WAYS TO MEASURE RACIAL IDENTITY: THE U.S. AND CANADIAN CENSUS

UNITED STATES

CANADA

CENSUS:

- Every 10 years
- Asks about race
- Decennial census sent to everyone
- American Community
 Survey sent to 3.5
 million people yearly

CENSUS:

- Every 5 years
- Asks about ancestral ethnic origin
- Short-form questionnaire sent to75% of the population
- Long-form to 25%

2021 Canadian Census



Census Questions

What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors?

Ancestors may have Indigenous origins, or origins that refer to different countries, or other origins that may not refer to different countries.

For examples of ethnic or cultural origins, visit www12.statcan.gc.ca/ancestry

Source: Statistique Canada 2021

2020 U.S. Census

hat is this perso ark 🗴 one or mo		print origi	ins.			
	White – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.					
	n Am. – Print, fo ian, Nigerian, Et					
principal tribe(s Mayan, Aztec, i	American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.					
Chinese	Vietname	ese 🗆	Native Ha	awaiian		
Filipino	Korean		Samoan			
Asian Indian	Japanese	e 🗆	Chamorro)		
	Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian,					
Some other rac	ce – Print race o	r origin. 🍃				

Source: United States Census Bureau 2020

Differences

Canada

- Link to list of 500 ethnic or cultural origin examples
- Answer Format: Fill in the blank
- One question for racial, ethnic, and religious identity

United States

- Written examples of race and ethnicities
- Answer Format: Checkboxes + Fill in the blank
- Separate question for ethnicity
- "Some other race" catchall

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS:

Asian: 6.3%Black: 13.6%

Hispanic or Latino (Any

race): 19.1%

 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: .03%

Two or More Races: 3%

White (Non-Hispanic):58.9%

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS:

 More than 450 ethnic or cultural origins

More than one origin: 35.5%

• European Origin: **52.5%**

South Asian: 7.1%

• Chinese: **4.7%**

• Black: **4.3%**

 Top Single Origin = Canadian: 15.6%

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

For both states, the Census informs the distribution of resources.

UNITED STATES

Race questions aim to ensure equal opportunity. Examples include drawing representative district lines, evaluating public health programs, and enforcing anti-discrimination laws.

CANADA

- Ethnic and cultural origins are used to depict the richness, diversity, and complexity of Canada's cultural heritage today.
- Maintain the 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act — a fundamental characteristic of Canadian identity

U.S. Next Steps

Amendments to U.S. 2030 Census



MOCK EXAMPLE OF 2030 CENSUS

CHANGES:

- Inclusion of Middle
 Eastern or North African
 (MENA) checkbox
- Race and ethnicity
 questions combined
 (Hispanic or Latino
 included as checkbox)

IMPORTANCE:

- Greater visibility for minority populations
- Remove MENA from White heritage
- Multiracial population projected to triple by 2060
- Census questions
 adopted across all country
 surveys about health,
 education, and economy

There is no such thing as a perfectly representative question, but the amendments to the 2030 census are a step in the right direction.

What is your race or eth Select all that apply AND Note, you may report ma	enter additional deta	ails in the spaces below.
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☐ Italian	□ Polish	□ French
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☐ Salvadoran	□ Dominican	☐ Colombian
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☐ ASIAN – Provide detai	ils below.	
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☐ Vietnamese	□ Korean	☐ Japanese
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AMERICAN INDIAN O Navajo Nation, Blackf Barrow Inupiat Tribal	eet Tribe, Mayan, Azt	ec, Native Village of
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☐ MIDDLE EASTERN OR	NORTH AFRICAN - P	rovide details below.
☐ Lebanese	☐ Iranian	☐ Egyptian
☐ Syrian	☐ Moroccan	□ Israeli
Enter, for example, Al	gerian, Iraqi, Kurdish,	etc.
☐ NATIVE HAWAIIAN O	R PACIFIC ISLANDER -	- Provide details below.
☐ Native Hawaiian	☐ Samoan	☐ Chamorro
☐ Tongan Enter, for example, Po	☐ Fijian	☐ Marshallese
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Source: NYT 2023

LEARN MORE!



QR Code to Interactive New York Times
Article on 2030 Proposed Changes