

**FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON RACIAL, ETHNIC AND OTHER POPULATIONS
MADE AS A RESULT OF THE MEETING ON
March 19-21, 2014**

The National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations developed the following recommendations during the meeting held March 19-21, 2014 in Suitland, MD. The Members present were: Dr. Linda Marc-Clerisme (Convenor), Dr. Jerlean Daniels (Notetaker), Mr. John Bouman, Ms. Carol Gore, Mr. Tim Harjo*, Ms. Kathleen Harris*, Dr. Akram Khater, Ms. Pauline Medrano[†], Dr. Ann Morning, Ms. Mee Moua, Ms. Altagracia Ramos, Mr. Neel Saxena, Dr. Alisu Schoua-Glusberg, Dr. Maile Taulii, Mr. Arturo Vargas (Absent “*”, New Member “†”)

Recommendation 1: Support Further Testing of the Combined Race and Hispanic Origin Question

The Working Group Members support further research and testing of the combined race and Hispanic origin question that offers a write in box for each of the population groups.

Per recommendations from the Final Report ¹, further quantitative and qualitative testing should examine the effect on detailed information specific to each population, with special emphasis to eliminate the decrease in detailed reporting among some groups that results from the use of the combined question and/or no-detailed-checkbox formats.

This includes specific recommendations to conduct additional research on *example listings* of ethnic identities under the major categories (i.e. African-American/Black ², American Indian and Alaska Native ³, Asian ⁴, Hispanic ⁵, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders ⁶), as well as conducting additional research on *example language* specified under major categories (i.e. American Indian and Alaska Native ⁷; Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders ⁸).

Recommendation 2: Create a Separate Category for Persons of “Middle Eastern or North African” Origin

The Working Group Members support further research and testing for a separate combined race and origin category for persons of “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) origin, including ethnic groups from the MENA region (e.g., Kurds, Chaldeans, Armenians, etc.) that would not be captured correctly with a country of origin question.

Per recommendations from the Final Report, the Working Group ⁹: (1) Supports that nationalities reflective of MENA populations (e.g. Lebanese, Egyptian, Libyan, and Moroccan) be dis-associated with “White” on the combined race and origin write in box; and (2) Requests that OMB consider including a MENA category as an official designation, thus updating the 1997 OMB Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.

Recommendation 3: Multiracial Populations

The Working Group Members support further research and testing to increase the response rate of multiracial populations.

Per recommendations from the Final Report, the Working Group ¹⁰: Supports the combined race and Hispanic origin question which offers the advantage of making it possible for people: (1) To express a “mixed” identity by checking off more than one category amongst the major racial and ethnic categories (e.g., (i) part Latino, part-non-Latino background, by checking off both the Hispanic category and another category to identify as a "mixed" person; (ii) part African-American/Black, part NHOPI by checking off both the African-American/Black and NHOPI categories); and (2) To report more than one detailed origin (e.g. On the “Asian” write in box, include both “Korean” *and* “Chinese”).

Recommendation 4: Improve Testing of, and Reporting by, Respondents with Limited English Proficiency, Low Reading and Computer Literacy

The Working Group Members support further research and testing in hard-to-reach and hard-to-count populations.

Per recommendations from the Final Report, the Working Group Supports: (1) Conducting additional testing in populations who are limited- and non-English proficient speakers, who have low reading ability, and have low computer literacy ¹¹; and the (2) Testing of questionnaire formats in languages other than English ¹².

Recommendation 5: Advise on Engaging the Public

The Working Group Members recommend that the Census Bureau utilize strategies that are transparent, as well as engage and inform the diverse American public about ongoing race and Hispanic origin research ¹³.

Per recommendations from the Final Report, the Working Group recommends that the Census Bureau:

- 1) Sponsor some of the meetings held with advocacy groups, community leaders, community partners and stakeholders within the major racial and ethnic groups to explain the research conducted to date.
- 2) Explain the findings, implications of those findings, and receive suggestions for further research strategies to be conducted by the Census Bureau.
- 3) Support that Census Bureau staff to do presentations at major national conferences of organizations engaged in the issues of hard-to-reach and hard-to-count populations.
- 4) Develop targeted messages, and identify a broad range of media outlets that address lifestyle and geographical segmentation, as well as ethnically and linguistically diverse populations living in ethnic enclaves.
- 5) Engage advocacy groups, community leaders, community partners and stakeholders using plain language in communications; and
- 6) Develop a vetting process to identify communication subcontractors, and consider their experience and community involvement at the local and regional levels.

NOTES

¹ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2: General Recommendations or Statements of Agreement.

² See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.1: African-American, African, Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latino: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends testing example ethnicities, such as *Afro-Latino*, *Afro-Indian*, *Indo-Caribbean*, *Caribbean/West Indian*.

³ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.2: American Indian and Alaska Native: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the AIAN Category: (1) Test example ethnicities, such as *Cherokee*, *Navajo*, etc, but not include any language concerning tribal enrollment or affiliation; and (2) Test example origins for write in boxes that might include, Navajo, Tlingit, Maya, Quechua, etc.

⁴ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.3: Asian: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the Asian Category: (1) Use larger Asian American sample sizes, recruiting Asians populations across diverse language, literacy, culture, income backgrounds; (2) Integrate a maximum number of example listings of the largest Asian American detailed race groups, including ethnic groups that would not be captured correctly with a country of origin question; and (3) Develop an example-based strategy that results in the same level of detailed reporting as check boxes elicit.

⁵ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.4: Hispanic: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends that the Census Bureau focus on a combined race/ethnicity question approach in its future testing because it increases considerably Hispanic response rates, without depressing the count of the Hispanic population; and to conduct additional focus groups with Latinos of African descent to better understand their concerns.

⁶ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.7: Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the NHOPI Category: (1) Test distinct ethnicities/nationalities for the write in box and not use generalized labels (e.g., Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian); (2) Test the combined question format to accommodate a Pacific Islander population alone.

⁷ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.2: American Indian and Alaska Native: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the AIAN Category: (1) Rephrase using language that is broader to capture all of the Indigenous people of North, Central, and South America; (2) Test to determine if the write in boxes could be used for the specific tribe, village, nation, etc; (3) Conduct more research among Spanish and indigenous-language speaking immigrants of South American Indian ancestry; and (4) Conduct additional testing of language to differentiate between AIAN people from Central and South America to prevent conflict with Federally Recognized Tribes.

⁸ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.7: Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the NHOPI Category: (1) Test very clear definitions and instructions for information to go into the write in box (e.g. a person's ethnicity, nationality as opposed to cultural identity, clan, religious, cultural, or village group from their home of origin).

⁹ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.5: Middle Eastern and North African: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends the following for the MENA Category: (1) Testing a separate MENA category; and (2) Requesting that MENA be considered an official OMB category.

¹⁰ See Final Report – Section 4.1.2.6: Multiracial Populations: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends that the Census Bureau experiment with instruction changes to increase the rates of multiracial reporting.

¹¹ See Final Report – Section 4.1.3.1: English Proficiency, Literacy and the Digital Divide: The Final Report of the Working Group expresses concerns with the heavy reliance for proposed internet and computer usage for outreach on future AQE testing and surveys in hard-to-reach and hard-to-count populations.

¹² See Final Report – Section 4.1.3.2: Types of Questions: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends future surveys that test question formats in languages other than English.

¹³ See Final Report – Section 4.1.4: Advising on Engaging the Public: The Final Report of the Working Group recommends strategies to be transparent and engage and inform the public about race and Hispanic origin research.