

**RESPONDENT:** 2964252744 – Liz Tobin  
**SECTOR:** Unknown - Individual

**Q1 - What are your views of the different census approaches described in the consultation document?**

I believe the primarily on-line census once a decade is the preferred method. I have taken part in the census taking process for two successive full censuses in 2001 and 2011 in Canada. I experienced many of the issues in the 2011 census where only 54% of the population chose to complete their census on line and then getting to an overall response rate of 98%. It was not an easy task, but there were lessons learned that fed back into many levels of local administration in a timely manner. The amount of data that is provided and the way in which it is collected far surpasses any data which comes out of administrative data and so called compulsory large annual surveys. I take very seriously the preliminary report produced for StatCan on approaches to the Canadian 2016 and 2021 census, in neither case did the consultant consider a census based on administrative data a viable option particularly if a Central Population Register and PIN has not already been set up and proved workable. The correct use of administrative data on an ongoing basis is vital and will always support, and probably validate the census but it comes in a piecemeal fashion from various sources with different mandates, reporting methods and time frames. The current method is a "snapshot", and is one case of what has worked for two hundred years that may need to be modernised but does not need to be changed.

**Q2 - Please specify any significant uses of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.**

no comment

**Q3 - Please specify any significant additional benefits of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.**

no comment

**Q4 - What would the impact be if the most detailed statistics for very small geographic areas and small population groups were no longer available? High, medium, low or no impact?**

Low

**If medium or high, please give further information.**

**Q5 - What would the additional benefit be if more frequent (i.e. annual) statistics about population characteristics were available for areas like local authorities and electoral wards? High, medium, low or no additional benefit?**

Low

**If medium or high please give further information.**

**Q6 - Please specify any significant uses of census information for historical research that we have not already identified.**

I am addressing the preamble first .... It is not impossible to understand how census information will be used from a genealogical perspective because fundamentally it will presumably still be used by

curious humans wanting to know where they came from so that they can live in their present and plan for their future. Genealogists are already at the fore-front of text mining and geocoding working alongside social history academics so both groups will continue to welcome every emerging technology and embrace it. It should be emphasised that many of us are looking forward to the release of 1921 census information, a snapshot which will give us a better understanding from a social and family aspect of the impact of the war to end all wars. One hundred years from now or less depending on census release it will be instructive to have the same snapshot of events of this century which post 9/11 is considered to be a "different world. Even discounting continued global conflict we live in a world of increasing environmental change and once again the snapshot method will provides an opportunity to analyse the impact of this.

**Q7 - What advantages or disadvantages for genealogical or historical research can you see from a move to a solution based on archiving administrative data sources?**

Archiving administrative data is already ongoing and can and should continue irrespective of its use to replace a census. The only advantage would be releasing data in a more timely or complete manner.

**Q8 - What are your views of the risks of each census approach and how they might be managed?**

An online census still needs a managed 'human' interaction component. A major problem in Canada in 2011 for the online census was reaching out to new populations in appropriate language with front line workers who also understood cultural barriers. Marginalised populations of any kinds need special handling and many people felt that personal information would be shared with other government departments. The consultation document pays scant attention to the issue of a national identification number scheme, there are serious issues regarding this that were minimised in the document. I understand it to be fundamental to an annual compulsory survey. Before moving away from the ten year in depth approach the use of existing data from various sources would need to be more carefully analysed.

**Q9 - Are there any other issues that you believe we should be taking into account?**

There is a fundamental problem with engaging the entire population in either a ten year census or one year compulsory survey. Punitive measures don't work so there needs to be some rethinking of what would. The declining response rate is likely to be exacerbated by a compulsory annual survey. I don't buy the privacy excuse, the more typical one is I am too busy, I don't understand or care about the value of the census. An annual invasion of privacy etc is likely to go over like a lead balloon.