



## **2011 Census Content: Consultation guide**

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## Preface

Thank you for taking the time to get involved in the consultation process for the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings. This document outlines how Statistics New Zealand determines census content, and describes our proposed changes for 2011.

For 2011, Statistics NZ will make minimal change to census content, to emphasise data quality and maintain consistency. The aim of this census consultation is to assess the impact of proposed changes on users, and achieve the best possible design of those changes. Your comments will help us assess and prioritise the changes we propose to census content for 2011. As the Statistics Act 1975 requires, final decisions on content rest with me as Government Statistician.

The census is the official count of population and dwellings in New Zealand, providing a vital 'snapshot' of our society every five years. It fits within a wider Programme of Official Social Statistics (POSS) that produces comprehensive and cohesive statistics on social well-being and social outcomes. The census is a key part of this programme because it covers the entire population and provides localised information that other POSS surveys cannot.

Finally, a reminder that submissions close at 5pm on Monday 14th July 2008. We look forward to considering your feedback.



Geoff Bascand  
Government Statistician

## Standards and further information

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## Contents

Preface.....	1
Standards and further information .....	2
Contents.....	3
Sections	
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Proposed changes to census content for 2011.....	7
3. How to provide feedback .....	8
4. Further research and consultation .....	9
Appendices	
1: Further detail on proposed changes for 2011 .....	11
2: 2006 Census topics to be included in 2011 Census .....	14
3: Submission form .....	15

## 1. Introduction

This consultation guide outlines how Statistics New Zealand determines census content, and describes proposed changes for 2011. It invites comment from information users, to help Statistics NZ ensure the census produces quality data that meets users' needs. Key policy agencies and expert data users were consulted during the writing of this document.

### About the census

The overall goal of the census is to produce the best possible count of the population and dwellings in New Zealand every five years, as required by the Statistics Act 1975. This, along with other related statistical information, will be delivered to users through a useful and accessible range of products and services.

The Act specifies a number of topics that must be included in the census and states that additional topics may be included at the discretion of the Government Statistician.

#### The census:

- is the only complete count of New Zealand's population
- provides base data for population estimates and projections and other statistics
- is a crucial source of data for central and local government, communities, businesses and for determining electoral boundaries
- occupies a unique position within the Programme of Official Social Statistics (POSS) as the only survey that provides comprehensive data on small areas and groups as well as at the national level
- collects a very wide range of information at one time, allowing rich comparisons to be made within and across groups, and across time
- collects data about the usually resident population, and useful information on visitors.

### 2011 Census content strategy

The strategy for the 2011 Census is for minimal change to census content and the census questionnaires. Within this context the Government Statistician has decided there will be no new topics or questions in the 2011 Census.

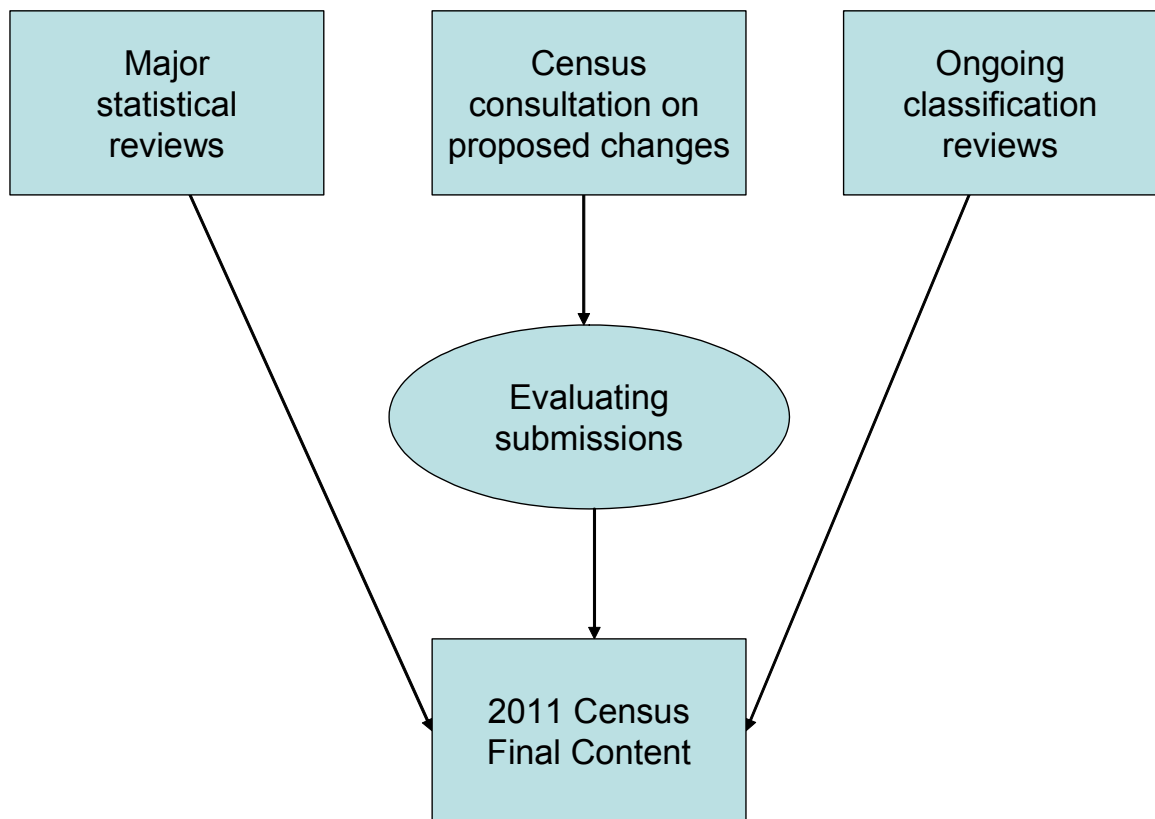
By limiting the amount of content change, the census will continue to stay relevant and produce quality data, while also providing a high degree of historical comparability. Each census is not a standalone survey; the information it provides is most valuable to users when combined with information from past censuses. Extensive changes to census content reduce the ability of our users to make these valuable comparisons over time.

A number of changes were made to the 2006 Census to maintain relevance in a changing society, and these will be carried through to the 2011 Census. In addition, Statistics NZ is proposing some changes to existing topics to improve data quality.

Statistics NZ assesses all changes to census topics very carefully. Any change to content has significant flow-on costs for other parts of census, including processing systems. Statistics NZ is prioritising investment in its collection activities to ensure a high response rate can be achieved, within the resources available.

### Census consultation process

Consultation on census content for 2011 will occur through Statistics NZ reviews, and a further consultation on the proposed changes not covered by those ongoing review processes. See the diagram below.



This guide supports the census consultation on proposed changes. Its publication marks the beginning of the public submission period. After submissions close on Monday 14 July 2008, they will be evaluated along with the outcomes of other statistical and classification reviews. Final decisions on census content will be made by the Government Statistician and notified to users on the Statistics NZ website from late 2008.

### Evaluation of submissions

Statistics NZ seeks user feedback on the proposed changes to census content for 2011. Users can also suggest other changes that might significantly improve the data quality

of existing topics. This feedback will allow Statistics NZ to assess the impact of each proposed change on users of census data. In evaluating submissions, the strength of arguments for or against each proposed change will be given primacy over volume of submissions.

Statistics NZ will consider the following factors when determining whether each proposed change should be made:

- the outcomes of ongoing statistical and classification reviews
- the impact on end users of the data
- the impact on respondents
- the potential data quality benefits
- the cost of the change.

### **The census survey cycle**

The development and undertaking of the census is a continuous cycle. Preparation for the 2011 Census began before census day in 2006, and the overlap allows the lessons learned from the previous census to be integrated into preparations for the next. The various phases of the cycle are listed below. A key consideration when determining census content is the impact any changes will have on the subsequent parts of the census, particularly the cost of altering collection and processing systems.

- 2008: consult with users and determine census content
- 2008–10: develop and test questionnaires and systems
- March 2011: communicate with the public and undertake the survey
- 2011: process the information
- 2011–12: supply information to users
- 2011: begin planning for 2016.

## 2. Proposed changes to census content for 2011

The following proposed changes are the subject of this census consultation. For further description of each change, see appendix 1.

Topic	Proposed changes for 2011 – census consultation
Legal marital status	A change to the question to help respondents better understand civil unions and to improve data quality.
Total annual income	A change to the income categories to collect a wider (higher) range of income amounts.
Number of children born	Will not be included in the 2011 Census but will be retained on a cyclical basis.
Cigarette smoking	Will not be included in the 2011 Census but may be retained on a cyclical basis.
Access to telecommunication systems	Changes to categories to reflect technological change.
Fuel types used to heat dwelling	Changes to categories to reflect technological change.
Number of motor vehicles	Changes to categories of number of motor vehicles.

Opportunity for users to comment on these proposed changes is provided in section 2 of the submission form. Users can suggest other changes that might significantly improve the data quality of existing topics in section 3 of the submission form.

For a list of the 2006 topics to be included in the 2011 Census, refer to appendix 2.

### Potential changes being considered through other consultations

The following potential changes to census content are the subject of other consultation processes, and are not included on the submission form. See page 8 for more information.

Topic	Potential changes – other consultations
Ethnicity  See page 8 for details on how to participate.	The Revision of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard will determine whether changes are made to the ethnicity question in the census. It is part of a broader Review of Cultural Identity Statistics across the Official Statistics System.
Qualifications – field of study  See page 8 for more information.	Statistics NZ is working with the Ministry of Education to update the New Zealand Standard Classification of Education – Field of Study (NZSCED.FIELD) at the detailed level of the classification. This update is due for completion by March 2009.

### **3. How to provide feedback**

#### **Providing feedback on proposed changes to census content for 2011**

Statistics NZ wants to assess the impacts on users of proposed content changes for the 2011 Census, and welcomes submissions. Submissions in support of proposed changes to topics are useful when weighing up the strength of information need against objecting submissions.

The best way to make a submission is online at [www.stats.govt.nz/census2011](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census2011).

**The submission period begins on Friday 30 May 2008 and closes on Monday 14 July 2008 at 5pm.**

#### **After you submit**

- You will receive confirmation that we have received your submission by email if you submit online, or by post if you submit on paper.
- If you do not receive a confirmation within one week of making your submission, please contact us on 0800 CENSUS (236 787).
- Final decisions on census content will be made by the Government Statistician and notified to users on the Statistics NZ website from late 2008.

#### **Revision of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard**

Statistics NZ is reviewing the collection of statistics on cultural identity across the Official Statistics System. As part of this review, a revision of the ethnicity statistical standard will also be undertaken, with a view to implementing any changes that might be required for the 2011 Census.

More information, including details on how to make a submission, will be posted at [www.stats.govt.nz/about-us/consulting](http://www.stats.govt.nz/about-us/consulting) when the consultation process starts.

#### **Classification reviews**

Statistics NZ regularly reviews the classifications and standards that various surveys use to collect and produce information. These include targeted consultation with key users of each classification and standard. For more information on these classification reviews, please go to [www.stats.govt.nz/statistical-methods/classifications-standards](http://www.stats.govt.nz/statistical-methods/classifications-standards).

Some reviews currently underway will affect census content.

## 4. Further research and consultation

### Research topics for future censuses or other Statistics New Zealand surveys

Statistics NZ has identified that users are interested in the following topics: second residence / supplementary address, more detailed information on family structure, generational attachment to New Zealand, mortgage payments, sexual orientation.

These topics may be further researched as part of Statistics NZ's normal business activities. Discussion of these topics can be found in the [2011 Census Content: Supporting Information](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census/about-2011-census/2011-census-content-development/default.htm) document available online at [www.stats.govt.nz/census/about-2011-census/2011-census-content-development/default.htm](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census/about-2011-census/2011-census-content-development/default.htm).

### Further Statistics NZ consultation

The Programme of Official Social Statistics (POSS) was established in November 2003 to provide a coherent system of official social statistics across the government sector. It is important to consider the census within the context of POSS.

The key elements of the POSS work programme are:

- consolidation of existing surveys into a managed programme
- the introduction of new surveys to fill information gaps
- exploitation of other sources of data such as administrative databases
- improvement of analytical capability, dissemination of information and access to data.

POSS has a broad scope covering 12 domains or subject-matter areas: population, housing, safety and security, economic standard of living, knowledge and skills, health, paid work, culture and identity, social connectedness, human rights, physical environment, and leisure and recreation. Statistics NZ aims to develop a 'domain plan' for most of these areas. The domain plan will document key information needs and priority areas for statistical development in the domain over the next five to 10 years. Domain plans will be developed in consultation with data users and there will be a process of public consultation. In addition, reviews of classifications will also usually be conducted with input from users.

Significant effort is going into developing the POSS survey programme. The following surveys are under development:

- 2011 Census
- General Social Survey
- Time Use Survey
- Household Income Survey
- Families Survey
- Survey of Working Life
- Childcare Survey.

The past 12 months have also seen release of results from the following POSS surveys:

- 2006 New Zealand Disability Survey
- Household Economic Survey
- Survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand
- Survey of Family, Income and Employment.

These surveys address information gaps identified from earlier consultation with stakeholders and form key components of POSS. Some activity is underway to build statistical infrastructure and examine the potential of administrative data and data integration to create new official statistics. However, the primary focus is currently on the continued development of the survey programme.

The census provides comparable data for many POSS surveys, and further harmonisation work will take place as the programme progresses. POSS is also a key means of reducing load on the census. As other surveys develop and produce comprehensive databases, it is envisaged that information needs, where appropriate, will increasingly be met outside census.

The intention is that domain plans will guide statistical development work, including collection activity, use of administrative datasets and data analysis. An important aim is to maximise the use and ensure the quality of current data, and minimise the need for additional collection activity.

Progressively, provisional domain plans will be available on the Statisphere website and will provide guidance on determining census content for 2016 and beyond.

[www.statisphere.govt.nz](http://www.statisphere.govt.nz)

## **Appendix 1: Further detail on proposed changes for 2011**

### **Legal marital/relationship status**

#### **A change to the question to help respondents better understand civil unions and improve data quality.**

Statistics New Zealand is proposing to change the legal marital/relationship status question in the 2011 Census to address issues with the quality of civil unions data. The 2006 Census was the first census to collect information on civil unions. This reflected the expansion of recognised legal relationships in New Zealand with the introduction of the Civil Union Act 2004, which came into effect in April 2005. There are significant data quality issues regarding the civil unions data from the 2006 Census. Civil unions data for marital/relationship status from the 2006 Census is not fit for use. The figures for civil unions from the census are significantly higher than civil union registrations in New Zealand and are believed to be due to respondent misinterpretation regarding what a civil union is. The rest of the marital/relationship status data is not affected by this quality problem and shows the expected distributions.

A review of the classifications and standards for marital/relationship status is currently underway and this will be taken into consideration in the development of the 2011 Census.

For more information see the discussion of population topics in [2011 Census Content: Supporting Information](#).

### **Total annual income**

#### **A change to the income categories to collect a wider (higher) range of income amounts.**

Statistics New Zealand is proposing to change income categories, including the possible splitting of the \$50,001–\$70,000 band (to \$50,001–\$60,000 and \$60,001–\$70,000) and the option of providing bands beyond \$100,001. To give more space on the individual census questionnaire to allow for either of these changes, the lower bands \$1–\$5,000 and \$5,001–\$10,000 may need to be combined.

A review of the classifications and standards for total annual income is currently underway and this will be taken into consideration in the development of the 2011 Census.

For more information see the discussion of population topics in [2011 Census Content: Supporting Information](#).

## **Number of children born**

### **Will not be included in the 2011 Census but will be retained on a cyclical basis.**

The topic 'number of children born', also sometimes called 'fertility', is cyclical and was included in the 1981, 1996 and 2006 Censuses. Statistics NZ is proposing to exclude this topic from the 2011 Census.

Cyclical topics typically show less variation over a five-year cycle, but still have clearly demonstrated uses and are unable to be collected accurately elsewhere. However, current fertility trends, alongside trends in childlessness, mean that there is potential for quite rapid change in fertility patterns in New Zealand in the near future. This may indicate a need to consider fertility as a five-yearly question at least in the current situation.

For more information see the discussion of population topics in

[2011 Census Content: Supporting Information.](#)

## **Cigarette smoking**

### **Will not be included in the 2011 Census but may be retained on a cyclical basis.**

Statistics New Zealand considers that a 10-yearly cycle of inclusion for the cigarette smoking topic is adequate. As this topic was included in the 2006 Census, it will not be included in the 2011 Census. Survey data are available to measure change in the intervening years, and the census can be used as an occasional benchmark. Including this topic in the census is valuable, because it is able to monitor the smoking behaviour of at risk sub-groups, which cannot be easily monitored through sample surveys.

Between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, new and more regularly-collected data sources on cigarette smoking have been established. For example, the New Zealand Tobacco Use Survey (NZTUS), conducted for the first time in 2006, is a sample survey that will be repeated two out of every three years. The survey can produce national estimates for the key demographics of interest: age, sex, and ethnic group. The Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) Year 10 Smoking Survey collects data annually from year 10 students. Information on cigarette smoking is also collected in the New Zealand Health Survey and the General Social Survey.

For more information see the discussion of health topics in [2011 Census Contents: Supporting Information.](#)

## **Access to telecommunications systems**

### **Changes to categories to reflect technological change.**

This census topic provides information on whether households have access to a telephone, cellphone, the Internet and/or a fax in their home.

Statistics New Zealand is seeking feedback on how the access to telecommunications systems data is used, in particular fax access data and whether this should continue to be collected in the census. The classification for access to telecommunication systems is scheduled to be reviewed in 2008, and user comment in this consultation will be taken into consideration in that review.

For more information see the discussion of housing topics in [2011 Census Contents: Supporting Information](#).

## **Fuel types used to heat dwelling**

### **Changes to categories to reflect technological change.**

Currently the fuel use data from the census has separate categories for mains gas and bottled gas. However, respondents are often not aware of which type of gas they use, and may incorrectly indicate mains gas in situations where gas is supplied from a cylinder for an entire street but is piped underground. One possible solution to this problem that is being considered for 2011 is to aggregate the mains and bottled gas categories together to form one gas category. Whether this should be done, however, depends on whether distinguishing between mains gas and bottled gas is important for users of this data. Statistics NZ is seeking feedback on this.

The fuel type classification is scheduled for review before June 2009. Whether additional categories for other fuel types (eg pellets, home heating oil, biofuel) are needed is being considered.

For more information see the discussion of housing topics in census at [2011 Census Contents: Supporting Information](#).

## **Number of motor vehicles**

### **Changes to categories of number of motor vehicles.**

The classification for number of motor vehicles is scheduled to be reviewed before June 2009. It has been suggested that the top category should be raised from three or more motor vehicles to five or more motor vehicles. Statistics New Zealand is seeking feedback on whether this extra information would be of value to users.

For more information see the discussion of housing topics in census at [2011 Census Contents: Supporting Information](#).

## Appendix 2: 2006 Census topics to be included in 2011 Census

All the topics listed in the table below will be included in the 2011 Census. Full discussion of all existing topics is available in [2011 Census Contents: Supporting Information](#).

Only two 2006 Census topics will not be included in the 2011 Census, subject to the outcome of this census consultation: number of children born, cigarette smoking.

Topic area	2006 Census topics to be included in the 2011 Census
Population Structure <a href="#">More information</a>	Name Age (date of birth) Sex Absentees Marital/relationship status
Location <a href="#">More information</a>	Census night address Dwelling address Usual residence Years at usual residence Usual residence 5 years ago
Ethnicity & Culture <a href="#">More information</a>	Birthplace Ethnicity Language spoken Māori descent Iwi affiliation Religious affiliation Years since arrival in NZ
Disability <a href="#">More information</a>	Disability
Families & Households <a href="#">More information</a>	Extended families Family type Household composition
Education & Training <a href="#">More information</a>	Highest qualification Secondary school qualification Post-school qualification Study participation
Work <a href="#">More information</a>	Labour force status Occupation Industry Status in employment Sector of ownership Workplace address Hours worked Main means of travel to work Unpaid activities
Income <a href="#">More information</a>	Total annual income Sources of income
Housing <a href="#">More information</a>	Dwelling counts (includes dwelling location) Dwelling type Number of rooms and number of bedrooms Tenure of household Tenure holder Sector of landlord Weekly rent paid by households Access to telecommunication systems Fuel types used to heat dwelling Number of motor vehicles

## Appendix 3: Submission Form

### 2011 Census Content: Submission form

Statistics New Zealand welcomes submissions from all users of census data regarding the proposed changes to content for the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

The strategy for the 2011 Census is for minimal change to survey content, and there will be no new topics. Under this strategy, Statistics NZ can consider limited changes to existing topics to improve data quality and relevance.

Please refer to *2011 Census Content: Consultation guide* to help you make your submission. It outlines how Statistics NZ determines census content, and is available online at [www.stats.govt.nz/census2011](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census2011) or by calling 0508 525 525.

**Section 1** of this form asks for your contact details, as anonymous submissions will not be considered. We will also use this information to inform you of the Government Statistician's decisions on census content in late 2008.

**Section 2** seeks feedback on the changes Statistics NZ proposes to census content for 2011, to improve data quality and maintain relevance.

**Section 3** is where users can suggest other changes that might significantly improve the data quality of existing topics.

Remember, the fastest way to make a submission is online at [www.stats.govt.nz/census2011](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census2011).

Our mailing address for hard copy submissions is:  
2011 Census content  
Statistics New Zealand  
PO Box 2922  
Wellington

All submissions received by Statistics NZ will be acknowledged – electronic submissions by email, posted submissions by letter.

**Submissions must reach Statistics NZ by 5pm on Monday 14 July 2008.**

### Authority to release information

All submissions received become the property of Statistics NZ and may be released or otherwise referred to when publicly explaining the content of questionnaires for the 2011 Census.

**1. Contact details**

Is this submission by an

- Organisation/group
- Individual

Name of organisation (if on behalf of organisation)

Surname

First name

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Postal address:

<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>

Email:

Phone:

**2. Statistics NZ's proposed content changes for the 2011 Census**

If you would like to comment on these proposed changes please check the relevant box(es) and write in the space provided. Otherwise proceed to section 3.

In your comments please outline how you use the information collected by these topics and consider the impact any proposed change would have on that use. If possible, state whether you broadly agree or disagree with our proposed change.

*Further information about each proposed change can be found in 2011 Census Content: Consultation guide, available at [www.stats.govt.nz/census2011](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census2011) or by calling 0508 525 525.*

- Legal marital/relationship status  
A change to the question to help respondents to better understand civil unions and improve data quality.

- Total annual income**  
A change to the income categories to collect a wider (higher) range of income amounts.

- Number of children born**  
Will not be included in the 2011 Census but will be retained on a cyclical basis.

- Cigarette smoking**  
Will not be included in the 2011 Census but may be retained on a cyclical basis.

- Access to telecommunication systems**  
Changes to categories to reflect technological change.

- Fuel types used to heat dwelling**  
Changes to categories to reflect technological change.

- Number of motor vehicles  
Changes to categories of number of motor vehicles.

*Attach extra sheets if required.*

### **3. Other quality improvements for the 2011 Census**

To suggest any other changes that might significantly improve the data quality of existing census topics, please write in the space provided. A full list and discussion of all existing topics can be found online at [www.stats.govt.nz/census2011](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census2011).

In your comments please clearly specify how you use the data collected by the existing topic and outline how your suggested change might improve the quality of that data.

*Attach extra sheets if required.*

### **4. Further contact**

As part of ongoing development work, Statistics NZ may wish to contact you in the future regarding other consultations. Can Statistics NZ contact you regarding other consultations?

- Yes, Statistics NZ may contact me regarding other consultations.
- No.