



Ethnic group statistics

*A guide for the collection
and classification of
ethnicity data*

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ISBN 1 85774 561 2

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Foreword by the National Statistician

Britain has a rich mix of cultures and communities. Some of these reflect long-standing history and heritage, while others reflect more recent and ongoing social changes and new ways of life. Ethnicity is, therefore, far from a static concept. It is a rich balance of ancestry, religion, culture, nationality, language, region etc. Globalisation, intermarriage, the changing nature of migration and the massive shift in travel and transportation are challenges to the things that preserve and protect ethnicity. Understanding people's ethnicity and their sense of national identity is key to understanding many current social and economic trends.

Defining and measuring ethnicity and national identity has never been easy, especially as what the term embraces is constantly evolving. However, it is vitally important that we do measure ethnicity and national identity and that we do so in a way that is sound, sensitive, relevant and useful. We also need this to be consistent over some period of time, so that we can build up a clear picture of contemporary Britain and how it – rather than the measure of ethnicity and national identity – is changing.

The *2001 Census of Population* provides a foundation for work in the years until the next census, on ethnicity and national identity. Census results will be available as the population base for many different monitoring exercises, not only at the national level but also for local areas and communities across the UK. The publication of this guidance on defining and measuring ethnicity and national identity is, therefore, timely. It builds on the considerable experience of the producers of National Statistics in government departments and in devolved administrations, as well as in the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

I thank all those involved in the preparation of this guidance and strongly encourage everyone who needs to collect data on ethnicity and national identity to adopt the principles and procedures set out in the guidance. The benefits of doing so are potentially very large, as our understanding of ethnicity and national identity will develop through the accumulation of consistent and robust statistical pictures and analyses. Ethnic communities plan, influence and need culturally relevant services and activities at various levels, and use official data as one source of knowledge about themselves. Their wish to distinguish themselves provides a strong basis for establishing classifications such as this.

Len Cook
National Statistician



1

Introduction

There is a need for more frequent and comprehensive data by ethnicity across a range of administrative and survey data. This is true at both local and national levels, so that we can build up a picture of ethnic groups over time and promote equal opportunities.

In addition, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 gives public authorities a general duty to promote race equality. Ethnic identification is a subjective and multi-dimensional phenomenon and this makes this sort of information particularly difficult to collect. So, while this guidance has been prepared to give you some standard methodology, we recognise that the whole subject calls for further research in order for us to keep pace with changes in the mix of UK society.

Background

The Report of Policy Action Team 18 on Better Information (2000), which relates to the information needs for the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, emphasised that “some of the groups in society that are the most vulnerable to becoming victims of social exclusion are forgotten simply because not enough is known about their particular circumstances”. It added that ONS should “ensure that more administrative data is coded by ethnicity”.

The purpose of the guide

Basing ethnic identification upon an objective and rigid classification of ethnic groups has been found not to be practical. Various possible ways of measuring ethnic groups have, therefore, been developed and been used over time. These guidelines suggest National Statistics standards for the collection and classification of this information in order to achieve comparability over time, and between data sources. The aim

has been to generate standards that meet a range of user needs and which also provide comparability with the 2001 census as far as possible.

In brief, we are giving guidance for two methods: a two-question and a single question method. Generally speaking, we recommend the two-question method, which combines ethnic and national group dimensions. But we recommend you use the single question method, restricted to only ethnic groups, when the following conditions apply:

- it is possible to ask one question only
- direct comparison with the 2001 census is important
- response to the data collection is not likely to suffer because of the lack of a national group question and
- national group is not an important dimension to measure or ask about.

Wherever possible, we recommend the inclusion of a question on religion.

We have included, for each option, standard data presentations and questions, taking into account differences between geographic levels and modes of collection, i.e. whether face-to-face, telephone interview, or a self-completion questionnaire method is being used.

In this paper, we also give guidelines for the collection and classification of more detailed ethnic group data and for the collection of data on other dimensions such as religion and country of birth. In addition we list some available sources on ethnic group statistics.

How this guide is structured

Chapters 1–4 give context to the whole subject of the collection and classification of ethnicity data and describe the issues we had to resolve when devising these new standards. It also gives background information on other issues that you will need to consider e.g. legal, when putting together data presentations and questions. Chapters 5–7 then go on to give more detailed, practical guidance on how they should be constructed, and the appendices are a useful source of reference.

2

Why is it difficult to collect data on ethnicity?

Collecting data on ethnicity is difficult because of the subjective, multi-faceted and changing nature of ethnic identification and there is no consensus on what constitutes an 'ethnic group'. Membership of any ethnic group is something that is subjectively meaningful to the person concerned and the terminology used to describe ethnic groups has changed markedly over time. As a result, ethnic groups, however defined or measured, will tend to evolve depending upon social and political attitudes or developments. Therefore, we do not believe that basing ethnic identification upon an objective and rigid classification of ethnic groups is practicable.

What is an ethnic group?

Definitions of what constitutes an ethnic group or an ethnic minority are subject to much discussion (see Coleman and Salt (eds) 1996¹, Bulmer 1996², Ballard 1996³, Solomos and Back 1996⁴). In British government research, minority ethnic groups are differentiated based on a combination of categories including 'race', skin colour, national and regional origins, and language. We believe that the fact that ethnic monitoring categories in a British policy context have been modified over time points to the contested and changing nature of ethnic identification. What has remained fixed, however, is the assumption of an 'ethnic majority' that is White, of British origin, and English-speaking.

Bulmer's (1996) definition of an ethnic group is as follows:

An ethnic group is a collectivity within a larger population having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared past, and a cultural focus upon one or more symbolic elements which define the group's

1 Coleman, D. and J. Salt. *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census of Population*. HMSO, 1996.

2 Bulmer, M. "The ethnic group question in the 1991 Census of Population", *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census of Population*, Eds. Coleman, D. and J. Salt. HMSO, 1996.

3 Ballard, R. "Negotiating race and ethnicity: exploring the implications of the 1991 census", *Patterns of Prejudice*. 30, 3 (1996): 3-33.

4 Solomos, J. and L. Back. *Racism and Society*. Macmillan, 1996.

identity, such as kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance. Members of an ethnic group are conscious of belonging to an ethnic group.

Berthoud, Modood and Smith (1997)⁵ define ethnic group as follows:

In principle, an ethnic group would be defined as a community whose heritage offers important characteristics in common between its members and which makes them distinct from other communities. There is a boundary, which separates 'us' from 'them', and the distinction would probably be recognised on both sides of that boundary. Ethnicity is a multi-faceted phenomenon based on physical appearance, subjective identification, cultural and religious affiliation, stereotyping, and social exclusion. But it is not possible in advance to prescribe what the key distinguishing characteristics might be; the components of ethnicity will be different in Britain compared with, say Northern Ireland, Belgium, Bosnia, the United States, Rwanda, India or Singapore. So it is necessary to adopt a flexible and practical approach to choosing the specific criteria to identify the important ethnic boundaries in any particular society.

What is a classification?

A classification is used to assign data reported or measured for a particular situation into categories according to shared characteristics. We use classifications to ensure consistent description and comparison of statistics. In practice, it is a set of 'boxes' into which items can be put in order to get some kind of meaning. For example, when collecting data on marital status, the categories are separated into single (never been married), married, separated, divorced, and widowed.

So, when managing and updating the ethnicity classification for the United Kingdom for statistical purposes, you should consider the following basic classification rules:

1. Group the items using a conceptual basis.
2. Provide categories that reflect and distinguish between the significant ethnic groups present in the United Kingdom.
3. Ensure that you will be able to use the classification for a number of years.
4. Create a classification that you will be able to use in a variety of different types of collections, for example, telephone, Internet, interviewer-administered and self-administered surveys, as well as for administrative data.
5. Construct a classification that will produce data that are comparable with data previously produced on the subject.
6. Ensure that, no matter what the response to the question, it will fit into the classification.

⁵ Berthoud, R., et al. *Ethnic Minorities in Britain*. Policy Studies Institute, 1997

When classifications relate to a concept that is evolving, they should be updated so that they reflect the current situation as well as allowing for comparisons over time.

Why have classifications?

Classifications allow us, in an accurate and systematic way, to arrange our data according to common features, so that the resulting statistics can be easily reproduced and able to be compared over time and between different sources.

Is a person's ethnic group self-defined?

Yes. Membership of an ethnic group is something that is subjectively meaningful to the person concerned, and this is the principal basis for ethnic categorisation in the United Kingdom. So, in ethnic group questions, we are unable to base ethnic identification upon objective, quantifiable information as we would, say, for age or gender. And this means that we should rather ask people which group they see themselves as belonging to.

What terminology has been used to describe ethnic groups?

Bulmer (1996) provides a useful summary of the terminology that has been used to describe ethnic groups.

In order to ask a successful self-identification question about ethnicity or 'race', one must use a clear terminology. One of the difficulties in this area is that the terminology in general use has changed markedly over time. If one traces the post-war shifts in terminology, the earliest studies of British race relations used the term 'Negroes' or 'coloured migrants' for persons of West Indian descent (Bulmer 1986)⁶. One study was entitled *Dark Strangers* (Patterson 1963)⁷. As Asian migration from the Indian sub-continent increased in the 1960s, the term 'migrant' or 'coloured immigrants' or 'Commonwealth immigrants' became much more commonly used. The first national study of racial discrimination, published in 1968, referred to the "Commonwealth coloured immigrant population" (Daniel 1968)⁸. In the early 1970s, in official publications of statistics about ethnic minority groups, the term "New Commonwealth and Pakistan ethnic origin" was intensively used for a period (compare with Moser 1972)⁹.

In the mid-1970s, in the years preceding the *1981 Census of Population*, there was a shift in empirical social research toward using terminology placing an emphasis upon area of origin. In the second *Political and Economic Planning (PEP) national survey of race relations* (Smith

⁶ Bulmer, M. "Race and Ethnicity", *Key Variables in Social Investigation*, Ed. R.G. Burgess. Routledge, 1986.

⁷ Patterson, S. *Dark Strangers: a Study of West Indians in London*. Penguin, 1963.

⁸ Daniel, W.W. *Racial Discrimination in England*. Penguin, 1968.

⁹ Moser, C. "Statistics about immigrants: objectives, sources, methods and problems," *Social Trends*, 3 (1972): 20-30.

1976)¹⁰ the terms “West Indian”, “African Asian” and “Indians and Pakistanis” were used. West Indians were defined as people born in the West Indies or Guyana, or (if born in Britain) people whose families originally came from there. African Asians were defined as people who were racially Asian and who either were born in Africa or were living there immediately prior to coming to Britain, or belonged to families that were originally African Asian. Indians and Pakistanis were defined as people who were not African Asians and were born in India or Pakistan or who belonged to families that originally came from India or Pakistan. ‘Asian’ was used to refer only to people coming from the Indian sub continent. Other Asian groups such as Chinese or Japanese were not included in the classification. This classification had similarities with the OPCS estimates of the population of New Commonwealth and Pakistan Ethnic origin, which was broken down by geographical area of origin.

Other studies at the time used this terminology in one form or another. In Ken Pryce’s study of West Indian lifestyles in Bristol (1979)¹¹, those researched are referred to throughout as “Jamaicans” or “West Indians”, whether born in the West Indies or Britain. John Rex and Sally Tomlinson (1979)¹², and Peter Ratcliffe (1981)¹³, in their studies of Handsworth in Birmingham used the terms ‘West Indian’ and ‘Asian’, with the term ‘ethnic group’ introduced as a more general term. The third National Survey of Race Relations, carried out by PSI in 1981 (Brown 1984)¹⁴, used a broadly similar definition of ‘West Indian’, ‘African Asian’, ‘Indian’ and ‘Pakistani’ to that of the second PSI survey in 1974.

The 1991 census did not include a specific ‘mixed’ ethnic group category. Up to the mid-1980s, various field trials had shown that people of mixed descent often preferred not to be distinguished as a separate group (Sillitoe, 1987)¹⁵; instead they usually identified with the ethnic group of one of their parents – usually the father. As a result, an attempt to classify all persons of mixed descent in the same way was abandoned, and a guidance note was added to the 1991 census question:

If the person is descended from more than one ethnic or racial group, please tick the group to which the person considers he/she belongs, or tick the ‘Any other ethnic group’ box and describe the person’s ancestry in the space provided.

More recently, fieldwork to determine a revised ethnic group question for the 2001 census has shown that a ‘mixed’ category would be acceptable, provided that an opportunity were given to record the relevant details as a written description.

A similar evolution in concepts is occurring in other countries.

10 Smith, D.J. *The Facts of Racial Disadvantage: a national survey*. PEP Broadsheet no. 560 (1976).

11 Pryce, K. *Endless Pressure: a study of West Indian life-styles in Bristol*. Penguin, 1979.

12 Rex, J. and S. Tomlinson. *Colonial Immigrants in a British City: a class analysis*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.

13 Ratcliffe, P. *Racism and Reaction: a profile of Handsworth*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

14 Brown, C. *Black and White Britain*. Heinemann, 1984.

15 Sillitoe, K. *Developing questions on Ethnicity and related topics for the Census*. OPCS Occasional Paper 36, SS 1246/1261. OPCS, 1987.

Does ethnic group change over time?

It appears that ethnic groups, however defined or measured, will tend to change over time – so that, quite legitimately, for a proportion of the population, a person may record themselves as one ethnic group at one time and another on a subsequent occasion. Such changes depend upon social and political attitudes and developments; ‘Black’, for example, was an unacceptable term at one time, but it is now one that is embraced by many of the individuals in the groups concerned. This, and earlier examples, show that any ethnic group label is only valid for the period and context in which it is used.

What is a ‘self-identification’ measure of ethnic group?

In the census and many surveys, respondents are invited to select, from a list of categories, the ethnic group to which they consider they belong. There appears to be two factors determining the ethnic group that is recorded for each respondent:

- their own choice of how they view their own ethnicity and
- the list of options presented to them.

The first consideration is the most straightforward: the ethnic group that each person chooses as his or her own is intrinsically the ethnic group of self-identity, rather than being ascribed by anyone else.

The second consideration is apparently not so clear-cut. The ethnic group options presented to the respondent are not completely ones of self-identity, since the respondent is likely to have had no say in the names or the number of the different alternative ethnic groups in the ‘menu’. Therefore, the freedom the respondent has to select their own group is constrained and influenced by the options on offer.

So it is important that the ethnic groups presented in a self-identification question are piloted and pre-tested. And a large part of the piloting should centre on testing alternative wording of the questions as well as the named categories in order to match respondents’ own preferred ethnic descriptions of themselves. This way, the list of ethnic group options will be consistent with their own understanding of their ethnic group. In practice, then, the list of apparent answers becomes, effectively, a list of questions. There is a very good reason for compiling your questions in this way: some who would respond with their ethnicity when it means ticking a box may not be prepared to write in their ethnicity by hand were it not listed.

3

What are the different aspects of ethnicity?

Since ethnicity is a multi-faceted and changing phenomenon, various possible ways of measuring ethnic groups are available and have been used over time. These include country of birth, nationality, language spoken at home, parents' country of birth in conjunction with country of birth, skin colour, national/geographical origin, racial group and religion. What seems to be generally accepted, however, is that ethnicity includes all these aspects, and others, in combination.

Country of birth

For many years, the only statistics regularly available in Britain were based on people's country of birth. This was of limited reliability because, for example, a number of white people had been born in such countries as India when it was ruled by Britain. Country of birth has, in any case, become increasingly less relevant when used on its own to specify ethnicity, as second and third generation children have been born since the main periods of migration.

Nationality

Some destination countries use nationality as their primary criterion, implying that migrants cease to be minorities once they have qualified for citizenship. However, it is clear that many of the disadvantages and other experiences associated with minority status continue long after naturalisation has been completed. Also, the nationality laws associated with Britain's former empire are far too complex for this to be a useful criterion on its own.

Language spoken at home

For some minority ethnic groups, language spoken at home may be an effective way of defining ethnicity. Such a question has been commonly asked in large national surveys of minority ethnic groups, not only to identify members of the minority but also to permit the matching of interviewer with respondent in cases where the interview is conducted in the indigenous language. But, as time goes on, this measure is becoming increasingly less useful: with the emergence of the second and third generations, young families may use English as their main language, even though they still identify with particular minority ethnic groups.

Parents' country of birth in conjunction with country of birth

Parents' country of birth, taken together with the respondent's own country of birth, enables data to be produced as a proxy variable for ethnic group about both first and second generation migrants to the UK. This approach is rather imprecise because of a small but significant number of the White population being born in other parts of the Commonwealth. In addition, the increasing proportion of minority ethnic groups being born in the UK means that this is no longer an adequate signifier.

Skin colour

Skin colour is another option. After all, the majority group is defined as 'White', and some (or even all) minorities are often referred to as 'Black'. Colour can also reflect the fact that minority status is likely to follow from generation to generation, whatever changes occur in the cultural behaviour of the people concerned. On the other hand, colour cannot be used to distinguish between minority groups (for example between Caribbeans and Africans, or between Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) and it is not acceptable to some people. So it is inadequate as a criterion on its own.

National/geographical origin

A question may include aspects of national or geographical origin, with the assumption that these help to identify ethnic groups. For example, the terms West Indian or Indian are taken as shorthand terms for members of ethnic groups originating in those parts of the world. A further development has been to combine national or geographical origin with a colour term such as Black, as in Black-African, to identify more precisely which group is being referred to for people originating from a part of the world which is itself multi-ethnic, such as the West Indies.

Racial group

Sometimes a classification is used which is more than identification in terms of national origin or geography. Categories such as Chinese or Arab are, in effect, racial classifications of a kind, even if they also have to an extent certain geographical connotations.

Religion

One of the important defining characteristics for some ethnic minorities is their religion. Many commentators, especially in the Asian communities, think that the religious dimension should be recognised more explicitly. To this end, a question on religion was included on the 2001 census.

The table below shows the religious breakdown of each ethnic group. This breakdown is particularly important when looking at Asian sub categories. Within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, Islam is the main religion while, in the Indian community, Sikhs and Hindus are the norm. One of the important questions is whether the experiences of Muslims for example, are more similar to each other irrespective of ethnic group, or whether ethnic group is the more important factor.

Ethnicity by religion (percentage), 2001 (England & Wales)

	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Any other religion	No religion	Religion not stated	All people
White	75.7	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.3	15.3	7.7	100%
Mixed	52.5	0.7	0.9	0.5	9.7	0.4	0.6	23.3	11.5	100%
Indian	4.9	0.2	45.0	0.1	12.7	29.1	1.8	1.7	4.6	100%
Pakistani	1.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	92.0	0.1	0.0	0.5	6.2	100%
Bangladeshi	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.1	92.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	5.8	100%
Other Asian	13.4	4.9	26.8	0.3	37.3	6.2	0.9	3.4	6.8	100%
Black Caribbean	73.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.0	0.6	11.2	13.0	100%
Black African	68.9	0.1	0.2	0.1	20.0	0.1	0.2	2.3	8.1	100%
Other Black	66.6	0.2	0.4	0.1	6.0	0.1	0.7	12.1	13.9	100%
Chinese	21.6	15.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.5	52.6	9.8	100%
Other Ethnic Group	33.0	15.5	1.3	1.1	25.7	1.0	0.9	14.1	7.5	100%

Source: 2001 Census of Population, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

4

What are the key Acts to have in mind?

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 guards against discrimination and gives public authorities a general duty to monitor policy and service delivery for different ethnic groups. This duty encourages the collection of statistical data on ethnicity to assess the likely impact of services and policies on different ethnic groups and to monitor any adverse impact.

The Data Protection Act 1998 protects the confidentiality of data about living individuals and their rights to privacy. Information about a person's race is classified as sensitive personal data in the Act. This means that when we collect data on ethnicity to use for statistical purposes, it is of paramount importance that we protect confidentiality.

Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

This is an extract from the guide *Ethnic Monitoring – A guide for public authorities* (2002) released by the Commission for Racial Equality, an independent body.

The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) (the Act) gives public authorities a general duty to promote race equality. The duty applies to all the public authorities listed in Schedule 1A to the Act, and in appendix 1 of the draft Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality. Many of these authorities are providers of major public services, like health, education, local government and the police.

The duty means that, in everything they do, public authorities should aim to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The duty's aim is to make race equality a central part of the way public authorities work, by putting it at the centre of policy making, service delivery, regulation and enforcement, and employment practice.

To help public authorities meet this general duty to promote race equality, the Home Secretary has issued an order (under the Act) that gives them specific duties in policy, service delivery, and employment. The aim of these duties is to guarantee better performance of the general duty to promote race equality. The Commission for Racial Equality has issued a statutory code of practice to help authorities to meet all these duties. The monitoring guidance part of this is voluntary and so you are able to use the guidance given here if you choose.

Employment

Most public authorities bound by the general duty also have a specific duty to promote race equality in employment. Under this duty, they must monitor, by racial group:

- staff in post and
- applicants for jobs, promotion, and training.

Authorities with at least 150 full-time staff also need to monitor and analyse, by racial group:

- grievances
- disciplinary action
- performance appraisals (when they lead to benefits or penalties)
- training and
- staff leaving the authority.

Policy and service delivery

Public authorities that are bound by the employment duty must set out how they will monitor the impact of the policies they have adopted, or are proposing to adopt, on race equality. This applies to all functions and policies that are relevant to the general duty. The code of practice defines functions as the full range of a public authority's duties and powers. It defines policies as the formal and informal decisions about how a public authority carries out its duties and uses its powers.

Educational institutions bound by the general duty also have specific duties, as follows:

- schools must assess the impact of all their policies on ethnic minority pupils, staff and parents. The emphasis here is on monitoring pupils' attainment levels, by their ethnic groups and

- institutions of further and higher education must assess the impact of all their policies on ethnic minority students and staff. They must also monitor, by racial group, student admissions and progress, staff recruitment and career development.

The general duty does not say explicitly that you must monitor policy and service delivery. However, you will find it difficult to show that you have met your duty (to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations) if you do not have any monitoring data. So, if your authority is only bound by the general duty, you should not assume that monitoring is something that you do not need to worry about.

Data Protection Act 1998

Laws exist to protect the confidentiality of data about living individuals ('personal data') and give individuals rights to privacy or to access information held about them by public authorities. These laws are:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998 and
- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (not fully enforced until January 2005).

The Data Protection Act is concerned with the fair and lawful processing of personal data. Information about an individual's race is classified as sensitive personal data, together with information about their political opinions, religion, trade union membership, health, sex-life or offences. Sensitive data are recognised under European and domestic law. The conditions for processing sensitive personal data, one of which must be met to satisfy the First Principle on Data Protection, are listed in schedule 3 of the Act.

Data protection principles

Data protection is based on eight principles with which you should become familiar. Personal data should:

1. Be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and should not be processed unless certain conditions are met
2. Be obtained for a specified and lawful purpose and should not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose
3. Be adequate, relevant and not excessive for those purposes
4. Be accurate and kept up-to-date
5. Not be kept for longer than is necessary
6. Be processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
7. Be kept safe from unauthorised access, accidental loss or destruction, and

8. Not transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area (EEA), unless that country has adequate levels of protection for personal data.

The Act provides certain limited exemptions for data held for research, historical, or statistical purposes.

Research, history and statistics (section 33 of the Act)

Section 33 of the Act offers various exemptions in respect of the processing of personal data for research purposes, provided this is exclusively for those purposes and, also, that the data are not processed:

- to support measures or decisions relating to particular individuals and
- in such a way that substantial damage or substantial distress is, or is likely to be, caused to any data subject.

Please note that when processing personal data, you are required to comply with the rest of the Act, especially the First and Second Principles. You should ensure that the data subject is made fully aware of what you intend to do with the data at the time of its collection. This is known as 'express consent'. If you then later decide to process the data to carry out further research of a kind that would not have been envisaged by the subject at the time the data were collected, you must comply with the fair processing requirements of the Act.

Wherever possible, you should only process data that have been stripped of all identifying features. You can keep personal data that is used for statistical research purposes for an indefinite period of time if they are not made available in a way that identifies individual data subjects. These kinds of data are exempt from the part of the Act that gives data subjects the statutory right to access their personal information. This means that a member of the public does not have a legal right to see the confidential information that is held about them which is used to compile statistics.

What is express consent?

When you plan to collect sensitive personal data, such as ethnicity, there are both legal and ethical reasons for obtaining express consent. Express consent means that a respondent voluntarily agrees to take part in a survey after they have been informed of all intended uses for their information, and have received assurances regarding confidentiality. They are then able to make a fully informed choice about whether or not they wish to participate.

So you should get express consent from respondents before data collection begins. They can give it to you either orally or in writing. Consent cannot be inferred from a lack of response – you must get an affirmative response on this from the respondent before processing can take place.

Legally, express consent means that respondents have authorised you to process their data for the purposes you have informed them of, and this

will assist with compliance with the first principle of the Data Protection Act. But you must still ensure that you have the lawful authority to process the data, and that you have provided sufficient fair processing information to the respondent to make the granting of consent meaningful.

Ethically, by obtaining express consent you enter into a confidentiality agreement with respondents that they expect you to honour.

If you plan to share sensitive data such as ethnicity then, as a Data Controller, you have responsibilities to ensure that all parties processing data on your behalf are aware of both your, and their, responsibilities and duties under the Act, and that this is part of a formal data access agreement.

5

What data presentations can be used?

The legal duty to promote race equality leads to an increasing need for knowledge of ethnicity. This is preferably based on ethnic classification standards for statistical purposes that are simple and stable, but are also sufficiently flexible to cope with the complex and changing nature of ethnicity.

We expect that the current ethnic classification will be replaced well before the next census, as our understanding evolves. But, in the meantime, these guidelines will give you consistent ways of collecting and classifying ethnic group data. (Other standards may be more relevant to uses that are not discussed here and are likely to emerge as research in this area develops and as the social and political contexts evolve.)

Our aim has been to generate standard classifications that meet a range of user needs and which provide comparability with the census as far as possible, while allowing for the practical and justified data collection differences between the census, surveys and administrative sources. This national population census will be a key benchmark for many years and comparability with it, therefore, is seen as an important factor.

The approach also takes into account differences between geographic levels, modes of collection, national and local monitoring purposes and ethnicity-related aspects. It is, however, important to emphasise that there is no single and permanent standard for ethnic group classification but rather flexible standards that are fit for purpose.

You should present ethnic group data in as much detail as possible. For example, broad headings such as ‘Asian or Asian British’ will mask important distinctions, such as those between the Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic groups. You should distinguish between each of these groups wherever possible.

Option A. Two-question data presentation: ethnic and national group

This standard data presentation classification is based around two questions: one on ethnic and the other on national group data.

- The ethnic group question is broadly in line with the data presentation for the 2001 census. The categories support broad if varying degrees of comparability with the censuses of the different countries of the United Kingdom (which differ in the categories used), allowing commensurate comparability at the Great Britain and UK levels.
- In addition, there are clear user needs for data about national identities i.e. respondents who classify themselves as English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, British. For instance, there is a need for data about ‘White Irish’ to inform distinct service and policy needs on health and housing issues. There is also some interest in other UK national identities. So, in recognition of these requirements, and after testing, we have established a second question, that of ‘national group’ information. This would be collected from all data source respondents and would mean that users could then analyse the White Irish, for example, by analysing respondents who classify themselves as White and as Irish. The national categories tested and proposed are:
 - English
 - Scottish
 - Welsh
 - Irish
 - British
 - Other.

In addition to presenting the overall results from the national group question, you should also present analyses of the national group data of particular ethnic groups according to user needs. For example, you should present particular analyses for respondents who classify themselves as White and as Scottish, Welsh etc. This approach to national group data, using the example of England and/or Wales, is indicated below, together with the ethnic group data presentation. Standard data presentations for ethnic group only, relating to Scotland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom, are given under option B.

Two-question standard data presentation for England and/or Wales

Ethnic group

White

British	xxx
Irish*	xxx
Any Other White background	xxx
All White groups	xxx

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean	xxx
White and Black African	xxx
White and Asian	xxx
Any Other Mixed background	xxx
All Mixed groups	xxx

Asian or Asian British

Indian	xxx
Pakistani	xxx
Bangladeshi	xxx
Any other Asian background	xxx
All Asian groups	xxx

Black or Black British

Caribbean	xxx
African	xxx
Other Black groups	xxx
All Black groups	xxx

Chinese or Other ethnic group

Chinese	xxx
Other ethnic group	xxx
All Chinese or Other ethnic groups	xxx

All ethnic groups (including White) xxx**Not stated** xxx

National group

All ethnic groups (including White)

English	xxx
Scottish	xxx
Welsh	xxx
Irish	xxx
British	xxx
Other	xxx
All	xxx

Not stated xxx

The XXX in the table are used to show you where data will be in the presentation table. This shows that where possible and we recommend you present data for the more detailed sub-categories, eg, for ‘Indians’ or ‘Pakistanis’ rather than for ‘Asian or Asian British’.

Given the accepted need to present White-Irish in some National Statistics analyses about minority ethnic differences, such presentations will include the category ‘White Irish’ (see asterisked label in table). You should, therefore, add a footnote stating that estimates of the White-Irish are derived by co-analysing respondents who choose the ‘Irish’ category in the national group question with those who identified themselves as ‘White’ in the ethnic group question. The data on other national groups (Scottish, Welsh etc) can be presented as required, and are likely to be of particular interest in the devolved administrations.

Why are results for some ethnic groups not published?

Although most surveys contain an ethnicity question, many national surveys contain only small numbers of people from minority ethnic backgrounds. This often means that data for some ethnic groups cannot be analysed or published separately due to statistical unreliability or disclosure control issues. One way around this is to aggregate data – either by combining more than one year’s data, or by combining different ethnic groups. For example, data for Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are often combined because of small sample sizes, but this should only be done if the two groups show similar patterns on the outcome variable of interest.

How should categories be combined if numbers are too small to present some categories individually?

Depending on the sample size in each category for which you want to present data, you may sometimes need to combine categories. But how you combine particular categories will depend on the specific purpose of the data. It does not always make sense to combine some large and important categories just because one category is particularly small.

For example, in presenting UK female unemployment data from the *Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey*, it is not sensible to combine data for Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Other Asian, into one ‘Asian or Asian British’ figure, just because the Bangladeshi group is too small to present separately. In this case, it would be better to show the data separately for Indians and to combine data for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. This is because they are similar to each other on the outcome variable while the employment pattern for Indians is very different. You should either suppress data for the Other Asian group or add it into the ‘Other ethnic group’ category.

Rather than combining categories inappropriately, it is better to show a category in a table while indicating that data for that category have been omitted because of small sample sizes.

For example, in presenting UK male unemployment rates from the *Annual Area Local Labour Force Survey*, sample sizes are big enough to show rates for Black Caribbean and Black African men separately, but too small to show the Other Black group. So, rather than combining all three categories into one Black group, and losing the distinction between Black Caribbeans and Black Africans, present each category separately and suppress the data for the Other Black men.

The following table, reproduced from *Social Focus in Brief: Ethnicity* (ONS, 2002), shows how categories of data are combined or suppressed and presented appropriately.

Unemployment rates¹: by ethnic group, sex and age, 2001–02

United Kingdom

Percentages

	Males			Females		
	16–24	25–64	16–64	16–24	25–59	16–59
White	12	4	5	9	3	4
Mixed	25	9	14	*	10	11
Indian	18	6	7	18	4	7
Pakistani	28	12	16	21	13	16
Bangladeshi	41	14	20	*	*	24
Other Asian	*	12	12	*	*	9
Black Caribbean	27	12	14	20	7	9
Black African	31	12	15	*	12	13
Other Black	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chinese	*	*	*	*	*	*
Other	*	9	11	*	*	9

* sample size too small for reliable estimate.

¹ Unemployment based on the ILO definition as a percentage of all economically active.

Source: *Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey, 2001/02*, Office for National Statistics

Opposite there are two suggested ways of combining categories according to different sample size thresholds.

Option 1: Six categories of classification.

Presentation group		Combined categories
White	xxx	White British White Irish Any Other White
Mixed	xxx	White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Any Other Mixed
Indian	xxx	Indian
Pakistani and Bangladeshi	xxx	Pakistani Bangladeshi
Black or Black British	xxx	Black Caribbean Black African Other Black
Other ethnic group (inc. Chinese and Other Asian)	xxx	Chinese Other Asian Other ethnic group

Option 2: Eleven categories of classification.

Presentation group		Combined categories
White	xxx	White British White Irish Any Other White
Mixed	xxx	White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Any Other Mixed
Indian	xxx	Indian
Pakistani	xxx	Pakistani
Bangladeshi	xxx	Bangladeshi
Other Asian	count too small	Other Asian
Black Caribbean	xxx	Black Caribbean
Black African	xxx	Black African
Other Black	count too small	Other Black
Chinese	xxx	Chinese
Other ethnic group	xxx	Other ethnic group

Why are the ethnic group categories in this order?

The categories listed in the standard ethnic group data presentations are not in alphabetical order. Instead, their order relates to the question used to collect these data (for details of the question, see the following section). We have designed it in this way in order to make it as easy as possible for people to answer. This is because ethnic group is a sensitive subject, and it is, therefore, important that the question is acceptable to people being asked to answer it.

Testing of the question has shown that a significant proportion of respondents only read as far down the list as the first answer they find suitable. Thus, the ordering of the list makes a difference to the answers given. In the United Kingdom the majority of respondents will come under the 'White' category, and so we have put this at the top. This will save them having to read through the full list of categories before finding the one suitable for them. The Mixed category comes next, because tests have shown that this was likely to get missed if placed at the bottom of the list. The remaining categories are placed in alphabetical order.

Why are the ethnic group categories limited to these groups only?

The list of categories also relates to the question used to collect these data and is designed to enable the majority of the population to identify themselves in a manageable way. As a result, it is restricted to the ethnic groups that make up the majority of the population. The length of this list is not intended to exclude any groups of the population, but rather to prevent the ethnic data collection from becoming overly complex and confusing while ensuring the majority of the population can record themselves accurately.

You will need to ensure that data presentations are supported by appropriate information about the collection of the data. Details about the context in which the data are collected will help users when comparing data from more than one source to make judgements about their quality and consistency. For example, it is important to state the geographical level at which the data were collected, whether it was in person or by telephone, and the list and order of categories used. Further guidance on these aspects is given in the following sections.

Option B. One-question data presentation: ethnic group only

The 2001 census data presentation is a standard you might decide to follow for presenting data on ethnic groups, except when you are presenting data for Great Britain (GB) or the United Kingdom (UK). These situations are more complicated, because the census questions were not the same across the whole of the UK or even GB. The standard data presentations of ethnic group introduced below will be particularly appropriate when:

- it is possible to ask one question only
- direct comparison with the 2001 census is the prime concern
- response to the data collection is not likely to suffer because of the lack of a national group question
- national group is not an important dimension to measure or ask about.

England and/or Wales

If you are producing data on ethnic group for England and/or Wales, you should use the 2001 census presentation for these countries.

Presentation of ethnic groups in England and/or Wales

White

British	xxx
Irish	xxx
Any Other White background	xxx
All White groups	xxx

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean	xxx
White and Black African	xxx
White and Asian	xxx
Any Other Mixed background	xxx
All Mixed groups	xxx

Asian or Asian British

Indian	xxx
Pakistani	xxx
Bangladeshi	xxx
Any Other Asian background	xxx
All Asian groups	xxx

Black or Black British

Caribbean	xxx
African	xxx
Any Other Black background	xxx
All Black groups	xxx

Chinese or Other ethnic group

Chinese	xxx
Any Other ethnic group	xxx
All Chinese or other ethnic group	xxx

All ethnic groups xxx

Not stated xxx

Scotland

If you are producing data on ethnic group for Scotland then again you should use the 2001 census presentation for Scotland. Once again, the XXX in the table are used to show you where data will be in the presentation table. The categories are not exactly the same as in England and Wales, and nor is the order in which they are presented. This is because these categories were seen as the best way to present ethnic group data in Scotland. Despite these differences, you should still not present data for the main headings only (e.g. 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British'). Instead, you should present data for the more detailed sub-categories wherever possible (e.g. 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi').

*Presentation of ethnic groups in Scotland**

White	XXX
White Scottish	XXX
Other White British	XXX
White Irish	XXX
Other White	XXX
Indian	XXX
Pakistani and other South Asian	XXX
Pakistani	XXX
Bangladeshi	XXX
Other (South) Asian	XXX
Chinese	XXX
Other ethnic group	XXX
Caribbean	XXX
African	XXX
Black Scottish and other Black	XXX
Any Mixed Background	XXX
Other ethnic group	XXX
All Ethnic groups	XXX
Not stated	XXX

* The Scottish Executive is currently reviewing its long-term requirements for ethnicity classifications. After a programme of consultation with users and providers of ethnicity information, the Executive will be recommending revised classifications. But it is not expected that it will present the results of this work before mid-2004.

Northern Ireland

Like the other parts of the UK, if you are producing data on ethnic group for Northern Ireland then you should use the relevant 2001 census presentation. Once again, the XXX in the table are used to show you where data will be in the presentation table. You will see that the categories are different from those used elsewhere in the UK. This is to reflect the different population structure in Northern Ireland, and these categories were seen as the best way to present ethnic group data

in Northern Ireland. Another difference is that there are no distinctions between main and sub-categories in the Northern Ireland presentation.

Presentation of ethnic groups in Northern Ireland.

White	xxx
Irish Traveller	xxx
Mixed	xxx
Indian	xxx
Pakistani	xxx
Bangladeshi	xxx
Other Asian	xxx
Black Caribbean	xxx
Black African	xxx
Other Black	xxx
Chinese	xxx
Any other ethnic group	xxx
All ethnic groups	xxx
Not stated	xxx

Great Britain

Should you wish to present ethnic group data for Great Britain, then you should use the presentation standard for the England and Wales 2001 census. See page 27. As this presentation uses the word British, and avoids the words Scottish, English and Welsh, it is the best fit for presenting GB data. It will allow you to compare your results with census results.

We again make the same recommendations for presenting your data. The XXX in the table are used to show you where data will be in the presentation table. You should not present data for the main headings only (e.g. 'Asian or Asian British') but instead for the more detailed sub-categories, wherever possible (e.g. 'Indian', 'Pakistani', or 'Bangladeshi').

United Kingdom

You may need to present your data on ethnic group across the UK, and once again there is no single 2001 census presentation. Instead, you should present your results as set out in the table on page 30. This is very similar to the Northern Ireland table, since in Northern Ireland there are fewer groups collected than elsewhere in the UK. You should still collect data in as much detail as possible (you may want to collect more groups outside of Northern Ireland) but then aggregate categories as we show in the table below. For UK output, you should include respondents who stated that they were an 'Irish Traveller' into a single 'White' output category.

Presentation of ethnic groups in the UK

White	xxx
Mixed	xxx
Indian	xxx
Pakistani	xxx
Bangladeshi	xxx
Other Asian	xxx
Black Caribbean	xxx
Black African	xxx
Black Other	xxx
Chinese	xxx
Any other ethnic group	xxx
All ethnic groups	xxx
Not stated	xxx

6

What questions can be used?

Because standard classifications determine the way in which responses are grouped, they have implications for the ways in which data are captured, i.e. the standard questions used. The format of the questions will also have to fit the mode of data collection, whether face-to-face or telephone interview, or self-completion form. We have undertaken a programme of question-testing to develop questions that generate data to populate the classifications. The preferred standard questions are given below.

Option A. Two-question data presentation: ethnic and national group questions

Questions on national group

With the new devolved administrations, there has been an increasing interest in 'national' consciousness with many people wanting their 'national' identity to be acknowledged. So we have developed a 'national identity' question that you should use if this needs to be taken into account.

You should ask about national identity as a separate question in addition to ethnic group. This is because our research has led to the conclusion that classifying ethnic group is best achieved separately from national identity. There is an order effect that is best managed by asking national identity before ethnic group, as this allows respondents to describe themselves as English, Welsh, Scottish etc. And our research suggests that people were happier when asked about their national identity first.

The question we suggest for national identity is shown below. We also show the answer categories that you should give to the respondents. And we recommend that you change the order of categories depending on where you are asking the question.

However, we do not recommend the use of a national identity question in Northern Ireland.

National identity question and answer categories: England, Scotland, and Wales

Country where you are asking the question	Question	Answer categories
England	What do you consider your national identity to be? Please choose your answer from this card. Choose as many or as few as apply.	English Scottish Welsh Irish British Other
Scotland	What do you consider your national identity to be? Please choose your answer from this card. Choose as many or as few as apply.	Scottish English Welsh Irish British Other
Wales	What do you consider your national identity to be? Please choose your answer from this card. Choose as many or as few as apply.	Welsh English Scottish Irish British Other

If someone answers 'Other', you should then ask:

How would you describe your national identity?

This question allows respondents to choose more than one identity (if they think of themselves as having more than one). This is because, like ethnicity, national identity is self-defined, i.e. it is something that is subjectively meaningful to the person concerned. The second part of the question 'How would you describe your national identity?' should be asked of those for whom it is relevant, even if these answers are not going to be coded.

Our research on evaluating the national identity question shows that the response is very sensitive to exactly how the question is asked, and this can impact on the results quite considerably. The main limitations with the question are:

- Results are affected by the order of the answer categories being presented.
- When choosing between a country specific identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish) versus British, whichever category is listed first (either on a showcard or in a list that is read out by an interviewer) is more likely to be selected.
- Results are affected by how the answer categories are presented to respondents either on a showcard or read out by an interviewer.
- Respondents are more likely to select more than one identity if a showcard is used than if an interviewer reads out the answer categories. We therefore recommend using a showcard where possible.
- Results may be affected by the context in which the question is asked.
- When the question was asked after questions on nationality and British citizenship, respondents were more likely to give a single answer, rather than state two identities.

Questions on ethnic group

The format of the question will depend on the country in which you want to collect data.

England and/or Wales

Standard ethnic group question for England and/or Wales – to be used in conjunction with national group questions.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ British
- ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other, *please write in*

Scotland

Standard ethnic group question for Scotland – to be used in conjunction with national group question.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group.

A White

- ☐ British
- ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*

B Mixed

- ☐ Any Mixed background, *please write in*

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

D Black, Black Scottish or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*

E Other ethnic group

- ☐ Any Other background, *please write in*

Great Britain

It is suggested to use the same question as for England and Wales.

Standard ethnic group question for Great Britain – to be used in conjunction with national group questions.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ British
- ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
-

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

United Kingdom

Standard ethnic group question for UK – to be used in conjunction with national group questions.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ Any White background

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
☐ White and Black African
☐ White and Asian
☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
☐ African
☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

Option B. One question data presentation: ethnic group question only

If you ask only one question and intend to use the data mainly for comparability with the 2001 census, you should ensure that the format of the questions that are used to generate ethnic group data are consistent with the 2001 census questions. However, the format will also need to vary slightly to reflect geographic coverage, mode of data collection and target population. Below are some ways of adapting the format of the questions used to deal with these constraints.

England and/or Wales

2001 census question for England and Wales. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
-

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

Scotland

This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

2001 census question for Scotland

What is your ethnic group?

Choose *ONE* section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ Scottish
 - ☐ Other British
 - ☐ Irish
 - ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
-

B Mixed

- ☐ Any Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
 - ☐ Pakistani
 - ☐ Bangladeshi
 - ☐ Chinese
 - ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black, Black Scottish or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
 - ☐ African
 - ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Other ethnic group

- ☐ Any Other background, *please write in*
-

Northern Ireland

2001 census question for Northern Ireland. We do not recommend the use of a national group question in Northern Ireland.

To which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong?

✓ *one box only.*

- ☐ White
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Irish Traveller
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Black Caribbean
- ☐ Black African
- ☐ Black Other
- ☐ Mixed ethnic group, *please write in*

- ☐ Any Other ethnic group, *please write in*

Great Britain

Please use the 2001 census question for England & Wales. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

2001 census question for England and Wales

What is your ethnic group?

Choose *ONE* section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ British
 - ☐ Irish
 - ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
-

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
 - ☐ White and Black African
 - ☐ White and Asian
 - ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
 - ☐ Pakistani
 - ☐ Bangladeshi
 - ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
 - ☐ African
 - ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
 - ☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

United Kingdom

Please use the 2001 census question for England & Wales, but with no breakdown of the White category. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose *ONE* section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group .

A White

- ☐ Any White background
-

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
☐ White and Black African
☐ White and Asian
☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
☐ African
☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

Which mode of data collection are you using?

You will need to customise the format of the question in order to fit the data collection mode used, whether this is a face-to-face, or telephone interview, or a self-completion form method.

Face-to-face interview

For this mode of data collection, the national identity and ethnic group questions should be asked as two separate questions, each with a showcard listing all the possible answer categories. You should pay attention to the layout of the showcard. Research has shown that the order and layout of answer categories can have significant effects on answers given. The national identity question is particularly sensitive to order effects (see page 33).

The interviewer should read out the questions and hand over the showcards to the respondent. The example below gives the detail of the question for data collection relating to England & Wales.

Q1. What do you consider to be your national identity to be? Choose your answer from this card. Choose as many or as few answers as apply.

Showcard 1

English
Scottish
Welsh
Irish
British
Other (please describe)

Q2. *To which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong? / What is your ethnic group?*

Showcard 2

White

British

Any Other White background (Please describe)

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any Other Mixed background (Please describe)

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Any Other Asian background (Please describe)

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any Other Black background (Please describe)

Chinese

Other ethnic group

Any Other (Please describe)

The option to 'please describe' any other national identity or ethnic group to which respondents consider they belong should be given, even if these answers are not going to be coded. National identity and ethnic group are concepts that are difficult to define and it is important that people feel able to describe this in their own way when they consider none of the answer categories to be suitable. Details of how any freely specified answers for ethnic group should be coded, in line with the coding strategy used on the 2001 census, are given on page 52.

Telephone interview

This mode of data collection is where the interview is conducted by telephone with an interviewer reading out the questions and possible answer categories. This mode of interview has limitations compared to the face-to-face mode.

Questions and lists of possible answer categories cannot be too long or complex or respondents will not listen to the question properly, nor remember all the possible answer categories. This problem affects the ethnic group question because the list of answer categories is long. Testing has shown that for this mode of interview, the ethnic group question is best split into three. Questions 1 and 2 are asked of all respondents. Question 3 is asked for those respondents who answered White, Mixed,

Asian or Black at Q2. Question 4 is asked for those respondents who answered Other ethnic group at Q2 or who answered Another [White/ Mixed/ Asian/ Black] background at Q3.

The example below gives the detail of the questions for data collection relating to England & Wales.

Q1. What do you consider to be your national identity to be? Choose as many or as few answers as apply.

- English
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Irish
- British
- Other

Q2. To which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong?

- White
- Mixed
- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- Chinese
- Other ethnic group

Q3. And to which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong?

If **White** chosen:

- British
- Another White background

If **Mixed** chosen:

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Another Mixed background

If **Asian or Asian British** chosen:

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Another Asian background

If **Black or Black British** chosen:

- Caribbean
- African
- Another Black background

If **Chinese** chosen:

Note – no further question

If **Other ethnic group chosen**, ask Q4

Q4. Please can you describe your ethnic group?

Question 4 should be asked of those for whom it is relevant, even if these answers are not going to be coded.

Self-completion form

This method of data collection is where a form is given to respondents either by an interviewer, an administrator, or sent to them by post, and respondents are expected to fill it in by themselves. There is usually no-one available to provide help with filling-in the form. So it is vital that the form and the questions are clearly designed, easy to read, and easy to follow. Such forms should also not be too long as this will deter respondents.

The form used for the 2001 census was extensively tested prior to the census and the layout and format of the ethnic group question should follow this guide as far as possible. Key elements are:

- Order of answer categories.
- Layout – having the list of answer categories in a single column format down the page.
- Size and style of typeface – using these consistently for headings at the same level.
- Alignment.
- Allowing enough space for write-in answers.

The example below gives the detail of the questions for data collection relating to England & Wales.

England & Wales

What do you consider your national identity to be ?

Choose your answer from this list, choose AS MANY OR AS FEW as apply, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your national identity.

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

What is your ethnic group?

Choose *ONE* section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group.

A White

- ☐ British
- ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
-

B Mixed

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
-

C Asian or Asian British

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
-

D Black or Black British

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*
-

E Chinese or other ethnic group

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other, *please write in*
-

What is the target population?

The questions above have all been designed for use with adult respondents aged 16 or over. However, if the target population is children then, depending on the age of the children and whether they are answering the questions themselves, you may need guidance from the child's parent / guardian / carer etc. We particularly recommend this guidance for children aged 5 to 12, since there is a high possibility that they may misunderstand what an ethnic group is. We do not, however, recommend that you cut the number of categories on the question because, while this might help children to read the question, their choice to iden-

tify themselves should not be limited because of their age (or other factors). You should develop the exact format of the question and answer categories according to local needs and they will need to be tested with the relevant target population.

Who should answer the question?

This guidance relates to measuring ethnic group as perceived by respondents themselves and, wherever possible the question should therefore be addressed to the respondent directly – particularly when the respondent is an adult. It is sometimes possible to ask another member of the household to reply on behalf of the respondent. This should only be used as a last resort, and if someone else has answered on behalf of the respondent, you should record this fact. It is important that interviewers do not attempt to use their own judgements.

7

What if more detailed ethnic group data are needed?

Although the 2001 census provides a key baseline for comparisons, it is primarily designed to produce national data. You may be working at smaller scales, such as a region or a local council, and there may be large populations of ethnic groups which you consider need to be recognised in a question on ethnic group. If this is the case, then you should ask the ethnic group question in a way that will allow you to compare your results with the census data. So you may find the summary below, of how 'write-in' answers are allocated to the main census categories, helpful in achieving this comparability.

You may also want to get a more complete set of data on ethnicity. Wherever possible we recommend that you ask questions on other key aspects of ethnicity such as religion or country of birth. You should ask standard questions that will allow you comparability with the census data as far as possible.

How are 'write-in' answers allocated to ethnic groups in the 2001 census?

A 'write-in' answer is where someone has ticked 'Other' in the ethnic group question, and then has written in a description of his or her ethnic group. The ethnic group question has a number of 'Other' sub-categories, one under 'White', one under 'Mixed', one under 'Asian or Asian British', one under 'Black or Black British', and one under 'Chinese or other ethnic group'.

In the *2001 Census of Population*, if people have written in their own ethnic groups instead of ticking one of the ethnic group boxes in the question, we then try and allocate their write-in response to one of our ethnic groups. For example, people who said they belonged to the 'Cypriot' ethnic group would be allocated to the 'Other White' group. So, if you have a large Cypriot community in the area where you are collecting ethnic group data, you could include a Cypriot sub-category under the 'White' heading.

A summary of how write-in answers are allocated to the main census ethnic groups is shown below. These might help you in doing your own surveys, especially if you need to separately identify ethnic groups that are not among the 2001 census categories. At the same time, you will still be able to compare your results with census data, and with other organisations or areas that use the 2001 census ethnic groups.

Summary of how write-in answers are allocated to main census ethnic groups

Write-in answer	Census category
English	White British
Scottish	
Welsh	
Cornish	
Northern Irish	Other White
Cypriot	
Gypsy/Romany	
Former USSR	
Baltic States	
Former Yugoslavia	
Other European	
White South African	
American	
Australian	
New Zealander	
Mixed White	
British Indian	Indian
Punjabi	
British Pakistani	Pakistani
Kashmiri	
British Bangladeshi	Bangladeshi
British Asian	Other Asian
East African Asian	
Sri Lankan	
Tamil	
Sinhalese	
Caribbean Asian	
British Asian	
Nepalese	
Mixed Asian (i.e. mixture of descriptions in the Asian section)	
Caribbean and West Indian islands (and also Guyana) apart from Puerto Rican, Dominican and Cuban, which are Latin American	Black Caribbean

Nigerian	Black African
Somali	
Kenyan	
Black South African	
Other Black African countries	
Black British	Other Black
Black American	
Mixed Black	
Hong Kong	Chinese
Japanese	Other ethnic group
Vietnamese	
Filipino	
Malaysian	
Aborigine	
Afghani	
Burmese	
Fijian	
Inuit	
Maori	
Native American Indian	
Thai	
Tongan	
Samoan	

Which are the ethnic groups that are particularly difficult to allocate to census categories?

There are some other write-in answers that are more difficult to allocate into census categories, because the write-in answer could conceivably appear under a number of different census categories. For the 2001 census, these groups have been allocated according to the main section in which the answer was written. For example, if Sikh has been written under the 'Asian or Asian British' main heading, the answer has been allocated to the 'Other Asian' category. If Sikh has been written under the 'White' main heading, it will have been allocated into the 'Other White' category. If in your study you need to ask specifically about these ethnic groups, then you will have difficulty in placing responses back into the census categories, and therefore in comparing your results with 2001 census data.

'Other' categories that cannot be systematically allocated to 2001 census ethnic groups

Main write-in responses	Details / examples
Arab	
Buddhist	
Hindu	
Iranian	
Israeli	
Jewish	
Kurdish	
Latin American	Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Hispanic
Moroccan	
Multi-ethnic islands	Mauritian, Seychellois, Maldivian, St Helena
Muslim	
Other Middle Eastern	Iraqi, Lebanese, Yemeni
Other North African	
Sikh	
South American	includes Central American

However, it is recognised that for some purposes, and particularly where these groups form a significant proportion of the population, that you may need to collect data on these specific ethnic groups. If you decide to introduce extra ethnic groups to those used in the census, these should be added as sub-groups of the appropriate main ethnic group in the census question.

For example, you may want to collect data on Sikhs. In this case, we would suggest adding further sub-divisions to the Indian category, so that the answers can still be aggregated to the census output category for comparative purposes. For the Sikh example, suitable sub-categories under Indian might include Sikh, Tamil and Other Indian, if there were significant numbers of Sikhs and Tamils in the area being surveyed.

As data are made available from the 2001 census, we will be issuing more advice as to the main headings under which the majority of these other write-in answers appeared.

Collecting data on religion

The 2001 census included a question on religion for the first time.

The concepts of ethnic group and religion overlap to some extent, particularly for groups such as Sikhs and Muslims. Therefore it is strongly recommended that, wherever possible, a question on religion as well as ethnic group should be included as part of data collection.

Suggested questions on religion are:

*Religion question in the 2001 census for England and Wales***What is your religion?***This question is voluntary.**✓ one box only.*

- ☐ None
 - ☐ Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
 - ☐ Buddhist
 - ☐ Hindu
 - ☐ Jewish
 - ☐ Muslim
 - ☐ Sikh
 - ☐ Any other religion, *please write in*
-

*Religion question in the 2001 census for Scotland***What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?**

- ☐ None
 - ☐ Church of Scotland
 - ☐ Roman Catholic
 - ☐ Other Christian, *please write in*
-

- ☐ Buddhist
 - ☐ Hindu
 - ☐ Jewish
 - ☐ Muslim
 - ☐ Sikh
 - ☐ Another religion, *please write in*
-

*Religion question in the 2001 census for Northern Ireland***Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?**☐ Yes *Go to a*☐ No *Go to b***a What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?**☐ Roman Catholic☐ Presbyterian Church in Ireland☐ Church of Ireland☐ Methodist Church in Ireland☐ Other, *please write in*
_____**b What religion, religious denomination or body were you brought up in?**☐ Roman Catholic☐ Presbyterian Church in Ireland☐ Church of Ireland☐ Methodist Church in Ireland☐ Other, *please write in*
_____☐ None*Religion questions on the Labour Force Survey 2001/02 and 2002/03
(only asked in Great Britain)***What is your religion even if you are not currently practising?**

- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion
- Or no religion at all.

Do you consider that you are actively practising your religion?

- Yes
- No

Collecting data on country of birth

Country of birth is another component that is related to ethnic group. Thus a question on this may also prove useful depending on data requirements. The 2001 census country of birth questions are shown below and it should be noted the options consisted of UK countries, plus the Republic of Ireland and an 'Elsewhere' category with a write-in box.

Country of birth question in the 2001 census for England and Wales

What is your country of birth?

- ☐ England
 - ☐ Wales
 - ☐ Scotland
 - ☐ Northern Ireland
 - ☐ Republic of Ireland
 - ☐ Elsewhere, *please write in the present name of the country*
-

Country of birth question in the 2001 census for Scotland

What is your country of birth?

- ☐ Scotland
 - ☐ England
 - ☐ Wales
 - ☐ Northern Ireland
 - ☐ Republic of Ireland
 - ☐ Elsewhere, *please write in the present name of the country*
-

Country of birth question in the 2001 census for Northern Ireland

What is your country of birth?

- ☐ Northern Ireland
 - ☐ England
 - ☐ Wales
 - ☐ Scotland
 - ☐ Republic of Ireland
 - ☐ Elsewhere, *please write in the present name of the country*
-

Appendix A

Useful sources of ethnic group statistics

What sources are available for ethnicity data?

The table below lists some of the main sources of ethnicity data:

Source	Most recent year's data available	Coverage	Sample Size	Main speciality of source	Longitudinal study	Notes
ONS sources						
2001 Census of Population	2001	UK	Census	Demographic, local area estimates, religion, tenure, health and employment all available by ethnicity.	No	Release: late 2003
Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey	2001	UK	384,000 adults. This includes 25,000 adults from minority ethnic groups.	Labour market, education, training, demographic characteristics and local area estimates.	Interviews are held annually for four years.	This is a large and complex dataset.
Labour Force Survey (Quarterly)	2002	UK	138,000 adults per quarter. This includes 9,800 adults from minority ethnic groups.	Labour market, education, training and demographic characteristics.	No (although there are follow-ups at quarterly intervals for a maximum of five quarters).	This is a large and complex dataset.
Family Resources Survey	2001/02	GB	Sample of 25,000 households. This includes 1,600 households from minority ethnic groups.	Income, savings and wealth	No	

Source	Most recent years data available	Coverage	Sample Size	Main speciality of source	Longitudinal Study	Notes
ONS Longitudinal Study (The LS)	2001	England and Wales	1% sample of people in England and Wales – approximately 500,000.	Health, ageing, mortality, ethnicity, household composition, occupational mobility, social and economic change.	Yes	Will be linked to 2001 census by summer 2004. The LS is linked to census variables and registrations data (such as birth and death records).
Other government sources						
British Crime Survey	2002/03	England and Wales	30,000 core sample of adults (including 2,000 from minority ethnic groups). Plus an additional minority ethnic boost sample of 3,000 adults.	Crime and victimisation	No	Survey with large ethnic boost sample.
Home Office Citizenship Survey	2001	England and Wales	10,000 core sample of adults. An additional minority ethnic boost of 5,400 adults.	Family and parenting. People and their neighbourhoods. Community participation. Racial prejudice and discrimination.	No	Contains a question on religion.
Health Survey of England	1999	England	7,800 adults in the general population. Plus an additional minority ethnic group sample of 6,800 adults. Plus samples of children aged 2–15.	Health data, but also contains other data (e.g. languages spoken, religious affiliation, housing tenure etc).	No	More recent surveys have been conducted. However, these did not include a boosted ethnic minority sample. The 1999 survey focused exclusively on the health of people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Data only available for the following ethnic groups: Irish, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Chinese, which can be compared to the general population.

Source	Most recent years data available	Coverage	Sample Size	Main speciality of source	Longitudinal Study	Notes
Ethnic Minority Psychiatric Illness Rates in the Community (EMPIRIC)	1999 & 2000	England	4,300 individuals. Minority ethnic group sample 3,400. A further 117 individuals were re interviewed for the follow up study	Mental health	No	The EMPIRIC survey included all the respondents from the <i>Health Survey of England</i> (1999) that were willing to be re-contacted. Therefore, data are only available for the following ethnic groups: Irish, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Chinese.
Millennium Cohort Study	2000/01	United Kingdom	19,000 families interviewed, covering 19,000 children born in 2000/01. This includes around 3,000 children from minority ethnic groups.	Child health and development. Family circumstances, including fathers' involvement in childcare and development.	Yes	Over sampling of areas with high deprivation and large ethnic minority populations.
Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census	Provisional 2003 data.	Separate census for England, Wales and Scotland.	School census	School exclusions, absences, educational attainment, mother tongue, receipt of free school meals, Special Educational Needs.	Yes	From 2002, the <i>Annual Schools Census</i> changed to <i>Pupil Level Annual Schools Census</i> . This means that information can be provided as individual pupil records rather than as school totals. The main dataset will be released in late 2003
Youth Cohort Study	2002	England & Wales	17,000 16–19 year-olds. Minority ethnic group sample 2,000	GCSE & A level qualification attainment, participation in full-time education and training. Employment circumstances after leaving school.	Yes	Schools with more than 20%+ of their pupils recorded as being from ethnic minority groups are over-sampled. 16 year-olds are tracked for three to four years following the end of compulsory education.
Longitudinal Study of Young People	Due to start in 2004	England	20,000 13/14 year-olds. Minority ethnic group sample 5,000.	Education, training and employment, family and relationships, leisure activities and interests, health and lifestyle.	Yes	

Appendix B

Useful references and contacts

Office for National Statistics

1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Helpline: 0845 601 3034

Website: www.statistics.gov.uk

e-mail: info@statistics.gov.uk

Publications:

- *National Statistics Code of Practice*
- *National Statistics framework document* (2000)

Other useful links:

- Neighbourhood Statistics: www.statistics.gov.uk/neighbourhood

Census forms:

- England & Wales: www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/censusform.asp
- Scotland: www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/grosweb/grosweb.nsf/pages/cenbi102
- Northern Ireland: www.nisra.gov.uk/census/censusmethodology/censusforms.html

Commission for Racial Equality

CRE
St Dunstan's House
201–211 Borough High Street
London SE1 1GZ

Tel: 020 7939 0000

Website: www.cre.gov.uk

Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations

University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL

Tel: 020 47652 4869

Website: www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CRER_RC

Home Office Race Equality Unit

The Race Policy Team
Race Equality Unit
4th Floor
Allington Towers
19 Allington Street
London SW1E 5EB

Website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/org/dob/direct/reu.html

e-mail: rlu@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate

Allington Towers
19 Allington Street
London SW1E 5EB

Website: homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

Centre for the Study of Ethnicity & Citizenship

Department of Sociology
University of Bristol
12 Woodland Road
Bristol BS8 1UQ

Tel: 0117 954 5591

Website: www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Sociology/main/frset.htm

e-mail: ethnicity-centre@bris.ac.uk

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

National Policy Strategy Team
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 020 7944 8383

Website: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk

e-mail: neighbourhoodrenewal@odpm.gsi.gov.uk

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