

Country of birth

2001 Census question

9 Which country were you born in?

New Zealand, go to **11**

Australia

England

Scotland

The Netherlands

Cook Islands

Samoa

Fiji

other. Please print the present name of the country:

Background

The 'country of birth' question appears on the front page of the individual form and is considered key information. Listed country answer options are used to help make the task easier for respondents.

The format for this question was introduced in the 1986 Census. The listed options were determined by the percentages of people in each in the previous census. There have been few changes in the order of the country options since that time, although the numbers of people from each country have changed between 1986 and 2001.

During the redevelopment process for the 2001 Census the People's Republic of China was considered as a listed response option based on the numbers recorded in the previous census. However, cognitive testing showed respondents tended to write in 'China' and ignored the full country name in the list of options. Due to space constraints on the form China was not listed in 2001.

The Cook Islands has been considered important to list as a response option due to the high number of errors recorded. Cook Islanders tend to write in the name of individual islands such as 'Aitutaki' rather than 'Cook Islands'. Therefore, despite the relatively low numbers of people in this category, Cook Islands remains on the list.

Development objectives/plan

The objectives identified for the 2006 development were to:

- review the listed country response options
- test whether respondents used the text boxes to write in countries that were already listed.

To meet these objectives a comprehensive programme of testing was conducted including cognitive testing, analysis of data from field tests and consultation with key stakeholders.

