

Preliminary progress report of the CES Census Task Force on Emergency Preparedness and Contingency Planning

24th Meeting of the Group of Experts on
Population and Housing Censuses

Geneva, 20-22 September 2023



Delivering insight through data for a better Canada



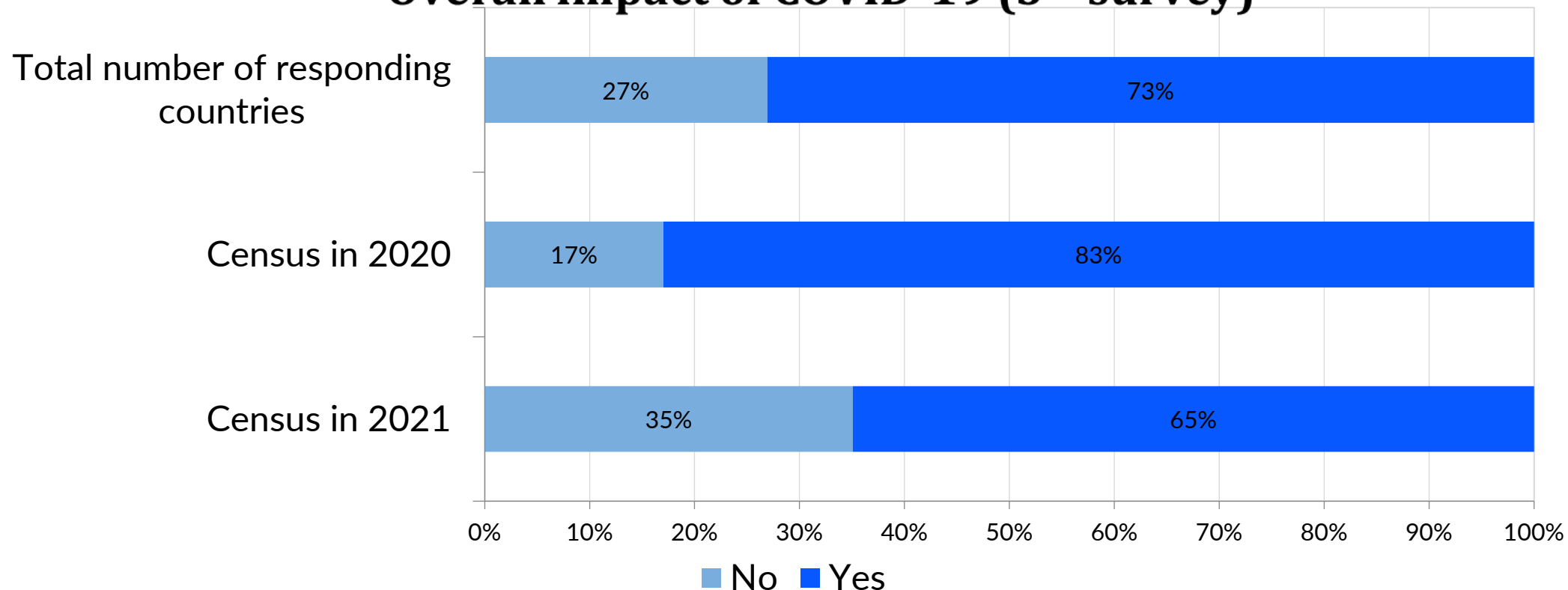
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The need for new guidance

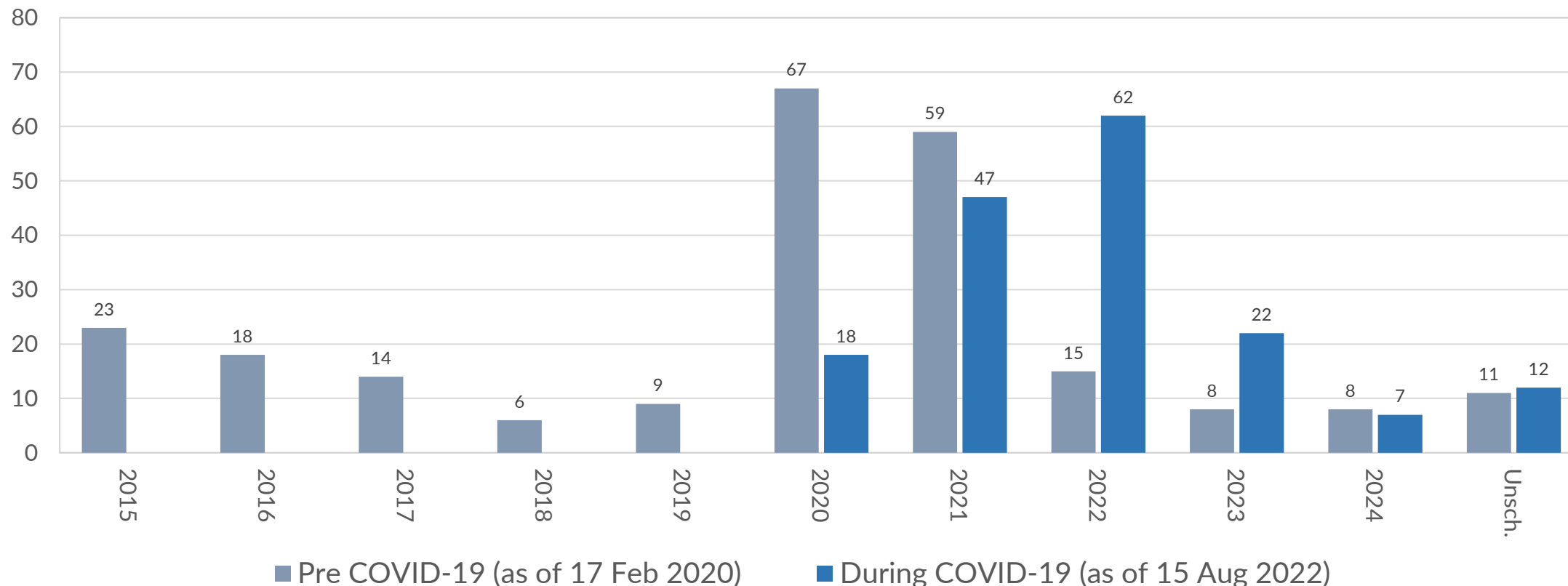
Overall impact of COVID-19 (3rd survey)



Source: 3rd UNSD Survey of COVID-19 Impacts on Censuses, January 2021

The need for new guidance

Impact of COVID-19 on 2020 round census schedule (2015-2024)



Source: UN Statistics Division

The need for new guidance

The need for new guidance became obvious during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- Worldwide, censuses were delayed and impacted by COVID-19
- Other natural disasters (e.g. wildfires, major weather events etc), cyber risks and technology dependency are increasing operational risks
- The 2020 Recommendations contain very little reference to the topic of emergency preparedness and contingency planning

Step 1: Develop a framework

To structure the work of the Task Force, a framework was developed:

- Effective documentation of inherent risks and possible mitigations (Risk registry)
- Proper emergency management, governance and decision-making (Emergency management plan)
- Use of practice sessions to condition a proper response (Team conditioning)
- Effective techniques for quick changes to the plan (Flexibility and lean management)
- Development of multiple contingencies in the event of main plan failure (Census planning insurance)



Step 2: Share country experiences

Canada (2021 COVID response):

- Pre-pandemic risk registry adapted to the new context
- Fast adaption (8-10 months reaction time) to COVID and Kanban lean management technique
- Risk playbooks developed and practice sessions pre-operations
- Strengthening of Management Information Systems and “command centre” information
- Activation of incident management process, as necessary
- Development of a “statistical contingency” (admin data back-up)

Step 2: Share country experiences

New Zealand (2023 risk management practices):

- Risk registry documented in cloud-based project management tool
- “Heat map” assessments of risk likelihoods, impacts, and residual risks
 - Included risk of low recruitment, low response, COVID-19 issues, mis/disinformation and cybersecurity
- “Incident Response Preparation” exercises implemented pre-operations, to mimic incidents during operations
- Incident management plan followed the NZ-government Coordinated Incident Management System framework, using four steps:
 - Notify, Assess, Decide and Act”, with assigned severity to incident

Step 2: Share country experiences

Portugal (2021 COVID response):

- April 2020 pilot cancelled
- Proceeded with 2021 operations, with mitigations:
 - Introduced a new Public Health Protocol (PPE, video training, etc)
 - Re-enforced the internet option
 - Introduced CATI option
 - Adapted communications
 - New administrative data to support field operations

Step 2: Share country experiences

Mexico (Risk management practices):

- Used documented framework, “Methodology for Risk Management of INEGI”, based on ISO 31000 standard
- Risk registry with focus on program execution, data quality, data security, human and financial resources, behavioural risks
- Risks categorized and controls put in place to mitigate, residual risk determined. More acceptable levels of risk managed differently than high risk.
- Inclusion of new technology a key factor in success in 2020, as well as enhanced communication between INEGI, general population and Mexican authorities



Step 3: Develop the questionnaire

Two types of questions (40 overall):

- Risk management
- Crisis management

- Designed to take stock of country policies, procedures, documentation and expertise, related to Emergency Preparedness and Contingency Planning
- Cover the framework described earlier
- Open ended, allowing description of current capacities and where countries may prefer added guidance

Conclusion

- Looking forward to your input today and when the questionnaire is completed
- Other similar guidance coming, through a related project of the UNSD to develop Emergency Preparedness and Contingency Planning content in the Principles and Recommendations for the 2030 Round
 - To ensure consistency, TF1 Chair has agreed to lead the related UNSD exercise, which got underway this summer

