



Office for  
National Statistics

## Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Social Data Sources

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### Primary Standards

Ethnic Group

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## About this document and Update history

### **About this document**

This document forms part of a series that replaces the original *Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Government Social Surveys*. This series will make topics easier to find, with clearer guidance and consistent layouts. By using a series of documents, updates will be simpler and faster, and new topics will be easier to incorporate.

This document is part of the set of Harmonised Primary Standards for social sources. These are concepts and questions that are used on all or nearly all major government social surveys. They are distinct from Secondary Standards, as the latter apply only to a selected group of surveys.

For more information, please see the introductory document, available on our website.

### **This is version 2.0, published in April 2008.**

This document was updated to Version 2.0 to reflect the changes in the contact details for the Harmonisation Team

Previous versions

### **This is version 1.0, published in October 2005.**

This document is part of a series that replaced the Harmonised Concepts and Questions document. We have been working to make our guidance easier to find and clearer to use. Previously, questions on Ethnic Group were accessible through the Ethnic Group Statistics website. We have now made it easier for you to access the Ethnic Group questions by listing them in this module. Questions on National Identity can be accessed at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/harmonisation/downloads/s11.pdf>

Please note that version control is new to this edition. Please ensure that you always use up-to-date versions of questions and outputs by checking our website for new editions – the version number will be incremented when changes are made.

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### Introduction

Please note that the recommended National Statistics classification for Ethnic Group can be found in the Ethnicity and Identity Guidance: *'Ethnic group statistics: A guide for the collection and classification of ethnicity data'*. The guide has been designed to simplify the task of collecting data on ethnicity and ensure more comparable information can be obtained. It offers practical assistance and some standard questions to use for anyone involved in collecting and presenting ethnicity data, including those who are new to the task. Use of the guidance will ensure that data collected can be compared with other sources. The guide is available in a variety of formats:

**web:**

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/ethnicityguide>

**pdf:**

[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic\\_group\\_statistics/downloads/ethnic\\_group\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic_group_statistics/downloads/ethnic_group_statistics.pdf)




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


The National Identity question should be used in addition to the ethnic group question whenever there is a need to collect data about national identities. For instance, when respondents classify themselves as English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, British, or another national identity. The question on National Identity can be accessed at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/harmonisation/downloads/s11.pdf>

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. Research suggests that people were happier when asked about their national identity first.

#### Contact us

For more information about Harmonisation or to join our mailing list, please visit our website at [www.statistics.gov.uk/harmonisation](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/harmonisation). If you would like further information or have any questions, please contact:

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### Ethnic Group

One-question data presentation: ethnic group only

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 needed
- 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

Although based on 2001 Census, the ethnic group data presentations differ depending on the country.

### England and/or Wales

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

#### 2001 Census presentation for England and Wales

<b>White</b>	
British	XXX
Irish	XXX
Any other White background	XXX
All White groups	XXX
<b>Mixed</b>	
White and Black Caribbean	XXX
White and Black African	XXX
White and Asian	XXX
Any other Mixed background	XXX
All Mixed groups	XXX
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	
Indian	XXX
Pakistani	XXX
Bangladeshi	XXX
Any other Asian background	XXX
All Asian groups	XXX
<b>Black or Black British</b>	
Caribbean	XXX
African	XXX
Any other Black background	XXX
All Black groups	XXX
<b>Chinese or other ethnic group</b>	
Chinese	XXX
Any other ethnic group	XXX
All Chinese or other ethnic group	XXX
<b>All ethnic groups</b>	XXX
<b>Not stated</b>	XXX

*Note: XXX indicates where data will be in the presentation table.*

## Scotland

If you are producing data on ethnic group for Scotland, you should use the 2001 Census presentation for Scotland.

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 present data for the more detailed sub-categories wherever possible (e.g. 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi') rather than for main headings only (e.g. 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British')

### 2001 Census presentation for Scotland

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

*Note: XXX indicates where data will be in the presentation table.*

## Northern Ireland

If you are producing data on ethnic group for Northern Ireland, you should use the relevant 2001 Census presentation.

The categories are different from those used elsewhere in the UK. This is to reflect the different population structure in Northern Ireland. 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.

### 2001 Census presentation for 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
Other ethnic group	XXX
<b>All ethnic groups</b>	<b>XXX</b>
<b>Not stated</b>	<b>XXX</b>

*Note: XXX indicates where data will be in the presentation table.*

## **Great Britain**

If you are producing data on ethnic group for Great Britain, you should use the 2001 Census presentation for England and Wales, as it uses 'British', and avoids 'Scottish', 'English' and 'Welsh'. This is the best fit for presenting GB data and will allow you to compare your results with census results.

You should still present data for the more detailed sub-categories wherever possible (e.g. 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi') rather than for main headings only (e.g. 'Asian or Asian British')



## United Kingdom

If you are producing data on ethnic group for the UK, there is no single 2001 Census presentation. Instead, you might want to present your data as set out in the table below. This is very similar to the Northern Ireland presentation, 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 per the table below.

For UK output, you should place respondents who state that they are 'Irish Traveller' into the 'White' output category.

White	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
<b>All ethnic groups</b>	<b>XXX</b>
<b>Not stated</b>	<b>XXX</b>

*Note: XXX indicates where data will be in the presentation table.*

## Ethnic Group

Please note that the format of the question will vary slightly depending on whether you are collecting data for England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain or the United Kingdom.

### England and/or Wales

*Please use the Census question for England and Wales. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.*

#### 2001 Census question for England and Wales

##### ETHNIC GROUP

###### – What is your ethnic group?

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR ETHNIC GROUP

###### A. White

1. British
2. Irish
3. Any Other White background, *please write in*

---

###### B. Mixed

4. White and Black Caribbean
5. White and Black African
6. White and Asian
7. Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*

---

###### C. Asian or Asian British

8. Indian
9. Pakistani
10. Bangladeshi
11. Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

---

###### D. Black or British Black

12. Caribbean
13. African
14. Any Other African background, *please write in*

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###### E. Chinese or other ethnic group

15. Chinese
16. Any Other, please write in

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## Scotland

Please use the Census question for Scotland. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

### 2001 Census question for Scotland

#### ETHNIC GROUP

##### – What is your ethnic group?

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR ETHNIC GROUP

#### A. White

1. Scottish
2. Other British
3. Irish
4. Any Other White background, *please write in*
- 5.

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#### B. Mixed

6. Any Mixed background, *please write in*

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#### C. Asian or Asian British

7. Indian
8. Pakistani
9. Bangladeshi
10. Chinese
11. Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

---

#### D. Black or British Black

12. Caribbean
13. African
14. Any Other African background, *please write in*

---

#### E. Other ethnic group

15. Any Other background, *please write in*

---

## Northern Ireland

*Please use the Census question for Northern Ireland. We do not recommend the use of a national group question in Northern Ireland.*

### 2001 Census question for Northern Ireland

#### ETHNIC GROUP

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

CHOOSE ONE ONLY

1. White
2. Chinese
3. Irish Traveller
4. Indian
5. Pakistani
6. Bangladeshi
7. Black Caribbean
8. Black African
9. Black Other
10. Mixed Ethnic Group, *please write in*

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11. Any Other ethnic group, *please write in*

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## Great Britain

Please use the Census question for England and Wales. This should be used when no national group question is being asked.

### 2001 Census question for England and Wales

#### ETHNIC GROUP

##### – What is your ethnic group?

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR ETHNIC GROUP

##### **A. White**

1. British
2. Irish
3. Any Other White background, *please write in*

---

##### **B. Mixed**

4. White and Black Caribbean
5. White and Black African
6. White and Asian
7. Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*

---

##### **C. Asian or Asian British**

8. Indian
9. Pakistani
10. Bangladeshi
11. Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

---

##### **D. Black or British Black**

12. Caribbean
13. African
14. Any Other African background, *please write in*

---

##### **E. Chinese or other ethnic group**

15. Chinese
16. Any Other, please write in

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## United Kingdom

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

### Recommended standard question for the UK

#### ETHNIC GROUP

##### – What is your ethnic group?

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR ETHNIC GROUP

##### **A. White**

1. Any White background

##### **B. Mixed**

2. White and Black Caribbean
  3. White and Black African
  4. White and Asian
  5. Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
- 

##### **C. Asian or Asian British**

6. Indian
  7. Pakistani
  8. Bangladeshi
  9. Any Other Asian background, *please write in*
- 

##### **D. Black or British Black**

10. Caribbean
  11. African
  12. Any Other African background, *please write in*
- 

##### **E. Chinese or other ethnic group**

13. Chinese
  14. Any Other, please write in
-