



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 August 2013

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses

Fifteenth Meeting

Geneva, 30 September – 3 October 2013

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Migration and ethno-cultural characteristics

International, internal migration and ethno-cultural characteristics: Key results the UNECE Survey on National Census Practices

Note by the UNECE Task Force on migration and ethno-cultural characteristics

Summary

In early 2013, the UNECE conducted an online survey among its member countries on national practices in the 2010 round of population and housing censuses. This document presents an overview of the main results of the survey on international and internal migration characteristics, and on ethno-cultural characteristics. The results are presented with reference to the various questions included in the survey.

I. Part 1: Questions on International and Internal Migration Characteristics

A. Question: Was information collected on the place of usual residence at some point in time prior to the census?

1. Forty four countries out of 51 (86 per cent) collected data on the place of usual residence at some point in time prior to the census. Question on place of usual residence 1 year prior to the census (which formed the reduced mode of the core topic 'Previous place of usual residence and date of arrival' - §385 in the CES Recommendations) appears in 77 per cent of censuses, and in 25 per cent it refers to the 5 years prior to the census (which was a non-core topic – §390 in the CES Recommendations). About 36 per cent of countries have asked about the place of usual residence at another point in time prior to the census and most of them have asked about the year when the person has started to reside continuously in the current locality. Some countries asked more than one question on previous place of usual residence.

2. Only 7 countries have not collected information on this question - from the group of countries conducting traditional census¹: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, and Serbia. Germany, Poland and Liechtenstein as countries using combined census method.

Table 1.

Number of countries collecting information on place of usual residence at some time prior to the census

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total number of participants	51	9	10	32
Yes, 1 year prior to the census	34	8	6	20
Yes, 5 years prior to the census	11	1	3	7
Yes, at another point in time prior to the census	16	2	4	10
No	7	0	3	4

3. Census methodology adopted in the country has not made lot of difference. In each group most of countries have asked about the place of usual residence 1 year prior to the census, 20 out of 33 countries (about 61 per cent) that undertook traditional census, 8 out of 9 wholly register-based countries and 6 out of the 10 countries that adopted a combined census methodology (see Table 1)

B. Question: Which items were collected on the place of residence at a point in time prior to the census?

4. Most of countries that have answered positively on previous question have collected information whether the person was living in the same (28) or in another minor civil division (27), in another major civil division (22), or in another country (31) as well as information on name of the locality in case that person has changed place of usual residence

¹ For the analysis presented in this paper, the group of countries with traditional census includes also France, which conducted a rolling census.

in reference period (see Table 2). Only Portugal, Ukraine and Belgium – among the countries that have collected information on minor civil division - have not collected name of the minor civil division from which person has moved.

5. Among 44 countries who collected data on the place of usual residence at some point in time prior to the census, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have not reported which items they were collecting on this issue.

Table 2.

Number of countries collecting items on the place of residence at a point in time prior to the census

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Countries who provided data on this question	42	9	7	26
Living in the same dwelling where the person was resident at the time of the census	20	5	2	13
Living in the same minor civil division where the person was resident at the time of the census	28	6	6	16
Living in another minor civil division, and the name of the civil division was asked	27	6	5	16
Living in another minor civil division, but the name of the civil division was NOT asked	3	1	0	2
Living in the same major civil division where the person was resident at the time of the census	16	6	1	9
Living in another major civil division, and the name of the civil division was asked	22	4	3	15
Living in another major civil division, but the name of the civil division was NOT asked	3	3	0	0
Living in another country and the name of the country was asked	31	4	6	21
Living in another country, but the name of the country was NOT asked	4	4	0	0
Other (specify below)	6	1	1	4

C. Question: Was information collected on the previous place of usual residence/registration?

6. About three quarters (38) of all countries have collected information on the previous place of usual residence, which was part of the extensive mode of the core topic 'Previous place of usual residence and date of arrival', together with the year and month of arrival in the current place of usual residence (§385 in the CES Recommendations).

7. In the group of countries conducting traditional census more than 80 per cent have collect this data. Five countries who have not collect this data are Czech Republic, France, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and UK. It has to be noted that four of them have collected data on place of usual residence 1 year prior to the census, and Kazakhstan has collected data on place of usual residence at another point in time prior to the census.

8. Among countries that undertook Register-based censuses 4 out of 9 countries have collected data on this question.

9. In the group of countries using combined census (10) only Lichtenstein, Lithuania and Turkey gave negative answer, but Lithuania and Turkey also collect data on place of usual residence 1 year prior to the census.

D. Question: Which items were collected on the previous place of residence?

10. In most of the responding countries, regardless of the census methodology, information on the name of the minor civil division, major division or the name of the country previous residence was collected (see Table 3).

11. Georgia reported that they collect data on previous place of residence, but they have not stated which items on this question were collected in their census.

Table 3.

Number of countries collecting items on the previous place of residence

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Countries who provided data on this question	37	4	7	26
Another dwelling in the same minor civil division where the person was resident at the time of the census	10	1	2	7
Another minor civil division, and the name of the civil division was asked	23	3	4	16
Another minor civil division, but the name of the civil division was NOT asked	2	0	0	2
Same major civil division	12	2	0	10
Another major civil division and the name of the civil division was asked	23	3	3	17
Another major civil division, but the name of the civil division was NOT asked	1	0	0	1
Another country, and the name of the country was asked	30	3	6	21
Another country, but the name of the country was NOT asked	0	0	0	0
Other (specify below)	5	1	1	3

E. Question: Was information collected specifically on whether the person has ever resided abroad?

12. All 51 countries answered this question, and about 75 per cent (38 countries) have asked whether the person has ever resided abroad. This information was part of the core topic "ever resided above and year of arrival in the country", introduced for the first time in the CES Recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses (§ 379).

13. Nine countries that have conducted traditional census, Israel and Lithuania (combined census method) have reported that they have not collected this data as well as Austria and Finland who have conducted register-based census.

14. Some of those countries gathered data only on persons who have lived abroad after a specified year – such as 1980, 1986 or 2000.

F. Question: Was information collected about the country of previous usual residence abroad?

15. Overall, 32 countries (63 per cent) collected information about the country of previous usual residence abroad (non-core topic in the CES Recommendations – §382), including 71 per cent of countries with traditional census (22 out of 31), 60 per cent of those with combined census (6 out of 10), and 33 per cent of those with a register-based census (3 out of 9) (Table 4).

Table 4.

Was information collected on the country of previous usual residence abroad?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	31
Yes	32	3	6	22
No	19	6	4	9

G. Question: Was your country formerly member of a federation/union (i.e. USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia)?

16. In total, 20 out of 51 responding countries were previously a member of a federation/union that ceased to exist: USSR (Estonia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine), Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic, Slovakia). Latvia reported not having been a member of a former federation.

16. The large majority of former federation/union member states (17 countries or 85 per cent) employ the traditional census method (full field enumeration) (Table 5).

Table 5.

Was your country formerly member of a federation/union (i.e. USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia)?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
Yes	20	1	2	17
No	31	8	8	15

H. Question: How did you consider in the last census the population movements that had taken place when your country was still part of the federation/union, between one place in the current territory of your country and one place in another region of the former federation/union?

18. This question had to be answered only by countries that were members of a former federation or union and consequently replied “yes” to the previous question.

19. According to the 2010 CES Recommendations (CESR §382), "for purposes of international comparability as well as for internal use, information on country of previous residence should be collected on the basis of international boundaries existing at the time of the census." Some 17 of the 20 self-declared former federation/union members followed the recommendations in the 2010 census round and considered movements between their country and another member state of their former federation/union as international migration movements (Table 6). Two countries (Czech Republic and Slovakia) considered such movements as internal migration. Tajikistan mentioned to have applied some other criteria but did not specify or provide any comments.

Table 6.

Treatment of population movements that had taken place when your country was still part of the federation/union, between one place in the current territory of your country and one place in another region of the former federation/union

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	20	1	2	17
These movements were considered as internal movements (not as international migration)	2	0		2
These movements were considered as international migration movements, on the basis of the boundaries at the time of the census	17	1	2	14
Other	1	0	0	1

I. Question: Was information collected on year of arrival in the country?

20. In total, 38 out of 51 countries reported that they collected information on the year of arrival in the country, which was part of the core topic “ever resided above and year of arrival in the country” (CES Recommendations §379). No country has said that it does not collect data on this issue, but 13 countries have not answered the question (see Table 7).

21. Albania answered that they do collect this data but they did not mark any modality.

22. Some 37 countries provided information on the year of most recent arrival in the country, and 14 countries also gathered information on the month of the most recent arrival.

23. Only three countries (all using registers) provided information on the year and/or month of the first arrival: Iceland collects information on year and month of the first arrival, while Norway and Slovenia collect only the year of the first arrival.

24. Among countries that provided answers, Norway, Slovenia and Iceland (register based censuses), in addition to data on most recent arrivals, also collected data on first arrivals in the country. Norway and Slovenia have asked only about the year and Iceland has asked about year and month of first arrival in the country.

25. In the comments section, some countries stated that they started the collection of this information at a specified point in time (i.e. 1980, 1986) or that they expanded the information collected to include the month also.

Table 7.

Number of countries collecting information on year of arrival in the country

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Countries who provided data on this question	38	7	8	23
No	0	0	0	0
Yes, the following information was collected (indicate all that apply):	38	7	8	23
year of most recent arrival in the country	37	7	8	22
year and month of most recent arrival in the country	14	2	2	10
year of first arrival in the country	3	3	0	0
year and month of first arrival in the country	1	1	0	0

J. Question: Was information collected on the total duration of residence in the country for international migrants?

26. Information on the total duration of residence (non-core topic in the CES Recommendations §383) was only collected by 10 out of 51 countries (See Table 8). Among them are six countries using the traditional method of data collection, three countries using registers (Finland, Iceland and Slovenia) and one country using a combined method (Israel).

Table 8.

Number of countries who collected information on the total duration of residence in the country for international migrants

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
Yes	10	3	1	6
No	41	6	9	26

K. Question: Duration of residence

27. As described above, information on the duration of residence was provided by 10 countries. Eight out of these 10 countries asked the duration of residence in relation to the country where the person was resident, 3 countries refer to the minor civil division where

the person was resident at the time of the census (see Table 9). Respectively, two countries refer to the information on the duration of residence to the living quarter and to the major civil division where the person was resident.

Table 9.

The duration of residence was asked in relation to:

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
The living quarter where the person was resident at the time of the census	2	0	0	2
The minor civil division where the person was resident at the time of the census	3	1	0	2
The major civil division where the person was resident at the time of the census	2	1	0	1
The country where the person was resident at the time of the census	8	2	1	5

L. Question: Was information collected on the date of arrival in the current place?

28. Two thirds (33 countries) of all countries collected information on the date of arrival in the current place, which was part of the extensive mode of the core topic 'Previous place of usual residence and date of arrival', together with the previous place of usual residence (§385 in the CES Recommendations). Some 18 countries only charted the year of arrival, but 15 countries additionally recorded the month of arrival (Table 10).

Table 10.

Was information collected on the date of arrival in the current place?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
Yes, year and month of arrival	15	4	1	10
Yes, year of arrival	18	1	6	11
No	17	4	3	10

M. Question: Was information collected on the main reason for international migration?

29. Information on the main reason (non-core topic in the CES Recommendations – §391) was only collected by 19 out of 51 countries. No country using registers provided this kind of information (see Table 11).

30. Countries collecting information on the reason of migration for the main part captured the following reasons: employment (18 countries), education (18 countries), joining family members (14 countries). Other reasons were only collected by a limited number of countries: Health (4 countries), asylum (4 countries), refugee because of forced migration (9 countries) and return after emigration (4 countries). In the comments, some countries described other reasons reported in the census (such as marriage).

Table 11.
Was information collected on the main reason for international migration?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
No	32	9	6	17
Yes, indicate all reasons that apply:	19	0	4	15
.....Employment	18	0	4	14
.....Education	18	0	4	14
.....Health/medical	4	0	2	2
.....Asylum	4	0	0	4
.....Refugee (forced migration)	9	0	0	9
.....To join family members	14	0	1	13
.....Return after emigration	4	0	0	4
.....Other reasons	14	0	3	11

N. Question on country or place of birth

31. Except for one country (Tajikistan) all countries filling in the questionnaire reported that they collected information on the country or place of birth of the population (core topic in the CES Recommendations – §373). Most of the countries using traditional method asked a corresponding question in their questionnaire. Register countries of course used information from registers (see Table 12).

Table 12.
Did you include a question or otherwise collect information in your census on country or place of birth?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
No	1	0	0	1
Yes, information collected mainly from a full enumeration (census questionnaire)	32	0	4	28
Yes, information collected mainly from sample data (including census long form, ad hoc or existing sample survey)	5	0	2	3
Yes, information collected mainly from administrative records or registers	13	9	4	0
Yes, information collected mainly from other sources (specify below)	0	0	0	0

O. Question on what information on country/place of birth was collected

32. In total, 32 out of 50 countries collected the information on country of birth in relation to the actual place of birth, 25 countries collected information on the place of the usual residence of the mother (Table 13). This means that 7 countries collected both sets of information (but none were register-based countries).

Table 13.

Was information on country/place of birth collected in relation to:

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	50	9	10	31
Country or place of actual birth (i.e. geographical area in which the birth took place)	32	4	7	21
Country or place of residence of the mother at the time of the birth	25	5	4	16
Other definition of country or place of birth	0	0	0	0

P. Question on national boundaries used for information on country of birth

33. In most countries the national boundaries of the country of birth recorded related to the time of the census (37 countries) in compliance with the CES Recommendations (§374). However, nine countries collected information on the national boundaries at the time of birth and three used other definitions (Table 14). This means that data on persons born in countries where there have been subsequent changes of borders may be of limited quality.

Table 14.

Did the question/information on country of birth relate to:

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	50	9	10	31
National boundaries at the time of the census	37	4	8	25
National boundaries at the time of the birth	9	4	2	3
Other definition of national boundaries (specify below)	4	1	0	3

Q. Question on classification used for coding on information on country of birth

34. In total, 33 countries used the recommended classification for the coding of the information on the country of birth (see Table 15). Others described the codification system used in more detail in the comments-section. Most of them used national classifications, or the EU recommended classification, or country names with no coding.

Table 15.

Did you code country of birth information to the recommended classification?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	50	9	10	31
Yes	33	5	5	23
No	17	4	5	8

R. Question on country of birth of parents

35. Over two thirds (36) of all countries did not collect information on the country of birth of parents, which was a non-core topic in the CES Recommendations – §392 (Table 16). On the other hand, 13 countries collected information of the country of birth of both parents while one country collected information on the mother only and another on the father only. The ratio of collection of this information is highest among countries using combined method of data collection. Half provide information on both parents and another one on the father.

36. In the comments section some countries stated that this information was only available for children living with their parents or only for persons born in the country.

Table 16

Was information collected on the country of birth of parents? [Note: Line missing]

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
Information collected on country of birth of both parents	13	3	5	5
Information collected on country of birth of mother only	1	0	0	1
Information collected on country of birth of father only	1	0	1	0
No information collected on country of birth of parents	36	6	4	26

S. Question on country of citizenship

37. All countries except one (Israel) provide information on the country of citizenship, which was a core topic in the CES Recommendations - §375 (Table 17). All countries using traditional method asked for country of citizenship (although the UK collected information using a proxy question on passport held); only three of them used sample data (Canada,

France and United States); all other countries used a full enumeration. All register countries provided the information – clearly using registers. Countries using combined method partly used survey data, partly register data.

Table 17.

Was information collected on the country of citizenship?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
No	1	0	1	0
Yes, information collected mainly from a full enumeration	33	0	4	29
Yes, information collected mainly from sample data (including long form, ad hoc or existing sample survey)	5	0	2	3
Yes, information collected mainly from administrative records or registers	12	9	3	0
Yes, information collected mainly from other sources	0	0	0	0

T. Question on definition of country of citizenship

38. In total, 47 countries responded that they complied with the recommended definition of country of citizenship. Three countries used a different definition: Ireland asked nationality; in Russian Federation citizenship is defined as “sustainable and legal relationship of the person with the Russian Federation, expressed by their rights and obligations”²; in the UK information on country of citizenship was not collected from a specific question but derived from a question on passport held.

U. Question on dual or multiple citizenship

39. Most of the countries (31 of 50, 62 per cent) reported that the information they collected made it possible to report dual or multiple citizenships (21 countries for all respondents; 9 countries only for national citizens; and 1 country - Sweden - only for foreigners).

40. Countries that perform traditional censuses tend to collect information on dual or multiple citizenships (23 countries of 32, 72 per cent) more than countries that perform based-register or combined censuses (8 countries of 19, 42 per cent).

V. Question on the way national citizenship was acquired

41. Only seven countries (Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Spain and United States) collected information on the way national citizenship was acquired (Table 18). All except one (Spain) had traditional method of data collection.

² In accordance with the Federal Law "On Citizenship of the Russian Federation" dated 31.05.2002 № 62-FZ.

42. In addition two countries collected information if the respondents had citizenship since birth.

Table 18.

Was information collected on the way citizenship was acquired?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	50	9	70	33
No	43	9	6	27
Yes, information collected on the following types of citizenship acquisition (indicate all that apply):	7	0	1	4
acquisition by birth	5	0	2	3
acquisition by marriage	2	0	0	2
acquisition by naturalization	4	0	1	3
acquisition following creation of new state	1	0	0	1
other types of acquisition	3	0	1	2

W. Question: For the country of citizenship, was the same classification of country of birth used?

43. Forty-four (44) countries responded on the question about the classification used for the country of citizenship that it was the same classification as for the country of birth. In addition, 5 countries responded in the comments that they have used other classification.

X. Other information on migration that was not listed as a topic in the CES Recommendations

44. In the 2010 census round 8 out of 51 responding countries collected information on migration that was not listed a topic in the CES Recommendations.

Table 19.

Did you collect any other information on migration that was not listed as a topic in the CES Recommendations?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Register based census</i>	<i>Combined census</i>	<i>Traditional census</i>
Total	51	9	10	32
Yes	8	1	3	4
No	43	8	7	28

45. The following questions were asked to these eight countries.

Question on emigration data

46. Six countries reported that they collected information on emigration. However, one of these (Norway) commented that these data are available in population statistics, but not considered as a census variable. As a result, five countries have considered emigration in

the 2010 Census round: two countries with combined census (Estonia and Poland) and three with traditional census (Albania, Hungary, and Serbia).

Question on short-term international migrants or similar population groups (i.e. non-permanent residents)

47. Only four countries reported that they collected information on short-term international migrants: two countries with combined census (Estonia and Poland) and two with traditional census (Serbia and United Kingdom).

48. In the comments, it is mentioned that the determination of the short-term or long-term international migrants was done according to the duration of the stay abroad, so the data about long-term international migrants are also available.

Question on other information collected on immigration or emigration

49. Four countries (Estonia, Poland, Serbia and United Kingdom) reported that they collected other information on immigration/emigration. The other information collected by these countries is: Was the work performed by immigrants in line with their qualifications? (Poland), Information on length of intended stay for persons arriving within a year of the census in order to ascertain the long-term/short-term status (UK); birthplace of grandparents (Estonia).

Question: Is there additional information that you want to provide which is not addressed in the questions in this section of the questionnaire on migration characteristics?

50. In total, 13 countries answered the question; nine of them answered that there are no additional information that they want to provide about the migration statistics. Poland mentioned the problem of people born before the Second World War and are treated (according to the rule of boundaries existing at the time of census) as born abroad. They are born abroad because of boundary changes. In para. 370 of the CES Recommendations for the 2010 round of Population Censuses there is the following sentence: "Persons who were born in a particular territory but whose country of birth has changed because of boundary changes should not be counted as foreign-born", so these rules are contradictory and the countries are not sure whether they should provide data about foreign-born with this people or without this people. Two countries explained that additional information on migration characteristics of the population are collected with other Population statistics surveys not with the Census, but the data could be linked with the Census data.

II. Part 2: Questions on Ethno-Cultural characteristics

A. Questions on ethnicity and religion

51. Responses to census questions on ethnicity and, to some degree, religion are subjective in that persons must be free, on both counts, to respond in any way that they choose. That, added to the fact that information collected must inevitably vary from country to country across the UNECE region, means that these topics were included in the 2010 *Recommendations* as non-core. (Nor is the provision of data by EU Member States on either of them required under EC Regulations.) It might be expected, therefore, that, as was the case in the 2000 round, a smaller proportion of countries would include such questions in their recent censuses compared with those of other topics. And this, indeed, was the case.

52. Less two third of countries (31 out of 51, 61 per cent) reported that they collected information on ethnicity in their census (see Table 20). This was the same proportion as in

the previous round. Slightly fewer (28, 55 per cent) collected information on religion (as compared with just half of the countries in the 2000 round). Some 23 countries collected information on both topics.

Table 20.

Number and proportion of countries that collected information on ethnicity and religion in the 2010 round

	<i>Ethnicity</i>		<i>Religion</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Collected the information	31	61	28	55
Yes				
Mainly from a full enumeration	28	55	22	43
Mainly from sample data source	3	6	3	6
Mainly from registers/administrative data	0	0	3	6
No	20	39	23	45
Total	51	100	51	100

53. Not surprisingly, perhaps, none of the nine wholly register-based countries reported that they were able to collect information on ethnicity, and only one of them collected information on religion (Finland). However, two other countries that adopted a combined methodology for their censuses reported that information on religion was collected mainly from registers (Germany and Israel), indicating that registers *per se* are not an insurmountable barrier to collecting such data. In some countries such as France and Belgium, however, the collection of data on ethnicity and religion is generally forbidden by statute.

54. The concept of ethnicity as defined by the 2010 Recommendations refers to population groups that share such common characteristics as ‘historical or territorial origins’ or ‘culture’ or ‘language’ or ‘religion’ or ‘specific customs and/or way of life’. This encompasses a wide spectrum of characteristics, and the survey reveals that of those countries that collected such data, three quarters (23) reported that the concept that they adopted fell within the UNECE definition – all undertook traditional censuses. In addition, however, of the eight countries that reported otherwise, four (Bulgaria, Canada, Israel and Poland) adopted concepts which could be broadly interpreted as falling within the UNECE definition.

55. Information on ethnicity was collected separately from that on nationality or citizenship in the majority of countries (23). Some 14 countries reported that they collected information on ethnicity using a combination of the concepts of ethnic or cultural group and nationality; some 12 countries used only the concept of ethnic or cultural group (however that was defined), while six countries used only the concept of nationality. The question in the United Kingdom and Ireland used a mix of pragmatic concepts covering racial groups, skin colour and geographic origins. All but two countries (Canada and Kyrgyzstan) interpreted ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ synonymously.

56. The survey similarly enquired into the definitional concept to which the information on ‘religion or faith’ referred. Some 17 of the 28 countries that collected information (61 per cent) did so with reference to an ‘identification’ with a particular religion or religious community; a further 11 (39 per cent) referred to ‘religious belief’. In four countries the information related to a ‘formal membership’ of a church or religious community, and in two countries (Armenia and Canada) a question was asked about the religion in which a

person was brought up. In the United Kingdom, the situation was made complicated by the fact that different information was collected in Scotland (where the concept was the religious denomination in which the person ‘belonged’), in Northern Ireland (where two concepts were used: (a) the ‘belonging’ concept, as in Scotland, and (b) the ‘brought up in’ concept as in Armenia and Canada), and in England and Wales (where no concept was adopted at all and persons were just asked ‘What is your religion?’). Germany also collected information on two concepts ‘formal membership’ and religious belief’.

57. Religion clearly remains a topic on which is difficult to collect information on an internationally consistent basis. This is made doubly difficult by differences in the type of question that is used in traditional censuses. Countries were asked what formats of questions were used to collect information on ethnicity and religion. The responses are shown in Table 21.

Table 21.

Type of question used to collect information on ethnicity and religion in the 2010 round

Type of question	<i>Ethnicity</i>		<i>Religion</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Open-ended with no pre-defined response categories	12	41	6	23
Combined question with both pre-defined categories and write-in responses	17	52	16	58
Closed questions with pre-defined responses only	1	3	4	15
Other format	1	3	1	4
Total	31	100	27	100

58. Most widely adopted for both ethnicity and religion was the combined approach where pre-defined categories were identified for the most commonly anticipated responses but where there was also the facility to record write-in responses. Most countries that did not adopt this approach went with a completely open-ended write-in question, allowing the respondent to describe freely their ethnicity or religion. Not surprisingly, most countries that adopted one type of question for ethnicity also adopted the same type for religion (20 countries did so).

59. Those countries that included pre-defined categories for the ethnicity question were also asked to report the number of such categories from which the respondent was able to select a response. The average was 18.4 ranging from 1 (Estonia) to 189 (Poland). But this is perhaps a meaningless statistic as the advent of online returns allowed the opportunity for some countries to provide a drop-down menu of a large number of possible options from which the respondent could simply select a response. Poland adopted this approach, as did Hungary for the religion question.

60. Although the 2010 *Recommendations* suggested that respondents should be free to indicate more than one ethnic affiliation, or a combination of such affiliations, only nine countries (30 per cent) reported that this option was provided in their census. However, the recommendation that countries should include questions on ethnicity and religion on a voluntary basis (or at least allow the respondent not to have to declare an ethnicity or religion) was followed by the majority of countries. Some 88 per cent of countries allowed responses to the question on religion to be voluntary. Only Finland (whose data came from a register) and Ireland (where there is a long tradition of including religion in the census) did not. In the case of Germany the information on formal membership was taken from a

register and was therefore mandatory, but the information on religious belief, collected through a sample survey, was provided voluntarily.

61. A slightly smaller proportion (79 per cent) of countries collected the information on ethnicity on a voluntary basis; six countries (Ireland, Latvia, Poland, Tajikistan, the United Kingdom and the USA) collected the information on a mandatory basis.

B. Question on language

62. This question focused on how many countries reported collecting information on language during the 2010 Census Round. In total, 36 out of 51 countries, or 71 per cent, surveyed responded that they did collect information on language (Table 22). The remaining 15 countries, or 29 per cent, stated that they did not collect data on language. The most popular data source on language was collected from full enumeration, at 61 per cent. Sample and administrative data were rarely used to collect information on language; 8 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively.

Table 22.

Number and percentage of countries which collected information on language

	<i>Number (out of 51)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	36	71
Mainly from full enumeration	31	61
Mainly from sample data (including census long form, ad hoc or existing sample survey)	4	8
Mainly from registers and administrative records	1	2
Other sources	0	0
No	15	29
Total	51	100

C. Question on criteria used to define language

63. The most popular criterion for defining language was that of mother tongue, the first language(s) spoken by respondents in early childhood. In total, 47 per cent of nations collected information on mother tongue (Table 24). Language(s) spoken most often at home was the second most frequent concept collected by countries, at 39 per cent. Less common definitions of language used were: 25 per cent collected information on knowledge of language(s), including the ability to speak and/or write in one or more languages, and 22 per cent collected the respondents' main language (defined as the language which the person commands best). Sign language and languages spoken most often at work are not common criteria for defining language in censuses, at 8 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. In conclusion, the concept of mother tongue and language(s) spoken most often at home are by far the most widely used measures of language.

Table 24.
Criteria for defining language

	<i>Number (out of 51)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Mother tongue, defined as the first language(s) spoken in early childhood	24	47
Main language, defined as the language which the person commands best	11	22
Language(s) currently spoken at home (most often)	20	39
Languages spoken at work (most often)	3	6
Knowledge of language(s), defined as the ability to speak and/or write one or more other languages	13	25
Knowledge of/ability in the official language(s) of the country	6	12
Sign language	4	8
Other (Specify below)	4	8
Total	85	N/A

*Note: based on multiple responses, therefore the total is more than 51.

D. Question on other ethno-cultural characteristics

64. Countries were asked if they had collected information on other ethno-cultural characteristics. In Canada, for example, specific questions on the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (also known as indigenous peoples) are collected frequently with regard to other ethno-cultural characteristics. The UNECE country, survey data indicates that 45 countries responded no to this question, meaning that 88 per cent of nations did not collect information on other ethno-cultural characteristics. None responded yes to this question.