

Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity

RME

Huan ying Foon ying Selamat datang Haere mai Welcome
Willkommen Soyez bienvenue Talofa lava Kia orana Malo e lelei
Fakalofa lahiatu Ni sa bula vinaka Namaste Tena koe Helo ola keta Talohani Noa ia
Kamshor Lei ho Ne hou Ni Hao Buenos dias Mabuhay Sawat dii khrap
Konnichi wa Ciao Jum riap suor Wilkom

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Welcome and haere mai to the fourth newsletter from the Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity project team at Statistics New Zealand.

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Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity: final report out

In recent times we have been reviewing how ethnicity information is gained and reported on for official statistics. Statistics New Zealand wishes to thank all those individuals and organisations who wrote in, telephoned or attended meetings to express their views about the measurement of ethnicity. These views have helped shape the recommendations that we have made and will guide the way for research in the future.

The final report of the Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity (RME) can be seen on the Statistics New Zealand website (www.stats.govt.nz/ethnicity). It includes a full list of the recommendations and the reasons behind them. A short summary of the recommendations is contained in this newsletter.

Many of you will be aware that the draft report of the RME has been on our website for some time. Further discussions have taken place over the last year leading to changes in some of the recommendations from this draft.

If you would like a copy of the report mailed to you, please contact Jo-anne Allan. (see Contacts in this newsletter)

Main results of the RME

- ◆ There is an ongoing need to produce information about ethnicity.
- ◆ Ethnicity needs to be produced in the same way by all government agencies.
- ◆ The 2006 Census will use the same ethnicity question used in the 2001 Census.
- ◆ Statistics New Zealand needs to carry on educating people about how to answer questions on ethnicity, and how to effectively collect, use and understand ethnicity information.
- ◆ More research on how to gather information on ethnicity is to be completed by the end of 2009.
- ◆ Official agencies need to be able to record more than one ethnicity answer for each person.
- ◆ Official agencies need to ask each person to identify for themselves which ethnic group(s) they belong to.
- ◆ The approach that places each person in one ethnic group when they have given more than one ethnicity, will no longer be used.
- ◆ Answers like 'New Zealander' and 'Kiwi' will be counted separately.
- ◆ There will be a group at the highest level of the classification called Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA).
- ◆ The ethnicity classification will be changed to reflect the recommendations.

Submissions from stakeholders

We went to many individuals and groups to seek their opinions and views on how to gather and record information about ethnicity for this review. The final recommendations are based on this feedback. More than 120 submissions were received from stakeholders for the RME.

Stakeholders are individuals or groups who have an interest in a subject or task. Similar stakeholders were grouped to be able to study the submissions. The ten groups were: Central Government, Māori, Local Government, Academics, Health, Ethnic Community, Pacific Community, Community – Other, Business, and Statistics New Zealand.

The “Guide for Stakeholders” was used to gather views about ethnicity. Feedback from submissions was put into the topics from this guide. The topics were: Definition and concepts, Rationale, Operational issues, Questionnaire, Classification and coding, and Output. ‘Consistency’ was added as a topic by the team as a result of feedback from submissions.

The Māori submissions were examined by a team of Māori researchers from Statistics New Zealand. Remaining submissions were studied by the RME team. The team studied the views expressed by each group and how the views could affect different situations. These situations included how people answer the ethnicity question, how researchers use the information, how ethnicity information for Māori and other ethnic groups is used, and how groups who observe changes in society use the information.

Where to from here?

We will make every effort to contact those who made submissions to make them aware of the results of the review and thank them again for their feedback.

Over the next few months, Statistics New Zealand will develop a plan to carry out the recommendations, in discussion with stakeholders.

We will start a programme to carry out more research on ethnicity, after talking with other agencies and organisations.

A paper explaining how ethnicity information can be examined and output will be available on our website. This paper also describes the best output method for ethnicity information, depending on its purpose.

The revised Ethnicity Classification and Ethnicity Statistical Standard is being written and will be on our website once completed. A concordance, which matches the ethnic groups from the previous classification to the revised Ethnicity Classification, will also be available.

What is a statistical standard?

A statistical standard provides a full set of guidelines for collecting information on a topic. The parts of a standard are:

- ◆ a definition of the topic
- ◆ how to collect the information
- ◆ how the information has been classified
- ◆ how to code the information to the classification
- ◆ how to ask the question to get the information
- ◆ how to display the results as output.

Why have statistical standards?

The use of statistical standards enables the information on a topic to be collected at different times in the same way, and so give results that can be compared. This helps to keep the information about the topic reliable.

Statistical standards also allow information collected by different agencies to be combined, even when it may not have been collected with that purpose in mind. Using a standard cuts down the

work for groups and organisations because, instead of developing the questions themselves, they can use the information from the standard.

For information about other statistical standards, for example occupation and age, see: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/standards>

To find other classifications, see: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/classifications>

Papers written for the RME

The following titles are available from the RME page of the Statistics New Zealand website:

A Question of Ethnicity — One Word, Different People, Many Perceptions: The Perspectives of Groups other than Māori, Pacific Peoples, and New Zealand Europeans

Ethnicity Matters: Māori Perspectives

International Concepts and Classifications

The Definition and Measurement of Ethnicity: A Pacific perspective

Classification and Issues

Policy Perspectives

Comparison of the Measurement of Ethnicity in Australia and New Zealand

Background Paper

Measuring Ethnicity in the New Zealand Population Census

These papers are on the RME page of the website.

Website

The website address for the RME report is: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/ethnicity>

Contacts

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