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**Collection and dissemination of national census data through the  
United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*\***

**By the**

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DESA**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. This paper focuses on the collection and dissemination of national population and housing census data through the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*. Understanding country practices in responding to the *Demographic Yearbook* is important for two main reasons. First, it provides an indication of the availability and completeness of census data at a national level. The wealth of data collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* system sheds light on country practices concerning both the content of census questionnaires as well as important characteristics of the census itself such as coverage, whether the enumeration is *de jure* or *de facto* etc. Second, it offers an opportunity to evaluate the impact of resolution 1995/7 of the Social and Economic Council. This resolution, which urged Member States to carry out population and housing censuses during the period 1995-2004 and requested the Secretary-General to proceed with the development of the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme, also called upon Member States to continue to provide census results to the United Nations and other appropriate intergovernmental organizations to assist in studies on population, environment and socio-economic development issues and programmes. This paper, therefore, gives an overview of the extent to which Member States have continued to provide census results to the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*.

2. The paper is divided into three parts. The first, takes stock of the countries and areas that have conducted population censuses during the 1990 and 2000 census decades. This information is used to contextualize the analysis of country responses to the three *Demographic Yearbook* census questionnaires.<sup>1</sup> The second part focuses on the number of countries and areas that have provided information to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on census and specifically the questionnaires on Population Census-General Characteristics, Population Census-Economic Characteristics and Population Census-Household Characteristics. The proportion of population living in the countries and areas that provided such information is also examined. Only countries and areas that conducted a census are considered in the analysis. The third part of the paper focuses on the dissemination of census data through the *Demographic Yearbook* and provides the schedule of release for forthcoming special topics of the *Demographic Yearbook* based on census data.

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<sup>1</sup> The Demographic and Social Statistics Branch of the United Nations Statistics Division sends six questionnaires to national statistical offices on a regular basis. These are:

1. Population Census-General Characteristics
2. Population Census-Economic Characteristics
3. Population Census-Household Characteristics
4. Vital Statistics
5. Population Estimates
6. International Migration and Travel Statistics

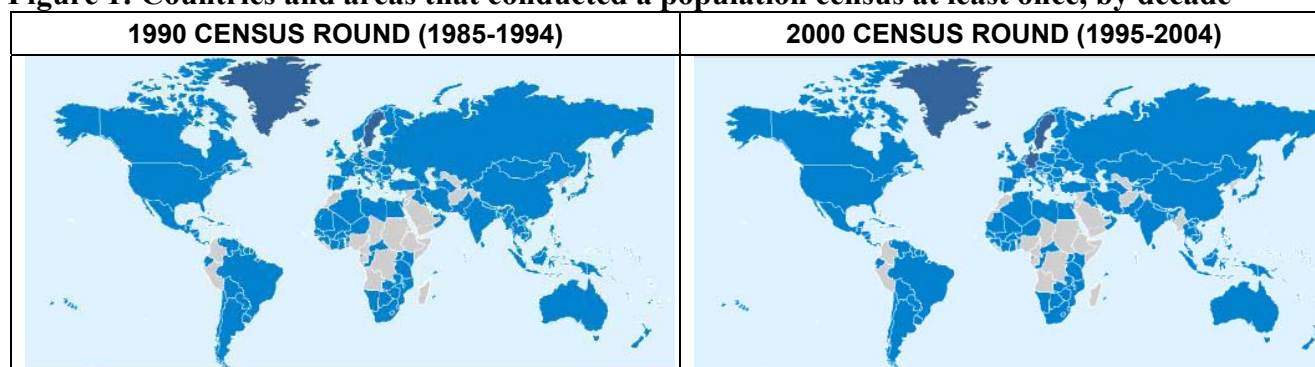
Of these six questionnaires, the first three—Population Census; Population Census-Economic Characteristics; and Population Census-Household Characteristics—collect and compile national data from censuses. These three questionnaires are sent on a periodical basis, after a country has completed a population and housing census. The remaining questionnaires are not further examined here since this paper focuses on official national census data.

## I. CENSUSES CONDUCTED IN THE 1990 AND 2000 CENSUS ROUND

3. As figure 1 indicates, population censuses were conducted in most countries and areas in both the 1990 and 2000 round. In absolute terms the number of countries and areas that conducted a census slightly increased. Although the 2000 census round has not yet finished, 196 countries and areas have already conducted a census compared to the 187 in the previous decade. Furthermore, according to the information collected by the United Nations Statistics Division, a number of countries and areas including Jordan, Morocco, Myanmar, the Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen are expected to conduct a census before the end of 2004. It is probable therefore, that by the end of this census round the number of countries and areas that will have conducted population and housing censuses will be even greater.




4. It is interesting to observe that of countries and areas that carried out a census in the 2000 round, a number adopted a non-traditional approach in their census taking activities. Based on the metadata collected by the United Nations Statistics Division, for example, countries such as, Norway and the Netherlands, conducted a population register-based census. The United Nations Statistics Division is currently trying to capture more detailed information on other census approaches.

**Figure 1: Countries and areas that conducted a population census at least once, by decade**



Source: The United Nations Statistics Division web site as of July 2004  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/censusdates.htm>

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

 Conducted a traditional census  
 Registers-based population data  
 Did not conduct a census

5. Despite this positive outlook, some challenges still remain. To date ten countries and areas have not conducted a census in either round and of these, six are in Africa (see table 1 below). Furthermore the number of countries conducting a census declined between the two rounds in a number of regions. In Africa, for example, only 37 countries and areas have so far conducted a census compared to the 45 that conducted one in the 1990 round. Likewise, in South America there has also been a slight decline in the number of countries conducting a census between the two decades. While in the 1990 round 13 countries and areas conducted a census, in the 2000 round only 12 have so far done so.

**Table 1: Number of countries and areas<sup>2</sup> that conducted a population census during the 1990 and 2000 census decade, by region**

	1990 ROUND			2000 ROUND			1990 AND 2000 ROUND	
	Number of countries and areas	Conducted a population census	Did not conduct a population census	Number of countries and areas	Conducted a population census	Did not conduct a population census	Conducted a population census in both rounds	Did not conduct a population census in either round
<b>Africa</b>	55	45	10	56	37	19	33	6
<b>America, North</b>	37	33	4	37	36	1	32	0
<b>America, South</b>	14	13	1	14	12	2	11	0
<b>Asia</b>	44	36	8	50	40	10	28	4
<b>Europe</b>	39	37	2	49	46	3	34	0
<b>Oceania</b>	23	23	0	25	25	0	23	0
<b>Total</b>	212	187	25	231	196	35	161	10

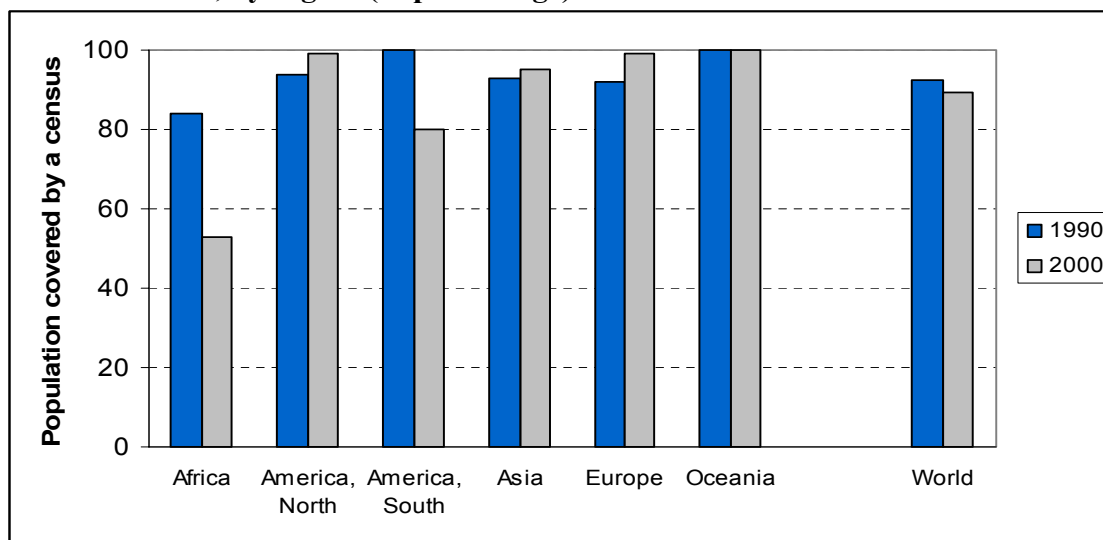
Source: United Nations Statistics Division web site as of July 2004:  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/censusdates.htm>

6. How do these figures translate in terms of population covered by a census? In the 1990 census decade most of the population of the world was living in a country or area that conducted a census (see figure 2 below).<sup>3</sup> South America and Oceania registered the highest proportion with almost 100 per cent of the population covered in censuses. Africa, Asia and Europe had the lowest proportion, with respectively 84, 93 and 92 per cent of their populations covered. In the 2000 round this picture changed considerably. According to the information collected to date by the United Nations Statistics Division, the proportion of population living in a country or area that conducted a census dropped from 92 to 89 per cent between the 1990 and 2000 round. As figure 2 indicates, Africa is currently the region with the lowest proportion of population covered, with only 53 per cent of its population living in a country that has conducted a census. The proportion of population covered by censuses has also declined in South America due to the fact that Peru and Colombia did not conduct a census in the 2000 round.

<sup>2</sup> Countries and areas were included in each census decade based on the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use.

<sup>3</sup> Table F1-Total Population (Both Sexes Combined) by Major Area, Region and Country, Annually for 1950-2050 (in thousands) of the World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision was used to calculate the proportion of persons living in countries and areas that conducted a census in the 1990 and 2000 round. The years 1990 and 2000 were chosen as a mid-point years for estimating the population during the two census decades.

**Figure 2: Population living in a country or area that conducted a population census in the 1990 and 2000 census round, by region (in percentage)**



Source: United Nations Statistics Division web site as of July 2004:  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/censusdates.htm>

Note: the World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision was used to calculate the proportion of population living in a country or area that conducted a census

## II. RESPONSE TO THE *DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK* CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRES FROM COUNTRIES AND AREAS THAT CONDUCTED A CENSUS

7. Four main points can be made in relation to response<sup>4</sup> for the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses, specifically:

- a. Country response has declined between the 1990 and 2000 census rounds among the countries and areas that have conducted a census;
- b. There is considerable variation in country response between the three *Demographic Yearbook* census questionnaires;
- c. Country response varies from topic to topic within each questionnaire;
- d. The proportion of population covered in the tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* census questionnaires is, in general, quite low.

These points are further elaborated below.

### a. Decline in responses between the 1990 and 2000 census round

8. Despite the increase in the number of countries and areas that conducted a census in the 2000 round, the number of countries and areas that have provided data to the *Demographic Yearbook*

<sup>4</sup> Responses to the *Demographic Yearbook* in this paper include: (a) data provided by National Statistical Offices through the Demographic Yearbook questionnaires; (b) data sent by National Statistical Offices in the form of a yearbook or other printed material; (c) data collected by the staff of the United Nations Statistics Division from official web sites and publications of National Statistical Offices.

questionnaires on census has declined.<sup>5</sup> As table 2 indicates, the number of countries and areas that have so far provided data for all three of the census questionnaires has fallen from 68 to 55 out of the 187 and 196 countries and areas that conducted a census respectively in the 1990 and 2000 round. At the same time the number of countries and areas that have provided no data for any of the three questionnaires increased from 38 to 71. This decline was particularly pronounced in Africa, North America and Europe. In Africa the number of countries and areas that have not yet provided any information to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses has risen from 4 to 14; in North America from 9 to 14; and in Europe from 7 to 18.

**Table 2: Number of countries and areas that reported data to the three *Demographic Yearbook* Questionnaires on censuses, by census decade and region**

	1990 ROUND			2000 ROUND			Did not respond to any of the three questionnaires on censuses	
	Conducted a census	Reported data to at least one questionnaire on censuses	Reported data to all three questionnaires on censuses	Conducted a census	Reported data to at least one questionnaire on censuses	Reported data to all three questionnaires on censuses	1990	2000
							ROUND	ROUND
<b>Africa</b>	45	41	17	37	23	9	4	14
<b>America, North</b>	33	24	15	36	22	9	9	14
<b>America, South</b>	13	12	6	12	8	3	1	4
<b>Asia</b>	36	30	12	40	30	14	6	10
<b>Europe</b>	37	30	16	46	28	19	7	18
<b>Oceania</b>	23	12	2	25	14	1	11	11
<b>Total</b>	187	149	68	196	125	55	38	71

Source: United Nations Statistics Division (2003a) and unpublished documents

9. Responses for each of the three census questionnaires declined as well (see table 3). Response to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics fell from 146 to 124 between the two census rounds. Likewise, the number of countries and areas that provided data for the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Economic Characteristics and Household Characteristics declined from respectively 119 and 71 in the 1990 census round to 77 and 61 in the 2000 round.

<sup>5</sup> Only countries that conducted a census were considered in determining the number of countries that replied or did not reply to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires.

**Table 3: Number of countries and areas that reported data to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses, by questionnaire, census decade and region<sup>6</sup>**

	1990 ROUND				2000 ROUND			
	Conducted a census	Responded at least once to the <i>Demographic Yearbook</i> questionnaire			Conducted a census	Responded at least once to the <i>Demographic Yearbook</i> questionnaire		
		PC	EC	HC		PC	EC	HC
<b>Africa</b>	45	41	32	17	37	23	11	11
<b>America, North</b>	33	24	19	15	36	22	10	9
<b>America, South</b>	13	13	12	6	12	8	5	3
<b>Asia</b>	36	30	23	11	40	30	22	15
<b>Europe</b>	37	28	22	20	46	28	22	21
<b>Oceania</b>	23	10	11	2	25	13	7	2
<b>Total</b>	187	146	119	71	196	124	77	61

Source: United Nations Statistics Division (2003a) and unpublished documents

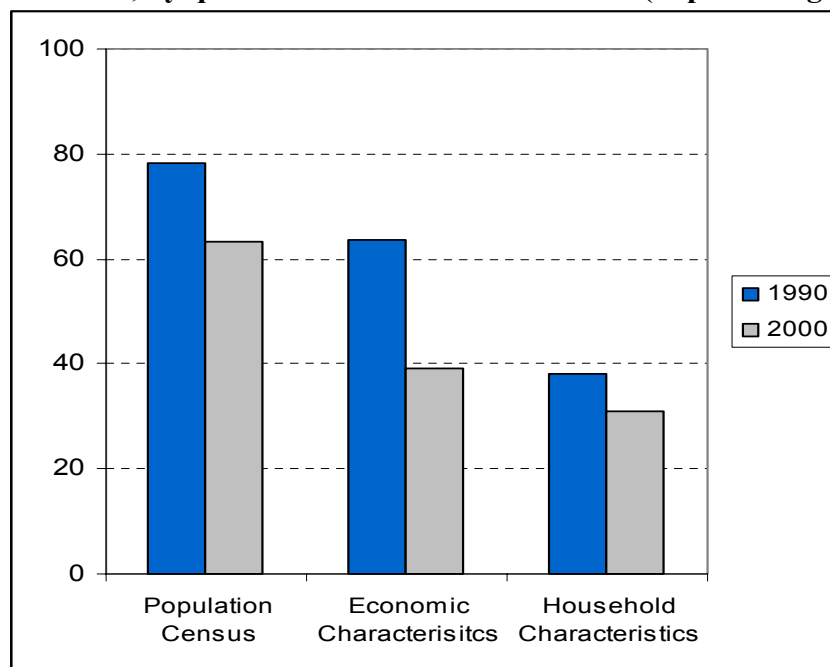
10. Why did this decline take place? It is possible, as has been suggested in a previous paper prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division (United Nations, 2003a), that this gap is partially attributable to a timing effect. More specifically, countries and areas that conducted censuses in the 2000 round, may not yet have responded to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires. The fact that more than seventy per cent of the censuses undertaken in the 2000 round have been conducted in the second half of the decade (141 out of the 196 countries and areas that conducted a census) seems to provide support to this interpretation. It is possible, therefore, that many of these countries will report data for the 2000 census round in the coming years.

#### **b. Differences between questionnaires in terms of response**

11. As figure 3 indicates, the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics has the highest response rate. In the 1990 round, 78 per cent of the 187 countries and areas that conducted a census provided at least some data through the questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics. In the 2000 round, only 63 per cent of countries and areas that conducted a census have thus far provided these data. It is important to note, however, that this percentage is still considerably higher than that for the other questionnaires. Response to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Economic Characteristics, for example, is currently around 39 per cent (i.e., 77 out of the 196 countries and areas that conducted a census). Response to the questionnaire on Household Characteristics is even lower with only one-third of all countries and areas (i.e., 61 out of 196) providing data. It is interesting to note that while the level of response to this questionnaire is the lowest of the three, it has registered the least pronounced decline in responses between the two rounds.

<sup>6</sup> PC indicates the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire Population Census-General Characteristics, EC the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire Population Census-Economic Characteristics and HC the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire Population Census-Household Characteristics

**Figure 3: Number of countries and areas that reported data to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses, by questionnaire and census decade (in percentage)**



Source: United Nations Statistics Division (2003a) and unpublished documents

Note: Percentages were calculated out of the total number of countries and areas that conducted a census in each census decade

12. Why are these levels of response so different between the three questionnaires? One of several possible answers is that national tabulation and dissemination practices have an impact. Specifically, countries may allocate high priority to the release of census data on basic population characteristics, while detailed information on other census topics such as household or economic characteristics may be released at a later date, if ever. The *Demographic Yearbook* system may, therefore, receive basic data through the questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics, but not from the other more specialized questionnaires.

13. Another possible explanation is that National Statistical Offices are not responding to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Economic and Household Characteristics on account of their complexity. To further explore this possibility, the United Nations Statistics Division organized an Expert Group Meeting in November 2003 aimed at reviewing the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* System. At this meeting, experts recommended a series of actions to improve the questionnaires and these recommendations are currently being acted upon (United Nations, 2003d).

**c. Variation in country response within each questionnaire: the example of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics**

14. It is interesting to note that there is considerable variation in the level of response to the individual tables of the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses. Responses to the



questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics<sup>7</sup> in the 2000 census round are considered here as an illustration. A more detailed overview of country responses to selected tables of this questionnaire as well as to other tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires Population Census-Economic Characteristics and Population Census-Household Characteristics will be given in the forthcoming *World's Women: Progress in Statistics*.

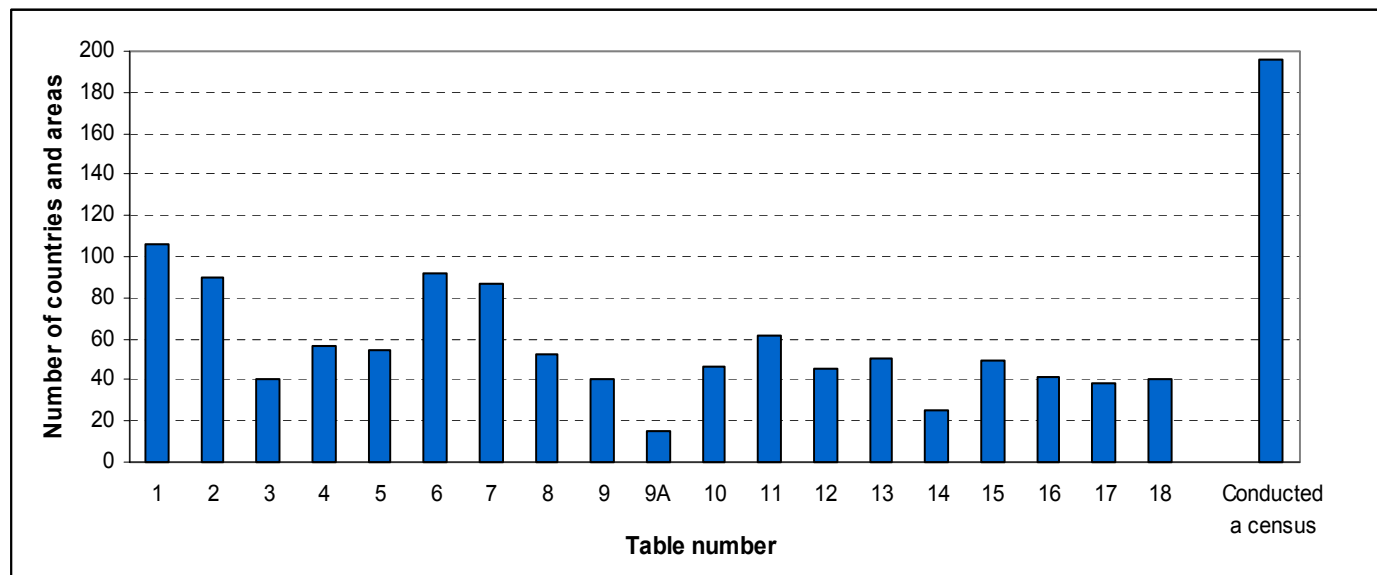
15. To date, response to the 19 tables of the questionnaire on Population Census ranges from 15 to 106 countries and areas out of the 196 that conducted a census in the 2000 round (see figure 4 below). Tables 1, 2 and 6, which are used to collect data respectively on population by urban/rural residence, population by major civil division and population by various age groups, have the highest level of response (between 106 and 90 countries and areas have provided data). Table 7, which collects data on population by marital status, also has a high level of response with more than 40 per cent of all countries that conducted a census reporting at least some data (i.e., 87 countries and areas out of 196). Tables on ethnicity, religion and language (Tables 16, 17 and 18) all have response rates around 20 per cent. The three tables used to collect information on educational characteristics (Tables 10, 11 and 12) have a slightly higher response, which ranges from 45 countries and areas for school attendance to 62 countries and areas for educational attainment. The tables used to estimate migration stocks (Tables 8, 9 and 15) have a slightly higher response rate with the number of countries and areas providing data for these tables ranging from 53 to 40 out of the 196 that conducted a census. The exception to this is Table 9A-Foreign-born population in the country for less than five years, to which only 15 countries and areas have replied to date. Table 14 - Female population 15 years of age and over by age and number of children living also has a low level of response with only 25 countries and areas that supplied data through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire.

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<sup>7</sup> The Population Census-General Characteristics questionnaire contains 19 tables on a wide array of topics, including migrant stocks, children ever born and various social characteristics of the population such as language, ethnicity and religion. The complete list of tables is as follows:

- Table 1. Total area and population by urban/rural residence
- Table 2. Population of major civil divisions by urban/rural residence
- Table 3. Population in localities by size-class of locality and sex
- Table 4. Population of national capital city and cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants
- Table 5. Households, population in households and number of family nuclei by size of household and number of persons not living in households
- Table 6. Population by single years of age and by five-year age groups and sex
- Table 7. Population by marital status, age, sex and urban/rural residence
- Table 8. Native and foreign-born population by age, sex and urban/rural residence
- Table 9. Foreign-born population by continent/country of birth, age and sex
- Table 9A. Foreign-born population in the country for less than five years by continent/country of birth, age and sex
- Table 10. Population 10 years of age and over by literacy, age and sex
- Table 11. Population 15 years of age and over by educational attainment, age and sex
- Table 12. Population 5 to 24 years of age by school attendance, single years of age and sex
- Table 13. Female population 15 years of age and over by age and number of children born-live
- Table 14. Female population 15 years of age and over by age and number of children living
- Table 15. Population by continent/country of citizenship and sex
- Table 16. Population by national and /or ethnic group and sex
- Table 17. Population by religion and sex
- Table 18. Population by language and sex

**Figure 4: Number of countries and areas that have so far provided data to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Censuses-General Characteristics during the 2000 census round, by table**



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, unpublished document

16. To further investigate these differences, the United Nations Statistics Divisions has prepared a series of technical reports that review the *Demographic Yearbook* collection system and identify areas where it can be strengthened. These technical reports are available on the United Nations Statistics Division web site at the following address: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dybtr.htm>.

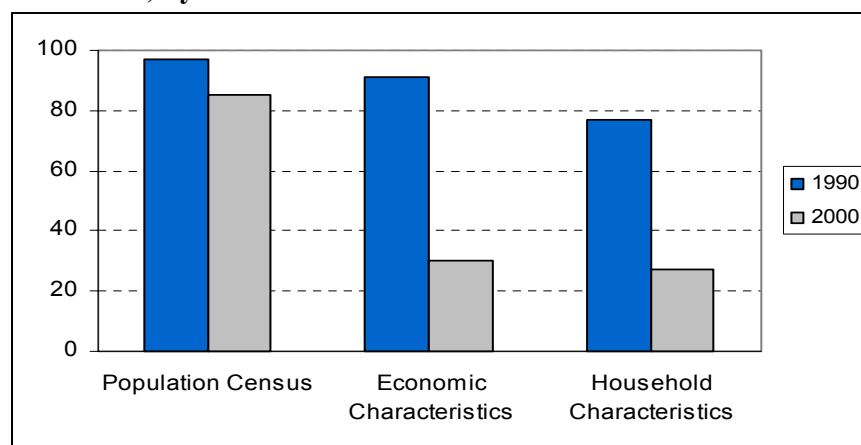
17. The United Nations Statistics Divisions has also recently started developing a metadata database that will contain a detailed list of the topics covered in the census questionnaires of each country and area. This project, which is currently still at a preliminary stage, will contribute to a better understanding of the differences in responses to the various tables of the *Demographic Yearbook*. It will enable the United Nations Statistics Division, for example, to ascertain how many countries include questions on literacy in their census questionnaires and compare this to the number of countries and areas that provided data to Table 10 of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics. This in turn will allow for a more targeted and efficient effort to reduce non-response.

**d. Low population coverage for the *Demographic Yearbook* census tables among the countries and areas that conducted a census**

18. As figure 5 indicates, the proportion of population covered in the *Demographic Yearbook* census tables is generally quite low. While, 85 per cent of the total population residing in a country or area that conducted a census in the 2000 round have so far been covered in the data collected through the Population Census-General Characteristics questionnaire, the questionnaires on Economic Characteristics and Household Characteristics received responses for respectively 30 and 27 per cent of population living in a country or area that conducted a census.

19. It is interesting to observe that for all three of these questionnaires there has been a sharp decline in proportion of population living in a country or area that reported any data. In the previous round, the proportion of population covered was respectively 97 per cent for the Population Census-General Characteristics questionnaire, 91 per cent for the Economic Characteristics questionnaire and 76 per cent for the Household Characteristics questionnaire (see figure 5 below). This decline, besides reflecting the drop in number of countries and areas that have so far provided data to the *Demographic Yearbook* system, is also due to the fact that a number of countries with large population sizes have not yet provided data for the 2000 census round. Countries such as Bangladesh, Germany and the Russian Federation, for example, have not yet responded to the questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics. Likewise, data for the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Economic Characteristics and Household Characteristics have not yet been entered in the *Demographic Yearbook* system for countries such as China and India. In the 1990 census round, most of these countries provided data to two if not all three of the census questionnaires.

**Figure 5: Population living in a country or area that conducted a population census in the 2000 census round by whether they reported any data to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses, by decade**



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision and the *Demographic Yearbook* 1997 - Historical Supplement

### III. DISSEMINATION OF CENSUS DATA THROUGH THE *DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK*

20. The *Demographic Yearbook* is an important vehicle for the dissemination of official national censuses data. During the past 54-years, the *Demographic Yearbook* has presented a collection of official national population, social and vital statistics from more than 200 countries and areas. Alongside this basic information, the *Demographic Yearbook* has also focused on special topics dedicated to a variety of topics including, among others, natality, international migration and population censuses. The special topics have been published on a periodical basis, with each special topic changing from year to year. Since 1997, the special topic tables have been published in a supplementary volume issued as a CD-ROM, while the regular tables have continued to be disseminated in paper format.

21. This section focuses on the dissemination of data collected through the three *Demographic Yearbook* census questionnaires. It examines both the tables that are disseminated on an annual basis

through regular editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* as well as the extent to which data collected through the three census questionnaires have been disseminated in special topic tables of the *Demographic Yearbook*. The section also provides the schedule for the forthcoming special topics issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* based on census data.

**A. Main findings related to the dissemination of data from the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses**

22. Two main observations can be made in relation to the dissemination of data collected through the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses, specifically:

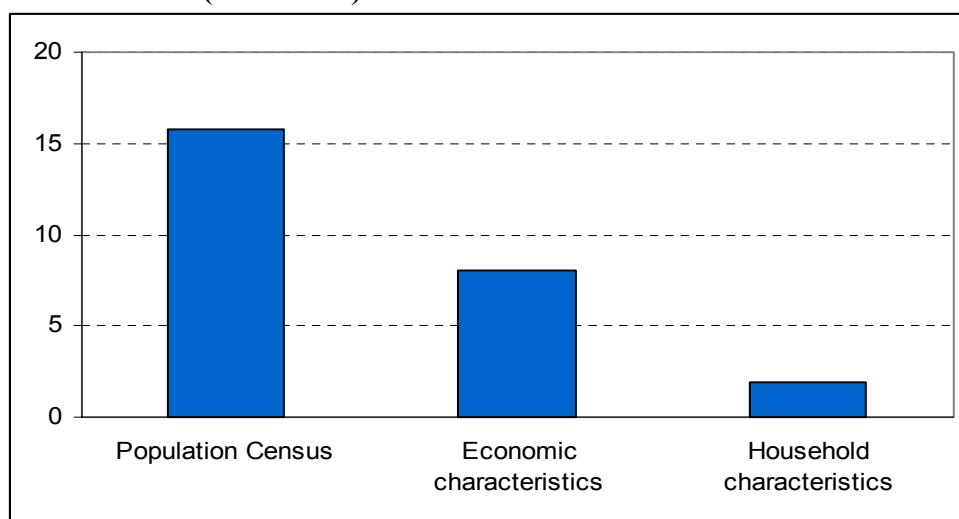
- a. There is considerable variation in the frequency of dissemination of the data collected through the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, reflecting in part the number of special topic issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to a given topic or area;
- b. The frequency of dissemination varies from table to table within each questionnaire.

These points are further elaborated below.

**a. Differences in frequency of dissemination between questionnaires**

23. As illustrated by figure 6 below, there are considerable differences in the average frequency of dissemination for the data collected through the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses. Since 1948, the 19 tables of the questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics have been disseminated most frequently and have been published on average 16 times. The tables of the Household Characteristics questionnaire, on the other hand, have been disseminated on average only twice, whereas the majority of the tables of the questionnaire on Economic Characteristics have been disseminated between 8 and 9 times.

**Figure 6: Average frequency of dissemination of the tables of the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses (1948-2002)**



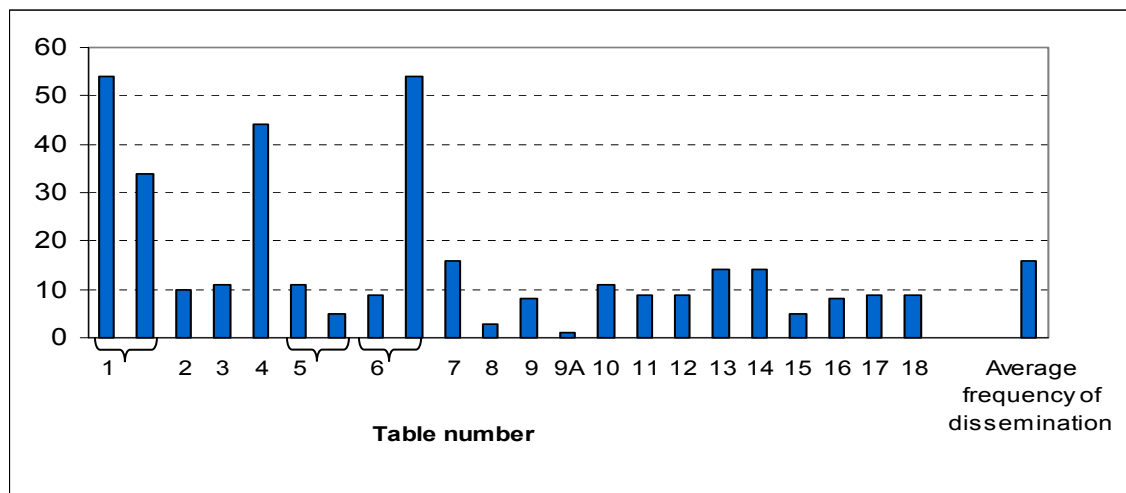
Source: *Demographic Yearbook* 2000

24. It is interesting to observe that the frequency of dissemination for many tables corresponds to the number of *Demographic Yearbooks* dedicated to a certain topic or area. An example of this is provided by the data collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics, which have been disseminated predominantly through special issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the topic of households and families, published in 1987 and 1995, respectively (see Annex 2).

**b. Frequency of dissemination varies from topic to topic within each questionnaire**

25. A second finding is that there is considerable variation in the frequency of dissemination between topics. In the case of the questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics this can be attributed in part to the fact that data from several of its tables are disseminated on an annual basis. Census data on population by sex, for example, have been disseminated every year since 1948. Likewise census data on urban and rural population by sex have been disseminated 40 times since 1948 and on an annual basis since 1970. Census data on population of capital cities and other cities over 100,000 inhabitants have been disseminated through the *Demographic Yearbook* since 1952. Since 1962 they have been published on an annual basis. It is interesting to observe that the *Demographic Yearbook* tables disseminated on an annual basis often combine data collected from the *Demographic Yearbook* Population Census and Population Estimates questionnaires. For example, Table 3 - Population by sex, rates of population increase/decrease and density displays both census data, taken from Table 1 of the Population Census questionnaire, as well as estimate data.<sup>8</sup> Similar differences also characterize the frequency of dissemination of the other two census questionnaires, although the differences are less pronounced.

**Figure 7: Frequency of dissemination of the data collected through the 18 tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics (1948-2002)<sup>9</sup>**



Source: *Demographic Yearbook* 2000

<sup>8</sup> The later are used to compute the rate of population increase.

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 6 for the complete list of Tables contained in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census-General Characteristics

## **B. Schedule of release for the forthcoming special topics issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* based on census data.**

26. For over five decades, publications such as the *Demographic Yearbook* have facilitated the exchange of demographic and social statistics at an international level, while highlighting differences in definitions, concepts and methods. However, as seen in the sections above, as well as in previous papers prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division (United Nations, 2003b), there is still room for improvement. A first step in this direction has been the creation of a new web site on Demographic and Social Statistics within the United Nations Statistics Division web site. This new web site provides electronic files of the most recent data published through both regular and special topic issues of the *Demographic Yearbook*, as well as a system for regularly updating the tables.

27. Currently the United Nations Statistics Division is planning to use this web site as a medium for releasing the next round of census data. The first issue, due by the end of 2004 will focus on basic demographic characteristics of the population, including population by marital status; population of major civil divisions by sex and urban/rural residence; and female population by age and number of children born alive. The second issue, which will be released in mid 2005, will contain data on social characteristics of the population including ethnicity, religion, literacy and educational attainment. Finally the third issue, due by the end of 2005, will provide data on migrant stocks. A complete list of the tables that will be included in each of these issues is available on the web site of the United Nations Statistics Division.<sup>10</sup> CD-ROMS and printed copies will also be produced for countries with limited access to the Internet.

## **IV. CONCLUSIONS**

28. This paper presents an overview of country responses to the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses. Although the census decade has not yet finished, it appears the actions need to be taken to ensure that, in accordance with resolution 1995/7 of the Social and Economic Council, Member States continue to provide census results to the United Nations and other appropriate intergovernmental agencies.

29. As mentioned throughout the paper several initiatives have been, or are currently being, undertaken by the United Nations Statistics Division to better understand patterns in country responses and to devise strategies to improve them. Among these:

- The Expert Group Meeting aimed at reviewing the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* System held in November 2003;
- Nine technical reports which focus on national reporting practices in relation to age and sex; mortality; fertility; international migration; economic characteristics; household characteristics, living arrangements and homeless households; marriage and divorce; educational characteristics; and nationality and/or ethnic group, language and religion;<sup>11</sup>
- A database on census metadata and census topics, which is currently under development;

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<sup>10</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dybschedule.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dybtr.htm>

- The forthcoming *World's Women: Progress in Statistics*, which will provide a more in depth analysis of country responses to, among others, selected tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses.

30. In relation to the dissemination of official national census data, the United Nations Statistics Division has developed a new web site, which highlights data collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* system, as well as essential census metadata such as census dates and other basic features. The *Demographic Yearbook* special topic tables on censuses will also be disseminated via this web site as well as through other media including CD-ROMs and paper copies.

31. Experts may wish to take stock of these activities and provide inputs on how these and other initiatives should be considered in the forthcoming 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing censuses.

## References

- Economic and Social Council (1995). Resolution 1995/7. 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme.
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**ANNEX 1: COUNTRIES AND AREAS THAT PROVIDED DATA TO THE *DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK* QUESTIONNAIRE ON POPULATION CENSUS**

**Table A1: Number of countries and areas that provided data to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census during the 2000 census round, by table and region**

	Conducted a census	Table number																		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9A	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>Africa</b>	37	22	18	3	7	7	16	10	5	2	1	7	8	5	5	2	8	2	5	5
<b>America, North</b>	36	22	17	6	10	8	16	14	14	9	2	6	9	10	7	3	7	8	6	8
<b>America, South</b>	12	7	6	2	4	3	5	6	3	2	0	3	4	4	2	1	1	0	1	0
<b>Asia</b>	40	25	20	7	14	15	22	26	8	7	3	17	21	11	16	12	14	13	10	10
<b>Europe</b>	46	26	22	20	20	20	25	22	18	17	8	10	15	13	15	7	17	13	12	13
<b>Oceania</b>	25	4	7	2	2	2	8	9	5	3	1	3	5	2	6	0	2	5	4	4
<b>World</b>	196	106	90	40	57	55	92	87	53	40	15	46	62	45	51	25	49	41	38	40

*Source:* United Nations Statistics Division, unpublished document

## ANNEX 2: TOPICS OF THE *DEMOGRAPHIC YEARBOOK* SERIES: 1948 - 2001

Year	Sales No.	Special topic
1948	49.XIII.1	General demography
1949-50	51.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1951	52.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1952	53.XIII.1	Population distribution
1953	54.XIII.1	General demography
1954	55.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1955	56.XIII.1	Population censuses
1956	57.XIII.1	Ethnic and economic characteristics of population
1957	58.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1958	59.XIII.1	Marriage and divorce statistics
1959	60.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1960	61.XIII.1	Population trends
1961	62.XIII.1	Mortality Statistics
1962	63.XIII.1	Population census statistics I
1963	64.XIII.1	Population census statistics II
1964	65.XIII.1	Population census statistics III
1965	66.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1966	67.XIII.1	Mortality statistics I
1967	E/F.68.XIII.1	Mortality statistics II
1968	E/F.69.XIII.1	Marriage and divorce statistics
1969	E/F.70.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1970	E/F.71.XIII.1	Population trends
1971	E/F.72.XIII.1	Population census statistics I
1972	E/F.73.XIII.1	Population census statistics II
1973	E/F.74.XIII.1	Population census statistics III
1974	E/F.75.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1975	E/F.76.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1976	E/F.77.XIII.1	Marriage and divorce statistics
1977	E/F.78.XIII.1	International Migration Statistics
1978	E/F.79.XIII.1	General tables
1978	E/F.79.XIII.8	Special issue-Historical supplement
1979	E/F.80.XIII.1	Population census statistics
1980	E/F.81.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1981	E/F.82.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1982	E/F.83.XIII.1	Marriage and divorce statistics
1983	E/F.84.XIII.1	Population census statistics I
1984	E/F.85.XIII.1	Population census statistics II
1985	E/F.86.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1986	E/F.87.XIII.1	Natality statistics
1987	E/F.88.XIII.1	Household composition
1988	E/F.89.XIII.1	Population census statistics
1989	E/F.90.XIII.1	International Migration Statistics
1990	E/F.91.XIII.1	Marriage and divorce statistics
1991	E/F.92.XIII.1	General tables
1991	E/F.92.XIII.8	Special issue-Population ageing and the situation of elderly persons
1992	E/F.94.XIII.1	Fertility and mortality statistics
1993	E/F.95.XIII.1	Population census statistics I
1994	E/F.96.XIII.1	Population census statistics II
1995	E/F.97.XIII.1	Household composition
1996	E/F.98.XIII.1	Mortality statistics
1997	E/F.99.XIII.1	General tables
1997	E/F.99.XIII.12	Special issue-Historical supplement-
1998	E/F.00.XIII.1	General tables
1999	E/F.01.XIII.1	General tables
1999	E/F.02.XIII.6	Special issue-Natality Statistics
2000	E/F.02.XIII.1	General tables
2001	E/F.03.XIII.1	General tables