

## Initial View on 2021 Census Output Content Design – Questions

The best way to respond to this consultation is [online](#). If you wish to respond to this consultation via email or on paper, please complete the questionnaire template and email your response to [census.outputs@ons.gov.uk](mailto:census.outputs@ons.gov.uk) using the subject line “Initial View Consultation”.

There are some mandatory questions which we need you to complete in order to include your response in our analysis.

You can respond to all the questions or just the questions that are relevant to your work.

### Introduction

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

- 1) \*Are you answering this consultation on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?

Organisation

Individual

- 2) \*What sector do you work in? This will assist us in monitoring the range of users that have responded to this consultation.

Government department

Public body (for example health, transport, emergency services)

Local authority

Housing

Academic/research

Charity and voluntary

Commercial

Utility

Journalist/media

Genealogist/family historian

Other (please specify) –

3) \*What is the name of the organisation that you represent?

British Sociological Association

4) \*Contact information

Your name            JUDITH MUDD  
 Email address        judith.mudd@britsoc.org.uk  
 Phone number        0191 383 0839

5) \*We may wish to contact you in relation to your response to this consultation. Would you be happy for us to do so?

Yes  
 No

6) \*To support transparency in our decision-making process, responses to this consultation will be made public. This will include the name of the responding organisation or individual. Please confirm that you're content for your name to be published. We won't publish personal contact details. Please be aware that any information provided in response to this consultation could be made publicly available if requested under a Freedom of Information request. Please be aware that if you're responding as an individual but then name your organisation in any of the open questions, that name will be published.

Yes, I consent to my name being published with my response  
 No, please remove my name before publishing my response

Please read through our consultation document, which outlines our initial view for the design of 2021 Census output content and dissemination. The following questions are related to the topics discussed in the consultation document. Please provide as much detail as you can to support your answers. If we've

asked you to describe the impact on your work, please provide specific examples. If you refer to a specific policy or scheme, please provide a direct reference to this. We'll only evaluate the evidence provided in your response. We have asked questions based on your experience with 2011 Census data. If you haven't used 2011 Census data, we'd still be interested to hear your thoughts about your needs for 2021 Census data.

After each section, a box will be provided for you to add any other comments that weren't addressed in the questions.

## Background

We'd like to know which topics and geographies you used the most after the 2011 Census. If you didn't use 2011 Census data, we would still be interested to hear your views about the data you are likely to use after 2021 Census.

### 1) What are your main topics of interest?

We've included some topics that are currently under consideration for inclusion in the next census or might be available through administrative data.

Please rank in order your topics of interest, with 1 being the most important topic of interest. If you did not use a topic, please leave this blank.

- Age
- Car availability
- Carers
- Central heating
- Citizenship
- Country of birth
- Education
- Ethnicity
- Gender Identity
- Health
- Household composition
- Income
- Language
- Labour market
- Marital status
- Migration
- National identity
- Number of rooms and bedrooms

- 8 Occupation
- 1 Religion
- 2 Sex
- 11 Sexual Orientation
- 1 Socio-economic classifications
- 21 Tenure and landlord
- Travel
- 19 Type of accommodation
- 22 Veterans

Other – please specify

2) In 2011, which geographies did you use?

Please rank in order your geographies of interest, with 1 being the most important topic of interest. If you did not use a geography, please leave this blank.

- 1 Local authorities
- 6 Parishes
- 2 Regions
- 3 Wards
- Counties / upper tier local authorities
- 5 Countries
- Built-up areas (including sub-divisions)
- GEOSTAT Grid
- Output Areas
- Lower layer super output areas (LSOAs)
- Middle layer super output areas (MSOAs)

- 8 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)
- Workplace Zones
- Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS)
- 9 Parliamentary constituencies
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- National Parks
- 7 Postcode
- Other

It will be helpful for us to know what you use census data for to allow us to understand how best to further support your needs.

3) In 2011, what did you use census data for?

Select all that apply

- Commercial purposes
- Resource allocation
- Service planning and delivery
- Policy development and monitoring
- Academic research
- Personal interest

Other purposes – please specify

## Accessing 2021 Census estimates

### Flexible dissemination system

For 2021, we aim to disseminate census data through a flexible dissemination system allowing for users to be able to define their own tables, selecting the geography, population base and variables they require.

This approach will enable you to have access to the data you want as soon as they're available. This means we'll be able to release data much sooner than following the 2011 Census.

The following questions are assessing your need to access the data this way and what impact it would have on your work.

- 1) I would prefer to access data via an online flexible dissemination system sooner after census day than wait for tables to be developed by ONS.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

- 2) Being able to define my own tables is more useful to me than using predefined tables.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

- 3) I would find it useful to be provided with a small number of univariate tables alongside those I can generate through the flexible dissemination system.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

- 4) I would find it acceptable to use tables where there are small inconsistencies in output table totals due to the perturbation caused by the cell-key method.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

- 5) I need a very high proportion of aggregate data to install in my own systems (for example bulk data)

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

- 6) Currently, we're planning to disseminate most public census data using the flexible dissemination system, but we'll also aim to provide an application programming interface (API). Would your systems be able to utilise an API to access census data?

Yes     No

7) How would you expect to make use data accessed via an API?

8) Any other comments?

## 2021 Census specialist products

### Enhanced Census Outputs

Enhanced Census Outputs will be new for 2021. In these, administrative data sources will be integrated with the census data to produce outputs, predominantly on characteristics of the population not historically included on the census. They could also be used to enhance existing questions by providing more detail for example using Valuation Office Agency (VOA) property type to break down the census property types into smaller categories.

1) Which topics, not currently collected on the census questionnaire would you/your organisation be most interested in receiving data about?

Income

Size of property in square meters

Type of property (more detailed breakdown)

2) What impact would this type of information have on the work of you/your organisation?

Analysis of households and trends in housing, employment and social class.

3) Any other comments?

### Microdata

Microdata are small samples of data for whole households and individuals, which include some associated census characteristics but no information that could identify a household or individual. We'll continue to provide access to microdata samples for users following the 2021 Census.

1) In 2011, which microdata samples did you access?



- Public
- Safeguarded
- Secure
- None

2) In 2011, you were sufficiently informed of the content and availability of microdata samples.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

3) What research/analysis has the microdata sample allowed you to undertake?

Please provide a link to any reports that have been published showing the impact of using microdata.

Household level and everyday activities.

4) Please describe any limitations when using 2011 Census microdata samples including:

- a. access to data (public, safeguarded, secure)
- b. sample design (public, safeguarded, secure)

None recorded.

5) Are you interested in contributing further to the design of 2021 Census microdata through a working group?

Yes  No

6) Any other comments?

**Origin-destination**

Origin-destination (flow) data produced following the 2011 Census shows the flows of people from one place to another. We plan to review the Statistical Disclosure Control methodology used to produce origin-destination tables for the 2021 Census to identify if more data can be made publicly available.

1) In 2011, which origin-destination data did you access?

- Public

- Safeguarded
- Secure
- None

2) In 2011, you were sufficiently informed of the content and availability of origin-destination data.

Strongly agree      **Agree**      Not sure      Disagree      Strongly disagree

3) What research/analysis has the origin-destination data allowed you to undertake?

Please provide a link to any reports that have been published showing the impact of using origin-destination data.

Travel to work analysis for work life studies and labour market / employment studies. Especially relevant in studies of women and work and precarious workers.

4) Please describe any limitations when using 2011 Census origin-destination samples including:

- a. access to data (public, safeguarded, secure)
- b. table design (public, safeguarded, secure)

None

4) Are you interested in contributing further to the design of 2021 Census origin-destination through a working group?

Yes  No

5) Any other comments?

## Geography

### Parishes

The GSS Geography Policy sets out a policy of best-fitting from Output Areas to administrative geographies based on a population weighted centroid. As a number of parishes are much smaller than Output Areas this meant that in 2011, approximately 10% of all parishes in England received no statistics as they don't contain an Output Area centroid.

Work has been done to look at alternative methodologies for producing parish-level statistics. It is clear that each methodology is a balance between having data available for all parishes and the number of variables that can be released. The more variables that are released, the fewer parishes they can be released for due to disclosure.

1) I have a requirement for parish data.

Yes  No

2) To understand your requirement, we would like to know which is more important to you as a user.

Please rank in order of preference, with 1 being most important.

1 Having data available for all statistical parishes even if it means that only a few variables are available

2 Having a number of variables available for parishes even if it means that not all parishes will have statistics produced

3 Having estimates for all parishes, but some parishes will have more variables provided than others

### Grid data

As part of its 2011 Census outputs, ONS released statistics on a 1km grid to support analysis at the European level. We'll also produce statistical outputs by grid as part of the 2021 Census to support the integration of statistics across multiple domains (for example population, environmental) and to better understand the distribution of data compared to the Output Area hierarchy. This output will sit alongside the Output Areas as dissemination geography and will not replace them.

To inform the methodology for producing these statistics it would be useful to understand your requirements and how they might be used to support spatial analysis.

1) Did you use grid square data in 2011 for your work?

Yes

No

2) ONS is considering producing 2021 Census outputs on grids. Would census data on grids be useful to you?

Yes

No

3) What impact would this have on your work?

Please provide an example (for example what benefit might this bring to your data?)

Detailed analysis of networks in terms of, for example, households and places of employment.

4) If you'll be using grid data in 2021 it would be particularly useful to know if you have a preference to have the data released on the British National Grid rather than the Pan-European one.

Please select your preference as to which grid you would prefer to have the data released on:

British National Grid

Pan-European Grid

I don't mind

Any other comments?

## Interpreting 2021 Census estimates

### Supporting information

In 2011, We provided a range of documentation about the information contained within the data tables, and supporting documentation, for example about the quality of outputs and definitions used. This information provides context to the data, for example how they were collected and the coverage of the data, for example publication date, description and search keywords. We want to make sure the information we provide is useful and easy for you to understand.

1) Which supporting information did you use in 2011? Please tick all that apply

Census User Guide

- Quality and methods (for example Statistical disclosure methodology, response rates)
- Glossary
- Variables and classifications descriptions
- Other (please specify)

2) Where would you expect to access supporting information?

- In the data tables
- In a link, next to the data table
- Accessed via another part of the ONS website

Any other comments?

### Wider analytical uses of census data

1) In 2011, did you read the accompanying analysis and commentary?

- Yes
- No (I didn't need to)
- No (I didn't know it was available)

2) What format of accompanying commentary do you find most useful?

Please prioritise what you find most useful using the ranking tool:

- Statistical bulletin describing key outputs
- Visualisations
- None
- Other

Any other comments? If you selected 'Other' please specify in the box below.

### Comparability of 2021 Census estimates

#### UK Harmonisation and UK Statistics

1) How important is being able to access data for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for your work?

**Very important**    Important    Not sure    Not very important    Not at all important

2) How would you expect to access UK data?

Access data about each UK country through a single website for example, select data about Scottish local authorities through the ONS website

Visit each UK country website to access data about that country

3) Are you interested in:

UK statistics totals

Small area statistics for different geographies across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

4) Please demonstrate the impact of using UK statistics to your work, please provide any links to any supporting information you have.

Responding on behalf of the British Learned Society for Sociologists we are aware of many uses of census data to analysis varied and inter-weaving aspects of British life, from cradle to grave, including education, work, housing, health, ageing, etc.

5) Any other comments?

#### International comparability

1) Have you compared UK estimates to international datasets?

Yes  No

2) Please provide examples where you have used UK data to compare to international datasets

Studies of migration and movement of people and families.

**Any other comments**