Second Expert Group Meeting on the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Conducting Population and Housing Censuses and Data Quality Concerns

2-5 November 2021

The four-day virtual meeting will be held from 2 to 5 November 2021, from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM New York time each day.

Work Programme

Time	Topic
	Tuesday, 2 November 2021
07:45-08:00	*Connection to the meeting link*
08:00-08:15	**Session 1 – Opening and administrative matters** • Opening remarks by United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) • Introduction of participants • Logistical matters, including instructions on asking for the floor, mute mode, video use, etc. • Introduction of the programme of work
	Day 1 - The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on conducting population and housing censuses
08:15-08:35	**Session 2 – Monitoring the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the implementation of population and housing censuses** UNSD will present its ongoing activities on the impacts of the pandemic on the implementation of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and introduce the UNSD dashboard which provides an overview of the pandemic's consequences on census-taking. • Presentation by UNSD • Discussion
08:35-09:15	**Session 3 – Potential adjustments in census questionnaires** Given the fact that many 2020 round censuses have been conducted or will be conducted under the pressure of the Covid-19 pandemic, population and housing censuses could provide an opportunity to produce data on changes in the level and pattern of demographic, social and economic characteristics of population due to the pandemic. Certain census subject matters are particularly susceptible to the impact of Covid-19. These include topics related to internal and international migration (due to travel restrictions, border closing, banning of international flights, etc.), labor force participation (in terms of number employed and unemployed, hours worked, place of work), school enrolment and attendance (impact of online education), and housing and living arrangements (usual place of residence; temporary living arrangements due to Covid-19). For example, asking

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	questions on the exact date of births, deaths and migration rather than asking the occurrence of these events during a reference period would be preferable to show the impacts of the pandemic on statistical measurements. Furthermore, because of changes in respondents` circumstances due to the pandemic, it might be necessary to provide additional guidance to support respondents in answering questions in the context of the pandemic. This session will discuss whether there is a need to make adjustments in the census questionnaires for some topics in order to obtain data that could allow better analysis of the effects of Covid-19 on census measurements. In addition, this session also aims to discuss the possibility of asking specific questions related to the pandemic (such as prevalence of Covid-19 vaccination) and explore other potential new topics that could be added to the census questionnaire to meet with data users` requirements, taking into consideration limitations of the census in terms of asking questions on sensitive topics and for collecting detailed and reliable information on some topics. Presentations: Ghana, Nepal, United Kingdom and UNSD
15 min	*Coffee break*
9:30-11:00	**Session 3 –Potential adjustments in census questionnaires** **(continued)**
	Wednesday, 3 November 2021
	Day 2 – Modifications in the design of population and housing censuses
08:00-09:30	**Session 4 – Major changes in census procedures to reduce the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic** This session aims to discuss the main difficulties in conducting censuses during the pandemic and how countries have modified the original activities to successfully implement census operation, focusing on census methodologies which require field work. This session will discuss technologies and procedures used for reducing face-to-face interviews and for improving population coverage, including: use of self-interview methods with online or paper questionnaire, and telephone interviews; use of administrative records to fill data gaps and for quality control; extension of the duration of the enumeration period; and, changes to census questionnaires and collecting information from proxy respondents for households that were not reached during the field enumeration. This session will have extensive discussions on the benefits and challenges of redesigning census activities. Presentations: Australia, China, Chile, Croatia, India, Italy, Portugal, South Africa and Zambia
15 min	*Coffee break*
9:45-11:00	**Session 4 –Major changes in census procedures to reduce the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic (continued)**

Time	Topic
	4 November 2021
	Day 3 – Quality assessment and data analysis
08:00-09:30	**Session 5 –Assessment of the process quality and output quality for censuses conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic** Data quality is a major concern regarding censuses conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, implementation of social distancing rules could discourage people from participating in the census, particularly if face-to-face interview is the only option available to them. Recent modifications in census procedures, such as introducing new data collection modes to reduce direct contact with respondents or extending the duration of the enumeration period may increase the risk of under-coverage of certain population groups. This session will discuss quality issues involving censuses conducted during the pandemic, focusing on the process quality and output quality. The session will address methods or approaches that have been used or planned to be used for assessing the quality of census processes (mainly data collection and processing stages) and the quality of outputs in terms of coverage and content errors. The session will also aim to discuss paradata-based indicators and outcome-based indicators that could be used for assessing process and output quality. Such indicators may include: response rate for each mode of data collection and percentage of unresolved cases (as an example of outcome indicators); the number of attempts for enumerating non-response cases; and, duration of completing online questionnaire or interview (as an example of paradata indicators). Furthermore, the session will discuss methods used or planned to be used for measuring under/over-coverage, and for imputing non-responses. Presentations: Australia, Canada, China, Hong Kong SAR, Slovakia, United Kingdom and United States
15 min	*Coffee break*
09:45-11:00	**Session 6 – Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on data analysis and comparability overtime** This session will discuss the potential challenges when comparing the results of 2020 round of censuses with previous censuses due to the impacts of the pandemic. The pandemic could affect some census measures such as international and internal migration, labor force and schooling activities. Such impacts may create a significant deviation from previous censuses and could reduce comparability of census results over time. Analysis of census results become critically important for informing users about the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on census results. The session will discuss what census topics will particularly be affected and require special attention for data analysis. The session will also discuss the importance of establishing an effective communication programme to inform data users about the impact of the pandemic on census data. Presentations: Canada, Latvia and Tajikistan
	5 November 2021
	Day 4 - Lessons Learned and Recommendations

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08:00-09:30	**Session 7 – Conclusions and recommendations** This session will discuss and summarize the major conclusions and recommendations of the meeting on the basis of the presentations made and discussions held over the four-days. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting will be drafted by UNSD and shared with all national statistical organizations responsible for conducting 2020 round censuses.
15 min	*Coffee break*
09:45-10:00	**Session 8 – The way forward and closing**