

Session A

Testing a “Middle Eastern or North African” Category on the 2015 National Content Test

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1997 Race and Ethnicity Standards

U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
defines White as:

*A person having origins in any of the
original peoples of*

- Europe
- Middle East
- North Africa

How Did We Get Here?

- 1997 OMB standards recommended further research on how to improve data on Arabs/Middle Easterners
- Major findings from the Census Bureau's 2010 Alternative Questionnaire Experiment showed that many respondents saw the use of "Egyptian" and "Lebanese" examples for the White category as inaccurate and recommended a separate Middle Eastern or North African category
- Arab American Institute and 25 organizations and researchers sent a formal request for the new category
- Census Bureau engaged and consulted with external stakeholders

Activities in the Past Year

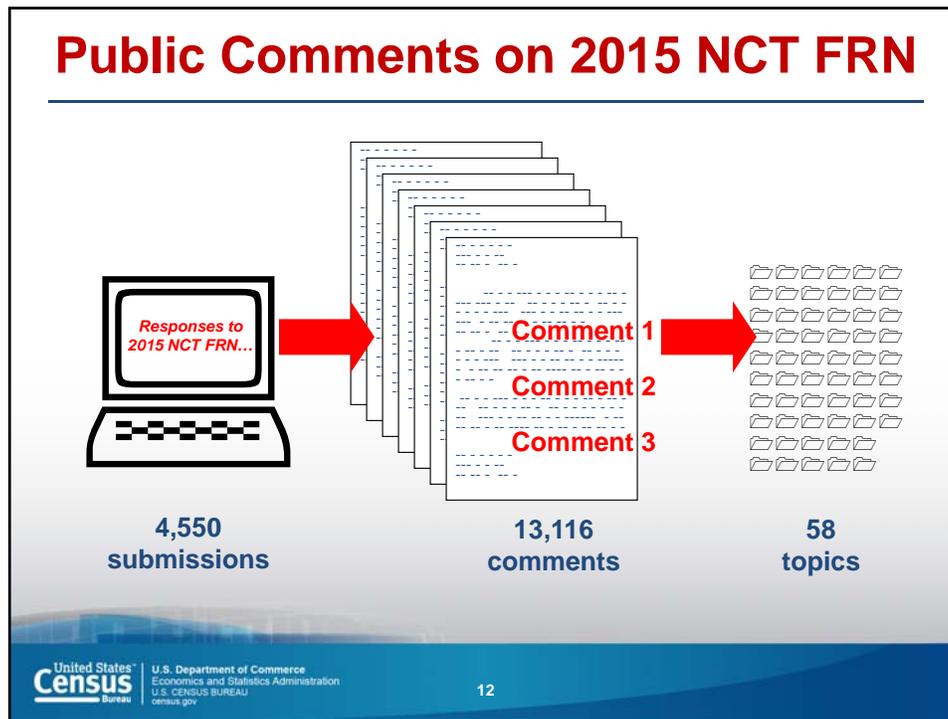
- Census Bureau National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations recommended testing a separate category (Summer 2014)
- Federal Register Notice on 2015 National Content Test (NCT) plans solicited public comment on new category (Winter 2014)
- Researched how various federal agencies, universities, and research organizations classify the region to develop a working definition for the category (Fall 2014 - Spring 2015)
- Planned Middle Eastern and North African expert forum (Spring 2015)

Public Comments on the 2015 NCT Federal Register Notice (FRN)

- Notice for public comment published in the *Federal Register* on December 2, 2014
- Census Bureau alerted members of National Advisory Committee and hundreds of other stakeholders, advisors, and community leaders to the release of the FRN
- Shared message during public briefings
- Helped elicit public comments on 2015 NCT research plans

Federal Register Notice on 2015 NCT

- Presented overall objectives for the 2015 NCT
- Described major research dimensions for 2020 Census content (race and ethnicity, relationship, and within-household coverage)
- Requested public feedback on research plans
- All comments were reviewed and addressed in submission of 2015 NCT testing plans for U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- Responses to comments will be made public



Comments on Testing a Middle Eastern or North African Category

Received 4,509 submissions related to testing a “Middle Eastern or North African” category

Submissions included 12,293 comments, covering 11 topics

- 4,473 comments expressed strong support for testing the category; 15 comments did not support testing the category
- 3,727 comments expressed strong disagreement with the classification of Middle Eastern or North African as “White”
- 3,301 comments advised that this population is racially diverse
- 737 comments on which countries or ethnic groups to include or exclude in this category

Summary

- Responses to public comments are under review
- U.S. Office of Management and Budget will review as part of clearance process for 2015 NCT
- Responses will be made public later this year
- Continuing to meet with stakeholders and advisors
- Building strong foundation for the 2020 Census

Overview of the 2015 NCT

- Test will take place in late Summer of 2015
- Use a large nationally representative sample, including Puerto Rico
- Evaluate and compare different census content, including race and Hispanic origin, relationship, and within-household coverage
- Refine estimates of national self response and Internet response rates and continue testing different contact strategies for optimizing self response
- Conduct content reinterview that includes a subsample of respondents, to measure accuracy of race/origin and coverage

Goals for Mid-Decade Race and Hispanic Origin Research

Four Key Dimensions to Explore

- Separate questions vs. combined question
- “Middle Eastern or North African” category
- Instruction wording and terminology
- Web-based designs to improve question understanding and optimize reporting of detailed racial and ethnic groups

Dimension 1: Separate Race and Hispanic Origin vs. Combined Race and Hispanic Origin

Separate Hispanic Origin Question

Separate Race Question

→ 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 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, Spanish, Ecuadorian, etc.

9. What is Person 1's race?
Mark 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 blood; for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfoot Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow (print Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian – Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc. <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc. <input type="text"/>	

Some other race – Print race or origin

8. What is Person 1's race or origin?
Mark one or more boxes AND print origins.

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

Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.

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

Asian – Print for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.

American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal blood; for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfoot Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow (print Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

Some other race or origin – Print race or origin

Combined Race and Hispanic Origin Question

Dimension 2: New Category

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

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

Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.

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

Asian – Print, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.

American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfoot Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

Some other race or origin – Print race or origin.

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

White – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.

Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.

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

Asian – Print, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.

American Indian or Alaska Native – Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfoot Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

Middle Eastern or North African – Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

Some other race or origin – Print race or origin.

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Dimension 3: Instructions and Terms

Instruction Wording:

- Mark [X] one or more boxes.
 - Mark all boxes that apply...
- Note, you may report more than one group.*

Alternatives for Terminology:

- “Race,” “Ethnicity,” “Origin”
- Which categories describe you?

Dimension 4: Web-Based Designs

Initial Screen for Race and Ethnicity

Which categories describe Person 1?
Select all boxes that apply. Note, you may select more than one group. [\(Help\)](#)

- White**
For example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin**
For example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.
- Black or African Am.**
For example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.
- Asian**
For example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.
- American Indian or Alaska Native**
For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Gwich'chin Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.
- Middle Eastern or North African**
For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**
For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.
- Some other race or origin**

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Dimension 4: Web-Based Designs

Subsequent Screens for Detailed Responses

Screen for Middle Eastern or North African

Select all boxes that apply and/or enter detailed ethnicities in the space below. [\(Help\)](#)

MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN

- Lebanese
- Iranian
- Egyptian
- Syrian
- Moroccan
- Algerian

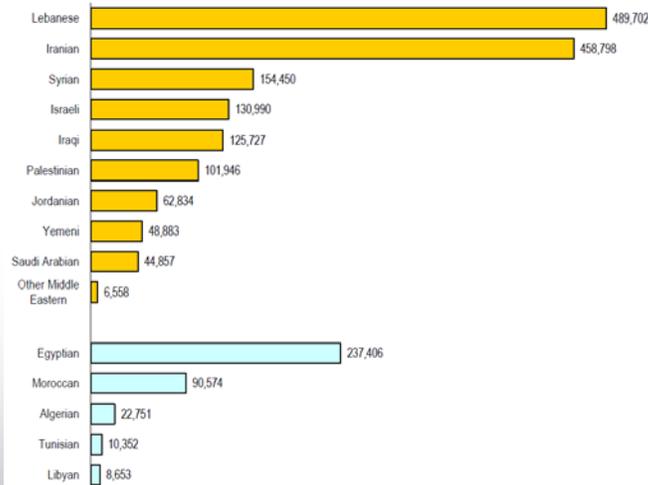
Enter other ethnicities below (for example, Israeli, Iraqi, Tunisian, etc.)

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Design Rationale for Detailed Groups

- Include six examples to reflect diversity of category's OMB definition
- The Census Bureau identified the largest groups in the United States which represent the different geographic regions referenced in each of the OMB race and ethnic group definitions
- Balance and equity -- present groups in population size order (largest to smallest)

People Reporting Selected Middle Eastern and North African Ancestries: 2013



Note: Other Middle Eastern includes Kuwaiti, Qatari, Bahraini, Emirati, and Omani

Detailed Ethnic Examples

- Middle Eastern or North African** – *Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.* ↴

Middle Eastern Examples

- 1) Lebanese (489,702)
- 2) Iranian (458,789)
- 3) Syrian (154,450)

North African Examples

- 1) Egyptian (237,606)
- 2) Moroccan (90,574)
- 3) Algerian (22,751)

EXPERT FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION

- Do you have a preference for the combined or separate question(s) on race and Hispanic origin?
- Do you think that Middle Eastern and North African responses should be classified as White?
- What do you think about the examples shown in the Middle Eastern or North African category on the questionnaire and the rationale of the selection of the examples?