Measuring the Racial and Ethnic Composition and Diversity of the United States Population: Historical Challenges and Contemporary Opportunities

Eric Jensen, Senior Advisor for Population Estimates and Coverage Measurement

Nicholas Jones, Director of Race/Ethnicity Research and Outreach

Karen Battle, Division Chief for the Census Bureau's Population Division

U.S. Census Bureau

July 19, 2023

This presentation is released to inform parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress.
Any opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not reflect the views of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Shape your future START HERE >

United States Census 2020

Goals for Paper:
Historical Challenges and Contemporary Opportunities

Part 1: Provide an overview of evolution of race and ethnicity concepts and questions (1790 Census to 2020 Census)

Part 2: Review Census Bureau's efforts to measure and analyze racial and ethnic diversity for 2020 Census

Part 3: Discuss potential plans and opportunities for improving measurement of race/ethnicity in Federal statistics

Shape
your future
START HERE >

United States®
Census
2020

What is Race? What is Ethnicity?

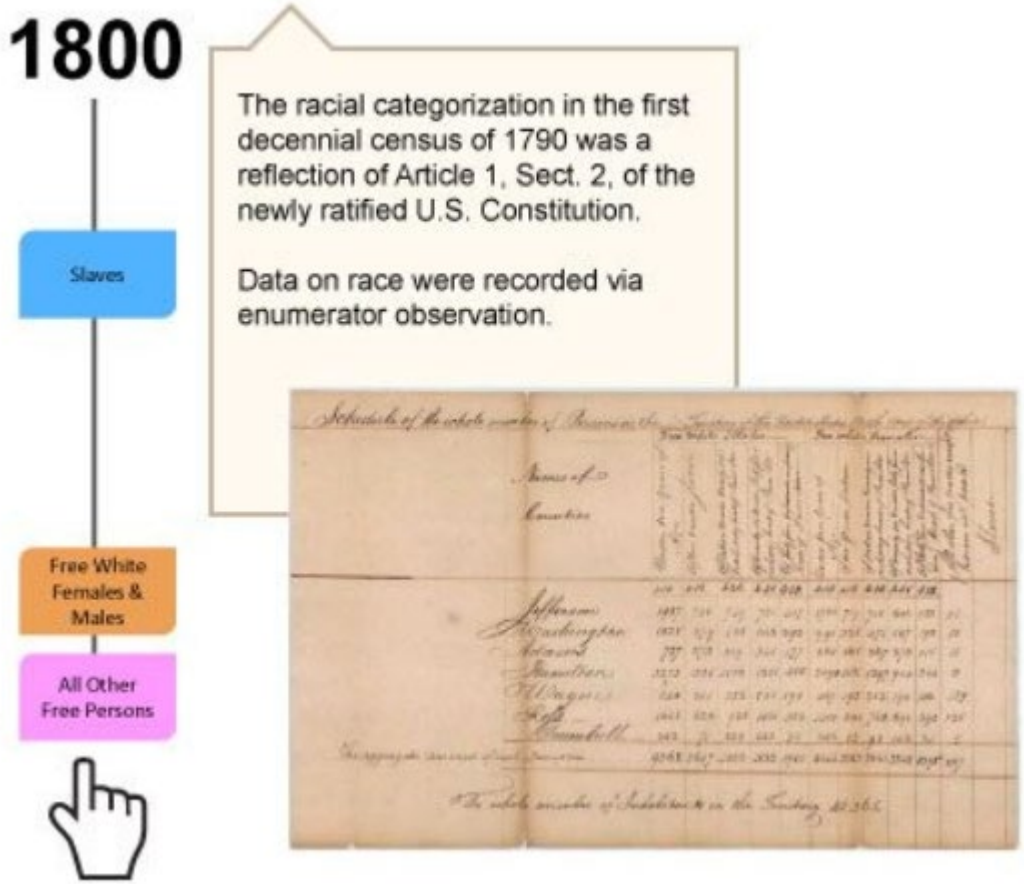


Shape your future START HERE >

United States Census 2020

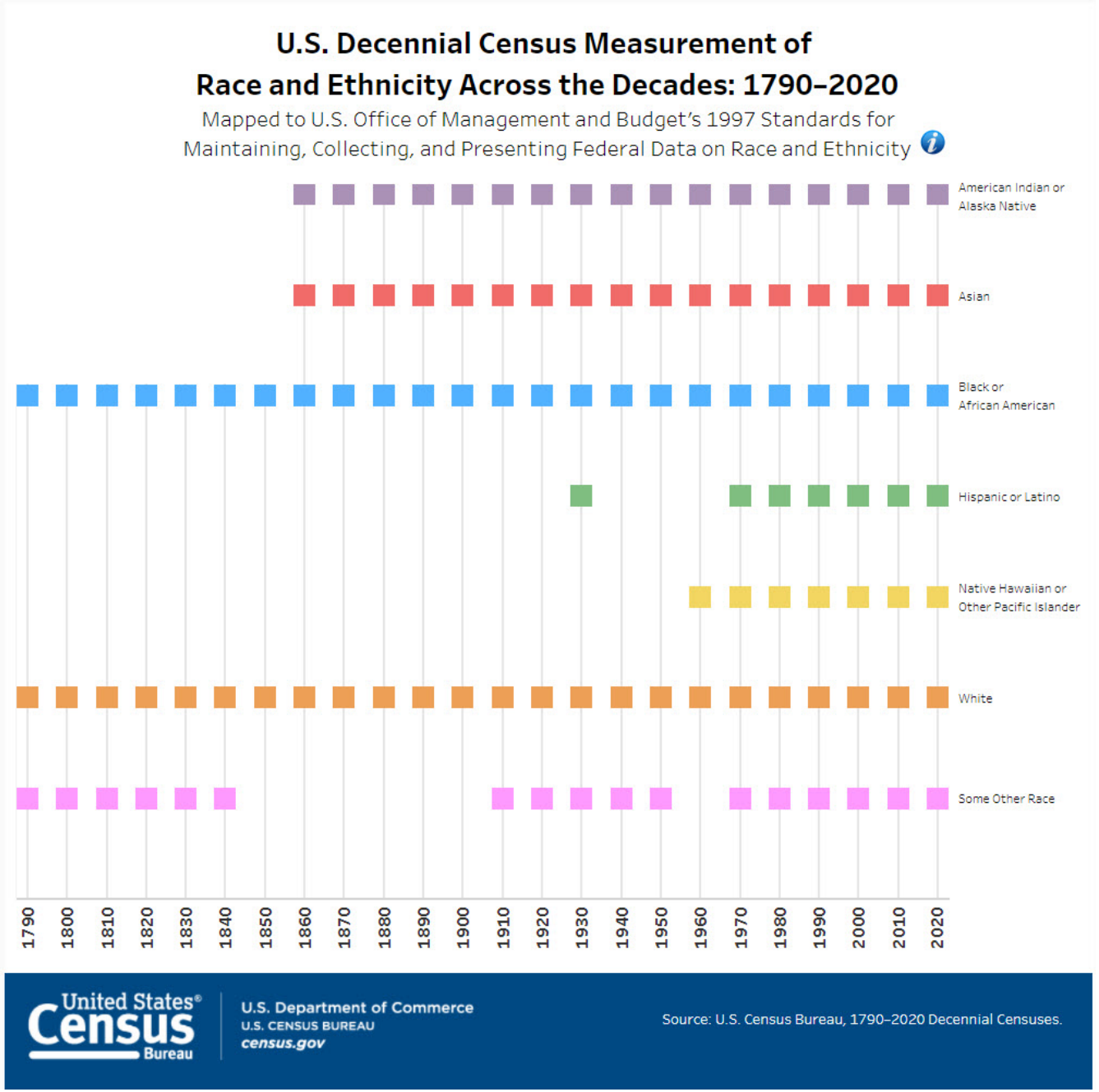
Race and Ethnicity

History of Collection in the U.S. Decennial Census



- Measured since 1790 Census
- Census form has reflected changes in society
- Influenced by social, political, and economic factors
- 1980 Census to present follows OMB standards
- Based on self-identification

Shape your future START HERE >
United States Census 2020



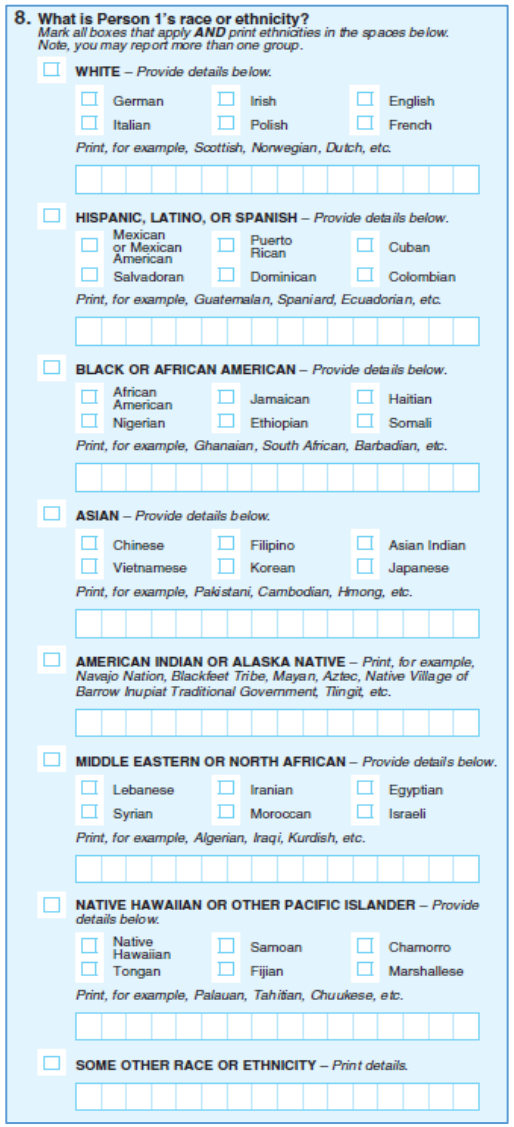
Link:
[Measurement of Race and Ethnicity Across the Decades: 1790–2020 (census.gov)]

Shape your future
START HERE >

United States Census 2020

Census Bureau Research on Race Ethnicity for the 2020 Census

Combined Question Design



8. What is Person 1's race or ethnicity?
*Mark all boxes that apply **AND** print ethnicities in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*
☐ German ☐ Irish ☐ English
☐ Italian ☐ Polish ☐ French
Print, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

☐ **HISPANIC, LATINO, OR SPANISH** – *Provide details below.*
☐ Mexican or Mexican American ☐ Puerto Rican ☐ Cuban
☐ Salvadoran ☐ Dominican ☐ Colombian
Print, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*
☐ African American ☐ Jamaican ☐ Haitian
☐ Nigerian ☐ Ethiopian ☐ Somali
Print, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*
☐ Chinese ☐ Filipino ☐ Asian Indian
☐ Vietnamese ☐ Korean ☐ Japanese
Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** – *Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, etc.*

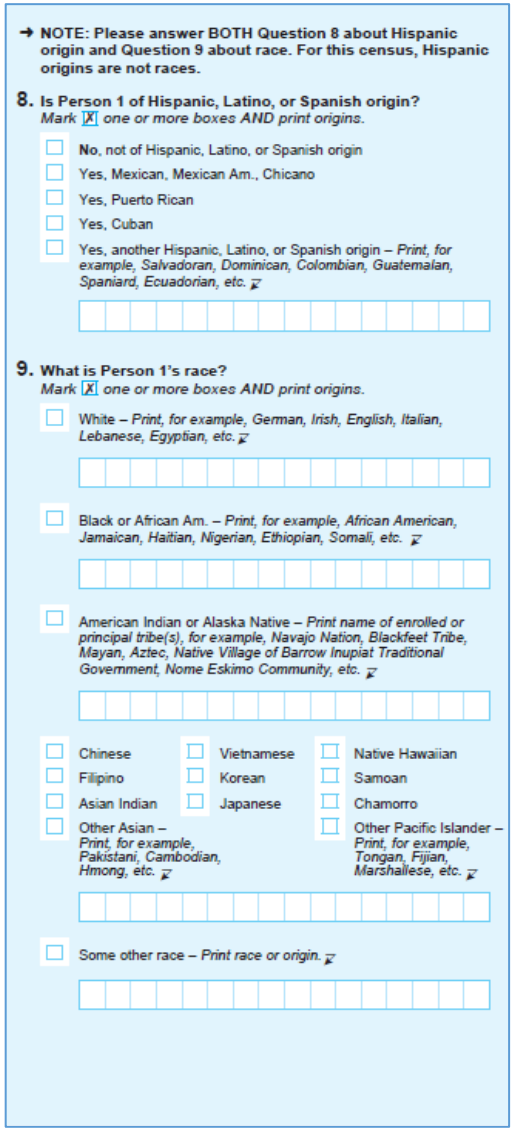
☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*
☐ Lebanese ☐ Iranian ☐ Egyptian
☐ Syrian ☐ Moroccan ☐ Israeli
Print, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*
☐ Native Hawaiian ☐ Samoan ☐ Chamorro
☐ Tongan ☐ Fijian ☐ Marshallese
Print, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

☐ **SOME OTHER RACE OR ETHNICITY** – *Print details.*

- Census Bureau conducted extensive research and outreach over past decade, including two groundbreaking national studies on how to improve the race and ethnicity question(s)
- Extensive research and outreach showed a combined race and ethnicity question with detailed checkboxes is the optimal design for improving race/ethnicity data
- Determining census content is an extensive undertaking, involving research and external partner engagement

Separate Questions Design



→ **NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 8 about Hispanic origin and Question 9 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.**

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
Mark [X] one or more boxes AND print origins.

☐ **No**, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
☐ Yes, Cuban
☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

9. What is Person 1's race?
Mark [X] one or more boxes AND print origins.

☐ White – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.*

☐ Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.*

☐ 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.*

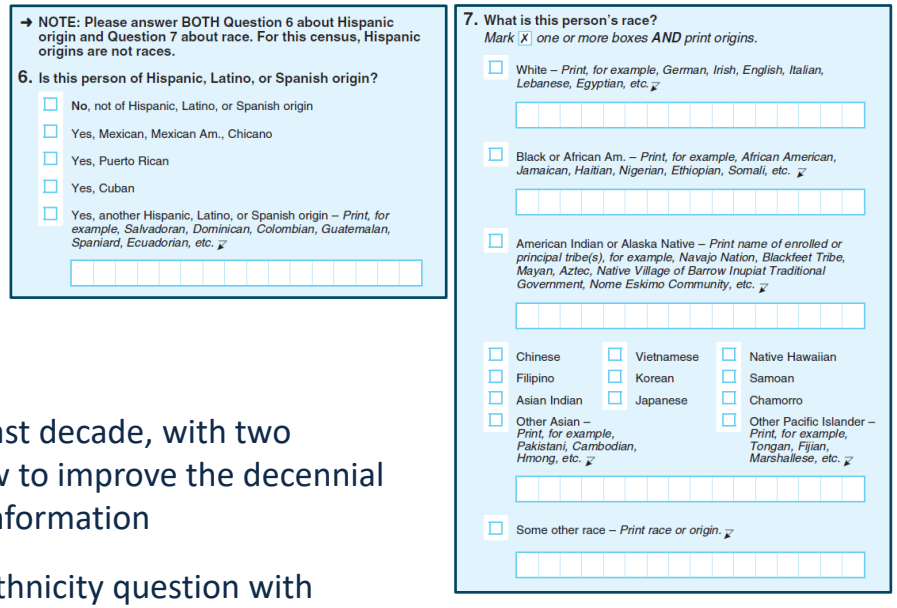
☐ Chinese ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Filipino ☐ Korean ☐ Samoan
☐ Asian Indian ☐ Japanese ☐ Chamorro
☐ Other Asian – *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.* ☐ Other Pacific Islander – *Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.*

☐ Some other race – *Print race or origin.*

United States Census 2020

Race and Ethnicity Research
for the 2020 Census

2020 Census: Two Separate Questions Design



➜ **NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 6 about Hispanic origin and Question 7 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.**

6. Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

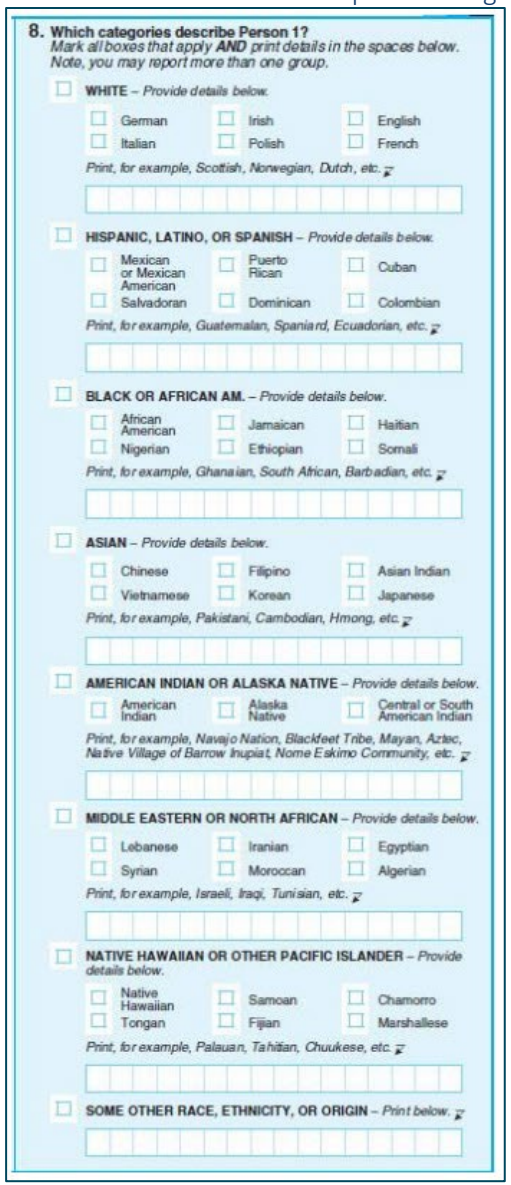
- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

7. What is this person's race?
Mark [X] one or more boxes ***AND*** *print origins.*

- White – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.*
- Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.*
- 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
- Filipino
- Asian Indian
- Other Asian – *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Japanese
- Native Hawaiian
- Samoan
- Chamorro
- Other Pacific Islander – *Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.*
- Some other race – *Print race or origin.*

- Extensive research and outreach over past decade, with two groundbreaking national studies, on how to improve the decennial census collection of race and ethnicity information
- Findings showed a combined race and ethnicity question with multiple detailed checkboxes and a dedicated Middle Eastern and North African category is optimal design for improving race and ethnicity data
- Determining decennial census content is an extensive undertaking, involving research and external partner engagement, and approval from U.S. Office of Management and Budget and U.S. Congress

2015 National Content Test Optimal Design



8. Which categories describe Person 1?
Mark all boxes that apply ***AND*** *print details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.*

- **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*
  - German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French
  - *Print, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*
- **HISPANIC, LATINO, OR SPANISH** – *Provide details below.*
  - Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian
  - *Print, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*
- **BLACK OR AFRICAN AM.** – *Provide details below.*
  - African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali
  - *Print, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*
- **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*
  - Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese
  - *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
- **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** – *Provide details below.*
  - American Indian, Alaska Native, Central or South American Indian
  - *Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.*
- **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*
  - Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian
  - *Print, for example, Israeli, Iraqi, Tunisian, etc.*
- **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*
  - Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese
  - *Print, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*
- **SOME OTHER RACE, ETHNICITY, OR ORIGIN** – *Print below.*

United States Census 2020

Measuring Racial and Ethnic Diversity for the 2020 Census

August 04, 2021

BY ERIC JENSEN, SENIOR TECHNICAL EXPERT FOR DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS; NICHOLAS JONES, DIRECTOR AND SENIOR ADVISOR FOR RACE AND ETHNICITY RESEARCH AND OUTREACH; KIMBERLY OROZCO, DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICIAN; LAUREN MEDINA, DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICIAN; MARC PERRY, SENIOR DEMOGRAPHER; BEN BOLENDER, SENIOR ADVISOR; AND KAREN BATTLE, CHIEF, POPULATION DIVISION

Subscribe RSS SMS Email

Diversity Index

Prevalence Maps

Prevalence Rankings

Diffusion Score

Census Bureau Develops Disseminating Diversity Working Group

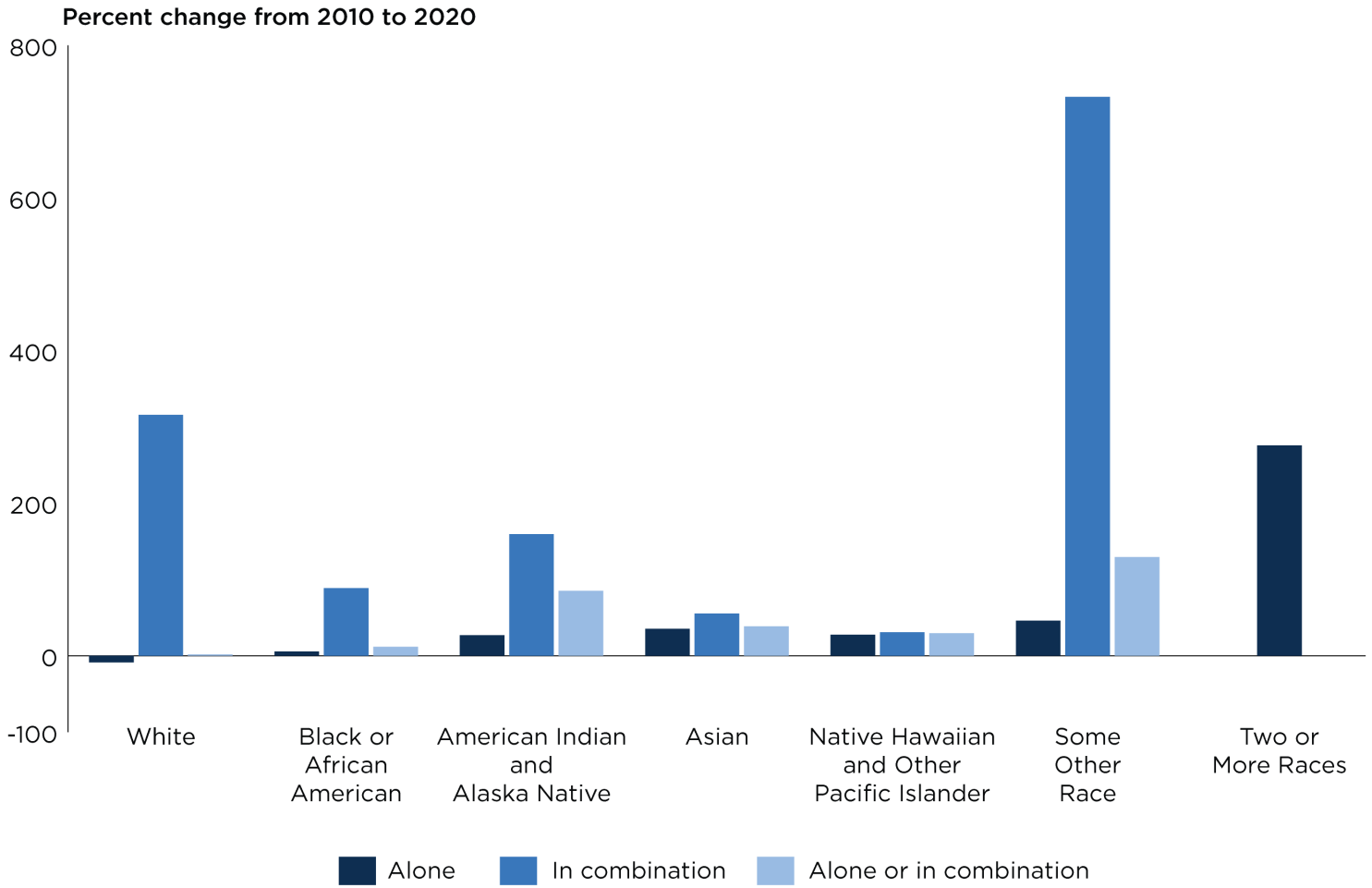
Acknowledgment

In 2019, the Census Bureau formed the ***Disseminating Diversity Working Group*** to develop a strategy for producing statistics on racial and ethnic diversity in the 2020 Census data products and beyond. The working group comprises subject-matter experts in race and ethnicity, demography and data visualization. The diversity measures included in this blog were developed through research and collaborative discussions among the authors, as well as consultation with external experts and advisors. The blog was written by members of the working group and reflects our efforts to clearly communicate statistics about the racial and ethnic diversity of the U.S. population.

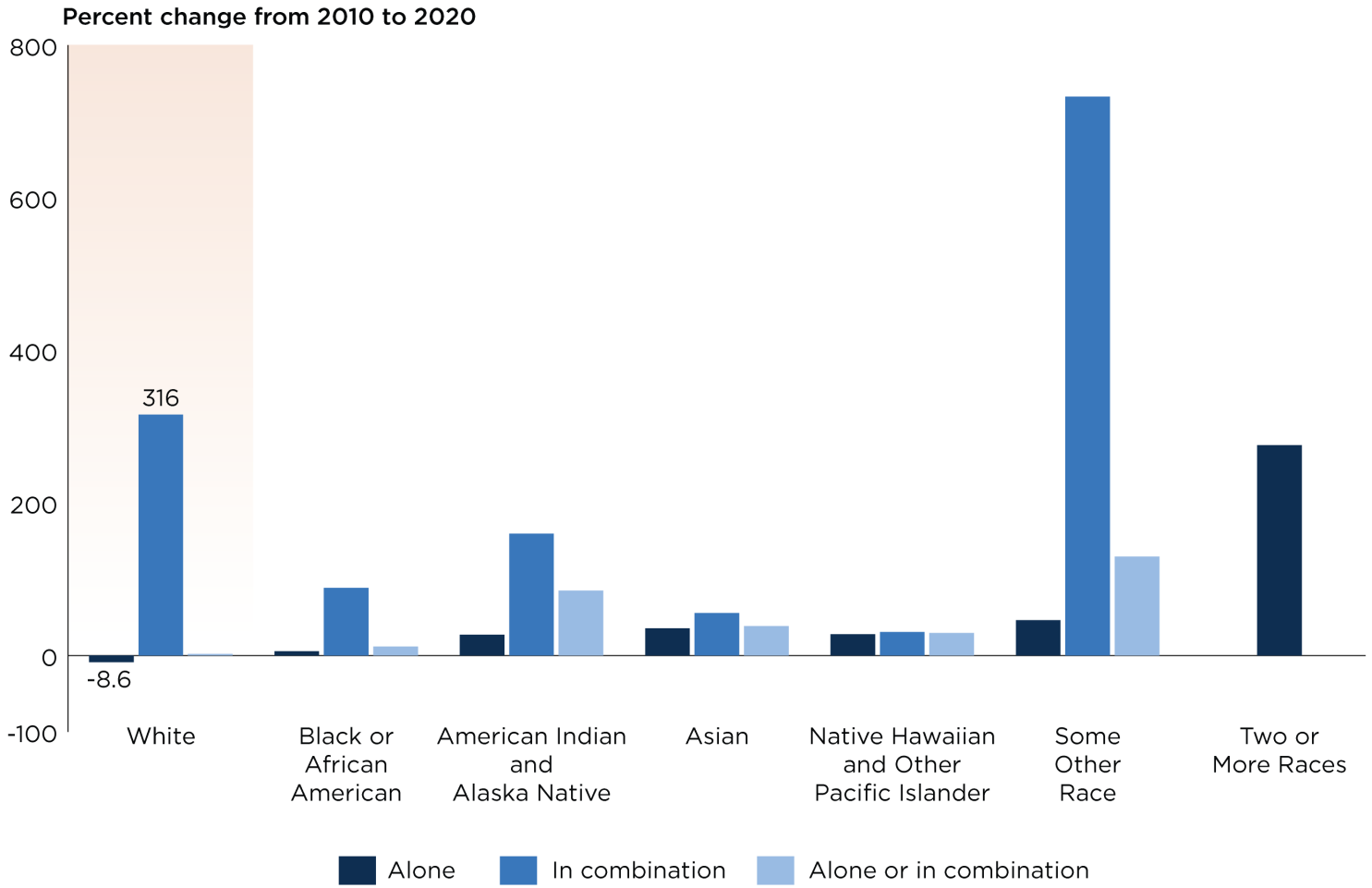
Shape your future START HERE >

United States Census 2020

Multiracial Populations Accounted for Most of the Change in Each Race Category

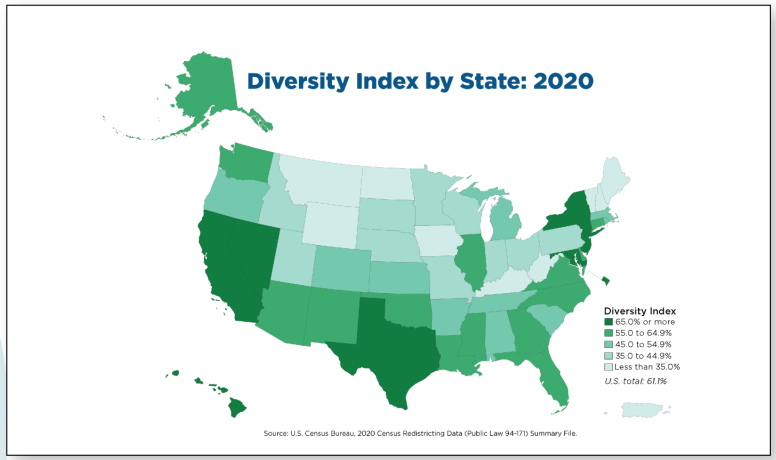


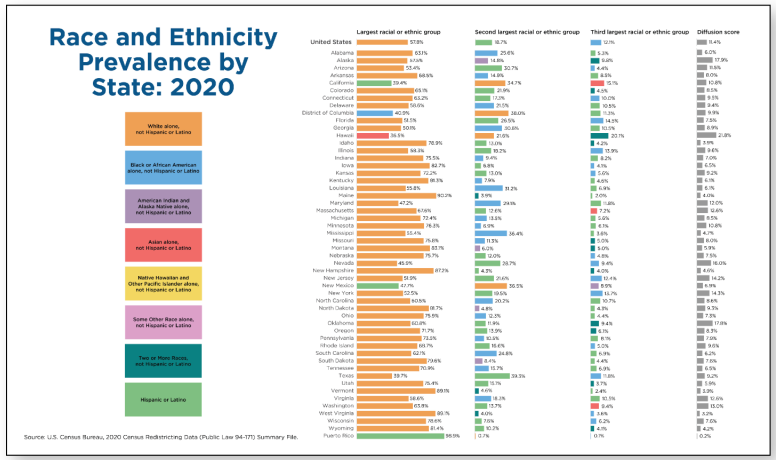
Multiracial Populations Accounted for Most of the Change in Each Race Category

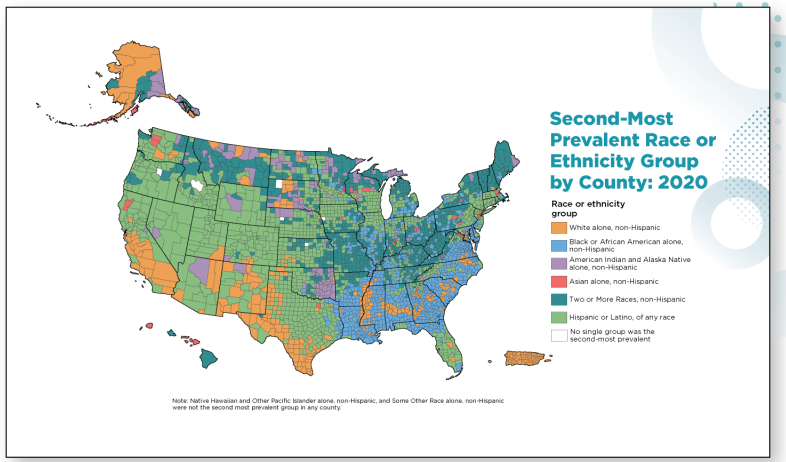


Measuring Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the 2020 Census

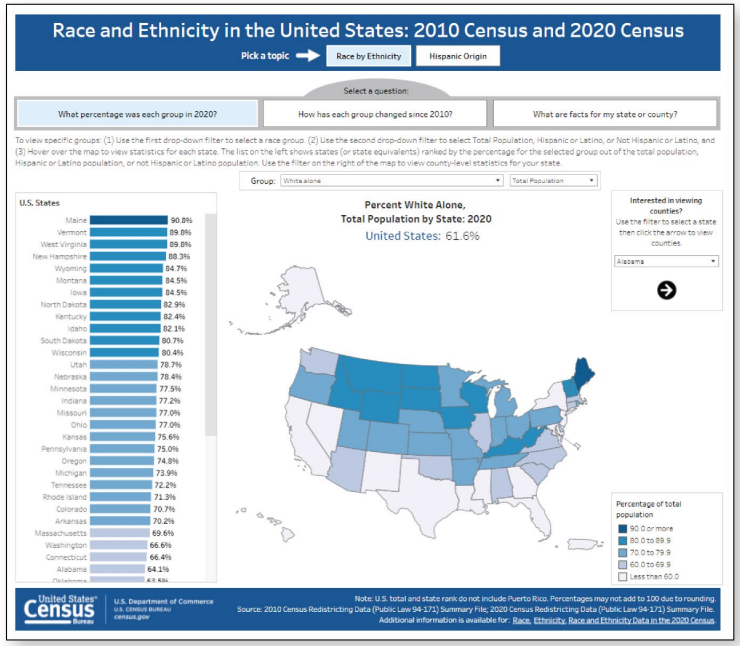
Concept of “diversity” refers to representation and relative size of different racial and ethnic groups within a population.



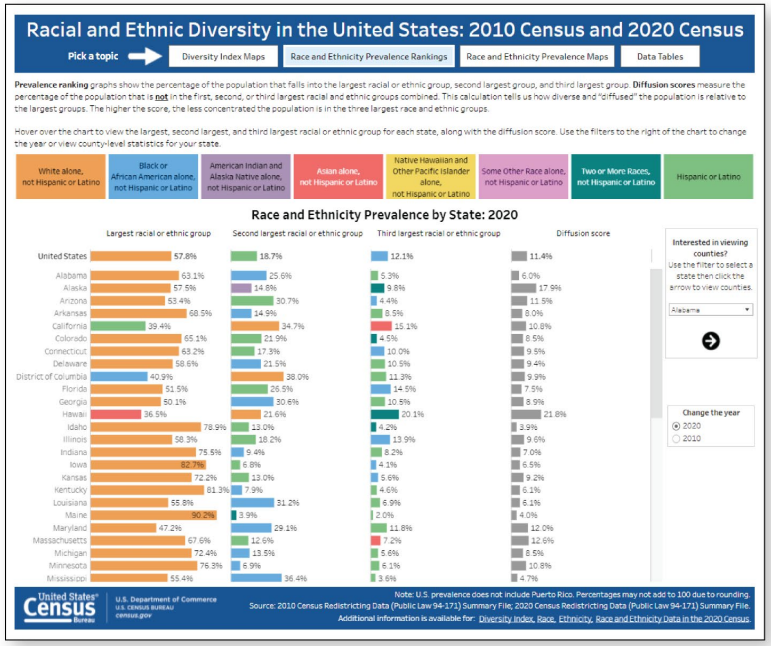




Our interactive data visualizations available on census.gov can help you explore statistics for your state, county, and areas across the United States.



Race and Ethnicity Data Viz



Racial Ethnic Diversity Data Viz

DATA GEMS: How Can I Visualize Race and Hispanic Origin Data from the 2020 and 2010 Census?

DATA GEMS: How Can I Access Data About Race and Ethnic Diversity from the 2020 and 2010 Census?

2020 Census Provides a New Snapshot of Racial and Ethnic Composition and Diversity



[Improved Race and Ethnicity Measures Reveal U.S. Population Is Much More Multiracial]



[2020 U.S. Population More Racially and Ethnically Diverse Than Measured in 2010]

Purpose for Research on Race and Ethnicity

Concerns have been raised for several decades:

Concern about non-response over decades, particularly among Hispanics not reporting a race response

Numerous campaigns and lobbying of the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Congress by key stakeholders and public for changes to the race and Hispanic origin questions

Growing "Some Other Race" population since 1980

"Some Other Race" now the 2nd largest race group in the country

Our team responded by conducting research and outreach:

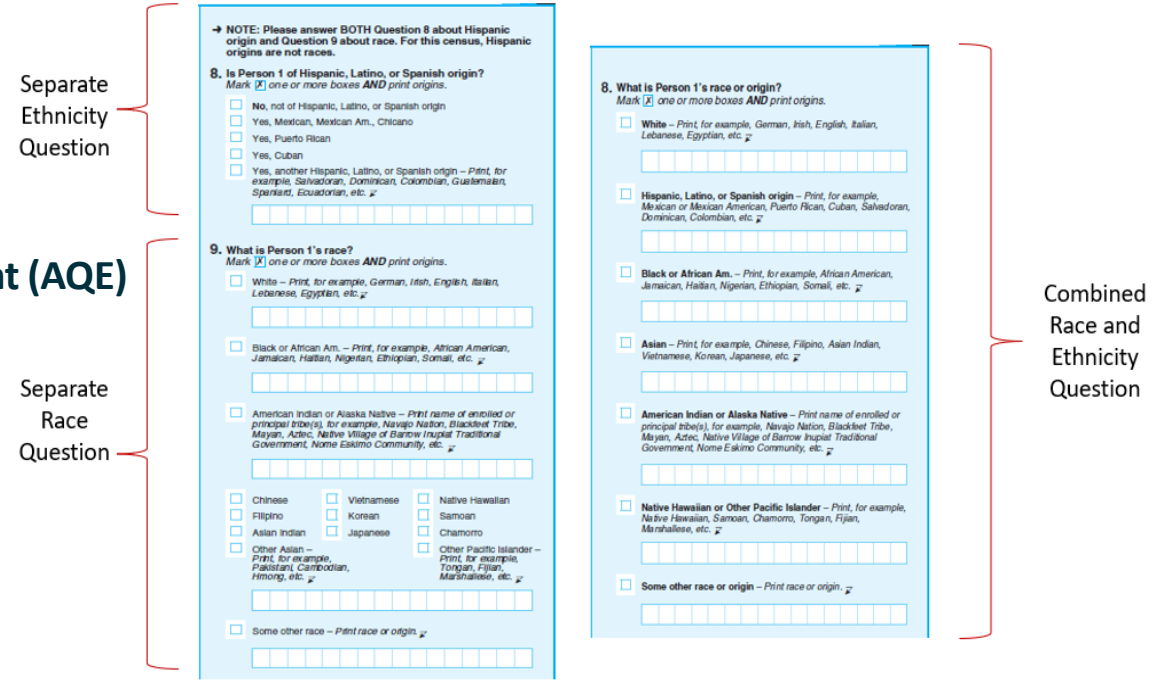
2010 Census Race and Hispanic Origin Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE)

2014 AIAN Research

2015 National Content Test (NCT)

2016 ACS content test

2017 Census test



Shape your future
START HERE >

United States Census 2020



Initial Proposals For Updating Statistical Policy Directive No. 15:
Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity

For information, visit
spd15revision.gov

OMB Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards

Background and Current Review's Scope

Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD 15)

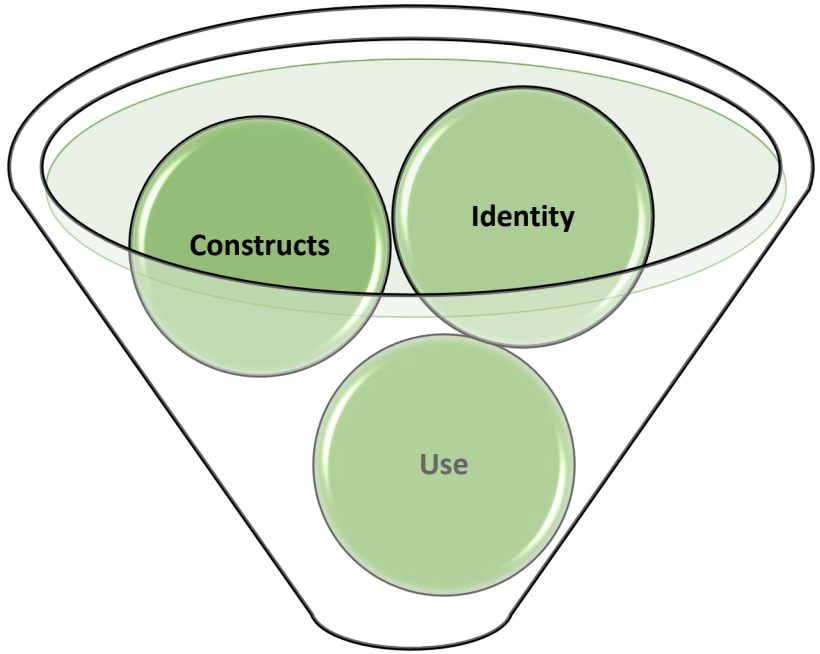
HISTORY OF SPD 15

1977 = Established, **1997 =** Last Revised

- New responsibilities to enforce civil rights laws
- Provide common language to promote uniformity, comparability, and consistency across Federal information collections
- Developed through cooperative Federal interagency working group process

WHY REVIEW SPD 15 NOW?

- Increase of "Some Other Race" reporting on decennial census and American Community Survey
- Many Middle Eastern and North African respondents view their identity as distinct from the White racial category
- Need for disaggregated data to better understand within-group disparities and outcomes
- Inconsistent and outdated terminology



SPD 15

Revising SPD 15

Where Are We?

- **June 2022:** Chief Statistician of the United States (CSOTUS) announced formal review to revise SPD 15 and convening of Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (Working Group)
- **January 2023:** OMB released Federal Register Notice which includes Working Group's initial proposals on revising SPD 15, open from January 27 – April 27



OMB Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards

Current Federal Register Notice – Initial Proposals

The initial proposals included:

- Collecting race and ethnicity information using one combined question.
- Adding “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) as a new minimum category.
- Requiring the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.
- Updating SPD 15’s terminology, definitions, and question wording.
- Placing SPD 15 and its related documents online in a central location and include implementation guidance.

Please Note

About Initial Proposals in the Federal Register Notice
Initial Proposals For Updating OMB's Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards

- These proposals are **preliminary** – **not final** – and do not reflect the settled opinions of the Working Group, the position of OMB, or the positions of the agencies participating on the Working Group.
- The Working Group will continue to deliberate, assess evidence, and take into consideration comments received from the public before making final recommendations for OMB's consideration.

Federal Register Notice's Public Comment Period:
Opened January 27 • Closed April 27

THANK YOU!

Questions and Feedback

Shape
your future
START HERE >

United States Census 2020