

Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network

By e-mail: danny.boyle@bemis.org.uk

Cc. Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government

Cc. Minister for Older People and Equalities

30 October 2020

Dear Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network Members

SCOTLAND'S ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATION 2011-2022

Thank you for your e-mail of 5 October 2020.

When developing questions to be asked in Scotland's Census, National Records of Scotland (NRS) consulted extensively with groups from all over Scotland to develop and test these questions to ensure they are acceptable to the public. Our aim for the census is to deliver a set of questions and associated guidance that enables all of Scotland to access, understand and complete the census. It is crucial that the data collected meets identified user need. You will be aware that there are many different uses of census data, including the development of policies by public bodies.

Evaluation of the 2011 census data showed the 2011 ethnic group question had collected good quality data that met user needs. Development for Scotland's Census 2022 did not identify a need to change the high level categories used in 2011. The consultation for 2022 highlighted a need for continuity of the data with 2011 and earlier censuses, particularly to enable monitoring of equality related policy and service delivery.

The ethnic group response options used in the 1991, 2001 and 2011 census questions combined the concepts of colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. This measurement in the UK is influenced by the legal framework (the Equality Act 2010) which specifically refers to 'race' as including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. The ethnic group question, under the 'Other ethnic group' response option, provides the opportunity to write in whichever term the individual respondent feels best reflects their ethnicity thereby ensuring further accessibility and openness.

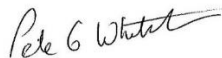
NRS considered the relevant protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 during the development of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for Scotland's Census 2022. The EQIA and other impact assessments can be found on our [website](#). The Equality Act 2010 does not, as a matter of law, restrict the questions which can be asked in the census to questions which are framed in terms of the protected characteristics described in that Act. The census questions do not use the same language as is used in the Equality Act 2010 however some of the user need for outputs is driven by the Act. A wide range of public authorities who are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty have indicated a need for data from the census to support them in fulfilling their duties. It is not the role of NRS to instruct how the data collected through the census is used by public bodies. Census data enables others to meet their responsibilities and requirements.

A Sikh tick box will not be included in the ethnic group question. Research and testing showed that the combination of a Sikh tick box in the religion question and a write in box in the ethnic group question provides good data on the Sikh population which meets user needs. The question on ethnic group will, under the 'Other ethnic group' response option, include a prompt to highlight the opportunity to write in Sikh as a response. As with Scotland's Census in 2011, this approach will enable Sikhs to identify themselves through the religion question and / or the ethnic group question. As stated above, the option to write in under 'Other ethnic group' is available to anyone who wishes to identify in a particular way, that is entirely a matter for the individual. The question set for Scotland's next census has been agreed as appropriate by the Scottish Parliament through the [Census \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#). The ethnic group question has a number of response options, including those listed in your letter.

Following the collect phase of Scotland's Census 2022, NRS will consider what outputs from tick boxes and data from write in responses can be made available in the flexible table builder. These outputs will provide detailed analysis by ethnicity and, for example, provide estimates of the number of people who responded as White Irish, White Gypsy / Traveller and White Polish. These outputs are subject to statistical disclosure control. NRS does not intend to update the 2011 outputs.

I hope that you have found this letter to be helpful.

Yours sincerely



PETE WHITEHOUSE
Director of Statistical Services