	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,851</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 6.22 shows the breakdown of national identities that have been selected as part of a multiple response. English and British was by far the most common combination, constituting 90 per cent of multiple responses.

**Table 6.22:** Breakdown of multiple responses to national identity question in 2008 Postal Test

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total Frequency</b>	<b>Percent %</b>
English and Welsh	2	0.2
English and Scottish	6	0.5
English and NI	1	0.1
English and British	1,060	90
English and Other	22	1.8
Welsh and British	6	0.5
Welsh and Scottish	0	0
Welsh and NI	0	0
Welsh and Other	0	0
Scottish and British	33	2.8
Scottish and Other	0	0
Northern Irish and British	3	0.2
Northern Irish and Other	0	0
British and Other	22	1.8
English and British and Other	10	0.9
Welsh and English and British	4	0.3
Scottish and British and Other	1	0.1

NI and British and Other	1	0.1
English & British & Scottish & Other	1	0.1
English and Scottish and NI and Other	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,175</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 6.4.4 March 2009 Postal Test

The March 2009 Postal Test returned a national identity question non-response rate of 1.6 per cent.

**Table 6.23:** Breakdown of multiple responses to national identity question in March 2009 Postal Test

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent %</b>
Missing tick/no response	58	1.6
English	2,352	63.9
Welsh	37	1.0
Scottish	25	0.7
Northern Irish	7	0.2
British	675	18.4
Other	121	3.3
Ticked multiple responses	404	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,679</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 7. Recommended location of the question

The questions on national identity, ethnic group, language and religious affiliation are all linked and therefore should be presented together as a suite of questions. To maintain respondent familiarity with the questionnaire, it is recommended that the question order for the three questions within the topics of ethnicity, identity, language and religion in the 2001 Census is retained unless this conflicts with any recommendation:

1. Ethnic group
2. Knowledge of Welsh language (Wales only)
3. Religious affiliation

A key factor driving the development of the national identity question has been to complement the ethnic group question by improving the public acceptability of the questionnaire as well as enhancing the quantity and quality of data collected on ethnicity. It is forecast that allowing respondents to state the national identity component of their identity first will increase the number of accurate answers to the ethnic group question. In 2000, Labour Force Survey testing with the national identity question asked *after* the ethnic group question found that the national identity question did not reduce respondents' need to identify with sub-British identities. Therefore, it is recommended that national identity is asked immediately before ethnic group.

The voluntary nature of the religion question may cause respondents to assume subsequent questions are also voluntary, particularly where these are on a related topic. For this reason it is recommended that national identity is asked before religion.

The recommended order for the topics of ethnicity, identity, language and religion in the 2011 Census is:

1. National identity
2. Ethnic group
3. Knowledge of Welsh language (Wales only)
4. Main language
5. Spoken English proficiency
6. Religious affiliation

## 8. Final question recommendations

The national identity question development process has produced questions that are recommended for the 2011 Census subject to approval by Parliament through the legislative process. The images below present the recommended questions for England, Wales (in English) and Wales (in Welsh).

### 8.1 National identity – England

**15** How would you describe your national identity?

➤ Tick all that apply

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

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### 8.2 National identity – Wales (English version)

**15** How would you describe your national identity?

➤ Tick all that apply

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

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## Annex A: Welsh translation of 'connected to' question

There are a number of difficulties with the Welsh translation of the question 'which national identity or identities do you feel most connected to?':

- 'hunaniaeth' [identity] is a feminine noun. The initial letter of adjectives [that is, 'cenedlaethol'/'national'] following feminine nouns should change (this change of initial letter is called a 'mutation'), so 'national identity' becomes 'hunaniaeth genedlaethol'. However, the plural noun 'hunaniaethau' [identities] does not cause a change to the initial letter of an adjective following it. A translation of 'Which national identity or identities...' would therefore be very long: 'Pa hunaniaeth genedlaethol neu hunaniaethau cenedlaethol...'
- 'cysylltiad' [connection] is followed by a preposition which refers back to the singular 'identity' and plural 'identities', so would need 'hi' [feminine 'it'] and 'nhw' ['them']
- generally, the literal translation sounds clumsy, complicated and long: 'Pa hunaniaeth genedlaethol neu hunaniaethau cenedlaethol, yn eich barn chi, y mae gennych y cysylltiad mwyaf â hi/nhw?'
- This literal translation may not be well understood by respondents.

Because of these problems ONS decided that this wording should not be used for the Welsh language question.