FEDERAL INTERAGENCY TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON
RACE AND ETHNICITY STANDARDS

Annex 2. Testing Team Final Report

## Contents

# 1. Executive Summary

The Testing Team was established in January 2023. Its purpose was to provide evidence to the Interagency Technical Working Group (Working Group), specifically the Content Team, on the performance of the initial recommendations, as outlined in the Federal Register Notice ([88 FR 5375](#)). During late Winter and early Spring 2023, the Testing Team identified a series of research questions so that testing efforts across agencies could be more effectively coordinated. Agencies identified surveys and other collections that could be used for testing the collection of race and ethnicity information using the proposed new combined question, and provided the resources (e.g., personnel, funds) necessary to conduct that research. Agencies were encouraged to conduct testing as they were able, given the schedule and other resource constraints. Generally, this meant that testing on the proposed combined race and ethnicity question occurred within the context of other testing that was already planned or underway, though some agencies were able to devote resources to testing the combined question exclusively. Twelve agencies participated in the Testing Team. Of those, nine agencies contributed new research to the effort. This work comprised over 400 qualitative interviews in English and Spanish; over 3,000 unmoderated web survey responses; and one large-scale split-ballot experiment that occurred in the spring and summer of 2023 (a full report from the large-scale testing will be released at a later date). This report summarizes the evidence to date from the testing conducted by those agencies.

Agencies conducted testing with individuals and households and with establishments using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. In most of the qualitative studies, participants who participated in this testing were presented with two versions of the combined question (exactly what was presented differed by testing agency). For individuals and households, respondents reported on their own self-identified racial and ethnic groups; some studies also included reporting for within household proxies. For establishments, the probing often prompted a discussion about the records that were available for the population of interest (e.g., students, staff, business owners), the limitations of those records, and the time and effort required to update them. Some agencies were also able to collect quantitative information; the findings from those studies complemented the qualitative studies.

Below are the findings categorized by topic areas specified in the Federal Register Notice (FRN).

1. **Collect race and ethnicity information using one combined question.**

In general, the combined race and ethnicity question tested well, with little concern for misreporting in households and with individuals. In most cases, respondents were able to accurately find and record race and/or ethnicity for themselves as well as proxies in a household setting. Most findings involve how the question was implemented for self- or interviewer-administration. For example, some agencies tested the question "What is your race or ethnicity?" while others tested "What is your race and/or ethnicity?" A small, quantitative, nonprobability study suggested no difference between the two versions, but qualitative testing suggested that the "and/or" application may lead to more reporting of both race and ethnicity or multiple races or ethnicities. In general, respondents commented that they felt freer to report as many identities as they felt with the "and/or" instruction than when "or" was used alone.

Agencies also tested different versions of the instructions that appeared after the question. These varied from ("Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.") to a simplified version ("Select all that apply."). Again, the small, quantitative, nonprobability study showed no differences, but qualitative testing showed that the longer instruction did not hurt understanding in any way and may help clarify the intention that multiple ethnicity and race

reporting is acceptable. Sometimes respondents did not seem to see the instructions, whether the long or the short version was used, a finding that is consistent with past research.

Qualitative testing with both households and establishments also showed a small but consistent finding concerning the order of the response options, specifically that they are in order by population size. A few respondents in several of the qualitative studies noted that the "White" category appeared first and were concerned that it connoted a bias suggesting this was the preferred category to report. A secondary concern was noted that with the addition of the "Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)" category, inaccuracies could occur. Specifically, if a respondent was not expecting to see "MENA" as a category, they might mark "White" and move on from the question and not realize that "MENA" was an option, resulting in measurement error. Alphabetizing the race and ethnicity categories would result in MENA appearing before White in the list. The current Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, *Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* (SPD 15) does not specify the order for response options, and the Working Group did not feel there was sufficient evidence from the additional testing to make a recommendation on the ordering of the minimum categories. Agencies generally order the categories alphabetically or by population size.

One potential concern identified in Spanish-language testing was possible over-reporting of American Indian or Alaska Native due to cultural identification with the term "mestizo." Respondents who do not otherwise identify with a specific American Indian or Alaska Native group sometimes reported "mestizo" because they had been taught culturally that their race, or people from their country, are all mixed races.

Establishments expressed a strong preference for the question that collected minimum categories only and some suggested that a single combined question would likely result in changes to demographic distributions in the future (e.g., more people selecting Hispanic or Latino alone). Some federal establishment surveys or information collections request summary or aggregate demographic data about groups of people.

## 2.    Add "Middle Eastern or North African" (MENA) as a new minimum category.

Noting that comprehensive quantitative testing was not conducted, the "MENA" category generally tested very well with households and individuals. Respondents who identified as MENA were able to find and select the category. Many respondents, including those who self-identified as MENA and others, commented positively on the addition of the category. There was some evidence of confusion for MENA respondents who had traditionally reported as White; some wondered whether they should report both MENA and White or whether MENA alone would satisfy.

Reactions to the inclusion of a "MENA" category were generally positive among establishment survey respondents as well. However, currently, there are very few establishments who include this category as an option for individuals to select. As a result, adding this option will take significant investments of time, effort, and resources to implement. Not only do the individual forms and instruments used for collecting this data from individuals need to be updated, the databases and systems that capture and hold the data will need to be updated, too. In some circumstances, the decisions to implement such changes must be made at a higher level (e.g., at the corporate, university, or health system level), rather than a lower level (e.g., individual establishment, campus, or facility level).

**3.      Require the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.**

In general, few problems were noted with collecting self-reports of detailed race and ethnicity categories for individuals. In some cases, for within household proxy reporting, the respondent either did not know the detailed information or was less likely to report it for another person. In some cases, there was a lack of clarity on how to report for a US-born child of an immigrant. In a similar vein, sometimes in Spanish interviews, this question was interpreted as a request for place of birth, rather than race and ethnicity.

For the detailed categories, a few respondents indicated concern that only European countries were listed for the category "White." Some noted that there are Whites from other non-European countries as well (e.g., South Africa). Additionally, researchers reported a small amount of concern that the category "English" could be overreported by those who chose it because they speak the language, rather than having distinct ancestry from England.

Interestingly, some qualitative studies indicated that some respondents used results from ancestry and DNA testing to inform their racial and ethnic self-identification. Some participants used such results as they answered the question. Some participants noted that, as more people engage in this type of testing, answers from the same person could change over time.

There was a strong preference among establishments for the question that collected minimum categories only. Establishments advised that the minimum categories would be easier to implement in their records formation and collection practices. In cases where an establishment respondent is providing race and ethnicity information on an individual by proxy, the respondent would be more likely to know the minimum categories, but less likely to know the detailed categories. Some establishments commented on the need for flexibility, specifically, to permit the collection of detailed categories that differed from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standard, to meet their needs. Finally, establishment participants questioned the utility and value of collecting and reporting detailed race and ethnicity data about individuals.

Generally, establishments' own needs, or the needs of critical external parties to whom they report, drive the collection of race and ethnicity data for individuals. Establishments often reported that records for an individual's race and ethnicity would contain only a single category or variable; some establishments may ask for people to report their "primary" race. Additionally, a person who identifies with two races may be coded as establishments as "other" or "multi-racial," without any additional details. Establishments generally collect information about a person's race and ethnicity at one time only, for example, at the time of hiring, matriculation, or enrollment, or at intake. If that data is missing or incomplete for some reason, an establishment may or may not take the time to identify the person whose information is missing, and follow-up with them to collect it. Often, the decision about whether or not to do so is guided by access restrictions, resource limitations, perceived burden, perceived level of effort, and/or perceived "return on investment" for recording, retaining, and reporting more complete information. If an establishment makes the decision to change the way it collects race and ethnicity data, it is unlikely to collect updated information from individuals for whom it already has information, leading to concerns about data quality and measurement error. To the extent that an establishment's records about individuals differ from OMB's (future) standard, and to the extent that data about individuals is collected in aggregate or summary fashion, measurement error will vary.

## 2. Introduction

The Testing Team was established in January 2023. Its purpose was to provide evidence to the Interagency Technical Working Group (Working Group), specifically the Content Team, on the performance of the initial recommendations, as outlined in the Federal Register Notice (88 FR 5375). For reference, there were four broad recommendations in the FRN:

1. Collect race and ethnicity information using one combined question.
2. Add "Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)" as a new minimum category.
3. Require the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.
4. Update terminology in SPD 15.

This report summarizes the evidence from the testing conducted by Federal agencies.

## 3. Background

The Federal Register Notice provided two proposed questions to collect race and ethnicity information from a single individual using a paper questionnaire (see Figures 1 and 2 below).

**Figure 1. Proposed Combined Question with Minimum and Detailed Categories**



What is your race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.
Note, you may report more than one group.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Figure 2. Proposed Combined Question with Minimum Categories**

> **What is your race or ethnicity?**
> *Select all that apply.*
>
> ☐ White
>
> ☐ Hispanic or Latino
>
> ☐ Black or African American
>
> ☐ Asian
>
> ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
>
> ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
>
> ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Federal agencies often collect race and ethnicity information from proxy respondents, using other modes (e.g., web), and may involve interviewer-administered collections. In addition, some federal surveys and collections request summary demographic information about individuals or groups of individuals from establishments. For example, the Department of Education collects information about students, teachers, and staff from school districts. The Bureau of Justice Statistics collects information about inmates from jails and prisons.

During late Winter and early Spring 2023, the Testing Team identified a series of research questions so that research efforts across agencies could be more effectively coordinated. Agencies identified surveys and other collections that could be used for testing the collection of race and ethnicity information using the proposed new combined question, and provided the resources (e.g., personnel, funds) necessary to conduct that research. Agencies were encouraged to conduct testing as they were able, given the schedule and other resource constraints. Generally, this meant that testing on the proposed combined race and ethnicity question occurred within the context of other testing that was already planned or underway, though some agencies were able to devote resources to testing the combined question exclusively.

Research questions focused on several topics, including the following:
- Collecting race and ethnicity in self- and interviewer-administered modes,
- How individuals identified themselves (using the minimum and/or detailed categories),
- How proxies would identify the race and ethnicity of others,
- Whether referring to "race and ethnicity" or "race and/or ethnicity" affected response patterns,
- Whether the length of the instructions affected response,
- Reactions to the minimum and detailed categories,
- Reactions to "help text" and definitions provided by OMB, and
- The records that establishments have concerning the race and ethnicity of individuals within the establishment (e.g., teachers, students, staff, inmates, patients).

# 4. Methodology and Limitations

Agencies used a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques to test the proposed combined race and ethnicity questions. Some of those methods and techniques are listed below:

- Exploratory interviews
- Cognitive interviews
- Respondent debriefings
- Unmoderated online testing
- Split-sample ballot testing

Agencies typically conducted testing with their populations of interest. In some cases, this resulted in samples being drawn from the general population. In other cases, participants had to meet specific eligibility criteria. For example, researchers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, where efforts to test a questionnaire concerning people with disabilities was planned, research participants had to have a disability, or live with someone who did.

Some agencies collect race and ethnicity information about individuals from proxies (e.g., other household members, neighbors), and were able to include proxies as part of their research efforts.

Some agencies collect information from establishments, and used the proposed combined race and ethnicity question as a discussion prompt to understand what records establishments have about individuals, when individuals provide that information, how often it is updated, and/or how race and ethnicity information collected using the proposed combined question might be summarized or aggregated for reporting to a Federal agency.

Some significant limitations to this report should be noted:

- *Timing and schedule constraints*: All testing efforts described here were done in Spring and Summer 2023.
- *Resource constraints*: Agencies funded their own testing and research. Some agencies had more funds available for this effort than others.
- *Agency constraints*: Some agencies were able to incorporate race and ethnicity testing into their research plans while others were not. The results presented here are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive.
- *Sample size constraints*: Both qualitative and quantitative studies were limited in sample size due to the above constraints. None of the studies reported here have the power to detect significant differences between distributions in the small, detailed racial and ethnic groups. The studies reported here are intended to add to the pre-existing literature compiled by the Content Team.

Table 1 below provides a brief description of the testing that each agency conducted.

**Table 1. Summary of Proposed Combined Race and Ethnicity Question Research, by Agency**

| AGENCY | TESTING VEHICLE | HOUSEHOLD or ESTABLISHMENT | QUANT or QUAL? | UNIVERSE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1a. Bureau of Labor Statistics | Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey Leave and Job Flexibilities Module | HHLD | QUAL | People with specific (un)employment criteria |
| 1b. Bureau of Labor Statistics | Current Population Survey Disability Supplement and American Time Use Survey Leave and Job Flexibilities Module | HHLD | QUANT | Nonprobability panel |
| 2a. Census Bureau | Cognitive Testing Study | HHLD | QUAL | General population |
| 2b. Census Bureau | Household Pulse Survey | HHLD | QUANT | General population (web only) |
| 2c. Census Bureau/National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics | Annual Business Survey (survey sponsor: NCSES) | ESTAB | BOTH | Sample of respondents from the Business Register |
| 3. Department of Defense* | Youth ad tracking military recruiting survey; Adult influencer panel survey | HHLD | BOTH | Young adults and their influencers |
| 4. National Center for Health Statistics | Omnibus Cognitive Testing | HHLD | QUAL | General population |
| 5. National Agricultural Statistics Service | Omnibus Cognitive Testing | HHLD | QUAL | Farmers/ranchers |
| 6. National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics | Survey of Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science and Engineering | ESTAB | QUAL | Graduate students and postdocs |
| 7a. Bureau of Justice Statistics | Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies | ESTAB | QUAL | Law enforcement agencies |
| 7b. Bureau of Justice Statistics/Census Bureau | Survey of Sexual Victimization | ESTAB | BOTH | Sample of prisons and related facilities |
| 8. National Center for Education Statistics* | School Pulse Panel | ESTAB | QUANT | Schools |
| 9. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency | National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey; Treatment Episode Data Set; Mental Health Client Level Data Set | ESTAB | QUAL | Mental health treatment facilities; state representatives that complete the NSUMHSS |

*Full reports for these studies are not available publicly at this time, however the testing team incorporated findings into the general findings section.*

This report summarizes research across agencies. More details can be found in the individual agency reports, which appear as appendices to this report where available.

## 5. Major Findings from Testing with Households and Individuals

Five agencies were able to complete testing with individuals and households using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. In most of the qualitative studies, participants who participated in this testing were presented with two versions of the combined question (exactly what was presented differed by testing agency). Respondents reported on their own self-identified racial and ethnic groups as well as reporting for within household proxies. Three agencies were able to complete quantitative data collection; the findings from those studies complemented the qualitative studies. Findings are organized below by topic areas from the FRN.

**1. Collect race and ethnicity information using one combined question.**

In general, across the board, the combined race and ethnicity question tested well, with little concern for misreporting. In most cases, respondents were able to accurately find and record race and/or ethnicity for themselves as well as proxies in a household setting. Most findings involve how the question was implemented for self- or interviewer-administration. For example, some agencies tested the question "What is your race or ethnicity?" while others tested "What is your race and/or ethnicity?" A small, quantitative, nonprobability study suggested no difference between the two versions of the question but qualitative testing suggested that the "and/or" application may lead to more reporting of both race and ethnicity or multiple races or ethnicities. In general, respondents commented that they felt freer to report as many identities as they felt with the "and/or" instruction than when "or" was used alone.

Agencies also tested different versions of the instructions that appeared after the question. These varied from what was recommended in the FRN ("Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.") to a simplified version ("Select all that apply."). Again, the small, quantitative, nonprobability study showed no differences, but qualitative testing showed that the longer instruction did not hurt understanding in any way and may help clarify the intention that multiple ethnicity and race reporting is acceptable. Sometimes respondents did not seem to see/read the instructions, whether the long or the short version was used, a finding that is consistent with past research.

Qualitative testing also showed a small, but consistent finding concerning the order of the response options; specifically, that they are in order by population size. A few respondents in several of the qualitative studies noted that the "White" category appeared first and were concerned that it connoted a bias suggesting this was the preferred category to report. A secondary concern was noted that with the addition of the "MENA" category. Specifically, if a respondent was not expecting to see "MENA" as a category, they might mark "White" and move on from the question and not realize that "MENA" was an option, resulting in measurement error. Alphabetizing the race and ethnicity categories would result in MENA appearing before White in the list.

One potential concern identified in Spanish-language testing was possible over-reporting of American Indian/Alaska Native due to cultural identification with the term "mestizo." Respondents who do not otherwise identify with a specific American Indian or Alaska Native group sometimes reported

"mestizo" because they had been taught culturally that their race, or people from their country, are all mestizo, or mixed races.

## 2.   Add "Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)" as a new minimum category.

Noting that comprehensive quantitative testing was not conducted, the "MENA" category generally tested very well with households and individuals. Respondents who identified as MENA were able to find and select the category. Many respondents, including those who self-identified as MENA and others, commented positively on the addition of the category. There was some evidence of confusion for MENA respondents who had traditionally reported as White; some wondered whether they should report both MENA and White or whether MENA alone would satisfy.

## 3.   Require the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.

In general, few problems were noted with collecting self-reports of detailed race and ethnicity categories for individuals. In some cases, for proxy reporting, the respondent either did not know the detailed information or was less likely to report it for another person. In some cases, there was a lack of clarity on how to report for a US-born child of an immigrant. In a similar vein, sometimes in the Spanish interviews, this question was interpreted as a request for place of birth, rather than race and ethnicity.

For the particular categories, a few respondents indicated concern that only European countries were listed for the category "White." Some noted that there are Whites from other non-European countries as well (e.g., South Africa). Additionally, researchers reported a small amount of concern that the category "English" could be overreported by those who chose it because they speak the language, rather than having distinct ancestry from England.

For administration of the detailed categories, there were several findings. In a self-administered setting, one quantitative study showed an increase in detailed reporting with a two-page question (as opposed to a single-page unfolding question). In an interviewer setting, it was noted that the number of detailed categories was time-consuming to administer and participants often interrupted or asked the interviewer to repeat the categories. The language of the follow-up questions also sometimes caused concern. For example, researchers reported that "et cetera" is difficult to say and may seem dismissive as a part of the question text. In addition, follow-up questions like "What White groups are you?" came across as awkward and potentially insensitive. For the self-administered setting, sometimes respondents did not realize they could write in their own detailed category beyond those listed in the question. Finally, in some cases, when participants could see all of the detailed categories at once, they selected only detailed categories rather than minimum categories.

Interestingly, some qualitative studies indicated that some respondents used results from ancestry and DNA testing to inform their racial and ethnic self-identification. Some participants used such results as they answered the question. Some participants noted that, as more people engage in this type of testing, answers from the same person could change over time (which suggests that longitudinal surveys may need to collect race and ethnicity data periodically, rather than only once).

# Major Findings from Testing with Households and Individuals, by Agency
## National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Omnibus Cognitive Testing

A total of 62 interviews were completed by NCHS, 39 in English and 23 in Spanish. Approximately half of the respondents received the interviewer-administered version and half received the self-administered version.

For some respondents, reporting race and ethnicity is a straightforward task into which they put little thought. These respondents answered this question on race and ethnicity in much the same way they would answer any question on race and ethnicity; therefore, it posed no discernable difficulty for them. However, many other respondents demonstrated a more complex cognitive process in providing an answer. Race and ethnicity took on multiple dimensions for these respondents and, depending on the purpose of providing such information, their answers can vary. As a result, the (perceived) intent of the combined question was taken into account by many respondents as they decided how to answer.

**Question interpretation**: The intent of the question was not consistently understood. Two main interpretations were found.

> Interpretation 1: The first interpretation is represented by respondents who understood the question to be asking them to report their personal understanding of their own race and ethnicity.

> Interpretation 2: The second interpretation is illustrated by respondents who thought the question was asking about their genealogy. This interpretation was often inspired by the structure of the question itself, specifically by its level of detail (i.e., number of subcategories). This interpretation caused some respondents to provide answers that did not necessarily reflect their personal sense of self. That is, respondents who typically think in more cultural or social ways about their race and ethnicity ended up providing an answer to this question on the basis of their (known) ancestry – something they would not normally do. This was especially (but not exclusively) true of White respondents.

> It is important to note that in no cases were respondents offering "incorrect" answers about their race or ethnicity because they "misunderstood" the question. It's more accurate to say that the complexity of the race and ethnicity construct, along with the detailed subcategories of the question, allows for a range of authentic individual representations. Seen in this light, the combined question performed well – everyone was able to choose categories that were acceptable to them.

**Question wording**: The wording evaluated in this study is as follows: "What is your race or ethnicity? Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group."

As mentioned above, the detailed categories caused some respondents to reflect on the intent of the question. The patterns (or dimensions of race and ethnicity) that they chose to frame their responses were informed by their personal life experiences and/or by the structure of the question itself, specifically, the level of detail in the subcategories. For others, answering was a non-reflective activity for which they had ready-made answers.

For these reasons, the term "race or ethnicity," along with the instructions, had little bearing on how most respondents answered the question. In other words, how respondents may (or may not) define "race" and "ethnicity" in the abstract played little, if any, role in how they chose to answer. In addition, many respondents spent little (if any) time reading the question stem/instructions. By far it was the categories

themselves, and respondents' self-perceptions vis-à-vis the categories, that shaped how respondents answered.

**Confusion with "English" Subcategory:**  Several respondents were confused over the term "English" as a subcategory of "White."   Several times it was mistaken to mean language, not ethnicity (especially for respondents who did not read the question stem).

**Confusion with "Mexican or Mexican American" subcategory:**  While most of the subcategories refer to a non-U.S. country of origin, "Mexican or Mexican American" has a dissimilar framework.  Because it is meant to include both American-born and Mexican-born people, this created some confusion.

**Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) respondents:**  Respondents who identified as having a MENA background chose this category and were able to find the appropriate subcategory.  The term "Middle Eastern or North African" resonated with respondents.  The "MENA" category also captured respondents with multiracial backgrounds (e.g., answering "White" and "MENA"), even if they generally only thought of themselves as one or the other (White or MENA).  This is another example of how the categories – and the number of subcategories seen by respondents – define the question and prompt answers based on genealogy, not self-perception.

**Black or African American respondents**:  Respondents who are descendants of enslaved people were generally able to choose an answer as intended by the question, that is, "Black or African American" as the minimum category and then "African American" as the subcategory.  However, some respondents were somewhat confused by the subcategory options or admitted that it would be impossible to provide an answer because they had no way of knowing from what country their ancestors were taken.  Hence, the act of asking specific African lineage of respondents who are descendants of enslaved people can be awkward and even potentially insensitive.  While the category "Black or African American" is meant to capture people who are descendants of enslaved people and people who more recently immigrated to the United States by their own volition, the detailed subcategories alter question interpretation for respondents who are descendants of enslaved people, thereby making the merging of these groups into one category seem somewhat inappropriate and confusing.

**Afro-Latino/a respondents:**  Four respondents who answered "Black or African American" and "Hispanic or Latino" in screening were interviewed (three in English and one in Spanish).  Two respondents chose only one option ("Hispanic or Latino") because they answered from a cultural or social perspective of their sense of self – they saw themselves primarily as Hispanic. However, for the other two respondents the question worked as intended; that is, to identify people with both Hispanic or Latino *and* Black or African American backgrounds.  In this regard, an ancestral interpretation of the question, as prompted by the detailed subcategories, helped to capture respondents who may identify as Afro-Latino/a.

**Interviews in Spanish:**  Patterns that were observed in the English interviews were often mirrored in the Spanish interviews as well.  That is, respondents interviewed in Spanish also answered on the basis of cultural, social, administrative, or ancestral understandings of race and ethnicity.  Overall, respondents were able to find a response category that they felt comfortable choosing.  Sometimes this meant choosing more than one category (such as "White" and "Hispanic or Latino") but more often they chose just one category, "Hispanic or Latino."   Additionally, this was true even when the term "Hispanic" was seen as an American construct.

**Choosing one versus more than one minimum category:**  The detailed subcategories under the "White" category caused some respondents to refrain from choosing "White" along with "Hispanic or Latino." This seemed, in part, due to the subcategories framing "White" as a European category.   In fact, many respondents chose only the "Hispanic or Latino" category because it was the one they identified with,

either culturally or in terms of their ancestry. Some respondents, however, did choose both "Hispanic or Latino" and "White." The choice of including "White" was sometimes motivated by a cultural affiliation with being White; other times it was a social dimension, i.e., they have been defined as White by others (particularly in the United States). Others chose both "Hispanic or Latino" and "White" simply because they have become accustomed to filling out "White" on most U.S. surveys.

**Mode Effects**

**Interviewer-administered issues:** Wording for the interviewer-administered version was adapted from the self-administered version and, as such, was somewhat awkward to read aloud. Improvements to the question stem and instructions could be made in order to allow for a smoother verbal delivery.

Most difficulties that arose, however, were related to the sheer number of subcategories. This made the question somewhat cumbersome to administer. As a result, there were occasions in which respondents either asked the interviewer to repeat the categories or, more often, offered answers before hearing all the choices. In the virtual interview, where the interviewer and respondent could see each other, this was not a significant impediment, but it might prove to be more problematic (in terms of comprehension and survey length) when administered over the telephone.

**Self-administered issues:** The self-administered mode (presented as a fillable pdf) presented more and different challenges. Specifically, it was not clear to some respondents how they should complete the form. Respondents were given control of the computer so that they could complete it on their own. Some respondents had no difficulty with the task and filled in the form as intended, but many did not. For example, some respondents did not physically check a minimum race category; they only selected a detailed subcategory.

In addition, many respondents did not understand that they had the ability to type in a detailed subcategory that was not offered as a check-box option (essentially, this open field was an "other-specify"). The form listed each minimum category with an instruction to "provide details below" alongside the option (for example: "WHITE - Provide details below…"). Respondents did not always understand how to proceed.

Many of the problems associated with the self-administered mode, as tested via fillable pdf in this study, could be minimized in different formats. It is possible, for example, that a web format could more effectively guide respondents through the process of answering. For instance, a web survey could expose respondents to the minimum categories first (potentially eliminating missing data due to misunderstandings), followed by the corresponding subcategories. In addition, the purpose of the open-field, "specify," option could be better displayed as well.

## U.S. Census Bureau Household/Individual Race and Ethnicity Cognitive Testing

A total of 100 interviews, 80 in English and 20 in Spanish, were completed by RTI International and RSS under contract with the U.S. Census Bureau. Testing examined how participants interacted with and responded to two self-administered versions of the combined race and ethnicity question. Half of the participants answered Version A first and half of the participants answered Version B first. Version A was programmed as a vertical unfolding question – when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, the detailed categories would immediately open beneath the selected response options. Version B was programmed as a two-page question – when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, they would click "Next" to advance to the next page where they would

answer the detailed categories question for each race/ethnicity category they selected in the minimum categories question.

Overall, testing revealed that the combined race/ethnicity question performed well. Most participants had no difficulty in understanding the question or selecting a response for themselves and others in their household. Additionally, participants displayed a strong understanding of the question instructions (i.e., "Select all that apply," "Provide details below," and "Enter, for example…"). When participants did struggle to select a response it was commonly because they were either unsure of (1) some of their racial/ethnic background, (2) how far back in their ancestry to report, (3) the racial/ethnic background of non-family members who lived in their household, or (4) among Spanish-speaking participants, how to report for U.S.-born children of immigrants.

Participants who identified as Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) provided positive feedback on the inclusion of this category as a response option and felt they were able to identify themselves more accurately within the response options. Participants who identified as Hispanic or Latino expressed a similar appreciation for the inclusion of this response option as part of the race/ethnicity question as opposed to a separate question. More generally, participants liked that they were able to select multiple response options and write in a description of their background if they did not see themselves represented in the listed response options of the detailed categories question.

A few specific findings included a Taiwanese participant who was unsure whether to report the minimum category Asian or Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. A participant with ancestry from Belize expected to find "Belize" as a category under Black or African American and upon not seeing that, selected only "Hispanic or Latino." A few Spanish-speaking respondents were surprised that there were only European detailed categories listed under White. There were also a few instances of reporting "mestizo" identity as American Indian and Alaska Native in the Spanish-language interviews.

Most respondents reported that they would not have answered differently if the question text had used "or" vs. "and/or" however several respondents mentioned that "and/or" was more inclusive and would allow the reporting of more than one category. Spanish speakers in this testing did not have difficulties with the "y/o" translation.

Though some participants expressed preferences for one version of the question over another, there were no differences in how participants answered the two versions of the question. Both versions performed similarly well, and participants did not change their responses when answering the alternate version of the question.

The Census Bureau quantitatively tested Version A vs. Version B in the Household Pulse Survey. Preliminary findings from that testing suggest no significant differences in minimum category reporting but slightly elevated detailed reporting with Version B (the version with 2 pages, rather than a single unfolding question). The full analysis of this experiment is forthcoming.

To supplement the RTI/RSS interviews, the Census Bureau conducted an additional 11 interviews with Afro-Latino respondents using the same protocols and procedures with the addition of the term "People of African Descent" listed as a write-in line example under "Black or African American." Cognitive testing with this small group of Afro-Latino participants found that the combined race/ethnicity question was not burdensome or difficult for participants to answer. While all participants reported a Black or African American ancestry in separate race and Hispanic origin questions during recruitment, about half of the group did not report their Black or African American racial background during testing of the combined question. Several respondents reported a complicated Hispanic ancestry that is a mix of White, Black, and indigenous people, and thus preferred to keep it simple by only reporting their Hispanic ancestry. Another

respondent expressed fluidity in how they report race and ethnicity. One respondent reported not noticing the instructions to "Mark all that apply" and that if they had noticed the instruction, they might have reported both Black and Hispanic. Future research directions include quantitative evaluation of terms designated for Afro-Latinos, modified recruitment for qualitative methods, and increased sample sizes for continued cognitive testing.

## National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Research with Farmers and Ranchers

NASS conducted a total of 33 cognitive interviews and 40 online web surveys for this project; key findings are presented below for each type of qualitative research.

**Cognitive Interviews:** Cognitive interviews were conducted in two ways, one to mimic a self-administered paper data collection (PAPI) and the other to mimic an enumerator-administered computer assisted telephone interview (CATI). In all the cognitive interviews, respondents were asked to provide answers for the combined minimum and detailed race and/or ethnicity categories. Within each type of cognitive interview, different instructions were tested, one longer version ("Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.") and one shorter version ("Please select all that apply."). Below are the key findings from the cognitive interviews:

**Not reporting race and/or ethnicity information:** There were several different scenarios where respondents did not or could not provide race and/or ethnicity information. Specifically, some respondents refused to answer the question, indicated they did not know the information, expressed intention to report (or not report) a certain way under certain circumstances or indicated missing a specific race or ethnicity on the form.

**Ability to select more than one race or ethnic group:** While many respondents did select more than one race or ethnic group or indicated that they knew they could select more than one group, there were at least eight respondents who indicated they did not see or know that they could select more than one race/ethnicity. This was found for respondents who received longer instructions, as well as those who received the shortened instructions. The longer instructions did not reduce the number of respondents who did not realize they could report more than one race or ethnicity.

**Response option order:** Several respondents asked unprompted questions about the rationale or reasoning behind the presented order of the response options. This order, based on population sizes, was not immediately apparent to these respondents and seemed to imply preferences or a hierarchy.

**Use of "or" vs. "and/or":** For the PAPI testing, respondents were shown a version of the question that read "race or ethnicity" and probed on their preference between that and "race and/or ethnicity." For those respondents who were asked about their preference about the use of "or" versus "and/or" in the question(s), all but one indicated that they would prefer the use of "and/or." It is important to note that several respondents indicated that just using "or" can impact how they may understand and respond to the question.

**Short vs. longer instructions:** Respondents were probed on their preference of the longer instructions or the shorter instructions. For those respondents who were asked about their preference, all but two respondents indicated they preferred the longer instructions.

**Minimum vs. detailed categories in the question:** During the cognitive interviews, the level of detail that the respondents would prefer to report on was discussed. Only one person indicated that they preferred the minimum reporting question in the cognitive interviews. Other respondents said that they preferred the more detailed question as it allowed them to describe themselves more accurately.

Some respondents did, however, indicate that their preference depended on who was conducting the survey and knowing what the purpose of the survey was.

**Proxy reporting:** Of the 33 respondents that were interviewed, 19 were asked to report information for a proxy. Most of the respondents who reported race and/or ethnicity for a proxy indicated that they could easily report that information. It is important to note that when respondents were probed on why it was easy to report that information, for many of the respondents, they indicated it was because of the familial relationship they had with the proxy (e.g., spouse, sibling, parent, child). At least 15 respondents indicated that they could very easily provide race and ethnicity information about a proxy.

**Cognitive testing mode-specific findings:** For CATI, respondents often interrupted the enumerator before the enumerator read all of the response options. This tendency increased when a respondent was proxy reporting (which was always after they reported for themselves). For PAPI, respondents often did not check boxes for both the minimum reporting category and the detailed categories.

**Web Surveys:** Roughly 2,000 agricultural producers were sent an email invitation to complete a web survey. There were four different survey versions that were tested, varying by including either the detailed and minimum reporting categories or just the minimum reporting categories for the race and/or ethnicity and by the inclusion of short or longer instructions. A total of 40 producers completed the web survey. Twenty respondents received and provided information on detailed race and ethnicity instructions; 20 respondents received and provided information just on the minimum reporting categories. Below are the key findings from the web surveys:

**Missed reporting and long instructions:** Across all versions of the web surveys, which included both long and short instructions, many respondents indicated that they did not realize they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity. While many respondents subsequently indicated they would not report any additional information, three respondents said they would have reported additional race and/or ethnicities if they knew they could. While the longer instructions did not eliminate the issue, there were fewer respondents who did not know they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity when they received the longer instructions.

**Minimum vs. detailed reporting:** Overall, many respondents indicated that the questions allowed them to describe themselves accurately. It is important to note that when looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, the respondents who only received the minimum reporting question indicated higher rates or agreement that the question allowed them to describe themselves more accurately than those respondents who received the detailed questions. When looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, of note is that more respondents who answered the minimum reporting question indicated that the level of detail requested was "just right" when compared to the respondents who answered the detailed questions.

**Proxy responses:** Across all versions of the web survey, respondents indicated that it was relatively easy to provide race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy. Only one respondent indicated that they found it difficult to provide the information. Reporting detailed or minimum category information did not seem to impact the difficulty of reporting race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent. It is important to note that many of our respondents indicated that they had a familial relationship (e.g., spouse or sibling) with the proxy which may have made it easier to report that information.

**Refusals:** Across the web surveys, only one refusal was received for the race and/or ethnicity questions. This respondent refused to provide a race/ethnicity for a proxy because they indicated that "White" was not an ethnicity.

**General Findings Across Cognitive Interviews and Web Surveys**

Respondents across both the cognitive interviews and web surveys had similar findings related to the following topics:

- Confusion about the use or lack of use of the response option "American," a few respondents questioned why the use of "American" behind some of the groups, and several others mentioned that they would prefer to use a response option of "American."
- Inconsistency with where respondents were including the write-in for Spanish/Spaniard. Respondents used the write-in box for both White and Hispanic or Latino to write-in variations on "Spanish" or "Spaniard."
- Some respondents who may have previously identified as White *and* Hispanic or Latino, chose to only identify as Hispanic or Latino in this testing.
- Several respondents mentioned that they have done an ancestry kit (such as 23andMe), which has impacted their understanding of their race/ethnicity and what they have chosen to report.

## U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Qualitative and Quantitative Testing

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics conducted two quantitative studies with nonprobability panels and two qualitative studies with convenience samples to examine the potential effects of combining the race and ethnicity questions proposed in Federal Register Notice 88 FR 5375 (OMB, 2023). Overall, participants understood what the race and ethnicity questions were asking. They were able to select minimum and detailed categories that reflected their race or ethnicity. Participants used the write-in boxes to provide additional categories, explain their ancestry, or provide commentary about why they selected a particular category.

Item non-response to the race and ethnicity questions was low. Across the quantitative and qualitative studies, approximately 99 percent of participants selected a minimum race or ethnicity category. More than 80 percent selected a detailed category. In the quantitative studies, 74 percent of participants did not provide a write-in response, indicating that although participants are willing to answer the race and ethnicity questions, they may not make additional effort to provide written responses.

In the quantitative studies, participants were randomly assigned to receive one of two question stems asking about either their race or ethnicity versus their race and/or ethnicity:

1. What is your race or ethnicity?
2. What is your race and/or ethnicity?

In addition, participants were randomly assigned to receive either brief or detailed instructions on how to report their race and/or ethnicity:

1. Select all that apply.
2. Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

In the quantitative studies, there were no significant differences by treatment group. Neither question stem nor instruction details affected participants' responses. Furthermore, changing question wording or instruction details did not affect understanding or self-identification.

In the qualitative studies, *List Wording* and *Yes/No Wording* protocols were used.[1] For the *List Wording* protocol, participants did not clearly understand whether they could select more than one category. They also did not realize they could add a group that was not included in the detailed category list. For the *Yes/No Wording* protocol, participants generally understood that they could choose more than one minimum or detailed category. Overall, there were fewer comprehension problems with the *Yes/No Wording* and the instructions were clearer than the *List Wording*.

Interviewers reflected on their experience administering the qualitative interview questions. Some interviewers described administering the race and ethnicity questions as uncomfortable. Specifically, they felt asking "What White groups are you?" was sensitive to administer. For the *Yes/No Wording* protocol, the inclusion of "et cetera" made the detailed categories sound like an afterthought.

Across all four studies, the majority of participants stated the questions reflected their race or ethnicity "very well" or "somewhat well." However, some participants who selected "not very well" noted that they did not identify with the categories, felt the detailed categories were more relevant to recent immigrants, did not understand the relevance for collecting the information, or identified as multiple races or ethnicities.

## Department of Defense Ad Tracking Recruits Study, Influencer Poll, and Qualitative Testing

The Department of Defense (DoD) conducted an experiment across two quantitative studies with probability-based panels and one qualitative study with youth and adult influencers. The Ad Tracking Recruits Study is an online nationally-representative study of youth ages 16–24. Its sample is drawn from another Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies (JAMRS) study—the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Youth Poll. As such, this recontact methodology allowed JAMRS to ask race and ethnicity in a manner that aligns with the current OMB standards in the Youth Poll (specifically using the U.S. Census Bureau's current implementation of these standards) and then test the proposed new standards in the Ad Tracking Recruits Study. Within the Ad Tracking Recruits Study, two questions were tested and randomly assigned to respondents: one which adheres to the new proposed minimum requirements, and the other which adheres to these same requirements while adding examples into the overall categories.

The Influencer Poll is an online nationally-representative study of adult influencers (e.g., mothers, fathers, grandparents, educators, and other adult influencers) of youth ages 12–21. The Influencer Poll is administered through Ipsos's KnowledgePanel, an online probability-based panel. The KnowledgePanel asks race and ethnicity in a manner that aligns with OMB's current standards, with the slight modification of asking race and ethnicity in a single question (e.g., participants are directly presented with the option of White, non-Hispanic). Respondents were then randomly assigned to respond to one of the proposed question versions (minimum vs. detailed).

Additionally, fifty-four virtual in-depth cognitive interviews were completed on two versions of the proposed alternative standard questions. To be eligible for an interview, participants needed to belong to one of three categories:

1. Youth: A young adult between the ages of 17 and 24
2. Parent: A parent or legal guardian of any young adults ages 17 to 24

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[1] See Appendix D. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Qualitative and Quantitative Testing for more information.

3. Influencer: Someone who interacts closely with young adults between the ages of 17 to 24 for at least 10 hours per week (e.g., teacher, athletic coach, pastor)

While key findings across all studies were similar and favorable towards the proposed changes, some findings emerged that may impact the quality and quantity of data collected using the proposed new standards. First, when presented with the new proposed combined question with minimum and detailed categories, many participants believed they were expected to select a detailed race and ethnicity category (e.g., "German," "Cuban," "Chinese," "Lebanese"), regardless of how this information is presented. Participants often acknowledged that they ended up selecting detailed race categories that they did not closely identify with because the option to do so was there and they were unsure when or if sub-categories should be selected.

- Similarly, participants were unsure of what information, if any, they were supposed to enter into the open-ended text boxes.
- The detailed categories were seen as helpful for interpreting the top-level categories, but many also viewed this information as overwhelming in a manner that could raise a risk for survey completion (i.e., some participants said they would be deterred from answering the question). This is particularly a concern for respondents answering the question on a mobile device.

Next, the proposed changes may result in fewer respondents selecting White when presented with multiple new race/ethnicity categories that may better reflect how they actually identify.

- Hispanic individuals were more likely to only select "Hispanic or Latino" when the race and ethnicity were presented in one question, whereas they would previously have selected "Hispanic or Latino" and an additional race (most often "White") when race and ethnicity were presented as separate questions. This could have implications on tabulation depending on how Hispanic origin is reported and whether or not a race is also marked.
- Most individuals who identified as and selected "Middle Eastern or North African" (MENA) in the new design would have previously only marked "White."

In instances where Hispanic individuals are classified as Hispanic regardless of their race selection, these changes will have a minimal impact on aggregate race/ethnicity categories (e.g., White, non-Hispanic). This is because of the small number of individuals who selected "MENA" and because individuals who identify as Hispanic are currently classified as Hispanic regardless of their race selection(s). In instances where this is not the case (i.e., where race categories were previously reported without regard to ethnicity), a decline in the number of individuals identifying as White is likely due to fewer Hispanic individuals selecting "White" in the revised form.

Finally, participants responded positively to the inclusion of "Hispanic or Latino" and "MENA" as main category selection options in one combined question. These individuals felt as if the current standards do not reflect their identity and the proposed revisions provide them with better aligned options.

# 6. Major Findings from Testing with Establishments

Five agencies were able to conduct testing with establishments - for example, schools, law enforcement agencies, state agencies, mental health treatment facilities, colleges, universities, and businesses - using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. In most of the qualitative studies, participants were presented with two versions of the combined question (one with minimum categories only, one with minimum and detailed categories), which often prompted a discussion about the records that were available for the population of interest (e.g., students, staff, business owners), the limitations of those records, and the time and effort required to update them. Three agencies were able to collect quantitative information; the findings from those studies complemented the qualitative studies.

Generally, establishments' own needs, or the needs of critical external parties to whom they report, drive the collection of race and ethnicity data for individuals. For example, a privately-owned business may have race and ethnicity records about their employees that do not follow OMB's guidance. A public university or K-12 school system may have race and ethnicity records and information about students, faculty, and staff that aligns with guidance from a state or accreditation agency. Establishments often reported that records for an individual's race and ethnicity would contain only a single category or variable; some establishments may ask for people to report their "primary" race. Additionally, a person who identifies with two races may be coded as establishments as "other" or "multi-racial," without any additional details.

Establishments generally collect information about a person's race and ethnicity at one time only, for example, at the time of hiring, matriculation or enrollment, or at intake. If that data is missing or incomplete for some reason, an establishment may or may not take the time to identify the person whose information is missing, and follow-up with them to collect it. Often, the decision about whether or not to do so is guided by access restrictions, resource limitations, perceived burden, perceived level of effort, and/or perceived "return on investment" for recording, retaining, and reporting more complete information.

If an establishment makes the decision to change the way it collects race and ethnicity data, it is unlikely to collect updated information from individuals for whom it already has information, leading to concerns about data quality and measurement error. To the extent that an establishment's records about individuals differ from OMB's (future) standard, and to the extent that data about individuals is collected in aggregate or summary fashion, measurement error will vary.

1. **Collect race and ethnicity information using one combined question.**

   Generally, there were no problems this approach, though establishments expressed a strong preference for the question that collected minimum categories only (see below) and some suggested that a single combined question would likely result in changes to demographic distributions in the future (e.g., more people selecting "Hispanic or Latino" alone).

   Some Federal establishment surveys or information collections request summary or aggregate demographic data about groups of people. At this time, it is unclear what effect any changes to SPD 15 will have to those collections.

   Similar to the finding for households and individuals, qualitative testing with establishments also showed a small but consistent finding concerning the order of the response options, specifically that they are in order by population size. A few participants noted that the "White" category appeared

first and were concerned that it connoted bias, that this was the preferred category to report. Some participants suggested alphabetizing the list.

One agency was able to conduct some qualitative testing of a Spanish version of the question with establishments. That agency identified concerns with "y/o," a usage which is not recommended by the Real Academia Española (the organization responsible for Spanish language rules). Finally, the agency noted that the Spanish version back-translated to "What is your race and/or your ethnicity?" leading to possible concerns about equivalence.

**2. Add "Middle Eastern or North African" (MENA) as a new minimum category.**

Reactions to the inclusion of a "MENA" category were generally positive. However, at this time, there are very few establishments who include this category as an option for individuals to select. As a result, adding this option will take significant investments of time, effort, and resources to implement. Not only do the individual forms and instruments used for collecting this data from individuals need to be updated, the databases and systems that capture and hold the data will need to be updated, too. In some circumstances, the decisions to implement such changes must be made at a higher level (e.g., at the corporate, university, or health system level), rather than a lower level (e.g., individual establishment, campus, or facility level).

**3. Require the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.**

There was a strong preference among establishments for the question that collected minimum categories only. Establishments advised that the minimum categories would be easier to implement in their records formation and collection practices. In cases where an establishment respondent is providing race and ethnicity information on an individual by proxy, the respondent would be more likely to know the minimum categories, but less likely to know the detailed categories. For example, respondents to the Census Bureau's Annual Business Survey may know that a particular business owner is Asian, but not that the business owner is Vietnamese. Additionally, in some cases, it may not be possible to obtain more detailed information about a particular individual (for example, because they are an inmate within a correctional facility).

Some establishments who participated in testing asked how the detailed categories were chosen. Some establishments also commented on the need for flexibility, specifically, to permit the collection of detailed categories that differed from the OMB standard, to meet their needs. For example, more details on American Indians may be required in one geographic area, and different groups within the Asian category may be needed in another.

Finally, establishment participants questioned the utility and value of collecting and reporting detailed race and ethnicity data about individuals. Establishments who are not required to comply with SPD 15 will collect information of use to them, which may not be at the detailed level.

# Major Findings from Testing with Establishments, by Agency
## Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Research with Law Enforcement and Correctional Agencies

BJS and the Census Bureau's Economic Directorate conducted two studies. The cognitive interview study with law enforcement agencies focused on the collection of race and ethnicity data for law enforcement personnel. The second study, which focused on race and ethnicity data of staff and inmates at correctional agencies, included 15 cognitive interviews with staff at those agencies and unmoderated cognitive testing with an additional 189 agencies.

Key themes from the cognitive interviews with law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and moderated and unmoderated cognitive interviews with correctional agencies are enumerated below.

No interviewed LEA currently includes the proposed "Middle Eastern or North African" (MENA) category in its records or reporting system for sworn or nonsworn personnel. This implies that all or most LEAs requested by BJS to provide counts of personnel fitting into this category will not have these data immediately available.

The level of burden that interviewed LEAs believe it would require to report personnel counts fitting in the "MENA" category varied by agency size. Interviewed representatives from small local police departments and sheriffs' offices were almost all able to either provide the count of staff that would identify as MENA from knowing all their colleagues or reported that they would be able to quickly gather this information by asking staff. Some representatives from larger agencies, by contrast, believe that reporting the number of staff who identify as MENA would be very burdensome.

Among the 24 interviewed LEAs that reported formally collecting and reporting data on the race or ethnicity of personnel, only half (12) use categories that match the current Federal standards ("American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian," "Black or African American," "Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander," and "White"). Twenty-nine percent (7) of the interviewed agencies use categories that do not match the current Federal standards, and 21 percent (5) were unsure which categories their agency uses. Of those whose agencies reported different categories than what are included in the current Federal standards, some chose to use categories requested on reporting forms by a law enforcement accreditation agency.

No interviewed LEA currently collects or stores information on the race or ethnicity of personnel that is more detailed than a minimum category (e.g., whether a Hispanic officer is of Cuban or Mexican descent).

The race or ethnicity categories included in both the short- and long-form items do not match exactly with the categories in agency inmate/youth or staff correctional agency record systems. About 56 percent of adult correctional administrators and nearly 70 percent of juvenile justice administrators reported the short-form-version categories matched the categories in their information systems for inmates or youth in custody. Respondents noted that their records systems may have had additional categories not included in the proposed items. Specifically, they noted the presence of the category of "Other" in which they could specify a different race or ethnicity not included in the existing list of categories. Some also indicated their records had a category of "Bi-racial" or "Two or more races." When asked about whether their records allowed for the selection of multiple categories, several were unsure if this was possible, and others noted they could only select one category to identify race or ethnicity. Of respondents who knew about their system's capabilities, 25 percent of adult correctional and 47 percent of juvenile respondents indicated they had the ability to report more than one category for race and ethnicity.

Correctional agencies do not have a category in their information systems of "Middle Eastern or North African." Respondents for adult correctional and juvenile justice facilities reported that their information systems did not include this category. About 76 percent of respondents to the unmoderated cognitive testing did not have a "MENA" category in their systems for inmates or youth in custody, and 82 percent did not have the category for staff. However, they noted that if this was an added category and they had a record of this information through an "Other" specification in their system, they would include it here. They also noted that questions on the Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV) inform what records they collect from a substantiated incident investigation, therefore if the question changed, they would consider changing their records.

Correctional agencies do not collect data on race or ethnicity to the level of detail that would allow them to provide responses to the longer version of the item. Respondents expressed that their records of race or ethnicity for inmates, youth in custody, or staff did not contain detailed country of origin or ancestry. Nearly 77 percent of administrators said they could not provide the necessary details for inmate/youth and 76 percent could not for staff. They expressed that it would be difficult to collect this information from inmates, youth, or staff because incidents of sexual victimization may be investigated, substantiated, and recorded in the SSV form after the person has left the facility. They also noted the sensitive nature of being involved in a substantiated incident of sexual victimization would make a respondent unlikely to follow up with an inmate or perpetrator to ask these questions. Even if the person was still in custody and they were able to contact them to ask this information, respondents were not confident they would be able to provide the level of detail required. Several administrators noted it would even be hard for them to personally answer this level of detail so they did not think the inmates or youth in their facilities could do so if given the opportunity. Respondents indicated that there may be proxy information in a record for an inmate or youth that could help identify a country of origin or ancestry, such as affiliation with a gang that has ties to a certain nationality.

Correctional agency respondents expressed more uncertainty and difficulty in answering the questions about race or ethnicity of staff in their facilities than questions about the inmates or youth held in their facilities. Most respondents noted that records about the race or ethnicity of staff were held in human resources systems that they may not have access to. They relied on investigative records about the incident and people involved, and if those records did not already contain race or ethnicity details, they would need to reach out to a different department to find out the information for a staff perpetrator. They also were less sure about some of the finer details of those information systems for staff, such as if it was possible to report multiple races or ethnicities. Records for inmates and youth were easier to access by coordinators and administrators who usually complete the SSV. In the unmoderated cognitive testing results, 92 percent of respondents indicated it was easier to access inmate or youth records than staff records.

## U.S. Census Bureau Annual Business Survey
During May and June of 2023 moderated (n=45) and unmoderated (n=157) cognitive interviews were conducted with respondents to the Annual Business Survey (ABS). The respondents who participated were a mix of self and proxy respondents. Interviews were either conducted with one of the business owners (self) or with a non-owner employee of the business (proxy). In some scenarios, the owner of the business provided demographic information on behalf of the other owners of the business (proxy). Overall, respondents were generally comfortable and confident in reporting race and ethnicity at the minimum level. Self-respondents were also comfortable and confident with reporting detailed race or ethnicity information. Proxy respondents expressed less confidence and comfort with reporting detailed race and ethnicity information on behalf of other owners.

When asked about race and ethnicity information that is collected and stored within company records, most respondents would be able to supply this information at the minimum level. None of the respondents in the moderated or unmoderated interviews had detailed race or ethnicity information within their company records. Overall, company systems generally capture only one race or ethnicity and do not allow for the selection of multiple options. In some cases, there was an option within systems for "more than one race," but the system did not capture information on what those multiple races were.

The addition of the "Middle Eastern or Northern African" (MENA) category was very positively received by respondents. Unfortunately, systems are not currently capturing this information. Respondents were concerned about the "White" category being listed first in both the minimum and detailed questions. They felt that this indicated a more favored position and suggested considering a different order such as alphabetical.

Most of the respondents who selected "Hispanic or Latino" did not select a second minimum category. Also, there was occasional reference to using genetic testing results as an input into detailed race or ethnicity selections.

Overall, the shorter (or minimum category) version of the question was preferred by most of the ABS respondents. Proxy respondents expressed discomfort with asking other owners about their detailed race or ethnicity, and would only have information associated with the minimum categories within their company records. There were some owners (self-respondents) that did express some interest in the detailed categories as a means of gathering more comprehensive statistics about business owners in certain minorities that may be undercounted by the minimum category (e.g., Asian Indian vs. Asian).

## Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey, Treatment Episode Data Set, and Mental Health Client Level Data

SAMHSA conducted interviews with 18 entities (7 mental health treatment facility managers, 11 state substance abuse or mental health authorities). Four interviews were done in Spanish. The researchers found many issues with OMB's proposed new race and ethnicity items.

The minimum OMB version is similar to the current OMB standards (except for the addition of "Middle Eastern or North African") and therefore would be easier to implement.

There would be a low return on investment along with a heavy administrative burden for the detailed OMB version. The study participants expressed concerns that this level of detail would provide small cells sizes that will end up being aggregated. There were also concerns on the quality of data from write-in entries, particularly when coding processes are not standard.

Some participants expressed concerns that the combined question needs more guidance as it is unclear on what is being asked. These participants expressed that the question could be interpreted as asking for race, ethnicity, ancestry, or national origin.

Many facilities and states would code individuals with two or more races as "other." In contrast, some states, such as New York, may have competing Executive Orders to report details on specific races, such as the Asian population.

Participants expressed needing some flexibility on how race and ethnicity data will be collected on the intake forms, as some of the proposed categories do not reflect the demographic reality of their state. For example, "American Indian or Alaska Native" might need to be collected separately in states with high presence of American Indian tribes. Participants are willing to comply on any required data reporting, as long as there is some guidance on how to crosswalk their data collections to the required categories. Data reporters would also need guidelines for the order of the response categories.

One state used a similar approach to what OMB is proposing for some of their program evaluations and found that individuals were more likely to report the more general groups in the shorter (minimum category) option than the more detailed groupings in the longer option.

One participant mentioned during the interview that the use of "y/o" is incorrect in Spanish.  She indicated that the "Real Academia Española" (organization responsible for Spanish language rules) discourages its use.  Researchers verified this statement after the interview; it is considered an anglicism in Spanish.

The same participant asked to see the English version of the questions, and noticed that the English version said "What is your race or ethnicity?," meanwhile the translation in Spanish back translated as "What is your race and/or your ethnicity?"  She questioned why the possessive "your" in the Spanish version was used twice (perhaps suggesting emphasis or making a distinction?).

It is important to note there are two processes at work: questionnaire/data collection standards versus reporting standards. While most state representatives do not want to say no to Federal questionnaire standards, it would be a huge burden for them and their reporting facilities with a low return on investment.  Representatives indicated that there would be an initial pushback from facilities and healthcare providers in terms of implementation. Additionally, some states "would take years" to update their reporting (database) systems, which would filter down to providers.

## National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) Survey of Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science and Engineering

NCSES selected the Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS) and the related Survey of Postdocs at Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC Postdoc Survey) for this research. This summary presents the key findings from interviews conducted with survey respondents from 27 GSS schools and 6 FFRDCs in April and May 2023.  Both the GSS and the FFRDC Postdoc Survey are establishment surveys rather than person-level self-report surveys. Staff at academic institutions and FFRDCs query administrative data that they maintain on their graduate students and postdocs and report counts in aggregate form.

In both surveys, there is a combined race and ethnicity and citizenship item, consistent with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Thus, race and ethnicity are only collected for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. The race and ethnicity reporting categories are "Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (one or more races)," "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian," "Black or African American," "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander," "White," or "More than one race (not Hispanic or Latino)." Respondents are instructed to count individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino as "Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (one or more races)" regardless of any racial categories in which they may also identify. The survey instructs respondents to count non-Hispanic individuals identifying with more than one race just once in the "More than one race (not Hispanic or Latino)" category.

Key findings from the interviews are as follows:

Both schools and FFRDCs tend to collect and maintain student data that are consistent with OMB's current statistical standards and other Federal data collections, most notably the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

None of the schools or FFRDCs collect race and ethnicity data in as much detail as OMB's newly proposed detailed question, and only a few collect Middle Eastern and North African data. Therefore, all participating GSS schools and FFRDCs would need to change the categories they use to collect race and ethnicity data to respond to the proposed detailed categories question and almost all would need to do so to respond to the minimum categories version of the question.

Almost all schools collect race from Hispanic students even though they are not currently required to report race for these individuals in the GSS Survey. However, race information is less consistently collected for Hispanic postdocs at schools and FFRDCs. With OMB's combined questions, schools and FFRDCs that do not currently collect race for Hispanic individuals would need to begin doing so.

Changes to the race and ethnicity categories will require significant coordination for schools and FFRDCs. This coordination could be institution wide, with the state, or with other organizations or standards.

Schools and FFRDCs often indicated that if changes to the standards were mandated by the Federal or state government, they would have to comply; without that authority, however, it would be less likely.

Information on race and ethnicity is collected at the time of application for students and as part of onboarding for postdocs. Therefore, schools and FFRDCs will need lead time to revise their applications for entering students and postdocs. Schools and FFRDCs would be less likely to re-survey current students and postdocs using OMB's revised race and ethnicity categories. This suggests that complete race and ethnicity data using a new OMB standard would not be available until all current students and postdocs have left the school or FFRDC, which would likely take 5 years or more, having implications for GSS and FFRDC Postdoc Survey data quality.

The minimum category question was preferred over the detailed question by both schools and FFRDCs, although some participants saw value in the level of detail that the detailed question provides. Implementation of the detailed categories question would present many challenges for both schools and FFRDCs and would require a greater level of effort and more resources than the minimum categories version.

Both schools and FFRDCs expressed concerns with the level of detail in the detailed categories version. These concerns included the following:

- Questions about how the detailed categories were chosen and concerns that the detailed categories do not reflect their student or postdoc population well;
- Questions about the utility of the detailed categories;
- Concerns about data quality, including item nonresponse and inaccurate responses;
- Concerns about processing and reporting write-ins;
- Concerns about aggregating all individuals who select multiple races or ethnicities into a single "Multiracial and Multiethnic" category for reporting purposes;
- Concerns about burden on students and postdocs; and
- Concerns about disclosure risk.

There were mixed opinions about whether the addition of MENA would improve or reduce data quality.

Regardless of version, some schools and FFRDCs noted that the ordering for the minimum categories, especially the placement of "White" first, could create Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion concerns.

# Appendices

Agency Reports from Testing with Households and Individuals

A.  National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Omnibus Cognitive Testing

B.  U.S. Census Bureau Household/Individual Race and Ethnicity Cognitive Testing

C.  National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Research with Farmers and Ranchers

D.  U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Qualitative and Quantitative Testing

Agency Reports from Testing with Establishments

E.  Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Research with Law Enforcement and Correctional Agencies

F.  U.S. Census Bureau Annual Business Survey

G.  Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey, Treatment Episode Data Set, and Mental Health Client Level Data

H.  National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) Survey of Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science and Engineering

**Cognitive Interview Evaluation of the Proposed Combined Race and Ethnicity Question: Interim Report to the Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity**

National Center for Health Statistics
Collaborating Center for Questionnaire Design and Evaluation Research

Stephanie Willson
Alisú Schoua-Glusberg

## Introduction

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), in collaboration with Research Support Services (RSS), is conducting a cognitive interview evaluation of the newly proposed combined race and ethnicity question as it appears in the Federal Register Notice. Although the study is ongoing, in the interest of time constraints, this document presents to the Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity findings established to this point, to include a total of 62 cognitive interviews.[1]

Because federal surveys are administered different ways, the question was tested in two languages (English and Spanish) and in two modes, a self-administered mode and an interviewer-administered mode.[2] This interim report documents the phenomena being captured by the question. It also discusses how the framework of the combined question influences the question-response process in terms of how respondents choose an answer and any difficulties they encounter in doing so.

This report has three sections. The next section describes the study methodology, including the procedure for sampling, the data collection method, and analysis plan. The third section of the report presents the findings, including 1) four interpretive patterns that formed the foundation for how respondents decided to report their race and ethnicity, 2) the question-response process exhibited by respondents who answered Middle Eastern or North African (because it is a newly proposed category), respondents who were Afro-Latino/a (to address concerns about the question's ability to capture this group), respondents who are Black or African American, and monolingual Spanish speaking respondents, and 3) an assessment of the performance of the question by mode of administration.

## Methodology

### Sample

The race and ethnicity question was evaluated along with a single non-binary gender item and other questions on cancer screening and COVID 19. Sample selection for the project was purposive; that is, the aim was to choose respondents who met criteria relevant to the questions under investigation. Because this project includes multiple topics, recruitment was based not only on racial and ethnic variety, but also on experiences with COVID 19 and age (to align with cancer screening

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[1] Once interviewing is complete, a full report will follow.
[2] Each version can be seen in attachments 1 and 2.

recommendations). Recruitment was carried out through a combination of flyers, special interest groups, and respondent referrals.

The demographic breakdown of respondents appears in Tables 1 and 2.  A total of 62 interviews were completed, 39 in English and 23 in Spanish.  Most of the Hispanic respondents (23) were interviewed in Spanish, but a few (7) were interviewed in English.

**Table 1: Respondent Race and Ethnicity by Language as Reported in the Interview (n=62)\***

|  | English (n=39) | Spanish (n=23) |
|---|---|---|
| **Non-Hispanic** | 40 | 6 |
| White | 18 | 5 |
| Black | 10 | 1 |
| Asian | 4 | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2 | 0 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 6 | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 0 | 0 |
| **Hispanic** | 7 | 23 |

\*Numbers do not add to denominators because respondents could select more than one category.

**Table 2:  Respondent Age and Gender by Language (n=62)**

|  | English (n=39) | Spanish (n=23) |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** |  |  |
| 18-29 | 4 | 3 |
| 30-49 | 20 | 12 |
| 50-64 | 11 | 8 |
| 65 and over | 4 | 0 |
| **Gender** |  |  |
| Male | 13 | 5 |
| Female | 26 | 18 |

**Data collection**

Staff at the Collaborating Center for Questionnaire Design and Evaluation Research (CCQDER) and RSS conducted all 62 interviews.  Table 3 illustrates the number of interviews conducted by language and instrument version (self- versus interviewer-administered).  The sample was divided roughly in half, with 33 respondents receiving the interviewer-administered version and 29 receiving the self-administered version.[3]  All interviews were conducted virtually and lasted no longer than one hour.  Upon completion of the interview, respondents received a $50 remuneration.

**Table 3:  Version of Instrument Tested by Language**

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[3] Slightly more interviews were conducted using the interviewer-administered version because not all respondents had access to a computer – a necessary requirement to complete the fillable pdf instrument virtually.  (Some respondents were on a smartphone or tablet.)

| | English (n=39) | Spanish (n=23) | Total (n=62) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Instrument Version** | | | |
| Self-Administered | 19 | 10 | 29 |
| Interviewer-Administered | 20 | 13 | 33 |

Interviewers first administered the survey questions as intended under actual field conditions and obtained respondents' answers to all the questions. The combined race and ethnicity question appeared as the first question in the test instrument and was followed by the other topics. The self-administered version was completed on-screen by respondents, while the interviewer-administered version was read aloud to respondents. The second part of the interview consisted of retrospective probing designed to capture contextual insight into the ways in which respondents interpreted the question, considered and weighed out relevant aspects of their lives, and formulated a response based on that consideration.

Upon completion of the interviews, all were summarized and uploaded into Q-Notes, a software application for data storage and analysis of cognitive interviews. Six CCQDER interviewers conducted the English interviews, and two RSS interviewers conducted the Spanish interviews. All interviewers were survey methodologists with qualitative training. Additionally, the use of Q-Notes allowed the Principal Investigator to monitor data quality as interviews were being completed.

**Data analysis**

Data analysis was conducted according to the grounded theory approach, which inductively generates explanations of how respondents answered the race and ethnicity question. This method generates explanations of response error and various interpretive patterns that are closely tied to the empirical data. This includes the constant comparative method of analysis, in which analysts continually compare data findings to original data, resulting in data synthesis and reduction (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Suter 2012).

Several levels of analysis were performed, per Miller et al. (2014). First, analysts synthesized interview data into summaries, detailing how each respondent interpreted the question and formulated their answers. Next, analysts compared summaries across respondents, identifying common themes. Once themes were identified, analysts compared themes across subgroups, revealing ways in which different groups of respondents processed the question differently depending on their differing experiences and socio-cultural backgrounds. Finally, analysts drew conclusions, determining and explaining how the question performed as it functioned within the context of respondents' various experiences and socio-cultural locations. In each analytic step, data were reduced into a theoretical summary detailing the question's performance. As such, these different analytic steps represent both data reduction and a movement toward larger conceptual themes. These themes are discussed next.

## Findings

### The Question-Response Process of Reporting Race and ethnicity

For some respondents, reporting race and ethnicity is always a straightforward task into which they put little thought. These respondents answered this question on race and ethnicity in much the same way

they would answer any question on race and ethnicity; therefore, it posed no discernable difficulty for them. In fact, the process of answering was so reflexive that it was difficult (or impossible) for some respondents to explain the rationale behind their answers. This was often true for respondents who chose 'White.' For example, when one respondent was asked to explain his answer, his only reply was, "I'm White…Just White." Another respondent also struggled articulating why he chose 'White,' but tried to offer an explanation. It seemed clear he had never given it much thought. He said, "Um. Well, I…[Thinks]. Appearance for one thing. My parents are both White. My brothers are both White. My children are both White. Um. [shakes head] I was brought up knowing I was white." It was not only respondents who chose the 'White' category. Others also had ready-made responses and struggled with providing a rationale. One respondent said, "So, it's just like – 'African American.' So, out of habit I just choose 'African American.'" It was similar for other respondents who marked 'Hispanic.' One respondent said, "I always answer that. And it's always been the same." Another respondent said, "Basically that's how I've done it all my life."

While the above respondents answered on the basis of predetermined responses, many other respondents demonstrated a more complex cognitive process in providing an answer. Race and ethnicity took on multiple dimensions for other respondents and, depending on the purpose of providing such information, their answers can vary. As a result, the (perceived) intent of the combined race/ethnicity question was taken into account by many respondents as they decided how to answer.

However, the intent of the question was not consistently understood and may be described as having two competing interpretations. The first is represented by respondents who understood the question to be asking them to report their personal understanding of their own race and ethnicity. The second interpretation is illustrated by respondents who thought the question was asking about their genealogy. This interpretation was often inspired by the structure of the question itself, specifically by its level of detail (i.e., number of subcategories). These interpretations and their impact on question response are detailed next.

*Question Intent: How respondents think about their race and ethnicity*

Four patterns emerged to form the foundation of how respondents conceptualize their race and ethnicity. These patterns (or dimensions of race/ethnicity) are similar to those found by Miller and Willson (2002) and Willson and Dunston (2017) and are identified as cultural, social, administrative, and ancestral. Although the patterns are conceptually distinct, in reality they are not mutually exclusive and have elements that overlap. The cultural dimension is characterized by a feeling of connectedness to a group which arises from shared cultural ideas and practices. The social dimension of race and ethnicity refers to the way others in society view and define a person. In the US this is often based on physical features, most notably skin tone, but can also include cultural aspects (such as clothing, food, or religion). The administrative dimension is how a person answers in an official capacity. For example, reporting race and ethnicity on standardized questions can depend on the purpose of the form or survey. Finally, the ancestral pattern is based on genealogy, often colloquially referred to as a person's "family tree." These ways of thinking about race and ethnicity (alone or in combination) were often brought to bear on how respondents chose to answer.

Cultural:  Respondents who thought of their race or ethnicity in this way often omitted other race and ethnic groups from their answer, even if those groups were part of their ancestry.  For example, one respondent who told the cognitive interviewer that his mother was Asian did not include Asian in his answer.  Part of the explanation is because he was not exposed to his mother or to Asian culture.  He said, "I'm not Asian, I don't speak Chinese, I don't speak Korean."  Another respondent discussed her American Indian lineage (her mother was Black and American Indian) but did not include it in her answer.  She explained "I don't really connect with it. The only time I talk about it is if people say something about my mom's hair or something like that. I might joke about it – like I have half my mom's hair and half my dad's hair."

Another respondent chose only 'Black' but told the interviewer she also had White in her background.  When asked why she reported only Black, she said:

> "Yes. Because that is the way that I was raised. I was raised only by my mother. My mother, her grandfather was White, but her mother was half White and half Black and her father was Black, and I was raised by them, and our community was Black. You know what I mean, like the family was all Black the people I lived around were Black…I mean my neighborhood was actually pretty diverse, but the people I actually had dealings with outside of school were Black people. So I just identify with being Black. I eat foods that Black people eat, I speak like a Black person, you know what I mean?"

Social:  The respondent above, who said his mother was Asian, did not mark 'Asian.'  When asked why, he describes not only on his cultural upbringing, but also his physical appearance – a characteristic endemic to the American experience.  He said, "I should have like a little gene of Asian, probably my hair, skin color, eye or something. I have none. I classify myself all Black [in appearance]."  Another respondent more clearly identified the phenomenon of being defined a certain way based on appearance.  He said, "I don't want to speak for all black people, but some of us do know that we do have Caucasian American in us. But we don't identify with that, I guess. Because, if I come on here and say, 'Caucasian American' you might come on here like, 'Oh, yeah, sure you are [sarcastic tone]!'"

Another respondent also chose 'Black' and linked her rationale to her treatment by society in general.  She explained:

> "I'm reminded that I'm Black daily. And because, the color of my skin doesn't allow me to even, even if I was Puerto Rican if I were to walk outside, I would definitely have to explain to everyone I walked past that I'm Puerto Rican instead of Black. So even if I *did* have Puerto Rican, even if I was Haitian and Puerto Rican, I would still identify as Black because it would take too much time and be too stressful to explain to somebody that I'm Puerto Rican."

An Afro-Latina respondent echoed this perspective.  She chose to report only 'Hispanic' even though she discussed her complex genealogy with the interviewer.  She said, "I am Dominican because I was born in the Dominican Republic. However, from my mother and my father's side I have German, I have Spaniard, Italian and African. So I have all those things. That I know of. God knows what else is my DNA breakdown."  Her decision to report only Hispanic related to her perceptions of how she is defined in this country.  She said:

"Because in this country it doesn't feel right for me to choose the other two [White and Black]. Because we're lumped into that sum of Hispanic -- into that group. So it doesn't feel less true to me as if I was back in my own country and I was being asked the same question. I live in a neighborhood where there's all cultures and I'm still considered Hispanic. White people don't consider me White. Black people don't consider me Black. Even Black people from the Islands don't consider me -- they still see me as Hispanic."

<u>Administrative</u>: Respondents who have the ability to report themselves in different ways often take the purpose of the form or survey into account when they answer questions on race and ethnicity. For example, one respondent who answered only 'Black' talked to the interviewer about her White and Native American background. When asked why she did not report those races she explained, "Well, I went on a search to get my DNA tested or whatever because I know that we certainly have White in our family. We certainly have Native American in our family. We certainly have African in our family." But because the interview also included questions on COVID 19 and cancer screenings, she chose only 'Black' "just to keep it simple, because I thought it was going to be more focused on health things, so I thought that for this purpose, I would just keep it simple with the 'African American' [subcategory]."

*Reluctance to answer*: Sometimes the purpose of forms or surveys may not be clear to respondents and are, therefore, not necessarily trusted. This creates the potential for missing data. For example, one respondent marked 'Asian' but no subcategory. When asked about this omission, she explained:

"I would not specify…And now, like I said, I just don't put it because…knowing a lot of history in this country and what this country has done, like interned the Japanese Americans, and like I said, especially when they don't break out the other groups…Like for example for White, if it just says White. You know, if you are only going to target a certain group then..."

The respondent went on to admit that if she were to provide a subcategory, it would have been Chinese.

Another respondent with Russian ancestry also chose to omit that from his answer. Similar to the previous respondent, he expressed concern about admitting such information given the war in Ukraine. He said:

"Well, I know about my parents and grandparents and where they came from. On my…father's side it was from Belarus, which at that time was Russian. So that's why I said that...I was a little hesitant. Because Russia is not a good place now. I wouldn't say it's shameful, but with what Russians are doing in Ukraine, I certainly wouldn't identify as a Russian."

This phenomenon was also observed in the Spanish interviews. For example, one respondent discussed how sometimes people are afraid of giving more details for fear of discrimination. As a result, even though she did answer 'Mexican or Mexican American,' she does not always answer the same way. She said she prefers not to give details when she is talking to someone "scary" like a lawyer or the police. In such cases she just says 'Latina' and does not elaborate.

*Question Intent: The Impact of Question Structure on the Question-Response Process*

The examples above show that many respondents understood the combined race question to be asking for a personal assessment of their race and ethnicity. As a result, they provided answers that drew on cultural, social, and administrative aspects of race and ethnicity. However, other respondents saw the detailed subcategories of this particular question and understood it as a question of ancestry (irrespective of personal identity). One respondent provides an example of how the detailed categories played a role in defining question intent. He said:

> "I noticed with the race and ethnicity demographic that it's more specific. Because obviously you want to know which particular group or race that that person is…um…belongs to. Like for 'White,' because there are different subcultures or subraces of White people and same with 'Hispanic' and then 'Black or African American,' you know American Black or Jamaican. So this is cool. It's good, you know?"

This interpretation caused some respondents to provide answers that reflected their genealogy (to the best of their knowledge), not necessarily answers that reflected their personal sense of self. For example, one respondent who saw herself simply as White ("Because I look like I'm albino [laughs]. I have fair skin. I guess people acknowledge me to be White, Caucasian.") answered the question in a way that included every element of her background. She said, "I just did my 23AndMe recently…German, Irish, French, English…that's pretty much what I am, and I'm like, um, some weird…0.6% of sub-Saharan African or something…" When she got to the 'Black or African American' category she said "I don't think a .6% on my genealogy really counts as…[trailed off]." When she saw 'Middle Eastern or North African,' she said, "It says I'm like .6% Moroccan." Unsure whether to include these races, she asked the interviewer, "Should I add that?" The interviewer said it was her decision to make. Deciding it wasn't "enough" heritage, she justified omitting these categories by saying, "Clearly I don't look it [showing her arms to the camera, laughing]."

Another respondent also saw herself as White but did not have any sense of ethnic identity. She saw the subcategories and wondered if she should answer based on her genetic ancestry or answer based on her self-perception, which would entail leaving those boxes blank. She said, "I have French and Irish in me. Would I put that?" The interviewer explained it was her decision. She ultimately decided the question was asking about genealogy and answered based on what she knew about hers. She said, "I think I'm 3/4 French, 1/4 Irish. I believe."

Another respondent who marked 'Hispanic' (in Spanish) normally does not think about reporting his subgroup affiliation. But he thought it was appropriate to do so here, given the structure of the question. He said, "So, I, myself, don't get offended if I'm just [able to] put the 'Hispanic or Latino' category. I don't have to say that I'm Puerto Rican. But, if you're going to ask that question, then I'm certainly going to note that."

In sum, the format and level of detail in the combined question prompted some respondents to see the intent of the question as asking about their family lineage. Some respondents would answer questions on race or ethnicity on this basis to begin with, especially those for whom genealogy forms the basis of their personal understandings of race and ethnicity. However, other respondents who typically think in more cultural or social ways about their race and ethnicity ended up providing an answer to this question

on the basis of their (known) ancestry – something they would not normally do.  This was especially (but not exclusively) true of White respondents.

It is important to note that in no cases were respondents offering "incorrect" answers about their race or ethnicity because they "misunderstood" the question.  It's more accurate to say that the complexity of the race and ethnicity construct, along with the detailed subcategories of the question, allows for a range of authentic individual representations.  For this reason, the combined question performed well – everyone was able to choose categories that were acceptable to them.

*Question Intent:  The Impact of Instructions and Question Stem*

One concern regarding the nature of the combined race and ethnicity question was the extent to which respondents understand both the question wording and instructions on how to answer.  The wording evaluated in this study is as follows:

> **What is your race or ethnicity?** *Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.*

As mentioned above, the detailed categories and the combined race and ethnicity feature of the question caused some respondents to reflect on the intent of the question. The patterns (or dimensions of race and ethnicity) that they chose to frame their responses were informed by their personal life experiences and/or by the structure of the question itself, specifically, the level of detail in the subcategories.  For others, answering was a non-reflective activity for which they had ready-made answers.

For these reasons, the term "race or ethnicity," along with the instructions, had little bearing on how most respondents answered the question.  In other words, how respondents may (or may not) define "race" and "ethnicity" in the abstract played little, if any, role in how they chose to answer.  By far it was the categories themselves, and respondents' self-perceptions vis-à-vis the categories, that shaped how respondents answered.

Another reason that the wording of the question stem and instructions did not have much impact on question response is simply that many respondents did not focus on them.  For example, one respondent commented that normally he skims through the directions and doesn't read such things verbatim ("Yeah I'm a skimmer.").  This was typical; most respondents paid little attention to the question stem or the instructions.  Additionally, respondents seemed to intuit that the question was 'mark all that apply,' though some did notice (or hear) this aspect of the instruction when answering.

**Noted Difficulties with Certain Subcategories**

Confusion with 'English' Subcategory:  Several respondents were confused over the term 'English' as a subcategory of 'White.'  Often it was mistaken as language, not ethnicity (especially as respondents did not necessarily read the question stem).  For example, one respondent said, "I speak English, but I didn't think [to choose] 'White' because I'm not White, I just speak English as my basic language and ethnicity."  Another did not realize her mistake until the probing part of the interview.  She said:

"You know what? Now that I'm looking at it, maybe I shouldn't have chosen 'English.' I'm thinking…it's 'White…what do I speak?' And then I'm like – oh 'race or ethnicity' that's dumb [meaning her interpretation as 'what language do you speak']. Now I'm looking at all this, wait…do I uncheck it? I'm not English, I'm white."

The word 'British' might be a better option than 'English' given that, for most people, the categories (not the question stem) define the question.

Confusion with 'Mexican or Mexican American' subcategory: While most of the subcategories refer to a non-US country of origin, 'Mexican or Mexican American' has a dissimilar framework. Because it is meant to include both American-born *and* Mexican-born people, this creates the potential for confusion, as was demonstrated in two Spanish interviews. For example, one respondent did not understand this subcategory to include people of Mexican descent who were born in *either* the US *or* in Mexico. She left it blank and said, "I studied the list of all the races [options] and I'm 'Hispanic or Latino.' I was expecting to see Mexican, but I only see Mexican American." Although the subcategory does include 'Mexican,' combining it with 'Mexican American' shifted the meaning of the subcategory and made its intent unclear, especially in relation to logic of the other subcategories.

**Group Patterns**

Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) respondents: At this time, only six interviews have been conducted with respondents who chose the MENA category, but the findings so far are commensurate with earlier work with this group (see Willson and Dunston, 2017). Respondents who identified as having a MENA background chose this category and were able to find the appropriate subcategory. The term 'Middle Eastern or North African' resonated with most respondents. For example, when asked if this was a term she would use herself, one respondent replied, "Yeah, it is, definitely." Another respondent was asked if she thought the MENA category felt more authentic than having to choose 'White,' which she typically does in the absence of MENA. She said, "I wouldn't describe it as authentic I would describe it as accurate. I feel like geographically, scientifically, to my mind this is very accurate." Other respondents also described preference for having a MENA category as an option instead of having to choose 'White' or 'Black:'

"When I was applying to [college], all the forms I just checked 'White.' [But]…White doesn't quite – like I don't feel I have a lot in common with Irish or Italian [people]."

"I just saw 'Iranian' and, frankly, it's so unusual to see Iranian. Because I don't see my category whenever I fill something out. So, I'll either do Caucasian or Asian. Which neither of them are, really – I mean the Caucuses are right there, so technically we're Caucasian. But not the way you guys think about it."

"When there is no 'Middle Eastern' category [when recently applying for a job] there was 'African.' So I just chose that since Egypt's in Africa."

The MENA category also captured respondents with multiracial backgrounds, even if they did not always think of themselves in these terms. For example, one respondent marked 'White' and 'MENA'

because her mother is White and her father is Palestinian. She answered the question from a genealogy perspective but when asked to describe how she normally describes herself, she said, "Palestinian American." Her sense of self was influence by a social perspective because, she explained, "I'm never seen as a White person." Another respondent who identified as 'White' found himself also choosing MENA for the first time because the question caused him to think about his racial and ethnic background in terms of genealogy. Unlike the previous respondent, he did not think of himself as Middle Eastern or North African, but the structure of the question caused him to answer according to what he knew about his ancestry. He said, "Put, actually, 'Italian'…and then go down to...I'm actually Armenian. So that's by Turkey, so I guess that would be the Middle East." This is another example of how the categories – and the number of categories seen by respondents – define the question and prompt answers based on genealogy, not self-perception.

<u>Black or African American Respondents</u>: Respondents who are descendants of enslaved people were generally able to choose an answer as intended by the question, that is, 'Black or African American' as the main category and then 'African American' as the subcategory. However, some respondents were somewhat confused by the subcategory options or admitted that it would be impossible to provide an answer because they had no way of knowing from what country their ancestors were taken. For example, one respondent demonstrated some confusion and said, "I would say 'African American' [thinks]…I'm sorry – that threw me off with all those [subcategories]. I would say 'African American.'" When asked about the source of his confusion he said:

> "It's weird because I'm, like, I guess a natural born Black American. So, I don't – my lineage doesn't – unless you go WAY back – trace back to Africa. So, it's interesting that African American, the subset started listing African countries. Which technically…it's weird. Even though I identify as African American, I don't really see myself as African. I identify more as 'Black American.'"

The act of asking specific African lineage of Black respondents can be awkward, and even potentially insensitive. The next two respondents illustrate why:

> "I'm African American, I was born here, and according to history that was told before, we've basically not, you know, we're from Africa, but our predecessors…are from a particular place in Africa. But it's something we don't actually know, if we are from a particular part of Africa. Just know we're from Africa."

> "I don't even say that I'm African American, I say that I'm Black, you know. But mostly I say that I'm an American because my family has been American for a very long time and even though they weren't considered American back then, I don't identify with anything beyond America. I just know that, because my family comes from slavery, there was a lot of mixing."

A Black respondent who was born in another country articulated the issue from the opposite perspective. He said, "Again, because I'm a naturalized American citizen, my exposure to different cultures and my origins are different than other Black people in America. So, I still identify as a Black person, but I know my roots are in the Caribbean." When asked why he chose that category if he did not think it fit, he explained, "Because that's the only one available that kind of captures part of my identity."

It seems that while the category 'Black or African American' is meant to capture both people who are descendants of enslaved people *and* people who more recently immigrated to the US by their own volition, it is not always seen as entirely befitting to merge both groups into this category.

Afro-Latino/a respondents:  Only four respondents who answered 'Black' and 'Hispanic' were interviewed (three in English and one in Spanish) due to both time constraints and recruitment difficulties.[4]  However, those who were interviewed offered important insights.

For two respondents the question worked as intended; that is, to capture respondents with both Hispanic and Black backgrounds.  For example, one respondent chose both Black and Hispanic and explained, "I would say I'm Black (I'm American) and I have some – I'm mixed with Spanish. So Black American mixed with Puerto Rican." Similarly, a second respondent explained (in Spanish), "I chose 'Black' for my skin color and 'Hispanic' because I speak Spanish and I'm from Central America. I know we, as Blacks, we come from Africans. I'm Latina because of my culture and customs."

However, two other respondents chose only one option ('Hispanic') because they answered from a more cultural perspective of their sense of self.  One respondent explained to the interviewer:

> "Um, yeah, so I'm actually mixed. I'm Hispanic/Latino and I'm African American. And I know you said I could choose, like, both, but I really, if it comes to just identifying myself, and I have the option, I just choose 'Hispanic/Latino,' because that's, even though I'm mixed, that's the culture I most identify with.  I was raised in a Hispanic household. And that's, like, the only family that I know."

The rationale was the same for the second respondent who chose only one option.  She said, "No. I mean, I am Dominican, but I do have Italian in me. African. I'm multiracial. Afro-Latina. So I don't know if I need to click more than just 'Dominican' – which is where I'm from." The interviewer asked how she would mark it on, say, a Census form.  The respondent replied, "Just like I did now. Just Dominican."

In sum, although the structure of question (containing many subcategories) prompted two respondents to answer the question based on their genealogy, this was not the case for the other two respondents with Hispanic and Black backgrounds.  They answered the question based on the way they personally defined their race and ethnicity, which was driven largely by a cultural understanding.

Interviews in Spanish:  Patterns that were observed in the English interviews were often mirrored in the Spanish interviews as well.  That is, respondents interviewed in Spanish also answered on the basis of cultural, social, administrative, or ancestral understandings of race and ethnicity.  Overall, respondents were able to find a response category that they felt comfortable choosing.  Sometimes this meant

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[4] People who answered both 'Black' and 'Hispanic' on the recruitment screener were included in the sample in an effort to interview Afro-Latino/a respondents.  This was no guarantee that the respondents screened into the study self-identified as Afro-Latino/a; however, there was not sufficient time to work through Afro-Latino/a community organizations in order to recruit respondents who identified specifically as Afro-Latino/a.

choosing more than one category (such as 'White' and 'Hispanic') but more often they chose just one category, 'Hispanic.' Additionally, this was true even when the term 'Hispanic' was seen as an American construct. These patterns are discussed next.

*Choosing one versus more than one main category*: The detailed subcategories under the 'White' category caused some respondents to refrain from choosing 'White' along with 'Hispanic.' This seemed, in part, due to the subcategories framing 'White' as a European category. For example, one respondent saw the 'White' subcategories and said, "I do not identify with any of those." In fact, many respondents chose only the 'Hispanic' category because it was the one they identified with either culturally or in terms of their ancestry. For example, one respondent chose only 'Hispanic.' When asked why, she said, "Because I am from the Latin American continent, and the country I belong to is Mexico." However, she went on to tell the interviewer, "We are also White. White race from Mexico." She did not select 'White,' however, because, she said, the 'Hispanic or Latino' option was available and made more sense to her. The following are more examples of respondents' rationales for choosing only 'Hispanic:'

> "Because I come from a Hispanic country, a country in Latin America."

> "Because my native language is Spanish, and I was born in Puerto Rico. Being born in Puerto Rico makes me Latino."

> "'Hispanic' because my language is Spanish, and my I have Mexican roots, that is the reason why I answered that way. My ancestors are Mexican."

Some respondents, however, did choose both 'Hispanic' and 'White.' For example, one respondent described a personal definition of race and said, "I consider myself White by race. Ethnically, I describe myself as a Hispanic or Latino person." The choice of including 'White' was sometimes motivated by a social dimension of race and ethnicity, i.e., identities that are defined by others. For example, one respondent said that when she fills out forms she is classified as 'White' because she is from Mexico City, "not from some province, I'm from the city itself, and for that they classify me as 'White.'" But she also chose 'Hispanic/Latina' "because I belong to Latin America, I was born there." From a more administrative perspective, another respondent also chose both 'Hispanic' and 'White' explaining that she is accustomed to filling out 'White' on most surveys.

*'Hispanic' is an American construct*: Several respondents, though having no issue with choosing 'Hispanic,' identified it as an American phenomenon. In this way, their answers reflect the social dimension of answering race and ethnicity questions in the US. As one respondent said, "They call us all Hispanics." Similarly, another respondent described how she came to understand the word. She said, "Before, when I had a social worker, she would assign me the option of 'White,' but then I started to understand that it is supposed to be 'Hispanic or Latino' because I come from Mexico." Finally, another respondent explained, "When we are here, when we immigrate to a different country, here you hear 'Hispanics.' And they mean those who speak Spanish. You always hear and you always understand that is Hispanics, Latinos. That is how others refer to the persons who have immigrated from South and Central America to the North."

**Mode Effects**

The survey instrument was tested in two modes – interviewer-administered and self-administered. While this was primarily not a mode effect study, some mode issues were observed. Earlier it was noted that the response categories defined the intent of the question. Hence, when difficulties arose, they were often centered around the response options. Moreover, similar patterns of difficulty were observed in both the English and Spanish interviews.

*Interviewer-administered issues*

Wording for the interviewer-administered version was adapted from the self-administered version and, as such, was somewhat awkward to read aloud. Improvements to the question stem and instructions could be made in order to allow for a smoother verbal delivery.

Most difficulties that arose, however, are related to the sheer number of subcategories, of which there were seven under each main race category. This made the question somewhat cumbersome to administer. As a result, there were occasions in which respondents either asked the interviewer to repeat the categories or, more often, offered answers before hearing all the choices. In the virtual interview, where the interviewer and respondent could see each other, this was not a significant impediment, but it might prove to be more problematic (in terms of comprehension and survey length) when administered over the telephone.

By comparison, however, the interviewer-administered version outperformed the self-administered version.

*Self-administered issues*

The self-administered mode presented more and different challenges. Specifically, it was not clear to some respondents how they should complete the form. The form was offered as a fillable pdf. Respondents were given control of the computer so that they could complete it on their own. Some respondents had no difficulty with the task and filled in the form as intended. However, many respondents did not. For example, some respondents did not physically check a main race category; they only selected a subcategory and assumed that the main category was implied.

In addition, many respondents did not understand that they had the ability to type in a subcategory that was not offered as a check-box option (essentially, this open field was an 'other-specify'). The form listed each main category with an instruction to "*provide details below*" alongside the option (for example: **WHITE** - *Provide details below…*). Respondents did not always understand how to proceed. For example, one respondent checked the 'White' main category with no difficulty. However, he was confused about the subcategories because he did not see the open-text box below the subcategories which read: *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.* He only saw the categories with check boxes. Unsure of what to do, he said, "Now, when it says 'White' and all the different - Irish, English, and French - I'm trying to think the best thing to put there. Because my ancestry is half Russian and half French. But I'm just your basic White, Caucasian American. So should I just click 'White?'" In other words, because one of his ethnicities (Russian) was not represented with a check box, he thought he had no way to include it. Thus, to check a single box (French) would be a misrepresentation in his mind.

Another respondent illustrates the same dilemma. She said, "Well, it says enter additional details, so I guess I can click 'French,' but I'll have to leave the Scottish and the Russian ancestry blank I guess. Because it's not an option. So I'll click 'French' and 'White' and then we'll have to leave the Scottish and the Russian to the imagination." The interviewer asked whether the respondent saw the other-specify open field: "Oh! No, I didn't, actually."

On the other hand, one respondent (a Spanish interview) did see the open-text field but did not necessarily understand its purpose. She saw "provide details" and thought it was asking for a discussion of her whole ancestry associated with her choice of 'Mexican or Mexican American.'

Many of the problems associated with the self-administered mode, as tested in this study, could be minimized in different formats. It is possible, for example, that a web format could more effectively guide respondents through the process of answering. For instance, a web survey could expose respondents to the main categories first (potentially eliminating missing data due to misunderstandings), followed by the corresponding subcategories. In addition, the purpose of the open-field, 'other-specify,' option could be better displayed as well.

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# OMB Race and Ethnicity Cognitive Testing: Findings and Recommendations

# Final Report

Prepared for

**U.S. Census Bureau**
Center for Behavioral Science Methods
Suitland, MD

Prepared by

**Deirdre Middleton, Carlye Arcas, Herschel Sanders, Y. Patrick Hsieh, and Victoria Dounoucos**
RTI International
3040 E. Cornwallis Road
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

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# Executive Summary

This study was designed to recruit participants for and conduct cognitive testing of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) initial set of recommended revisions to the statistical standards for collecting race and ethnicity data (88 FR 5373).[1] Updates to the race and ethnicity question included (1) collecting race and ethnicity together, with a single question; (2) adding a response category for "Middle Eastern or North African," separate from the "White" category; and (3) updating terminology, definitions, and question wording. To cognitively test these changes, the RTI International/Research Support Services (RSS) team conducted 100 interviews—80 interviews with English-speaking participants and 20 interviews with Spanish-speaking participants. RTI/RSS recruited participants to represent each of the minimum category and detailed category racial and ethnic groups. All interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams within the Census Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) environment. Data collection began on April 12, 2023, and concluded on June 26, 2023.

Testing examined how participants interacted with and responded to two versions of the combined race and ethnicity question. Half of the participants answered Version A first and half of the participants answered version B first. Version A was programmed as a vertical unfolding question—when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, the detailed categories would immediately open beneath the selected response options. Version B was programmed as a two-page question—when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, they would click "Next" to advance to the next page where they would answer the detailed categories question for each race/ethnicity category they selected in the minimum categories question.

Overall, testing revealed that the combined race/ethnicity question performed well. Most participants had no difficulty in understanding the question or selecting a response for themselves and others in their household. Additionally, participants displayed a strong understanding of the question instructions (i.e., "Select all that apply," "Provide details below," and "Enter, for example…"). When participants did struggle to select a response, it was commonly because they were either unsure of (1) some of their racial/ethnic background, (2) how far back in their ancestry to report, (3) the racial/ethnic background of non-family members who lived in their household, or (4) how to report for U.S.-born children of immigrants among Spanish-speaking participants.

Participants who identified as Middle Eastern or North African (MENA), provided positive feedback on the inclusion of this category as a response option and felt they were able to identify themselves more accurately within the response options. Participants who identified as Hispanic or Latino expressed a similar appreciation for the inclusion of this response

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[1] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-01635

option as part of the race/ethnicity question as opposed to a separate question. More generally, participants liked that they were able to select multiple response options and write in a description of their background if they did not see themselves represented in the listed response options of the detailed categories question.

Though some participants expressed preferences for one version of the question over another, there were no differences in how participants answered the two versions of the question. Both versions performed similarly well, and participants did not change their responses when answering the alternate version of the question. Based on the findings detailed in this report, we present limited recommendations for changes to the combined race/ethnicity question and also outline some potential areas for future research.

# 1. Project Overview: Background and Project Purpose

In January 2023, the OMB released an initial set of recommended revisions to the statistical standards for collecting and reporting race and ethnicity data across federal agencies. The initial recommendations included (1) collecting race and ethnicity together with a single question; (2) adding a response category for "Middle Eastern or North African," separate from the "White" category; and (3) updating terminology, definitions, and question wording. The purpose of this study was to recruit participants for and conduct cognitive testing on the updates to the race and ethnicity question format, terminology and wording of questions, and instructions for respondents. RTI/RSS conducted 100 interviews—80 English-speaking participants and 20 Spanish-dominant or monolingual Spanish-speaking participants. The two primary goals of cognitive testing were as follows:

1. Understand how the combined race and ethnicity question format affected response distributions, respondent interpretation, self-identification, and understanding.
2. Assess whether changes to the question stem and simplification of instructions affected respondent understanding and response.

This report presents the findings from the cognitive testing and recommendations for changes to the race and ethnicity question and areas for future research.

# 2. Research Methods

The cognitive testing for the OMB race and ethnicity questions focused on participants' cognitive process while completing the questionnaire. The goal was to identify any elements that may have invoked unnecessary cognitive burden that prevented participants from effectively comprehending, recalling, judging, and reporting proper answers to the race and ethnicity question. Additionally, the cognitive interviews aimed to assess differences in the cognitive process by subgroup and measure how well the Spanish translations performed for monolingual/dominant Spanish speakers.

## 2.1 Data Collection Period

Cognitive interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams, providing the flexibility to achieve geographic diversity in participant recruitment. The RTI/RSS staff conducted 80 English cognitive interviews and 20 Spanish cognitive interviews to assess the new race and ethnicity question. The data collection period started on April 12, 2023, and was concluded on June 26, 2023.

## 2.2 Target Population and Eligibility Criteria

The target population for the cognitive interviews was non-institutionalized English-speaking and monolingual/dominant Spanish-speaking adults (18+) who lived in the United States. RTI/RSS assessed prospective recruits' characteristics and invited those with desirable traits to participate in cognitive interviews. The project team balanced the composition of the participant characteristics to ensure the coverage of key subgroups. **Table 2-1** outlines the recruitment characteristics and quotas for this study.

**Table 2-1.    Target recruitment characteristics of the study**

| Minimum Category | Detailed and Additional Categories | Minimum Number of Participants |
|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, and Tlingit | 5 |
| | Original peoples of North, Central, and South American not included above | 5 |
| Asian | Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese | 5 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in East Asia, Southeast Asia, or South Asia and not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, Thai, Bengali, and Mien etc. | 5 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Black or African American | African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, and Somali | 5 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, Kenyan, Liberian, Bahamian, etc. | 5 |
| Hispanic or Latino | Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, and Colombian | 2 English<br>10 Spanish |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures.<br>Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Guatemalan, Honduran, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, Peruvian, Venezuelan, etc. | 3 English<br>10 Spanish |
| | People from Central and South American, and Caribbean nationalities or ethnicities whose primary language is not Spanish (e.g., Brazil, Surinam, Guyana, Belize, French Guiana) | 5 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli | 5 |
| | People of Middle Eastern or North African nationalities or ethnicities not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, Tunisian, Chaldean, Assyrian, etc. | 5 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, and Marshallese | 5 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in the Pacific Islands not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Saipanese, Yapese, etc. | 5 |
| White | German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, and French | 5 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Europe. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, Slavic, Cajun, Roma, etc. | 5 |
| | People with White origins not listed above (e.g., Russian, or eastern European groups) | 5 |
| Additional Interviews in Any Category | As selected by contractor | 5 |
| **Total** | | **100** |

## 2.3   Recruitment Methods

To ensure efficient and successful recruitment of the targeted populations, the RTI/RSS team used a combination of online recruitment strategies and community-based methods that we have found effective over the past 2 decades. Specifically, we used online

advertising and targeted community-based advertising as the main recruitment strategies to solicit participation based on the participant characteristics detailed in **Table 2-1**.

## 2.3.1 Recruitment strategies

**Online Advertisements**. Online advertising was primarily used for recruiting English-speaking interview participants. The RTI/RSS team prepared a recruitment advertisement with a general description of recruiting research participants for a study evaluating race and ethnicity questions in a national survey. The team placed the advertisements on www.craigslist.com, which has proven effective for recruiting participants for virtual and in-person interviews. Specifically, we paid to post in the jobs/et cetera section for 12 major metropolitan areas across the country to recruit local respondents who may be more likely to meet rarer racial and ethnic characteristics. These metropolitan areas included Oahu and Maui, HI; Anchorage and Fairbanks, AK; Los Angeles and San Francisco, CA; Denver, CO; Phoenix, AZ; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; Boston, MA; New York, NY; and Washington DC. However, please note that recruitment was not restricted to individuals living in these metropolitan areas. Any person could have seen and responded to the ads, regardless of city or state of residence.

The RTI/RSS team also searched for online destinations frequented by affinity groups pertaining to the targeted participant characteristics. Although the team identified several Facebook groups oriented toward Middle Eastern or North African immigrants living in the United States, we were not able to gain any recruitment assistance or approval for posting advertisements within the groups to recruit participants. The team also did not find any online destinations for immigrants from the specific Pacific Islanders or Native American tribes listed in the targeted characteristics.

**Community-Based Strategies**. Community-based recruiting was primarily used to recruit monolingual/dominant Spanish-speaking interview participants and harder-to-reach English speakers. To this end, the RTI/RSS team worked directly with staff at community-based organizations that our team has collaborated with in the past, such as adult literacy groups or churches primarily serving Spanish speakers. The team also reached out to project staff's personal and professional networks to solicit research participation from monolingual Spanish speakers via word-of-mouth referral.

**Outreach to Past Census Bureau Cognitive Interview Participants**. In June 2023, the RTI/RSS team requested assistance from the Census Bureau in reaching out to participants of past Census Bureau cognitive testing projects. This was an alternative strategy that helped meet some of the hardest-to-reach characteristics for the prior call orders. The Census Bureau agreed to share the recruitment advertisement via email with a few dozen individuals who may be of (1) Middle Eastern or North African, (2) American Indian or Alaska Native, and (3) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander origins. The RTI/RSS team were

able to meet the required recruitment targets for both detailed categories of the Middle Eastern or North African origins after implementing this strategy.

### 2.3.2   Screening Process

With the guidance and approval of the Census Bureau project team, the RTI/RSS team developed the web-based recruitment screening survey and published the survey in the recruitment advertisement to record screening information from prospective recruits. Interested individuals were screened for eligibility criteria using a scripted series of questions. Specifically, the team determined the eligibility using three screening questions: (1) place of birth, (2) the current standard race and Hispanic origin questions of the Census Bureau, and (3) an open-ended question of self-description of ancestry or ethnic origins.

The recruitment lead reviewed the screening data, determined recruits' eligibility, and selected prospective recruits for interview assignments by implementing the following five steps of the screening process.

1. Review IP addresses to exclude massive or repeated entries.
2. Exclude entries without usable contact information.
3. Identify the recruits with a notable self-description of ancestry or ethnic origins for the recruitment targets.
4. Review IP addresses for the coded cases to exclude scammers from click farms or any entities with a foreign IP address (instituted in May 2023).
5. Code the detailed race and ethnicity categories from the self-description of ancestry or ethnic origins for the identified subset from the previous step.

### 2.3.3   Recruitment Outcomes

The RTI/RSS team completed all 80 English interviews and 20 Spanish interviews by the end of data collection and met most targeted characteristics, except for the detailed categories of (1) Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, and Tlingit and (2) both detailed categories of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. **Table 2-2** reports the distribution of the detailed race and ethnicity categories of the participants of the study. Note that categories in Table 2-2 are not mutually exclusive and a single respondent can fill more than one criteria, thus the total sums to more than 100.

**Table 2-2.    Final distribution of the detailed recruitment characteristics**

| Minimum Category | Detailed and Additional Categories | Min No. | Final No. |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, and Tlingit | 5 | 3 |
| | Original peoples of North, Central, and South American not included above | 5 | 6 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian | Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese | 5 | 8 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in East Asia, Southeast Asia, or South Asia and not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, Thai, Bengali, and Mien etc. | 5 | 5 |
| Black or African American | African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, and Somali | 5 | 14 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, Kenyan, Liberian, Bahamian, etc. | 5 | 7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, and Colombian | 2 Eng. 10 Esp. | 8 Eng. 10 Esp. |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Guatemalan, Honduran, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, Peruvian, Venezuelan, etc. | 3 Eng. 10 Esp. | 8 Eng. 10 Esp. |
| | People from Central and South American, and Caribbean nationalities or ethnicities whose primary language is not Spanish (e.g., Brazil, Surinam, Guyana, Belize, French Guiana) | 5 | 7 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli | 5 | 10 |
| | People of Middle Eastern or North African nationalities or ethnicities not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, Tunisian, Chaldean, Assyrian, etc. | 5 | 4 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, and Marshallese | 5 | 2 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in the Pacific Islands not included above. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Saipanese, Yapese, etc. | 5 | 2 |
| White | German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, and French | 5 | 17 |
| | Additional nationalities or ethnic groups originating in Europe. Examples of these groups include, but are not limited to, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, Slavic, Cajun, Roma, etc. | 5 | 9 |
| | People with White origins not listed above (e.g., Russian, or eastern European groups) | 5 | 11 |

| Additional Interviews in Any Category | As selected by contractor | 5 | — |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | | **100** | **121** |

## 2.4   Cognitive Interview Procedures

Interviewers contacted eligible participants via phone or email to schedule an interview time. After scheduling the interview, the interviewer emailed the participant a link to the electronic consent form to review and sign prior to the interview. During the interview, participants were asked to share their screen while completing the programmed questionnaire. Participants first completed one version of the combined race and ethnicity question for themselves and up to three members of their household. Interviewers then probed on participant understanding and response process. After the initial set of probes, participants then answered the alternate version of the combined race and ethnicity question and provided their feedback. All participants were given a $40 electronic Visa gift card incentive for their participation in the interview.

## 2.5   Race/Ethnicity Question Versions (A/B)

Cognitive testing examined how participants interacted with and responded to two versions of the combined race and ethnicity question. Half of the participants answered version A of the race and ethnicity question first while half of the participants answered version B first. Version A of the race and ethnicity question was programmed as a vertical unfolding question: when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, the detailed categories would immediately open beneath the selected response options (**Figure 2-1**).

**Figure 2-1.  Version A of the Race and Ethnicity Question**



Version B of the race and ethnicity question was programmed as a two-page question: when participants selected one of the race and ethnicity minimum categories, they would click

"Next" to advance to the next page where they would answer the detailed categories question for each race/ethnicity category they selected in the minimum categories question (**Figure 2-2**).

**Figure 2-2. Version B of the Race and Ethnicity Question**



5. What is your race and/or ethnicity? (Help)
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White
For example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.

☐ Hispanic or Latino
For example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.

☐ Black or African American
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 Barrow Inupiat, Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.

☐ Middle Eastern or North African
For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Israeli, etc.

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

NEXT

5a. Next, we will collect detailed information for each race or ethnicity selected.

**You said that you are White. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ German

☐ Irish

☐ English

☐ Italian

☐ Polish

☐ French

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

[                                        ]

[ NEXT ]

# 3. Findings

## 3.1 Ease or Difficulty of Responding

Overall, participants clearly understood the race/ethnicity question. Most participants assumed that the question was asking about their family heritage, country of origin, or where they were from. For example, when asked what information they thought the question was asking for, participants responded with, "my family heritage…family roots," "my origin," "country of origin…heritage," and "where [I] am from, specifically." Other participants assumed the question was asking how they identified. For example, according to one participant, "you're really asking for [our] cultural identification or cultural classifications. You're not really asking me to be honest about exactly what I have in me, but I feel like the question is really asking how [I] identify ethnically." Other participants thought about their country of origin, their cultural heritage, and how they identified. One participant shared, "I chose my answer for that question based on my heritage, culture, and identity" while another explained, "my origin or where I'm from, what I identify as." Many participants commented that the way they answered the race/ethnicity question was how they had always answered similar types of questions or that the options they selected were what they always selected when completing surveys, job applications, and other forms that ask for race/ethnicity information. One participant explained, "Black or African American. Those are my go-to answers and what I look for. If I am filling anything out, I look for Black or African American." Most participants did not go back and change their answer at any point, even after probing.

Overall, participants who were interviewed in Spanish did not have difficulty selecting responses from the options provided. Most Spanish speakers selected Hispanic or Latino as their minimum category, with a handful also selecting White or American Indian or Alaskan Native. When probed about how they decided on their answers, typical responses from those who selected Hispanic or Latino included participants citing the fact that they were from countries in Latin America or simply saying that was how they identified.

### 3.1.1 Ability to Select from Response Options

*English Interviews*

In general, participants were able to easily decide on their response(s) using the available response options for both the minimum category and detailed category questions. Furthermore, most participants felt they were able to quickly identify themselves using one or more of the response options provided, with many of them noting that the way they identified was listed as an example. In the words of one participant,

> "I know that I'm Korean, so I selected Asian, and they had these examples listed so I selected that one."

> "I am Iranian and that was specifically stated under Middle Eastern".

> "I chose Asian because it listed my specific nationality under Asian... I like that this clearly specified the word Filipino under Asian. So, I have no doubt that I could choose Asian in this particular question."

Even participants who wrote in a response in the write-in/open text box expressed that it was easy for them to identify themselves.

Most participants decided on their response based on the race and/or ethnicity of their parents and explained that the race and/or ethnicity of their parents was how they also identified.

> "Because I'm fully Iranian, both my mom and my dad are Iranian...so I identify as that."

> "My Dad is Puerto Rican, my mom is African American, and I identify as both".

Some participants thought about where they were born, in combination with the race and/or ethnicity of their parents. For example, one participant shared, "I'm Korean. My parents are Korean. I was born in Korea, so I fit this." Seven participants reported they had used ancestry or heritage websites or DNA tests. Most of these participants considered the information they had learned from these websites or tests but ultimately chose their responses based on how their parents or how they themselves identified.

> "I did a heritage check and my mom's dad was French, but just because he was French, I don't claim French. My mom is Creole and all my life I have been identifying as Black or African American."

> "Just cause I'm not too familiar, like I said, with my backgrounds of Trinidad and Barbados so I don't think it would really make sense to comment or make up something that I don't really have too much knowledge of. I just know just through my family and ancestors that's where they come from, but I personally don't know enough to feel like I would be comfortable writing about it because I'm not too familiar with it."

A few participants decided on their response based on the race and/or ethnicity of their grandparents. According to one participant, "I know from both sets of grandparents that I have German, English, and French." Some participants chose their response based on how they believed they were perceived by other people in the United States. One of these participants selected White and the other selected Black or African American.

There were only a handful of participants who were not able to easily decide on their response(s) using the available response options. Three of these participants expressed that they were unsure how far back in their family history or ancestry they should go. One participant considered whether they should go back two or more generations but ultimately decided to go back only one generation. Another participant shared that both of their parents were multi-ethnic. They decided to select all races and ethnicities that they were

sure about. The other participant noted that the term "originate" in the help text made them think of distant ancestry, so they considered but ultimately did not include their Middle Eastern or North African ancestry. Another participant who was not able to easily decide on their response(s) using the available response options identified as Taiwanese and was unsure whether to select Asian or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander on the Minimum Category question:

> "When I see this question (list of ethnicities), I am not sure if I should check Chinese because I think when people see 'Chinese' they refer more to people who come from China, but from an ethnicity point of view maybe I'm still Chinese, so yea I'll check it."

Ultimately, the participant decided to select Asian. On the Detailed Category question, they were unsure whether to select Chinese in addition to writing in Taiwanese in the open text box. They explained that for a long time, they considered themselves to be Chinese, but they were unsure whether Chinese referred specifically to people from China. In the end, this participant selected Chinese and entered Taiwanese.

Another participant who was not able to easily decide on their response(s) using the available response options expected to find Belize in the detailed category list under Black or African American. According to this participant, "I don't know if I am Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American or even Asian. So, the question becomes what do I check? Belize is in central America, which would be considered Latino. I am first generation American, and my parents are from Belize. I am actually not African American, but I am viewed as African American. My dad, his family is from India, and they emigrated to Belize and then California. So, what do I check? Sometimes I check Hispanic or Latino. Most of the time I put Black or African American. It is on my driver's license as African American. I wasn't accepted as African American by other African Americans because of my accent. In America, Caucasians, white people, will view me as African American. And because I don't speak Spanish, I put down Black, unless it has "Belize" [in the description of Hispanic/Latino], then I put down Hispanic or Latino." After not seeing Belize listed under Black or African American, they decided to change their answer from Black or African American to Hispanic or Latino.

When selecting their response(s), at least two participants explained that they expected to see American listed under White after noticing several countries listed under the minimum categories.

One participant would have liked to have had a "Prefer not to answer option" given that they described themselves as "ethnically ambiguous."

*Spanish Interviews*

One Cuban-born participant who selected White in addition to Hispanic or Latino explained their thinking, "Considero raza si soy blanco o negro, y origen étnico si soy latino o no lo soy." [I regard race as whether I am White or Black, and ethnic origin as whether I am Latino or I am not.] This participant said they were White because they were fair-skinned, and they were Latino because they were born in Cuba.

Those who selected American Indian or Alaskan Native in addition to Hispanic or Latino explained in probing that this was because they considered their racial identity to be mestizo [mixed-race], which they explained came from the mixing of indigenous people from their country of birth with White Europeans who colonized those counties. They were referring to the mixing of races at the population level, however, and were not basing their answers on any specific knowledge of relatives or ancestors that were part of any existing indigenous group in those countries of origin. More can be read about this in Section 3.5.

Only one participant who was interviewed in Spanish did not select Hispanic or Latino at all, and only selected White. This participant was born in Argentina. They explained that because they were light skinned and descended from Italian and Portuguese people on their mother's side and Spanish people on their father's side, they did not consider themselves to be Latino.

Overall, Spanish-speaking participants did not have issues selecting a detailed category for themselves. For most of these participants, they were simply selecting their own country of birth, which seemed straightforward to them. Many understood the question on race and ethnicity, and the term "origen étnico" [ethnic origin] as asking about country of birth or nationality, especially when they saw the lists of countries under each category and the examples listed in the write-in instructions. This made it easy for them to provide an answer for themselves, giving their country of birth, but sometimes this made it difficult to respond about their U.S.-born children (see Section 3.2.1).

This interpretation, in turn, caused some confusion among participants who selected White as their minimum category response based on their skin color and then only saw European countries listed as options and examples, which appeared to exclude them.

Additionally, two participants were unsure how to respond to the detailed category question because they did not understand that the response options and examples listed were not meant to be exhaustive and so were unsure how to respond when they did not see their country of birth listed (see Section 3.3.2).

### 3.1.2   Understanding of "Select All that Apply" Instruction

Participants clearly understood the instruction of "Select all that apply." When asked what this instruction meant to them, participants explained that it meant that they could select more than one answer. According to participants, "Select all that apply" meant:

"Select all that apply to your personal identity."

 "You should click everything you feel that you identify as."

"You have an option of selecting as much race or ethnicity as you identify as."

"Choose as many as you feel you need to."

Many participants noted that the "Select all that apply" instruction was specifically intended for people who were multiracial or mixed race because it would allow them to select more than one response option. One participant explained, "people could be from multiple places. Pick as many as you identify with." Another participant speculated, "I think it means to include as many options as you might want because I understand that there are some people that are mixed race so maybe I might be a Black Hispanic individual so I would be able to check both boxes." Many of the participants who selected more than one response commented that they appreciated that they could select more than one option and that on some surveys, they are only able to pick one. Even some participants who did not select more than one option still commented that they liked that people were able to select more than one option.

Three participants did not notice the instruction when reading the question and they discovered that they could select more than one response during probing. These participants explained that being able to select more than one answer helped them in being able to identify themselves with the response options. Once they learned that they could select more than one option, two of them went back and selected multiple options. For example, one participant only selected White at first and explained that they look more White than Asian. Once they discovered that they could mark more than one response option, they selected both White and Asian.

None of the Spanish-speaking participants had trouble understanding that they should select more than one response if they identified as more than one category. Those who expanded on their answers generally did so by providing examples of people with parents from two different countries.

### 3.1.3   Reactions and Responses to the Open Text Box

Participants who were part of racial/ethnic groups that were not listed in the examples tended to write in their racial/ethnic group in the open text box. None of these participants noted any confusion with the open text box or had any difficulty entering responses in the open text box. Some of these participants who identified as American Indian or Alaska

Native, however, noted that there were no specific examples listed above the text box and speculated that this may be because of the high number of American Indian or Alaskan Native tribes.

Specific examples of responses that participants entered for each minimum category included the following:

> **White:** Finnish, Ashkenazi Jewish, Latvian, Pennsylvania Dutch, Swedish, British, Turkish, Hungarian, Danish, Breizh/Breton French, Slovenian, Ukrainian
>
> **Hispanic or Latino:** Basque, Portuguese, Belize, Brazilian
>
> **Black or African American:** Trinidadian/Caribbean, Nicaraguan, Zimbabwean, Cameroonian, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyanese
>
> **Asian:** Taiwanese, Indonesian, Romani*, Afghani
>
> **American Indian or Alaska Native:** Iroquois, Lumbee, Choctaw, Aleut
>
> **Middle Eastern or North African:** Palestinian, Indigenous North African/Amazigh Berber
>
> **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:** MikMaq

*After entering "Romani" under the minimum category of "Asian," they explained that they considered Romani people to be from Asia because they were people who originally came from India and then went to Hungary.

Almost all Spanish participants had no issues understanding how they should answer the detailed category question if their country of origin was not listed as a response option and were able to write in their specific origin. As mentioned in Section 3.1.1, however, there were two participants who did not see their country of birth listed and either did not understand that they were being asked to write it into the open text box or did not understand that a country that was not included in the list of examples could be written into the box. These participants were unsure how to respond (see Section 3.3.2).

## 3.2   Answering for Household members

Generally, participants struggled slightly more to answer race and ethnicity questions for other household members than for themselves. This included both family and non-family household members. However, most participants were able to answer these questions for other household members. Several people noted that it was easy to answer because the other household members had the same race/ethnicity as themselves or because they were aware of the other household members' racial and ethnic identity. Cases in which participants reported some difficulty responding for other household members are described here.

### 3.2.1   Answering for Family Members

Many participants did not report any difficulty answering for family members in their household, but some did. For example, one participant had difficulty answering for their daughter because they were unsure of the details of the father's ethnicity and had difficulty answering for their mother because "[the mother] is a very private person."

Several people considered where their children were born when deciding how to answer these questions for their children. A participant born in Taiwan questioned how they should answer for their son because the child was not born in Taiwan, and the participant considered nationality as part of ethnicity. Another participant said of their daughter, "I was kind of confused if I should refer to her as Cameroonian or American, but I know the right answer was American since she was born here." They selected Black/African American for their daughter.

Some participants with multiracial backgrounds expressed challenges with identifying the racial and/or ethnic categories for their children. One participant responded to the probe on difficulty answering for other household members, "Yes, for the children, considering the fact that their parents come from two different racial or ethnic groups, like I identify as Black or African American and my spouse identifies as Hispanic, so it's always difficult for the kids to identify. I chose Black or African American (for the kids)." Another participant shared that their daughter was biracial and that it was difficult to decide on a response for her because the participant had limited knowledge about their husband's race and/or ethnicity.

Three participants provided less detailed racial and/or ethnic descriptions for their children than for themselves. One of these participants selected the White and Asian categories for themselves but only selected White for their children because they decided to not report back further than two generations. Another participant identified multiple categories, including Black or African American for themselves but only selected Black or African American for their children because their children had been raised as African American. Similarly, another participant identified multiple racial and/or ethnic categories for themselves, including Black or African American but only selected Black for their child because they did not think it was necessary to include a more detailed response.

Four of the 20 Spanish-speaking participants encountered one specific difficulty when it came to answering about certain family members in their households. This confusion came when answering about the race and/or ethnicity of U.S.-born children of Latin American immigrants. It was clear to these participants that the parents of these children, who had themselves emigrated to the United States, were Hispanic or Latino, often explaining that this was because they were born in Latin America. When answering about their U.S.-born children, however, they were often looking for a way to respond that would make it clear their children were born in the United States. Two of these participants said they did not

consider their U.S.-born children to be Hispanic or Latino and instead selected White, thinking it was the closest to what they were looking for, which would have been North American or of the United States. One of these participants wrote in American as their daughter's detailed category. Both said that they did not consider their children to be Hispanic or Latino because they were not born in Latin America. Another participant initially selected White but went back and changed their answer to Hispanic or Latino once they saw that only European countries were listed under that category. This person expressed that they were unsure how they could answer that their daughter was born in the United States and instead decided to answer as they had for their mother and wrote in Salvadorian.

Another participant was not able to answer about the race and/or ethnicity of their niece at all. This participant did not consider their U.S.-born niece to be Hispanic or Latina because she was not born in a Latin American country, though the girl's mother was born in Colombia. This participant considered every category and ultimately could not answer for their niece because none of the options seemed correct when the listed detailed origins and examples did not include American or U.S.-born, which were what they were looking for.

One additional participant had a similar issue when answering about their son who was born in Spain. This participant chose White and wrote in Español [Spanish] because they thought that Spain, as a European country, would fit under White. It did not occur to them that Spain could be included with the Latin American countries under Hispanic or Latino, so they did not look and see it listed as one of the examples for the write in.

### 3.2.2   Answering for non-Family Members

Those living with non-family members seemed to have less confidence answering the questions on race and ethnicity for other household members. Four participants had difficulty answering for their roommate(s) because they were not sure how they identified. These participants made their best guess for how their roommate(s) would identify. One of these participants was unsure if their Black roommate was Haitian or Jamaican and ultimately selected both response options. Another said they made assumptions based on their roommate's appearance. This participant selected White/German for their roommate but would have selected "Don't know" if it had been an option. A third participant noted their roommate, who they described as Indian, was from the continent of Asia, but his race was not Asian. The participant chose to select Asian and write in Indian. Lastly, one participant was unsure of their roommates' ages and dates of birth and noted they would have waited for them to be home to answer the question if they were completing actual Census. This participant was also unsure if one roommate would have selected both "Native American" and "Hispanic/Latino" or just "Hispanic/Latino." The participant noted that this person had spoken more about her ties to Mexico than to the Navajo community so decided to not select "Native American."

Only two of the 20 Spanish participants lived with non-relative roommates. One of these participants said it was not a problem to answer about their roommates because they knew them and knew what countries they were born in and lived in before moving to the United States. The other participant expressed that they could only answer about what they knew of their roommate's origin, because they did not know details about their ancestry but were able to answer the questions and provide both a minimum and detailed category for their roommates.

## 3.3   Reactions to Question Wording, Instructions, and Help Text

### 3.3.1   Interpretation of "And/Or" vs "Or"

Most participants did not express any confusion with the phrase "and/or" in the question, "What is your race and/or ethnicity?" Several participants described that it meant they could choose either race or ethnicity or both race and ethnicity. Several people noted that "and/or" was respectful and inclusive of the different ways people could interpret race and ethnicity. One participant said that they imagined some people think of race and ethnicity as separate things and others think of them as the same thing, so the "and/or" opened up the question for however people identified with their racial and ethnic backgrounds. Another participant noted it was a "sense of respect to cover everyone's sensitivities." Several noted that this language might be necessary for others, even if it was not important to themselves. For example, one participant noted that "and/or" "doesn't mean anything to me but for Hispanics who can be any race it does." Some reported that "and/or" allowed people to report multiple parts of their identities. For example, one participant said the phrase meant that she could report being both White and Middle Eastern. Another participant noted, "I mean basically you can elaborate upon your race in more detail. I just see it as an extension of race. Something to elaborate on." Another participant said, "For me, I'm personally grateful. Having the option to choose more than one is good. I guess I didn't select it but I have a small amount of Cherokee so I could have decided to add that, but it's not White. White is a skin color. Just the fact that it's 'and/or' gives me more options." One person pointed out that "and/or" provided the option to give less information or more information, noting "If you just want to put in your race, that's OK since we have 'and/or,' but if you want to add ethnicity, that's OK too."

One participant interpreted "and/or" to mean that one could report either what they identified as or what their ancestors were. One participant initially said they did not understand the point of having "or" but decided the "or" would allow them to report more than one heritage, such as Asian and Hispanic, if needed.

Three participants expressed confusion with "and/or." One of these participants shared that they would just interpret the question as "What is your race and ethnicity?" Another participant expressed general confusion with how to define race and ethnicity, stating,

"I don't know. I get really confused with this - race and/or ethnicity. I get confused. It is
probably where I am born, but if I was Chinese born in Mexico, I wouldn't say
Mexican. I would say Mexican Chinese… I think that is what it means – if you are in
another country or were born somewhere else." The third said, "it's the 'or' that's
getting me. I would say 'and/or' would probably mean you could do either your race
or ethnicity. So, you could put Hispanic or Latino and White. You could put both of
them or one of them. Then that gets confusing for accuracy reasons. I'm getting held
up on the and/or."

When asked if their answer would change if the question asked, "What is your race **or**
ethnicity?" instead of "What is your race **and/or** ethnicity?" most participants reported that
their answer would not change. Fourteen English participants would have changed their
responses if only "or" was used in the race/ethnicity question instead of "and/or." Most of
these participants would have provided less detail by selecting fewer response options.
Notably, two respondents said this phrasing would change their response of White and
Middle Eastern to only Middle Eastern.

In addition, three participants noted they would have provided less detailed responses but
did not specify the exact changes they would make. Another three participants did not say
that it would change their response but noted the question would be unclear with only "or."
One stated, "It would make me have to decide for myself if it is the way I look or what I am
ethnically" while another said they would be confused, "as I am not sure how the Census
differentiates between" race and ethnicity.

None of the Spanish-speaking participants had any issues or expressed any confusion
surrounding "y/o" [and/or] in the question. When probed, most understood it was asking for
a race, an ethnicity, or both. One participant expressed confusion about the inclusion of the
"and/or" saying it was not clear why you would need to ask about both race and ethnicity
because they were the same thing and they identified as Hispanic or Latino for both their
race and their ethnicity. Similarly, another participant commented at probing that the
inclusion of "and/or" made them think that race and ethnicity must be different things, but
when they answered the question they did not notice it and were thinking of race and
ethnicity as being the same thing.

One participant who initially missed the "and/or" said that if they had seen it, it would have
changed their answer. They said they would have selected both Hispanic or Latino and
White if they had realized because "La raza y el origen étnico – La raza es como si fuera el
color de la piel. Y el origen étnico es donde tú naciste." [Race and ethnicity – Race is like
skin color. And ethnicity is where you were born.]

Only one participant who responded in Spanish said they would have answered differently
had the question asked for "race or ethnicity." This participant said that they would have
only selected Hispanic or Latino and not also selected White because it would be giving
them the option to answer about either their race or ethnicity. This participant saw race as

being related to physical characteristics and ethnicity as where you and your ancestors came from.

### 3.3.2   Instruction comprehension

Participants seemed to understand the instructions, and their responses to the probes on these questions generally verified their understanding.

*Understanding of "Provide details below"*

Most participants noted that the instruction "Provide details below" meant to provide more specific or additional information related to cultural lineage, nationality, ethnicity, country/countries of origin, bloodline or DNA, why you identify most with the group you selected, or geography.

> "I guess in my case, or generally, it's asking for country of origin, which is nationality or nation."

> "There are many nationalities within Middle Eastern or North African and they are not all listed. The probe is asking to identify the nationality within the category."

> "Break down – you are black but what kind of black are you…If you really want to look at the person more. When you say provide details below you can see what you are most closest to. If Somali wasn't in there I would stick with just African American or Ethiopian since that is most closest to me."

> "It is details about ethnicity, they are speaking about your bloodline, your DNA. Why you identify most with the group you selected."

> "To enter something more specific."

> "Country or countries that you come from."

> "Asking to be more specific with your choice; trying to figure out your geography."

> "It would be if I was English, Irish, German, Polish, Italian, or French that I would have to check all the ones that I am, but I'm not, so I just checked English."

None of the participants who responded in Spanish had any problem understanding the direction to proporcione detalles a continuación [provide details below].

*Understanding of "Enter, for example…"*

Most participants described that they should add more information to the prompt to "Enter, for example…" especially if there were parts of their racial or ethnic identity not described in the multiple-choice options. For example, one person said, "So that would be a way of entering additional information if these don't apply." One person noted she did not think about entering Scottish until she saw it. Another noted, "They are giving examples, what country you belong to. It's very clear. It's self-explanatory."

> "For myself, I would say country of birth even though my parents are from different countries. This is the country I was actually born in."

> "If you don't fit the criteria in the list. For example, if you are from Uganda…if you are not in these six (options) enter where you are originally from."

> "You don't see your island up there (in the list) put who you identify with here."

> "Choose whatever you don't see, enter what is not listed."

When asked about their interpretation of what was meant by ponga, por ejemplo… [enter for example…], it was clear that many Spanish-speaking participants were interpreting the question as asking about their nationality or country of birth specifically and that the instruction was asking them to write it in if it was not listed.

Additionally, as discussed in Section 3.1.1, two participants did not understand "enter, for example…" as intended, because they did not understand that the response options and examples listed were not intended to be exhaustive and that they were being asked to write something in when they did not see their country of birth listed. One of these participants ultimately wrote in Mayan because it was listed as an example, because Guatemala, their country of birth, was not included anywhere so they were not sure if they could write it in. The interviewer asked this participant if they would have selected Guatemalan if it had been listed, and the participant said, "If it said Guatemalan, obviously I wouldn't doubt to click on that." The other participant told the interviewer that their family came from Italy, Spain, and Portugal but only checked the box for Italian and did not write anything in the text box when answering the question. When asked why they did not include their Spanish and Portuguese origin, the participant said they did not notice the text box and so decided to check the box for the only origin they identified with.

### 3.3.3 Feedback on Help Text

Most participants did not use the help text or would have answered in the same way regardless of whether they read the help text. However, one participant from Belize did change their response based on the information in the help text. This participant was unsure whether to select Black/African American or Hispanic/Latino. After reviewing the help text, they decided to change their response to only Hispanic/Latino.

Regardless of whether participants read the help text when answering the race and ethnicity question, all participants were asked to read the help text during probing and provide their feedback. One participant noted that the term "originate" in the help text made them think of including distant ancestry. Additional comments included the following:

> "I didn't really read it when I opened it but I can read it now…Yes it's helpful because it includes all individuals who identify with one or more nationalities or ethnic groups. It is helpful to read it, and I'm sure it's helpful for people of other races to read it."

> "I was very curious about if the geography was listed. That was the main thing. Then, as far as the Native American part, I could certainly select it as part of my selections. The definition just says "identifies" which is pretty open-ended."

"I clicked on it because I wanted to see if they gave specific identification for each category of races or ethnicities… that is kind of what I wanted to see to fully understand what they are asking for. So, it is not my definition of what they are looking for, but to look into what they are asking about."

Some gave feedback about what they thought would or should be included in the help text. One respondent thought the Help information should have included definitions of race and ethnicity. Another thought the categories in the definitions should be in the same order as the question response options. Another person expected the help text to be related to technical problems with the survey rather than more information about the survey response options.

None of the 20 Spanish-speaking participants clicked on or read the help text until they were asked to by the interviewer at probing. When asked their thoughts, two of the Spanish-speaking participants who selected White commented that they were surprised to only see European countries included under the definition of White. One of these added that it did not make sense because there were certainly White people in Cuba, where this participant was from. Two other participants expressed surprise that Spanish was included under the definition of Hispanic or Latino, because Spain is in Europe, and they would have assumed it fit with the other European countries under White. Two participants who had had trouble selecting a race and/or ethnicity for U.S.-born children in their households commented that they were hoping to get some clarity on what they should have done in the help text but felt they did not find instructions how to answer for U.S.-born individuals. One participant, a Spanish-speaker born and raised in Argentina, did not answer that they were Hispanic or Latino, because their ancestry before their grandparents emigrated to Argentina was European. The help text did not change this participant's mind, though they recognized that according to the help text they could have selected Hispanic or Latino based on their language and country of birth.

## 3.4   Reactions to Response Options

### 3.4.1   Reactions to MENA category

Participants who identified as MENA[2] were asked whether they had seen the MENA response category on other surveys or forms that asked about race and ethnicity. Most of these participants shared that they had seen the category before with two participants sharing that they had seen the MENA response category about a third of the time when responding to demographic surveys. Only one MENA participant said they had never seen the response

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[2] None of 20 participants who responded in Spanish identified as Middle Eastern or North African, so this section only references interviews conducted in English.

category before. Another participant shared that they had only seen the Middle Eastern category before and not the combined Middle Eastern and North African category.

> "Yes, I have seen it before – job application, military. [Did they include MENA?] No, I don't recall. I have seen Middle Eastern, but not the North African."

A few participants shared positive reactions to seeing MENA as a category. One participant noticed that MENA was a separate category whereas it used to be included under White. Three participants had a positive reaction to seeing Iranian as an example of the MENA category in the minimum category question and as a response option in the detailed category question. One of these participants noted that in the past they would have written in "Iranian" under the "Other, specify" response option. One participant shared their negative opinion on the phrase "Middle Eastern" because they thought this was a colonial term and assumed London, England, as the center of the world. They would rather the Census Bureau use the term "Southwest Asian." However, they acknowledged that having a MENA category, even with its colonial context, was a positive step forward.

> "I'm very, very excited that Census Bureau is doing this. I've been active in the community, I've written articles, I've researched the topic of race. Racial justice is one of my passions. From that perspective, I'm very excited that Census Bureau is making this change. Even though the label has a colonial context, compared to not have the option of Middle Eastern or North African, it's a huge step forward."

Several MENA participants also discussed the intertwined relationship between the White and MENA response options. Four participants indicated that they typically selected both the White and MENA response options when answering surveys. Two of these participants elaborated that because they looked White in appearance and were of MENA descent, they would select both White and MENA categories. Another of these participants thought about how their mother was 50 percent White and 50 percent Asian and their father was 50 percent White and 50 percent Egyptian, so they would select the White, Asian, and MENA response options. However, this participant noted that if they were only allowed to answer with one response option, they would have only selected White. Some participants shared that they felt the Israeli or Ashkenazi Jewish detailed category response options should be included under White.

One participant shared that, in the past without the MENA option, they would select only White for the race question, even though one of their parents was from Lebanon, because they were born in the United States and did not speak any middle eastern languages. One participant shared that they would not have included their MENA heritage if it were not offered as a response option. Another participant would have only selected Other without being offered the MENA option. One participant shared that they would have selected both White and Other when MENA was not offered as an option. Similarly, another participant shared if Other were an option, they would have taken their time to include their MENA part.

"My mother is Brazilian, so South American, so we identify as Latina. My dad is from Iran and I'm a first generation American." [Participant shared that they had seen this category in the past (and often) but had never seen it with Iranian listed as an option/example.

"I believe in the past, there was an "Other" option and under this option I entered 'Iranian.'"

### 3.4.2 Additional Reactions to Response Options

Several participants shared their appreciation for the detailed race categories. Four participants liked that the detailed race categories allowed them to be more specific in how they categorized themselves. Before seeing the response options, one of these participants thought the question would be hard to answer because, as a mixed-race person, they often felt they had to "pick sides" when answering questions about race. This participant grew up being instructed to only pick African American based on their father's side and to ignore their mother's Asian side. The participant shared this was the first time they felt that they could accurately identify themselves.

"Well, the option was there which is nice. I don't like it when they just give you 3 options for race. My native heritage isn't a huge part of it, because there are so many other things mixed in there, but I do like to represent as much as I can."

"My father was Haitian. Oh, they have the options, I like that! And yes, my other mother was Filipino. Oh wow! I have never seen this before."

One participant expressed frustration with the detailed categories as it made it harder to select a response.

"My grandfather was from Germany, but he is Jewish, so some of his background is from Israel. So, it could have been Middle Eastern. I mean it depends on how far back you go. So, it is not easy when there is that many options. It's actually… it makes it even harder to think."

Some participants provided comments on the categories listed. One participant liked that Filipino was listed under Asian because they had seen Filipino listed under Pacific Islander in the past. This participant confirmed that in the past, they would select either Asian or Pacific Islander depending on how the Filipino was categorized. Another participant appreciated that Dominican was listed under Hispanic or Latino because it confirmed what they already thought about themselves. They also shared that many Dominicans considered themselves to be Afro-Latino but they had never seen that term listed on any government forms or surveys. Although this participant did not select both African American and Hispanic or Latino, they said they would have selected Afro-Latino if that had been an option. One participant looked for "mixed" as an option because they were Guyanese but eventually settled on Black or African American because they saw Caribbean nationalities, such as Haitian and Jamaican, listed as examples. This participant explained that although Guyana is in South America, the country is associated with the East Indies.

Another participant looked for a "Central Asian" or "Afghani" category. When this participant did not see one of these options, they selected Asian and wrote in "Afghani" for the detailed race categories question. As a Samoan, one participant did not like being grouped with Native Hawaiians and explained that Hawaii and Samoa are two different islands with unique histories. This participant could understand Samoans being categorized with Pacific Islanders because they considered this to be the overarching group, which would include Native Hawaiians. Another participant who selected MENA and White during the interview shared that they used to select "African American," even though their mother was North African, because they "used to be confused about what it meant to be an African American." During the interview, this participant looked for an Indigenous North African category and noted that although the Native American or Alaskan Native category included indigenous people, it was different from what they were looking for.

> "I chose Asian because it listed my specific nationality under Asian. Um, yeah, because I'm Filipino, that's what I look for because some questionnaires, they won't have… they don't have the Filipino listed and that is usually, it's just Pacific Islander because I'm kind of in that, you know, Pacific islands. But I like that this clearly specified the word Filipino under Asian. So I have no doubt that I could choose Asian in this particular question."

> "As a Pacific Islander I guess I can say yes, but if I am speaking culturally, I am Samoan, and I'd like to see Samoan on here. But then again if you are a Pacific Islander, we are proud to be Pacific Islander, so being identified as a Pacific Islander is perfect. I am Pacific Islander. It is something we take pride in. We carry that with us. So even if it is not identifying Samoan, Hawaii, Tonga, Fiji, yes we take pride in that as well but we are Pacific Islanders and identify as such."

Two participants had questions on whether they should select more than one response option. One participant identified as Taiwanese and selected Asian for the Minimum Category but also expressed that they were confused as to whether they should check Asian or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Some participants would have liked to see a "prefer not to answer" response option. Two of these participants shared privacy concerns when they saw the more detailed questions. A different participant, on the other hand, identified as "ethnically ambiguous" and felt they were often treated as an ethnic minority. Because of this, this participant stated that they preferred to not answer questions about race and ethnicity.

A few participants who responded in Spanish had additional comments related to the response options included in the question. One commented that they did not think that Mexican American should be included on the list of specific origins because they did not consider it to be an ethnicity, saying that the ethnicity of someone born in the United States to Mexican parents was American (making clear they were among those considering ethnicity to be tied to country of birth and nationality). This participant said that Mexican

American was a label someone could use to describe themselves, but they did not consider it to be a race or ethnicity, so thought it did not belong there.

Another Spanish-speaking participant, notably, interpreted Español [Spanish], which was included as an example of a write-in for Hispanic or Latino as referring to the Spanish language rather than as a national origin. On the write-in line, they wrote "Peruano y castellano" [Peruvian and Castilian Spanish]. In further probing, it became clear that they understood the question as asking for origin and language because it had included "español" in the example. They explained, "Veo que aquí dice español, pero español es alguien que vive en España, pero también as un idioma. Me imagino que están dando un ejemplo del idioma también." [I see that here it says Spanish, but Spanish is someone who lives in Spain, but it's also a language. I imagine that they are giving an example of the language too].

Also of interest were comments from several participants who said they were used to having to select White for themselves because Hispanic or Latino was not always offered as an option on surveys and forms, and they were happy to see it included here, so they could respond to the question in the way they most think of themselves. This was well-illustrated by a participant who initially answered White before changing their answer when they saw that Hispanic or Latino was included as an option. When asked about why they changed their answer, they said,

> "Because I consider myself to be Hispanic and Latina, I am from the Latin American continent, I speak Spanish, and I am of Mexican origin. I was born in Mexico…I got confused. I had not seen below. When I arrived in this country, the forms did not have Hispanic or Latino. They had White, Black, Asian, African, Indian American or from Hawaii. I am not sure what else. And I used to say, what do you answer here? And they would tell me at work: 'You have to put White because you are not African American, nor Native American of a tribe, nor Asian.' It was the only option there was. Over the years, I've seen that some places now add Hispanic or Latino, and it's more common. But still, sometimes they don't add it."

## 3.5   Overreporting

Because of the advancement in technology and the availability of genetic and DNA testing, there is some concern about overreporting among participants completing the race and ethnicity question. However, the magnitude of overreporting is unclear because what constitutes "overreporting" has not been specifically defined. It is not clear how much of the different races or ethnicities participants should respond with and how far they should go back within their ancestry.

Overall, we did not see evidence of problems with overreporting. There were a few participants who talked about including a race/ethnicity from a distant ancestor or that represented a very small part of their ancestry, but most participants did not do this.

Participants who learned something new about their racial background through DNA testing but did not include these discoveries in their response shared their rationale. One of these participants said the testing mostly confirmed what they knew about themselves but added "tiny percentages" of DNA that they did not expect. They did not report on these "tiny percentages." Another participant shared they would only report on what they grew up with culturally and the race and/or ethnicity of their parents. A different participant shared that they would answer based on their background, such as where they came from and who raised them. Another participant who identified as Hispanic or Latino and found out they had some Italian and Ashkenazi Jew in their background did not include Italian and Ashkenazi Jew in their responses because they believed they should answer based on their country of origin. This participant also believed being "counted" as Hispanic in this country was important.

> "23andMe said I am Nigerian and Chinese, but I don't relate to them culturally and I wouldn't know I that if I didn't take a DNA test, so I am selecting Haitian and Filipino, even though my DNA says I am Chinese."

> "Yeah, I have. Right when Ancestry.com came out because my mom has been doing genealogy since the 70s. The DNA is always changing, but I still think it doesn't matter what the DNA says. I think it's whatever your background is. Some people might be like, "I was so certain I was Italian, but the DNA is different." But even among siblings there can be large discrepancies or differences. I think it's more interesting and useful…but I think it's really more where did you come from and who was doing the raising."

> "It changed it a little bit because I was surprised. I grew up knowing there was German, French, and Spanish in my bloodline, but it turns out I was more Italian than all of that. And I found out that I had some Ashkenazi Jew. There were some things that I was shocked to find out. It made me think, but I still choose the same thing. It's the country that I come from. And in this country, we feel that we have to be counted. I want to choose that because you want to be counted as Hispanic in this country, so I choose the same thing."

On the other hand, some participants added other races and ethnicities after learning more about themselves through DNA or genetic testing. One of these participants wrote in Jewish in the detailed categories question because DNA testing revealed they had some Jewish ancestry. Similarly, one participant selected American Indian and Alaskan Native because of the results of their DNA test, and another participant selected Hispanic or Latino in their response even though their DNA test revealed a small amount of their ancestry was Hispanic or Latino. One other participant noted that they had been tested by different companies with one company indicating that their background included Alaskan Native. This participant explained that their mother's side of the family had a lot of White ancestry and their father's side of the family had some White ancestry and some Alaskan Native ancestry.

As a result, this participant selected White (specifying German, Irish, English, and Scottish) and American Indian and Alaskan Native (specifying Athabascan). This participant also considered specifying Jewish to represent their mother's ancestry but decided not to because they felt specifying German "would have taken care of that."

> "I am white presenting. Fair skinned. I know from the results of DNA tests where I am from. My Hispanic is minuscule, but I selected it."

There was one participant who used what they learned about themselves during DNA or genetic testing to better identify themselves. This participant thought they were of Irish origin but learned through DNA testing that they were actually of Scottish origin. As a result, this participant selected Scottish rather than Irish for the detailed category question. In this case, there was no overreporting but a correction of their understanding of their racial and ethnic background.

> "Yes, it did because up until then I was convinced that we were Irish and not Scottish, and that is when I find out that we were actually Scottish."

Two Spanish-speaking participants, one from Guatemala and the other from Nicaragua, potentially overreported when they selected Indígena de las Américas o nativo(a) de Alaska [American Indian or Alaskan Native], and one additional participant from Ecuador considered doing the same. At probing it was clear that their racial identity was linked to their understanding of the historical mixing of races in Latin America that occurred in the colonial period, rather than any knowledge of relatives or ancestors who were part of any specific existing indigenous groups in their countries of origin.

The first of these participants was from Nicaragua and wrote in Nahuatl. When probed about their choice, they said, "Porque 'las Américas,' estás hablando en plural. Entiendo yo que existe América del Norte, América Central y América del Sur. Entonces, yo nací en América Central y también soy de origen mestizo. Mestizo significa la mezcla de una raza con otra que fue lo que hubo y nos enseñaron en la escuela, la raza española con la que había ahí autóctona, entonces se produce la raza mestiza." [Because 'the Americas,' you are using plural. My understanding is that there is North America, Central America, and South America. So I was born in Central America and I am also of mestizo origin. Mestizo means the mixing of one race with another, which is what there was and I learned in school that the Spanish race, with the one that there was there, native, so the mestiza race originated.] This person was asked if they knew specifically about their own family having this ancestry, and they said they did not know of specific indigenous ancestors and that they just chose Nahuatl because they know that is an indigenous group that lived close to where they are from in Nicaragua.

The second participant, who was from Guatemala, wrote in Mayan. When asked about their choice said, "Because when I was little, I always heard the word Mayan, and that is what came to mind. I could have also written Hispanic or Latino, but I don't know. I decided to

answer that because sometimes we are asked: 'Where are you from. Are you indigenous?' We are Mayan."

The third ultimately did not select American Indian or Alaskan Native but told the interviewer that until they moved to the United States about a year ago, they had considered their race to be "mestizo" but once they arrived, they learned that "Hispanic" and "Latino" are considered race in the United States, so that is how they have learned to answer questions like this. When asked about how they define "mestizo," the participant talked about the mixing of indigenous people and "conquistadores." When asked, they confirmed that they do not know of any specific indigenous affiliation of any family members. They were also asked if they considered selecting American Indian or Alaskan Native because they identify as "mestizo," and the participant said they do not think it's quite the same thing and did not consider their indigenous ancestors from Ecuador to fit into that category. The interviewer also pointed out the examples of "Azteca" and "Maya" included, but the participant still did not consider those to be the same as their ancestors: "It seems like all the examples were from North or Central America and did not include South America." The participant pointed out that "Inca" was not included. They were asked if they would have selected it if "Inca" was included as an example, and they said they would have.

*Understanding of Race vs Ethnicity*

Several participants were unable to explain the difference between "race" and "ethnicity" or thought the words had similar meanings. However, most participants interpreted these two constructs as different but related terms. Participants tended to interpret "race" as a broad descriptor of one's physical appearance (e.g., skin color) and tended to have an interpretation of "ethnicity" that included one's cultural, geographic, or ancestral heritage. Some noted that race is related to how a person appears to others: "Race as far as the outside world would label you as. Ethnicity is the location or region." Another person stated that race is "Your first impression of me or what most people think that I am by looking at me."

Several described the term "ethnicity" in a more personal way, such as how a person sees themselves and identifies internally, regardless of how others perceive them. For example, one participant explained that if someone looked at them and asked what their race was, they would say White, but if they asked for their ethnicity, they would say American Indian, Jewish, and Welsh. Several participants referred to culture or how and where a person was raised to define ethnicity. One jokingly noted it is related to what food you like, which also indicates a connection to culture.

Some participants considered race to be a more general category and ethnicity to be more specific. For example, one participant said, "I guess as I understand it Race is more of the larger categories – White, Hispanic or Latino/black, African American, Asian etc. Then

ethnicity would be the individual things that would make up each of those. There is the larger category and then the more detailed ones." Another stated, "Well I think of race as more generic, and then I think of ethnicity as a subset." This participant noted, "I kind of think [ethnicity is] your basic continent a person comes from, more generic, a basic area."

The distinctions between race and ethnicity were not always consistent between participants. Compare, for example, the quotes from these two participants:

> "Ethnicity to me is the blood you carry. Who you are. The group you identify with the most. The bloodline. The DNA within your blood that determines your ethnicity. Now race is more…race is something you can learn. I don't know, this is a hard question…I feel like ethnicity is more your blood group and race, I don't know."

> "Race means your DNA, your origins. Ethnicity means more like where you are from, not where your DNA is from. Ethnicity has more to do with language and culture, than race. Race feels more biological. Race is really related to color of your skin. Even the word racism. It is about the color of your skin, not your culture. In my mind, the definition is not broad at all."

The participant in the first quote associated ethnicity with biological constructs like DNA, while the second associated these constructs with race. This example shows that there are a variety of definitions and ways that people distinguish these two terms, some of which may conflict with each other.

Some participants noted that they associated Hispanic identity with an ethnicity rather than a race: "I feel like Hispanic is more an ethnicity than it is a race as I understand it. Because within the Hispanic community we have all races. So, I feel like it is more of an ethnicity. Given these are the options we have here, it's what I'm going to choose. I'm multi-racial, but I'm not going to choose White or Black even though I have that background. I only choose Hispanic and it's more of an ethnicity than a race. [Interviewer: So, you would choose Hispanic or Latino because that's what you identify yourself with?] In this country, yes."

When the participants who were interviewed in Spanish were asked to define their understanding of the terms raza [race] and origen étnico [ethnic origin] in the question, several consistent themes emerged:

> Four of the 20 participants said they thought the two terms meant the same thing, and that they both meant things like "nationality," "where you are from," or "your origin".

> Among those who had differing definitions of the two terms, seven of the 20 mentioned skin color or other physical characteristics as part of their definition of race.

> Ethnic origin, however, was perceived as very tied to country of origin and country of birth, with six participants including descriptions like "where you come from," "country of origin," "where you were born" and "nationality".

Three participants saw "ethnic origin" as tied to culture, and two additional participants said it had to do with language.

## 3.6 Respondent Concerns and Feedback

Few participants brought up concerns or feedback outside of the main topics of the interview, but some notable items were mentioned.

### 3.6.1 Information Sharing and Privacy

Two participants raised concerns related to information sharing and privacy. One noted that if they were responding to the Census, they would not provide a more specific answer and so chose to leave the detailed categories question blank. This participant thought it was an invasion of their privacy to ask for this information. Another participant mentioned concerns about providing details for all household members. Although they shared details for all questions regarding all household members, they mentioned that it was not their preference, and they would have liked to only provide the topline responses.

Two participants remarked on the importance of the Census so they would provide additional details (i.e., Italian and Hungarian) or select additional race categories (i.e., American Indian and Alaska Native) when usually they would only select White.

### 3.6.2 Equity and Inclusion Concerns

Two participants who responded in English brought up concerns related to equity and inclusion. One did not like the capitalization of the word White because she associated the capitalization with the White power movement. Another participant became upset after reading the gender question as it only allowed for binary gender identities. This participant felt this was antiquated, noted that the optics of the question were poor, and that it "set the tone." They asked whether there was someone involved in equity and inclusion on the team.

One participant who answered in Spanish commented that they preferred ethnic origin over race and thought that race should not be included as part of the question because it made them think of racism, and they did not like that.

## 3.7 Question Version Comparisons (A/B)

### 3.7.1 Qualitative Results

Although participants provided information on their preferences, the qualitative study did not show participants changing their response based on the alternative version. One participant changed their response only after reading the help text and not because of version differences.

Many participants preferred version A because all relevant questions were placed on the same page. One of these participants explained that they could visually register and

acknowledge that the detailed race categories all stemmed from the same question. Several other participants explained that having the questions on the same page helped them maintain their concentration and "line of thought." One of these participants also expressed that they found version B to be somewhat confusing because the two-page format made them think they were moving onto a different question rather than a follow-up question. Others expressed that they liked the "dropdown list" of detailed race categories as presented in version A. One participant felt the dropdown list allowed them to be more descriptive than simply answering White. Another said that the dropdown list kept the questions together and made it easier for them to answer. Two participants shared that in version A, it was clearer where the detailed categories response options came from and felt it would be easier for a person to recognize if they chose the incorrect category and to then deselect and choose a new response. Lastly, some participants thought version A appeared cleaner and more streamlined. One participant noted that it took fewer clicks to complete version A. This participant also said if they saw a follow-up question on the next page (as in version B), they might be wary and think that there would be more than one follow-up question. Another of these participants shared that they thought it might be more difficult for people who had multi-racial backgrounds to provide responses to the detailed categories question on a separate page.

> "Version A. Can see and read everything clearly and like that it is presented all at once."

> "No this is too much (version B), it's like doing it twice, I liked the first way of doing it better (version A) because it just opens up and you choose on the same page."

> "Easier because you don't have to go to a different page. Makes it easier to choose the response and move onto next part of the survey."

> "I think it's [version A] clearer because if you select it, you can then unselect it if you hit the wrong thing."

> "It's already there. My mind doesn't go somewhere else… they're saying there's direct connection between the two as opposed to jumping to a different screen."

Although more participants preferred version A, there were some participants who preferred version B because they felt receiving the questions one at a time looked cleaner. One participant thought there was too much information presented under version A, which made them less likely to read the whole thing. Likewise, another participant thought having all the questions on the same page was "information overload." Several other participants liked receiving the questions on two separate screens because it allowed them to think more about their responses. One of these participants also shared that they felt their response would be more seen when the follow-up question was presented on a separate screen. Similarly, another participant felt that the separate page allowed them to provide more meaningful answers. Another participant thought it was redundant to have a dropdown list (as in version A) when the detailed category response options were the same as the examples listed under the minimum category response options. One participant thought

that version A would take more time to complete because it seemed to have "more boxes." Another thought more response options were listed on the screen for version B. Lastly, one participant thought version B's instructions were clearer and thought the instruction "provide details" in version A meant that she had to elaborate on the category already clicked (i.e., typing Northern Italian after checking Italian).

> "I think under the example here of White, the same answers are going across as down (version A), so I don't think it helps any to have it longer. I prefer the first one (version B)."

> "I think it gives me a second chance to reflect on it. It also, I don't know, it also feels nicer. Like it actually feels like it's being seen."

There were a few participants who shared preference for one version over the other because of some misunderstanding. For example, one participant preferred version A because they thought Ecuadorian was not offered as an option for version B. Two participants shared they liked version B because they could "select all that apply." They did not notice that version A also allowed them to select all options that applied to them.

There were other participants who thought both versions were the same and did not have any preference. One of these participants did not see the difference between the two questions until it was pointed out by the interviewer. Others saw the differences but did not think one was easier to answer than the other.

> "I actually do not see a difference. It is the same question but just asked in a different way."

> "No, I didn't really think of the subtle differences because under the category 'White' where it says 'for example' I remember seeing that in the other version too. It doesn't seem any different."

Of the 20 participants interviewed in Spanish, 16 did not change their answers when asked to answer the alternative version of the question. Of the four who did change their answers, only one seemed to do so for reasons related to differences between the two versions. The one participant who changed their answer in response to the different version selected White and Hispanic or Latino when they first saw version B, the two-page version of the question. When they were later shown version A, the one-page version, they did not select White and only selected Hispanic or Latino. This participant said that in the one-page version, it was not clear to them that they would have the opportunity to specify that they were from Venezuela when all the examples listed under White were European countries, so they chose not to select White the second time.

Two other participants who changed their answers did so by selecting more than one race/ethnicity when they were shown the alternative version of the question, when initially they had only selected one. During probing it became clear that the change was not related

to the differences between the one-page and two-page designs but rather a result of earlier probing related to the select all that apply instruction, which they had both initially missed.

The last participant who changed their answer did so because when they were shown the alternative version, they noticed the examples for the write-in box in the one-page version included "Spanish," which this participant interpreted as the language rather than the national origin and thought this version was asking him to include his language in addition to his country of origin. For this reason, the second time he answered, the participant wrote in "Peruano y castellano" [Peruvian and Castilian Spanish] when he had initially just written in "Peruano" [Peruvian].

Participants were also asked about what version of the question they felt was easier to answer. Of the 18 Spanish-speaking participants who indicated a preference, 10 preferred the one-page version, six preferred the two-page version, and two felt both versions were equally easy to answer. Those who preferred the one-page version cited reasons like it being easier and clearer to see all the options together. Those who preferred the two-page version offered that it was easier to focus on the second question when it was asked separately and that the two-page version was simpler and more direct.

### 3.7.2 Quantitative Results

In addition to the qualitative interviews, this study included a quantitative study component analyzed and reported by Shin (2023)[3]. The quantitative study results reflected similar results to the qualitative results.

*Quantitative Study Methods*

Data were collected on the Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey and analysis used the Internal Use File (IUF) using Week 58 data (collected June 7–June 19, 2023).[4] Survey respondents completing the survey on the internet were randomly assigned to see either version A or version B of the race/ethnicity question.

> Treatment 1 (version A) – detailed race/ethnicity options on the same page

> Treatment 2 (Version B) – detailed race/ethnicity options on subsequent pages

The main goal was to evaluate how the two question versions perform compared with one another. Survey weights were used to create estimates controlled to 2022 U.S. population estimates.

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[3] Shin, H. (2023). U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey (HPS) Race and Ethnicity Experiment. Presented on July 31, 2023.
[4] U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Internal Use Files, Week 58. Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY23-0427

*Quantitative Study Results*

The following tables (**Table 3-1 to Table 3-3**) show weighted population estimates for the treatment groups. Note that percentages do not add up to 100 percent because respondents could mark all that apply. Percentages are calculated from the total population for each treatment. **Tables 3-1** to **3-3** use the following abbreviations for the response categories:

    White = White

    Hispanic = Hispanic or Latino

    Black = Black or African American

    Asian = Asian

    AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native

    MENA = Middle Eastern or North African

    NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**Table 3-1** compares the population estimates based on the major checkbox the respondent selected for the race and ethnicity question. The results show a similar distribution of race and ethnicity between the two treatment groups. **Table 3-2** shows the estimated percentage of people who checked a more detailed group. Notably, a larger percentage of those assigned to treatment 2 (version B) selected a detailed group category. **Table 3-3** shows the population estimates created using the treatment 1 and treatment 2 data.

**Table 3-1.**  **Treatment 1 vs. Treatment 2 Results – Major Checkboxes**

| (In thousands) | Major checkbox Treatment 1 | | Major Checkbox Treatment 2 | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | **Number** | **Percentage** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| White | 84,940 | 66.4 | 85,070 | 67.0 |
| Hispanic | 22,700 | 17.7 | 21,510 | 16.9 |
| Black | 16,370 | 12.8 | 17,260 | 13.6 |
| Asian | 8,206 | 6.4 | 8,364 | 6.6 |
| AIAN | 3,955 | 3.1 | 3,329 | 2.6 |
| MENA | 1,400 | 1.1 | 1,395 | 1.1 |
| NHPI | 834 | 0.7 | 759 | 0.6 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Internal Use Files, Week 58. Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY23-0427.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent as respondents could mark all that apply. Percentages are calculated from the total population for each treatment.

**Table 3-2. Treatment 1 vs. Treatment 2 Results – Detailed Groups**

| | Checked a Detailed Group Treatment 1 | | Checked a Detailed Group Treatment 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (In thousands) | **Number** | **Percentage** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| White | 66,720 | 52.1 | 80,600 | 63.5 |
| Hispanic | 21,150 | 16.5 | 21,320 | 16.8 |
| Black | 14,300 | 11.2 | 17,150 | 13.5 |
| Asian | 7,878 | 6.2 | 8,295 | 6.5 |
| AIAN | 3,955 | 3.1 | 3,329 | 2.6 |
| MENA | 1,257 | 1.0 | 1,322 | 1.0 |
| NHPI | 714 | 0.6 | 702 | 0.6 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Internal Use Files, Week 58. Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY23-0427.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent as respondents could mark all that apply. Percentages are calculated from the total population for each treatment.

**Table 3-3.   Treatment 1 vs. Treatment 2 Results – Detailed Groups**

| | Checked a Detailed Group Treatment 1 | | Checked a Detailed Group Treatment 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (In thousands) | **Number** | **Percentage** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| Mexican or MexAm | 13,420 | 59.1 | 12,400 | 57.7 |
| Puerto Rican | 2,496 | 11.0 | 2,847 | 13.2 |
| Cuban | 895 | 3.9 | 1,183 | 5.5 |
| Other Hispanic | 6,286 | 27.7 | 6,499 | 30.2 |
| | | | | |
| Asian Indian | 743 | 9.0 | 679 | 8.1 |
| Chinese | 1,807 | 22.0 | 1,650 | 19.7 |
| Filipino | 1,338 | 16.3 | 1,615 | 19.3 |
| Japanese | 731 | 8.9 | 961 | 11.5 |
| Korean | 772 | 9.4 | 910 | 10.9 |
| Vietnamese | 1,546 | 18.8 | 1,814 | 21.7 |
| Other Asian | 1,880 | 22.9 | 1,727 | 20.6 |
| | | | | |
| Native Hawaiian | 357 | 42.8 | 348 | 45.9 |
| Chamorro | 142 | 17.1 | 89 | 11.7 |
| Samoan | 191 | 23.0 | 87 | 11.5 |
| Other Pacific Islanders | 91 | 10.9 | 167 | 22.0 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Internal Use Files, Week 58. Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY23-0427.

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent as respondents could mark all that apply. Percentages are calculated from the total population for each treatment.

# 4. Recommendations

## 4.1 Question Version (A/B)

The results of the qualitative interviews in this study did not result in a clear advantage of one version over the other. Most people were able to respond appropriately in either version, and many expressed no preference for a particular version. Although there were more participants who preferred version A, this study was not designed to assess quantitative results or have a representative sample. Therefore, it should simply be noted that some participants preferred version A whereas others preferred version B. Both versions had advantages and disadvantages according to participants as described in **Section 4.8.2**.

The quantitative results indicated respondents may share more detailed racial and ethnic data with version B than with version A. Although these results cannot tell us why respondents provided more detailed reporting in version B, this may be because when presented with the detailed race and ethnicity categories on a separate page, respondents were more likely to read all the categories rather than skim over them if presented on the same page as in version A. Therefore, version B may be somewhat preferable to encourage more detailed responses.

## 4.2 Questions Wording, Response Options, and Help Text

Most Spanish-speaking participants understood the question asking for race and/or ethnicity as being the same as asking about country of birth or nationality. As a result, they often had difficulty answering questions about U.S.-born descendants of Latin American immigrants. If the phrasing of "race and/or ethnicity" could be omitted, in favor of just asking people "Are you…" it may help avoid these associations with country of birth or nationality for Spanish speakers.

The inclusion of "mestizo" under the examples for the write-in or definition in the help text for "Latino or Hispanic" may help reduce the likelihood of Spanish-speakers of Latin American origin over-reporting "American Indian or Alaskan Native" origin. Although inclusion in the help text would likely be the simplest option, we do not expect most respondents will see it. In these 20 interviews, none of the monolingual Spanish speakers chose to look at the help text, even when they had trouble answering parts of the question or answering for some in their households, illustrating the challenge with only including needed information in that help text.

## 4.3 Future Research

This research project showed the diversity of ways people think about race and ethnicity, and there are several topics from this study that could be explored in greater depth. For

example, several people who identified as Middle Eastern or North African also identified as White. The relationship between these identities could be further explored through research with larger sample sizes of people with Middle Eastern and North African ancestry/identity.

Another notable topic that could be explored further is how people define racial and ethnic identities across generations. Many participants discussed how far back in their ancestry they go when considering how to answer questions on race and ethnicity. Although some considered several generations, others did not. For example, some participants who were interviewed in Spanish considered where their children were born rather than their ancestry in determining ethnicity. It may be useful to further explore how first- and second-generation immigrants define their own race and ethnicity, and whether this is different from how their family or other household members would describe them.

The term "mestizo" came up in several interviews as a way people with ancestry in South or Central America identify themselves. Previous research by Pew Research Center has found that one-third of U.S. Hispanics identify as "mestizo," "mulatto", or some other mixed-race combination.[5] The Census Bureau may consider further exploring how people use this term and whether it should be included in some way in questions on race and ethnicity.

DNA testing is allowing people new insights into their genealogy and ancestry. Few participants from this study had used DNA testing, which limited our ability to draw conclusions on how this may impact self-identification. A study focused on this topic recruiting only persons who have previously used DNA testing may be useful to fully understand how this technology is impacting racial and ethnic self-identification.

Racial and ethnic identity are social and cultural constructs. How people interpret these terms and self-identify may change over time because of a variety of factors, including exposure to new ideas and shifts in demographics within the United States. Therefore, the Census Bureau may need to revisit the findings of this study by periodically repeating qualitative research to further explore how people define their racial and ethnic identities.

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[5] Gonzalez-barrera, A. (2015, July). *'Mestizo' and 'mulatto': Mixed-race identities among U.S. Hispanics*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2015/07/10/mestizo-and-mulatto-mixed-race-identities-unique-to-hispanics/

**Center for Behavioral Science Methods (CBSM) Memo for
Cognitive Testing Research on the OMB Race and Ethnicity Question
with Afro-Latino Participants[1]**

Rodney Terry, Aleia Fobia, Betsari Otero Class, Marcus Berger, and Jennifer Hunter Childs

The following memo presents results from cognitive testing of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) initial set of recommended revisions to the statistical standards for collecting race and ethnicity data (88 FR 5373)[2]. This research specifically focuses on testing these revisions with Afro-Latino participants and is an addendum to a larger cognitive test project with participants from a breadth of racial and ethnic groups (i.e., Middleton, et al., 2023). This research was conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau's Center for Behavioral Science Methods (CBSM). Described below are cognitive test methodology, findings, and directions for future research.

**Methodology**

From May to July 2023, the CBSM research team conducted eleven cognitive interviews with Afro-Latino participants. Nine of the cognitive interviews were conducted in English and two of the cognitive interviews were conducted in Spanish. As was the focus for the larger study (i.e., Middleton, et al., 2023), the cognitive testing for the OMB race and ethnicity questions focused on participants' cognitive process while completing the questionnaire. The goal was to identify any elements that may have invoked unnecessary cognitive burden that prevented participants from effectively comprehending, recalling, judging, and reporting proper answers to the race and ethnicity question.

The cognitive interviews aimed to assess cognitive process issues for Afro-Latino participants and measure how well the Spanish translations performed for monolingual/dominant Spanish speakers. For these test interviews, the race and ethnicity question was revised to include the term "People of African Descent" as an example of (a) the Black or African American minimum race category, and (b) the write-in line for the Black or African American detail question. This term was included to test whether it would help promote the reporting of "Black or African American" by Afro-Latino participants, as many Afro-Latino participants may identify as being a descendent of Africa, but not necessarily identify with a particular country. See the Appendix for screenshots of how this term was presented in the race and ethnicity question during testing. Further, all cognitive interviews were conducted virtually using Microsoft Teams, providing the ability to achieve geographic diversity in participants.

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[1] This memo is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not those of the U.S. Census Bureau. The memo has been reviewed for disclosure avoidance and approved under CBDRB-FY23-CBSM002-031.

[2] See Middleton, et al., (2023) and https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-01635

*Participant Recruitment and Characteristics*

CBSM collaborated with the U.S. Census Bureau's Field Division (FLD) staff who distributed recruitment flyers and other study information to approximately 9,000 local third-party organizations that participated as partners in the 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program (CPEP). Many of these organizations then distributed the recruitment information to people in the communities they serve. This recruitment information included a weblink and QR code to an online screening questionnaire that interested people completed to establish study eligibility. CBSM selected participants who self-identified as Hispanic and Black or African American in the recruitment screener[3], and represented diversity in other variables such as age, income, education, and sex. Participants were from areas all over the United States.

The cognitive interview participants represented people that identified as both Hispanic and Black or African American. While initial targets aimed for an even distribution of women and men, final participation tallies consisted of more women than men. Most participants were highly educated but were more evenly distributed in terms of income. Overall, we were challenged with recruiting younger participants and participants with low education, which are common challenges when recruiting research study participants. See Table 1 below for further description of focus group participant characteristics.

Table 1: Selection Characteristics of Cognitive Interview Participants

| Characteristic | Quantity |
|---|---|
| **Population** | |
| Hispanic/Latino English speaker | 9 |
| Hispanic/Latino Spanish speaker | 2 |
| **Gender** | |
| Female | 8 |
| Male | 3 |
| **Educational attainment** | |
| Some College or less | 2 |
| College graduate or more | 9 |
| **Income** | |
| Less than $50,000 | 6 |
| $50,000 or more | 5 |
| **Age** | |
| Younger than 35 | 4 |
| 35 and older | 7 |

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[3] In the recruitment screener, ethnicity and race were measured in separate questions.

**Results**

*Reactions to Question Wording*

Almost all participants understood the race/ethnicity question and did not have difficulty providing a response for themselves. The few cases of difficulty occurred when reporting for family members. One participant had some difficulty reporting for their brother because their self-identification has fluctuated over time, and another participant had difficulty reporting a child born in the U.S. In this case, the participant was initially confused when reporting for their child because while the child shared the same Hispanic ancestry as the participant, the child does not share the same sense of cultural identification, as the child is most familiar with American culture, and thus identifies as "American" more than "Dominican." Ultimately, the participant decided to report the "Dominican" category anyway because that is the child's Hispanic heritage even if the cultural identification is not strong.

When asked how much of the question and response options they read, responses were a mix of carefully reading everything, skimming through everything, and reading only enough to find the categories they wanted to pick. Not reading the entire question affected only one case, where one participant did not initially see the "select all that apply" instruction and thus only reported an ethnicity, when they would have also reported their race (i.e., Black or African American). No participants asked for clarification, expressed literacy or language barriers, or clicked on the "Help Text" icon on the screen.

When coming up with an answer, most participants said they reported the minimum and detailed categories based on their ancestry, which sometimes comprised of multiple ancestries. While all participants reported a Black/African American ancestry in a separate race/ethnicity question format during recruitment, many participants did not report this ancestry during the interview. Reasons include one participant who goes back for forth periodically when reporting this heritage, and five participants who said they have a complicated Hispanic ancestry that is a mix of White, Black, and indigenous people, and prefer to keep it simple by only reporting their Hispanic ancestry. All participants understood the question as measuring race and ethnicity and were able to pick out the racial or ethnic categories that applied to them. However, a few participants had comments about improvements to the categories, including a preference for a "mixed-race" category (because it better represented their racial heritage than reporting the parts separately), and adding the term "American" to other Hispanic nationalities as this term could also apply to the other nationalities listed. Participants generally interpreted the term "race" as culture, nationality, skin color, and how people are perceived or assigned to groups. They generally interpreted "ethnicity" as nationality and culture.

The detailed category write-in line also worked well for participants. They understood the detailed category instruction as asking for more information about the minimum categories they reported and wrote one or more categories that applied to them that were not already listed. One participant wrote in "Afrolatino" for the Hispanic category. Additional write-ins

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included "Ecuadorian" or "Peruvian" for the Hispanic category, "Barbadian" for the Black or African American category, and "Asario" for the AIAN category.

*Reactions to Key Terms*

When asked about the term "and/or," most participants interpreted the term as an instruction to choose one side of the term or the other (i.e., "and" or "or"), depending on how the participant self-identified. A few participants interpreted this term as being for people who view race and ethnicity as the same thing (e.g., ethnicity as a person's nationality, and race as the broader category the nationality falls under). The former interpretation appeared to be critical for this group of participants because it caused some to only report ethnicity because of the "or" word. As a result, their responses would not have changed if the term was only "or" since "or" was the side of the term they focused on. However, several participants reported both a race and ethnicity, and thus reported their answer would have changed if the term was only "or." Furthermore, all participants properly understood the "select all that apply" instruction, the "enter, for example" instruction, and the introduction statement on the detailed categories response page.

When discussing terms that were tested specifically for Afro-Latino participants (i.e., "Afro-Latino," "People of African Descent," and "Afrodescendent"), participants were familiar with these terms and understood them all to mean heritage that traces back to Africa. For many participants, the use of these terms in daily life and when reporting would vary depending on how much they identified with them as part of their identity. For some participants, while they acknowledge their African heritage, they do not have a close relationship to it, while for some it is a very close relationship. For the one term actually listed in the question[4] (i.e., "People of African Descent" listed as a write-in line example under "Black or African American"), it did not change how participants reported because they used the nationalities listed under the Black or African American category. For one participant, reporting their Hispanic detailed category (i.e., Puerto Rican) was enough because they understood their Puerto Rican ethnicity as including African heritage.

*Feedback on Help Text*

Regarding the help text, no participants clicked on the help text when initially responding to the question. When discussing the help text retrospectively, participants described the text as helpful or informative. Comments about the help text included learning more about the definition of race and ethnicity and what nationalities are and are not a part of the Hispanic, AIAN, or Black/African American categories, and that the Hispanic or Latino definition did not include the term "African descent." In particular, a few participants said knowing that the AIAN

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[4] The terms "Afro-Latino" and "Afrodescendent" were introduced and discussed during retrospective probing.

definition included people from Central and South America would have had them report the AIAN category in addition to their usual reporting.

*Impact of DNA testing on Racial and Ethnic Identity*

Only three of the 11 participants reported completing a DNA test to learn more about their ethnic ancestries. Further, only one of the three said it changed how they reported. This person said the results informed them of what specific ethnic groups and nationalities to report for self, when they had only a vague understanding before the DNA testing.

*Question Version Comparisons*

When comparing the Version A and Version B, participants either had no preference or preferred Version A. Those who preferred Version A did so because it allowed participants to mark their nationalities immediately after reporting a minimum racial or ethnic category, therefore appearing more efficient than Version B. Of note, one participant preferred being able to report "Black" under the Hispanic category because they consider self a Black version of a Latino. All participants completed Version B before Version A. Thus, these results may have been impacted by recency effects and participants' discussion of race and ethnicity issues during retrospective probes after they completed Version B.

**Directions for Future Research**

This research suggests several directions for future research including quantitative methods, modified recruitment for qualitative methods, and increased sample sizes for continued cognitive testing. One of the remaining research questions after this study is whether including terms such as Afro-Latino, Afrodescendant, or People of African Descent would significantly affect the way that individuals self-identify. Quantitative experimentation with different placements of these terms could help determine whether and how the terms help respondents identify themselves in the question.

Recruitment for this study was challenging. One limitation is that we used separate race and ethnicity questions to identify respondents to participate in cognitive testing. This means that our results are limited to those who already identified as Hispanic and Black/African American in a separate question. Other approaches might recruit using a combined race/ethnicity question, an ancestry question, or a more in-depth exploration of ancestry, ethnicity, and race. Alternative recruitment approaches might lead to additional conclusions about the meaning of terms (e.g., Afrolatino, Afrodescendent, etc.) and interpretations of the help text, question stem, and instructions. A mixed-methods approach could leverage respondents from experimental quantitative testing as a screening tool for follow-up qualitative testing.

Another direction for future research is to continue exploration of differences between English and Spanish speakers and interpretations of race/ethnicity questions and terms. Increasing sample sizes for Spanish-speaking participants in both qualitative and quantitative research would provide data for comparison that was not appropriate for the samples obtained in this study. The findings in this study support previous research that finds that respondents understand and correctly interpret the combined race and ethnicity question, further research is needed to understand how the addition and placement of terms such as Afro-Latino or Afro-descendent might affect how respondents self-identify.

**Appendix: Screenshots of "People of African Descent" Placement in the Two-Page Version of Questionnaire**

5. **What is your race and/or ethnicity?** (Help)

   *Select all that apply.*

   ☐ **White**
   *For example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.*

   ☐ **Hispanic or Latino**
   *For example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.*

   ☐ **Black or African American**
   *For example, People of African Descent, 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 Barrow Inupiat, Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.*

   ☐ **Middle Eastern or North African**
   *For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Israeli, etc.*

   ☐ **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**
   *For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.*

## You said that you are Black or African American. Provide details below.

*Select all that apply.*

☐ African American

☐ Jamaican

☐ Haitian

☐ Nigerian

☐ Ethiopian

☐ Somali

*Enter, for example, People of African Descent, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

[                                                    ]

BACK                                    NEXT

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**United States**

**Department of Agriculture**

**National Agricultural Statistics Service**

Methodology Division
Washington DC 20250

Findings presented to the
Interagency Technical Working
Group on Race and Ethnicity
June 2023

# How do farmers and ranchers describe their race and/or ethnicity? Qualitative testing findings

Struther Van Horn
Kathy Ott

# Executive Summary

To assist with the OMB's Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity, the National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS) conducted qualitative testing on proposed changes to the 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). The proposed changes increase the level of detail that people can report when self-identifying their race and/or ethnicity and are based on findings from research conducted by several US government agencies. In response to the ITWG's call for conducting testing of the proposed new questions, NASS conducted qualitative research by conducting cognitive interviews and web surveys. A total of 33 cognitive interviews and 40 online web surveys were conducted for this project; key findings are presented below for each type of qualitative research.  For more detailed information on methods, findings (including specific race/ethnicity findings), and appendices, please refer to those sections in the report.

Table A shows self-reported race and/or ethnicity for the than one race and/or ethnicity. Of the 73 respondents, 38 minimum reporting categories, for both cognitive interview and web survey respondents. Respondents were able to select more self-identified as White, 24 self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, 11 self-identified as Black or African American, nine self-identified as Asian, six self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, two self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African, and three self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Table A: Self-Reported Race and/or Ethnicity, Combined Cognitive Interviews and Web Surveys

| Minimum Race/Ethnicity Category | Count[1] |
|---|---:|
| White | 38 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 24 |
| Black or African American | 11 |
| Asian | 9 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 6 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 2 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 3 |
| **Total** | **93** |

1/ Respondents could report more than one race/ethnicity

## Cognitive Interviews

Cognitive interviews were conducted in two ways, one to mimic a self-administered paper data collection (PAPI) and the other to mimic an enumerator-administered computer assisted telephone interview (CATI). In all the cognitive interviews, respondents were asked to provide answers for the combined minimum and detailed race and/or ethnicity categories. Within each type of cognitive interview, different instructions were tested, one longer version and one shorter version. The long instructions were: "Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group." The short instructions were: "Please select all that apply." Across the 33 cognitive interviews, 19 respondents provided proxy information. Below are the key findings from the cognitive interviews:

**Not Reporting Race and/or Ethnicity Information**: There were several different scenarios where respondents did not or could not provide race and/or ethnicity information. Specifically, some respondents:

- refused to answer a question,
- indicated they didn't know the information,
    - For example, at least three respondents mentioned difficulties with providing detailed race and/or ethnicity information once they had selected Hispanic or Latino. Two of these three respondents had difficulty providing detailed information for themselves, and one had difficulty reporting detailed information for a proxy respondent.
- made a concerted effort to not report a particular race or ethnicity,
- said they would answer differently based on who was asking, and/or
- missed reporting a race and/or ethnicity and indicated that they would have reported it had they not missed it.

**Ability to select more than one race and/or ethnic group:** While many respondents did select more than one race or ethnic group or indicated that they knew they could select more than one group, there were at least eight respondents who indicated they did not see or know that they could select more than one race/ethnicity. This was found for respondents who received longer instructions, as well as those who received the shortened instructions. The longer instructions did not reduce the number of respondents who did not realize they could report more than one race or ethnicity.

**Order that Response Options were Listed in:**
Several respondents asked unprompted about the rationale or reasoning behind the presented order of the response options. The response order used in this testing was the same as the response order presented 88 FR 5375. This order, based on population sizes, was not immediately apparent to these respondents and seemed to imply preferences or a hierarchy.

**Use of "Or" vs. "And/Or":**
For the PAPI testing, we showed respondents a version of the question that read "race or ethnicity" and probed on their preference between that and "race and/or ethnicity." For those respondents who were asked about their preference about the use of "or" versus "and/or" in the question(s), all but one respondent indicated that they would prefer the use of "and/or." It is important to note that several respondents indicated that just using "or" can impact how they may understand and respond to the question.

**Short vs. Longer Instructions:**
Respondents were probed on their preference of the longer instructions or the shorter instructions. For those respondents who were asked about their preference, all but two respondents indicated they preferred the longer instructions.

**Minimum vs. Detailed Categories in the Question:**
During the cognitive interviews, the level of detail that the respondents would prefer to report on was discussed. Only one person indicated that they preferred the minimum reporting question in the cognitive interviews. Other respondents said that they preferred the more detailed question as it allowed them to describe themself more accurately. Some respondents did, however, indicate that

their preference depended on who was conducting the survey and knowing what the purpose of the survey was.

**Proxy Reporting:**
Of the 33 respondents that were interviewed, 19 were asked to report information for a proxy respondent. Most of the respondents who reported race and/or ethnicity for a proxy respondent indicated that they could easily report that information. It is important to note that when respondents were probed on why it was easy to report that information, for many of the respondents, they indicated it was because of the familial relationship they had with the proxy respondent (e.g., spouse, sibling, parent, child). At least 15 respondents indicated that they could very easily provide race and ethnicity information about a proxy respondent.

**Cognitive Testing Mode-Specific Findings:**
For CATI, respondents often interrupted the enumerator before the enumerator read all of the response options. This tendency increased when a respondent was proxy reporting (which was always after they reported for themselves). For PAPI, respondents often did not check boxes for both the broad reporting category and the detailed categories.

## Web Surveys

Roughly 2,000 agricultural producers were sent an email invitation to complete a web survey. The producers were randomly selected into a version and emailed the corresponding survey link. Each version had about 500 emails sent. There were four different survey versions that were tested, varying by including either the detailed and minimum reporting categories or just the minimum reporting categories for the race and/or ethnicity and by the inclusion of short or longer instructions. A total of 40 producers completed the web survey. Twenty respondents received and provided information on detailed race and ethnicity instructions; 20 respondents received and provided information just on the minimum reporting categories. Below are the key findings from the web surveys:

**Missed Reporting and Long Instructions:**
Across all versions of the web surveys, which included both long and short instructions, many respondents indicated that they did not realize they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity. While many respondents subsequently indicated they would not report any additional information, three respondents said they would have reported additional race and/or ethnicities if they knew they could. While the longer instructions did not eliminate the issue, there were fewer respondents who did not know they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity when they received the longer instructions.

**Minimum vs. Detailed Reporting; Accurate Description of Respondents:**
Overall, many respondents indicated that the questions allowed them to describe themselves accurately. It is important to note that when looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, the respondents who only received the minimum reporting question indicated higher rates or agreement that the question allowed them to describe themselves more accurately than those respondents who received the detailed questions.

**Minimum vs. Detailed Reporting; Level of Detail Provided by Respondents:**
When looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, of note is that more respondents who answered the minimum reporting question indicated that the level of detail requested was "just right" when compared to the respondents who answered the detailed questions.

**Proxy Responses:**
Across all versions of the web survey, respondents indicated that it was relatively easy to provide race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent. Only one respondent indicated that they found it difficult to provide the information and none said it was very difficult. Reporting detailed or minimum category information did not seem to impact the difficulty of reporting race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent. It is important to note that many of our respondents indicated that they had a familial relationship (e.g., spouse or sibling) with the proxy respondent which may have made it easier to report that information.

**Refusals:**
Across the web surveys, we only received one refusal for the race and/or ethnicity questions and it was a refusal on a proxy respondent. This respondent refused to provide a race/ethnicity for a proxy respondent because they indicated that "White" was not an ethnicity.

## General Findings Across Cognitive Interviews and Web Surveys

Respondents across both the cognitive interviews and web surveys had similar findings related to the following topics:
- Confusion about the use or lack of use of the response option "American", a few respondents questioned why the use of "American" was behind some of the example groups, and several others mentioned that they would prefer to use a response option of "American".
- Inconsistency with where respondents were including the write-in for Spanish/Spaniard. Respondents used the write-in box for both White and Hispanic or Latino to write-in variations on "Spanish" or "Spaniard."
- Some respondents who may have previously identified as White and Hispanic or Latino, chose to only identify as Hispanic or Latino in this testing.
- Several respondents mentioned the politicalization of asking about race and ethnicity.
- Some respondents mentioned that in general, talking about race and ethnicity can be negative or bothersome to people, even going so far as to say the questions should not be asked.
- Several respondents mentioned that they wanted to know what the survey was about, why we were collecting this information, or how it relates to agriculture.
- Several respondents mentioned that they have done an ancestry kit (such as *23andMe*), which has impacted their understanding of their race/ethnicity and what they have chosen to report.

**How do farmers and ranchers describe their race and/or ethnicity? Qualitative testing findings**
Struther Van Horn and Kathy Ott [1]

**Abstract**
To assist with the OMB's Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity, the National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS) conducted qualitative testing on proposed changes to the 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). The proposed changes increase the level of detail that people can report when self-identifying their race and/or ethnicity and are based on findings from research conducted by several US government agencies. NASS conducted testing on the initial proposed edits to the race and ethnicity questions, using both cognitive interviews and qualitative web surveys with farmers and ranchers, stakeholders, and enumerators of NASS surveys. This report provides initial findings from both the cognitive interviews and the web surveys.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the Chief Statistician of the United States (CSOTUS) within the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) convened the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (Working Group) to review and develop recommendations for revising OMB's 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). SPD15 currently requires Federal surveys collect race and ethnicity separately. In a Federal Register Notice (88 FR 5375) issued in 2023, the OMB's Working Group (ITWG) on Race and Ethnicity Standards proposed a new combined race/ethnicity question with the following minimum categories as response options:

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

In the proposal, each of the minimum categories has more detailed categories listed and a write-in field to provide additional information.

[1] Struther Van Horn and Kathy Ott are Statisticians with the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Methodology Division, 1400 Independence Ave SW. Washington, DC 20250. Acknowledgements: The authors would like to thank Dan Beckler and Kenny Herrell for their support and review of this project. The authors would also like to thank NASDA enumerators, NASS survey coordinators, and RFO staff for assisting in this research. Most importantly, the authors thank the research participants who provided their time, feedback, and discussion on the race and ethnicity questions for this research.

All federal agencies that participated in the ITWG were asked to provide the ITWG with existing work on race and ethnicity or to conduct new work to test the proposed race and ethnicity questions and concepts that the ITWG included in the Federal Register Notice (88 FR 5375). Below are the two draft versions of the combined race/ethnicity question in the FRN. Under the new proposed standard, agencies would be expected to use one of the two versions for collecting race/ethnicity data.

Figure 1 illustrates an example for collecting more detailed data, with the minimum categories disaggregated by country of origin. This example was chosen by the ITWG because it reflects the approach that performed best of the options tested by the Census Bureau prior to the 2020 Decennial Census. The country-of-origin options reflect the most common countries of origin in the U.S. for each minimum category.



*Figure 1. Proposed example of Self-Response Data Collections: Combined Question with Minimum and Detailed Categories*

Figure 2 represents the ITWG's proposed minimum categories, for use when more detailed collection is not feasible or justified. It incorporates the other proposals from the ITWG to use a combined race and ethnicity question and to add a new minimum category for Middle Eastern or North African (MENA).

*Figure 2. Proposed Example for Self-Response Data Collections: Combined Question with Minimum Categories*

More information about the proposed changes from the ITWG can be found in the Federal Register Notice (88 FR 5375).

In response to the ITWG's call for conducting testing of the proposed new questions, NASS conducted qualitative work to examine the following research topics:

- How do respondents comprehend the combined race and ethnicity question?
- Are agricultural producers able and willing to answer the combined question?
- How does the mode of data collection impact the ability of the respondent to answer?
- Are respondents able and willing to report as a proxy for another person?
- How do differing question stems and instructions, as well as the definition of the race/ethnicity categories, impact respondent's understanding of the questions?
- What are agricultural producers' opinions about the level of disaggregated race/ethnicity data collected?

A total of 33 cognitive interviews and 40 online web surveys were conducted for this project. Several questions from the Personal Characteristics Section of the 2022 Census of Agriculture (COA) served as the basic questionnaire for the interviews, with the current race and ethnicity questions replaced with the proposed aggregated or the disaggregated race/ethnicity questions. The COA allows for proxy reporting for up to four individuals involved in decisions for the farm or ranch operation. To limit respondent burden but still capture proxy reporting, in this testing, respondents were asked to report for up to two individuals involved in decisions for their farm or ranch operation. This report presents high level findings and considerations from both the cognitive interviews and the web surveys.

## 2. METHODS

OMB clearance was requested and approved under NASS's generic testing docket OMB No. 0535-0248.

The sample for the cognitive interviewing and web surveys was selected based on several criteria on the NASS list frame. First, several states were selected that have a relatively high number of farm and ranch operators that have self-identified as self-identified as any race or ethnicity other that non-Hispanic White on previous NASS data collections.

Within those states, records were generally included in the sample if they were an active record, had an email address and a telephone number, had not been identified as an operation that needs special handling, were not in another NASS survey during the time frame of testing (approximately January – May 2023), had responded to at least one NASS survey in the past five years, and as of February 2023, had already responded to the 2022 Census of Agriculture (COA) (there were other NASS-specific criteria that were used that would eliminate a few records from the sample). Within that group, records that had list frame data that showed that they had self-identified on a past survey as Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian, or of Hispanic origin were included with certainty. In addition, we included some operators that identified as White. We also attempted to target operators who may identify as Middle Eastern or Northern African; because NASS had not previously included Middle Eastern and North African as an option, we targeted these records by querying the list frame for a list of the most common Arabic last names in the selected states and included those records in the sample.

These criteria identified a total of 2,447 records, which were divided into two groups, one group of 479 records to recruit from for cognitive interviews conducted with a researcher to mimic paper or telephone interviews, and one group of 1,968 records to contact via email to participate in a self-administered web interview. Records were put in one group or the other based on the previous data collection mode and race and ethnicity variables from the list frame to ensure that there was a diversity of operators in each group.

## Cognitive Interviews

Cognitive interviews were conducted in March, April, and May 2023. All cognitive interviews, except one, were conducted by NASS survey methodologists. One cognitive interview was conducted by a NASS survey coordinator, at the request of the respondent.

Recruitment for cognitive interviews was done predominantly by NASS enumerators in each of the states. In addition, USDA stakeholders and NASDA enumerators in some states were invited to participate in the cognitive interview portion of the research. (Only farm and ranch operators were included in the online web survey portion of this research.)

Cognitive interviews were conducted in two ways, one to mimic a self-administered paper data collection (PAPI) and the other to mimic an enumerator-administered computer assisted telephone interview (CATI). For the self-administered paper mode, respondents joined the researchers remotely using Zoom software. During the interview, the researcher shared their computer screen with the respondent to show them the "paper" questionnaire and asked the respondent to take control of the screen to fill out the form on their own, while thinking out loud as much as possible. For the enumerator-administered CATI mode, the researcher read the questions over the phone to the respondent and asked them to answer the questions verbally.

For both CATI and PAPI interviews, after answering the survey questions, researchers asked several follow-up probe questions. In all the cognitive interviews, respondents were asked to provide answers for the combined minimum and detailed race and/or ethnicity categories. Within each type of cognitive interview, different instructions were tested, one longer version and one shorter version. The long instructions were: "Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group." The short instructions were: "Please select all that apply". Across the 33 cognitive interviews, 19 respondents provided proxy information. The CATI scripts, PAPI questionnaires, and interview guides containing the probe questions for all versions are in Appendix A.

Table 1 below details the number of interviews that were conducted for each version of the cognitive interviews. There were 23 CATI interviews conducted over the phone and 10 PAPI interviews conducted over Zoom. Of the 33 cognitive interviews, 17 received the long instructions for the race and ethnicity questions and 16 received the short instructions.

Table 1: Cognitive Interview Versions, n=33

| Version | Description | Count |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Detailed Question, Long Instructions, CATI | 11 |
| 2 | Detailed Question, Short Instructions, CATI | 12 |
| 3 | Detailed Question, Long Instructions, PAPI | 6 |
| 4 | Detailed Question, Short Instructions, PAPI | 4 |
| **Total** | | **33** |

Tables 2, 3, and 4 provide basic demographic information that was self-reported by respondents in the cognitive interviews. Table 2 shows self-reported sex. Of the 33 interviews, 17 of the respondents identified as male and 16 identified as female.

Table 2: Self-Reported Sex, Cognitive Interviews

| Sex | Count |
|---|---|
| Male | 17 |
| Female | 16 |
| **Total** | **33** |

Table 3 shows the self-reported age ranges of respondents. No respondents were in the age range of 18 to 34 years-old, 15 of the respondents were in the 35 to 64 years-old age range, and 17 of the respondents said they were 65 years old or older. One respondent did not report their age.

Table 3: Self-Reported Age, Cognitive Interviews

| Age Range | Count[1] |
|---|---|
| 18-34 | 0 |
| 35-64 | 15 |
| 65+ | 17 |
| **Total** | **32** |

1/ One respondent did not report their age.

Table 4 shows self-reported race and/or ethnicity for the minimum reporting categories. Respondents were able to select more than one race in all versions of the cognitive interviews. Of the 33 respondents, 17 self-identified as White, eight self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, eight self-identified as Black or African American, four self-identified as Asian, four self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, two self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African, and two self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Table 4: Self-Reported Race and/or Ethnicity, Cognitive Interviews

| Minimum Race/Ethnicity Category | Count[1] |
|---|---|
| White | 17 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8 |
| Black or African American | 8 |
| Asian | 4 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 4 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 2 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2 |
| **Total** | **45** |

1/ Respondents could report more than one race/ethnicity

## Web Surveys

All self-administered web surveys were conducted in May - June 2023, in multiple waves. Recruitment for the web surveys was done via email through the Qualtrics survey platform. Roughly 2,000 agricultural producers were sent an email invitation to complete a web survey. The producers were randomly selected into a version and emailed the corresponding survey link. Each version had roughly the same number of emails sent (about 500). There were four different survey versions that were tested, varying by including either the detailed and minimum reporting categories or just the minimum reporting categories for the race and/or ethnicity and by the inclusion of short or detailed instructions. The questionnaires used for all versions are in Appendix B.

Table 5 provides details on the number of responses that were collected for each version of the web surveys. Twenty respondents received and provided information on detailed race and ethnicity instructions; 20 respondents received and provided information just on the minimum reporting categories.

Table 5: Web Survey Versions, n=40

| Version | Description | Count |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Detailed Question, Detailed Instructions | 14 |
| 2 | Detailed Question, Short Instructions | 6 |
| 3 | Minimum Reporting, Detailed Instructions | 8 |
| 4 | Minimum Reporting, Short Instructions | 12 |
| **Total** | | **40** |

Tables 6, 7, and 8 provide basic demographic information that was self-reported by respondents in the web surveys. Table 6 shows self-reported sex. Of the 40 interviews, 36 of the respondents identified as male and four identified as female.

Table 6: Self-Reported Sex, Web Surveys

| Sex | Count |
|-----|-------|
| Male | 36 |
| Female | 4 |
| **Total** | **40** |

Table 7 shows the self-reported age ranges of respondents. Only one respondent was in the age range of 18 to 34 years-old, 13 of the respondents were in the 35 to 64 years-old age range, and 25 of the respondents said they were 65 years old or older. One respondent declined to provide an age.

Table 7: Self-Reported Age, Web Surveys

| Age Range | Count[1] |
|-----------|----------|
| 18-34 | 1 |
| 35-64 | 13 |
| 65+ | 25 |
| **Total** | **39** |

1/ One respondent did not report their age.

Table 8 shows self-reported race and/or ethnicity for the minimum reporting categories for the web survey respondents. Respondents were able to select more than one race or ethnicity in all versions of the web survey interviews. Of the 40 respondents, 21 self-identified as White, 16 self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, three self-identified as Black or African American, five self-identified as Asian, two self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, none self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African, and one respondent self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Table 8: Self-Reported Race and/or Ethnicity, Web Surveys

| Minimum Race/Ethnicity Category | Count[1] |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| White | 21 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 16 |
| Black or African American | 3 |
| Asian | 5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 |
| **Total** | **48** |

1/ Respondents could report more than one race/ethnicity

## 3. COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Cognitive interviews were conducted in March, April, and May 2023. All cognitive interviews, except one, were conducted by NASS survey methodologists. One cognitive interview was conducted by a NASS survey coordinator, at the request of the respondent. Interviews were conducted with producers, stakeholders, and enumerators of NASS surveys.

### General Findings

Below are compiled general findings from the 33 cognitive interviews, with supporting quotes and information provided by the respondents.

### Definitions of race and ethnicity:

We asked respondents to tell us in their own words how they define or think of the term's 'race' and 'ethnicity'. We found that many respondents had difficulty articulating definitions for these terms and there were a wide range of definitions given. Some respondents had a difficult time distinguishing between the two terms.

Main finding: Respondents had diverse and varying definitions of race and ethnicity. Definitions often included information about skin color, culture, genetics, country of origin, or where their ancestors came from. Some examples given from respondents include:

- One respondent said that they believed the bolded terms (first seven categories / minimum reporting categories) were race, and the subcategories were ethnicities.
- "…not everyone understands the term 'ethnicity', race is a color, but I understand that ethnicity is how I was raised. I was raised as an African American. Black is a race and African American is an ethnicity."
- "Race to me is a color to a degree. Everyone has a different ethnicity; it is not a color to me."
- "Ethnicity is the country you are from, race is more of a scientific value given between people, genetic –physical differences. Ethnicity is a country you're from. Race is a more of a scientific value given on the differences between peoples."
- "Race is, what is the person's racial background, ethnicity is more like the cultural background, like where I grew up."

### What the question is asking for:

We asked respondents to tell us in their own words what they thought the race and ethnicity question was asking them for/to provide. Like the definitions provided for race and ethnicity, respondents provided a range of interpretations for what they thought the question was asking them.

Main finding: Like the range of responses and themes provided for the terms "race" and "ethnicity," respondents had a range of interpretations for what they thought the race and ethnicity question was asking them to provide. Respondents thought that the question was asking

them for genetic make-up, cultures that they identified with, ancestry, where they were born, and ethnic make-up. Some examples given from respondents include:

- "[The question is asking for] the details of my genetic make-up, I have Irish, my husband has Cherokee, we don't identify with Irish or French. We don't identify with those cultures, but we do with Cherokee and Creek and African American. "
- "[The question is] asking me for one of those groups that has migrated from one of those countries [countries listed in the response options]. In my past, I would have to go way back, to see what country my forbearers were brought from. Most of my past always said African American, until DNA was done."
- "I guess my ethnic background."
- "My ethnic make-up."
- "What I represent myself as."
- "Well basically, what is my ancestry, what do I see myself as."
- "What are you made of, what is your make up, who are your ancestors, what makes you who you are, that's kind of like in terms of place, when I see this, it tells me who is your ancestors."
- "My interpretation would be family history, linage. Were you born here or immigrated?"
- "You are asking me where my ancestors and where they are from."

It is also worth noting that at least one respondent indicated that they did not know or understand what the question was asking for:
- "I don't have a clue, I genuinely check the other box – and put 'American'"

## How the respondent chose their answer:
We asked respondents to tell us how they decided on their responses to the question. Many responses were centered around cultural and genetic make-up.

Main finding: Many respondents discussed providing information based on the culture they identify with. Others discussed specifically providing responses based on their genetic make-up or results provided from DNA testing, like *23andMe*. Others directly mention parental linage. Examples provided by the respondents are included below:

Of note, at least two respondents mentioned it being a process of elimination, which may be indicative of their groups or category names not really fitting how they self-identify:
- "Well because I am not any of the others."
- "Process of elimination. I am not any of the others."

## Genetic information/DNA:
- "Because when my sister did the DNA testing, it showed more of African descent than Indian descent, my great grandmother is of Indian descent, it is a very small amount."
- "Based on my genetic information, it seems to be the most legitimate. I would be doing a disservice to myself and the people who I come from, if I just chose one."
- "I have seen some genealogy most of it points to Northern European and Viking."

### Culture or ethnic background:
- "The culture we identify with."
- "Historically it is my ethnic background – I identify with Hawaiians. It was the only accurate response."

### Parent ethnicity:
- "I know father's background and got his ancestry information."
- "Based upon my parents' ethnicity."
- "That's who I am, that's who my parents are, mother and father, who I am is based on their ethnicities."
- "Hmm, I would say 55 years of history of knowing myself and my parents."
- One respondent answered the way they did because of their father/last name being of a specific ethnicity and grandparent, and said, "That is what I am, I don't act like someone who is different, I don't act like someone who is from Spain or China. Nothing else that would apply."

### Not reporting race and/or ethnicity Information:
Main finding: There were several different scenarios where respondents did not or could not provide race and/or ethnicity information. Specifically, some respondents:
- refused to answer a question,
- indicated they didn't know the information,
- made a concerted effort to not report a particular race or ethnicity,
- said they would answer differently based on who was asking, and/or
- missed reporting a race and/or ethnicity and indicated that they would have reported it had they not missed it.

Each of these scenarios is described with examples below.

### Refusal to answer a question:
We had at least two respondents who gave outright refusals to providing race and ethnicity information about themselves during the cognitive interviews. One respondent provided the minimum race and/or ethnicity but refused to provide detailed race and/or ethnicity data.
- For one respondent, who gave a full refusal to answering any race and ethnicity questions, they stated that they would rather ask/provide information on citizenship.
- "None of the above, not interesting in identifying with any 'other' category catch-all, we have heard other stories, doesn't matter as Hispanic and American. To use this [information] the easiest way to 'Other.' The question should be omitted."

Other respondents discussed how other people may refuse answering race and/or ethnicity question(s) when discussing how they perceived or felt about the race and/or ethnicity questions.
- "[There] may be straight out refusals."
- One respondent's initially response to the first question was, "Why do you have to be a race?" This respondent then proceeded to respond to the initial race and/or ethnicity question.

- "For myself a personally private person, a little disrespecting, for someone to fill in an application [related to providing race/ethnicity information]. A lot of times I leave this blank, why do you ask, why do you want to know this. If I have to answer, I will check [a response]."

## Hesitancy or don't know:

Not all respondents could accurately provide detailed race or ethnicity information about themselves. While this only occurred for two respondents, it is of note that not all people may know detailed race or ethnicity information about themselves.

- "I have no idea" [when asked for detailed category for Hispanic/Latino]
- In response to the detailed question, one respondent indicated hesitation or being unsure about their response and said, "Do I have to choose one? I guess I speak English, so I guess I'll pick that."

## Choosing not to report a particular race and/or ethnicity:

In looking at what respondents reported, we found that at least eight respondents specifically mentioned choosing not to report a specific race and/or ethnicity, when providing race and/or ethnicity information. Reasons for not reporting included:

- "I am also part Native American, but I don't put it in there. I have to check two now and explain – [I am] not as connected to the Native American side, the tribe isn't existing as much. In the record books it is there but it is dwindling. I knew I could check that, I wasn't raised in that community." (This respondent chose to only identify as Black and African American)
- "… I feel like it makes very little difference, if you apply for different things for the Ag. department, if you are a minority, you are a minority. If you select American Indian or African American – you are a minority." This respondent chose to only identify as Black and African American, mentioned having an 'American Indian' great grandmother. They elaborated, "Any times you would report American Indian heritage/background – if I was doing something about truly ethnicities, I would select that."
- Regarding choosing not to report American Indian, one respondent said,] "…that's what I can prove through genetics. Supposedly we have Cherokee in us too, but I can't prove that yet, so I'm not going to say that."
- "I did a DNA test, I reported based on percentages, Western and Southern Europe, small percentage of Irish.." (This respondent did not report races or ethnicities they considered of a low percent.)
- "I really didn't feel like I needed to put that in." (This respondent did report a minimum race and/or ethnicity but did not report detailed race/ethnicity. When the interviewer probed more about why she didn't select the sub-categories, she said she didn't see the importance of providing more detailed race/ethnicity data, such as "German and Irish".) "If I knew the reason behind the survey or what the survey was being used for – I would select more than one."
- One respondent mentioned specifically that their parents were of Iraqi and Turkish but opted to only select/report for their father's side, because culturally that is how they identify (by father's origination).

### Response dependent on who was asking:

At least two respondents indicated that their responses would be dependent on who was asking the questions and what the data was being used for, and that is why they chose not to report specific race or ethnicity information:

- One respondent who would answer differently depending on who is asking said, "In the livestock business, you can go into apply for assistance, if you are AI, female, or minority, you don't have to pay – but if I am White, I have to pay. In my records with USDA, I am American Indian." This respondent indicated that they do not always report that they are American Indian.
- "I really didn't feel like I needed to put that in." (This respondent did report a minimum race and/or ethnicity but did not report detailed race/ethnicity for PAPI. When probed more about why they didn't select the sub-categories, they didn't see the importance of providing more detailed race/ethnicity data, such as "German" and "Irish". "If I knew the reason behind the survey or what the survey was being used for – I would select more than one."

### Missed reporting:

A few respondents missed that they could select multiple race/ethnic groups and they indicated that they would have reported those groups and subsequently changed their response during the cognitive interview.

Some respondents just missed reporting in the broad groups in the self-administered cognitive interviews (e.g., one respondent missed MENA initially), while others also missed reporting detailed categories (e.g., one respondent later added "Irish"). It is important to note that these changes did not arise until we discussed their responses during the cognitive interview. This occurred in both CATI and PAPI interviews.  For example:

- One respondent missed hearing the option "English" initially, but during probing said they would select that. [CATI]
- One respondent initially did not see that they could select all that apply, and indicated they would White, German and French if they knew they could [PAPI].

## Question Design Findings

This section provides findings specific to question/survey design.

### General feedback on instructions:

Some respondents provided general feedback on the instructions for the questions:

- One respondent said that the instructions should immediately follow the question text and be in bold. "If [the instructions weren't] bolded, I would likely skip it or move over the information."
- "I think at the beginning underneath it needs to say you can you know you can pick more than one and I like I said, I don't think I've ever seen that on any survey or census that I've ever taken."

## Ability to select more than one race or ethnic group:

Main finding: While many respondents did select more than one race or ethnic group or indicated that they knew they could select more than one group, there were at least eight respondents who indicated they did not see or know that they could select more than one race/ethnicity. This was found for respondents who received more detailed instructions, as well as those who received the shortened instructions. The more detailed instructions did not seem to reduce the number of respondents who did not realize they could report more than one race or ethnicity.

## Respondents who saw more detailed instructions:

- One respondent initially did not see that you could check more than one, said "figured you wanted more than one."
- "I did not think about it, I normally select African American and move on."
- Did not initially realize they could select more than one.

## Respondents who saw short instructions:

- One respondent initially did not notice that they could mark more than one race and/or ethnicity, when the question was re-read and they were asked specifically about marking more than one sub-group, they then noticed they could mark more than one.
- Two respondents did not realize they could select more than one race or ethnicity, with one of these respondents asking to have the response options re-read by the interviewer.

## Order that response options were listed in:

Main finding: several respondents asked unprompted about the rationale or reasoning behind the presented order of the response options. The response order used in this testing was the same as the response order presented 88 FR 5375 (see Figure 1 and 2). This order, based on population sizes, was not immediately apparent to these respondents and seemed to imply preferences or a hierarchy. Examples of what respondents said are included below:

- "When it's that simple, why is it not alphabetized – for the response options?"
- A respondent brought up which response options go first and second, asking, "Why is White first? Is that representative of who is making the surveys?"
- "Why is White first? Maybe it is White is the majority? Why is it not alphabetical? If we are moving towards a different way looking at surveys maybe, we can move forward and have White last. Perhaps put Alaskan Native and American Indian." (In response to issues with people selecting American Indian without reading and just seeing American.)
- "I would start alphabetically with response options, African American, just because the sense of privilege that you would get when 'White' is all the way on top all the time, it helps with a sense of fairness."

## General terminology findings:

Main finding: Aside from a lack of consistency in how respondents could define terminology like race and ethnicity, there were other terms used in the questions that respondents indicated as confusing. Examples are given below:

At least one respondent indicated that the response options listed did not make sense, and it may point to larger issues of conflating varying terminology in the same list.

- "You have races, and you have colors within this list, to me, this list does not make sense. The categories do not make sense. You go from colors to countries."

Confusion over some specific race or ethnic group terminology that is used in the question(s):

- "How can you be Mexican American?"
- When the interviewer said "Asian Indian," the respondent asked, "What is Asian Indian"?
- "…but the options you have listed are incorrect. It is kind of confusing, especially when you are among a real Indian. Indian would be a person who is from India."

What does "group" mean?

- "A 'group' of what?"
- It was confusing to what was meant by "group" – "...is it the broader groups of what, Black, Latino, or the subcategories like German?"

Confusion about the use or lack of use of the response option "American":

- "How can you be Mexican American?"
- One respondent indicated that they would add "American" behind all options for ethnicities.
- "I think that 'American' is a good column to put in there, most of us are a mixed race, if there is another choice – I would put 'American' in 'Other.'"
- [Would add] "American" as a category – "I think that would be suit a lot of people. A lot of people would like that."

Use of "etc."

- "I would say that it might better to say, "or other" rather than etc. There may be confusion about entering options other than the three additional examples given."

### Use of "Or" vs. "And/Or"

For the PAPI testing, we showed respondents a version of the question that read "race or ethnicity" and probed on their preference between that and "race and/or ethnicity."

Main finding: For those respondents who were asked about their preference about the use of "or" versus "and/or" in the question(s), all but one indicated that they would prefer the use of "and/or." It is important to note that several respondents indicated that just using "or" can impact how they may understand and respond to the question. Some comments from respondents are provided below:

- One respondent that preferred the use of "and/or" said that it would change how they answer the question: "When you look at me or my husband, you may think we are African American, when you say 'and/or,' you are asking for things beyond the obvious, what may not be known."

- One respondent that preferred the use of "and/or" said, "If it was 'and/or' it would have changed how I felt about the question, the 'or' made it seem like people don't care about me."
- A respondent that preferred the use of "and/or" said, "it is a self-certified topic, you self-certify what you are, this is saying this is what I think I am. There is no double checking a response given."
- One respondent commented on not having "and/or" included, "For someone that is [bi-racial], they may think you are asking just about race and not race and ethnicity."
- "The emphasis on 'and' and it being bolding encourages me to choose more."
- "I would say yes it would impact how others would respond to it" [regarding 'or' vs. 'and/or'].
- A respondent who said it would not change how she answered the question said, "I kind of like the 'and/or,' it makes more sense, because I look at both as the same, but some people may interpret race and ethnicity as something different."
- "Prefer 'and/or', it would cue me in to think more about a detailed answer."

## Short vs. longer instructions:

Respondents were probed on their preference of the longer, more detailed instructions or the shorter instructions. The long instructions were, "Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group." The short instructions were: "Please select all that apply."

Main finding: For those respondents who were asked about their preference about the use of the longer, more detailed instructions or the shorter instructions, all but two respondents indicated they preferred the more detailed instructions. The two respondents who indicated that they would prefer the shorter instructions were enumerators, and they indicated that preference for easy of administering the questions. Examples of what the respondents said are given below:

- One respondent preferred "select all that apply and enter additional details below," adding that it "that sounds like it wants me to be as inclusive as I can be."
- "I guess the longer is good, it is a little bit more explanation which some people need. I thought 'select all that apply' covered it."
- "The second set of instructions [more detailed instructions] is a little clearer, you can tell that you really can check more than one race/ethnicity."
- Prefer the longer instructions, "that would have helped make it clearer that I could have selected more than one race/ethnicity."
- "Yes it [the more detailed instructions] makes it clearer."
- Longer instructions are preferrable and "much clearer".
- "Would prefer more detailed instructions."

## Minimum vs. detailed categories in the question:

In the process of the cognitive interviews, the level of detail that the respondents would prefer to report on was discussed.

Main finding: Only one person indicated that they preferred the less detailed question in the cognitive interviews. Other respondents said that they preferred the more detailed question as it allowed them to describe themself more accurately. Some respondents did, however, indicate

that their preference depended on knowing what the purpose of the survey was. Examples of what was said by the respondents is included below:

- When discussing preferences about drilling down/providing more specific race/ethnicities, they said that they preferred to provide the additional detail.
- A respondent that liked the more-detailed question said, "When you hear your ethnic group being recited that is more personal; 'here I am!'"
- "Yes – first one [minimum reporting question] did not [allow them to accurately describe themselves], the second more detailed question did."
- "I definitely like the fact that Asian is broken down, it is difficult to tell based on looks where someone is from."
- "I can go either way, what is the purpose behind it, it will determine when I will be more specific or not."

## Proxy reporting:

Of the 33 respondents that were interviewed, 19 were asked to report information for a proxy respondent, as they indicated they had more than one person involved in decisions for their farm or ranch operation.

Main finding: Most of the respondents who reported race and/or ethnicity for a proxy respondent indicated that they could easily report that information. It is important to note that when respondents were probed on why it was easy to report that information, for many of the respondents, they indicated it was because of the familial relationship they had with the proxy respondent (e.g., spouse, sibling, parent, child). At least 15 respondents indicated that they could very easily provide race and ethnicity information about a proxy respondent.

There were at least two respondents who indicated that they may have difficulty providing race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent.

- One respondent indicated that they would not be able to provide such detailed race/ethnicity information if there was not a familial tie. "What if I have a business partner, I probably would not know what his race is, for instance within White, is he from Germany or Italy, I wouldn't know. It would depend on who it is and how deep you know the partner."
- Another respondent did show some difficulty in providing detailed race/ethnicity: "Uhh, American? Do you want him to go back hundreds of years ago? Welsh, and German?" [It is worthwhile to note that this respondent did say that it was easy to report race/ethnicity.]

## Use of the write-in box:

Main finding: Many respondents utilized the write-in box, across many different races and/or ethnicities. For respondents that did not utilize the write-in box, the purpose of it was clear.

- "I saw the box, to add something that isn't listed. That is a good one to have, it is good to have the write-in box."
- "Yes, it was clear that you could give another response that you did not read."
- A respondent who brought up the ability to write-in or specify without prompting said, "..you gave the option that if you, if you were, you know, I don't think you had like Spain

on Spanish on there, you have Hispanic stuff, but you I don't think you actually specifically mentioned Spain, but you can fill in blank on whatever you want for something else. So, you could put Eastern European, or you know something like that in there if you needed to so."

- "The 'enter for example' is good, [you can put in] something not covered."
- "I think you identified the majority [of races and/or ethnicities], but the box is there for a reason."
- "Figured it was for putting something other than what wasn't listed."
- "Specifying 'other' is important."

## Race and/or Ethnicity Specific Findings

Below are specific findings or comments related to a specific race or ethnic group.

### White:

There were 17 respondents who self-identified as White. The write-in option was utilized for this group. Examples of write-ins used included: American, Scottish, Swiss, Portuguese, Austrian, Spanish, Norwegian, Dutch, and Northern European. Comments received included:

Use of the term 'Caucasian' over 'White'
- "I actually prefer [the term] Caucasian, I feel like in today's world Caucasian has a better connotation."
- "It used to be Caucasian. It is what they always asked, and I don't even know when that started changing, so I was always Caucasian. Now I'm just White. I don't know why that changed, but it did. I actually prefer Caucasian. I don't know, and in today's world, I almost feel like White is a bad thing and you don't wanna be labeled that."

Preference of different terminology:
- "I have a different term: 'Southern White.'" When probed on what that meant, this respondent said, "…more open society, more friendly, food is different, manner of speaking and inflection, and of course hobbies and stuff, we shoot guns, we go hunting, we cook wild game. When you get into the cities, the topics of conversations are a whole lot different."
- "I don't like to be called a White person or a Northern European, it means nothing to me."
- One respondent said that they felt that the categories didn't adequately describe them, they suggested the terminology 'Americans of Spanish Descent.'

Main finding: There was inconsistency amongst our respondents under where they would consider reporting "Spanish." Some respondents wrote-in "Spanish" under White and others under Hispanic or Latino. Three respondents wrote-in "Spanish" or "Spanish Descent" under White and two respondents wrote-in "Spanish" or "Americans of Spanish Descent" under Hispanic or Latino. There was one comment directly addressing this with a respondent who selected White and used the write-in for both groups saying, "Spanish and Portuguese, typically they are considered White."

Hispanic or Latino:

There were eight respondents who self-identified as Hispanic or Latino. Examples of write-ins used included "Brazilian," "Spanish," and "Americans of Spanish Descent."

Main finding: Some respondents who may have previously identified as White and Hispanic or Latino, are choosing to only identify as Hispanic or Latino. Of the respondents who self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, three identified only has Hispanic or Latino and five self-identified as White and Hispanic or Latino. Similarly, to the finding mentioned above for 'White', some respondents are using the Hispanic or Latino write-in for 'Spanish'.

- One respondent that had difficulty deciding initially between White and Hispanic or Latino indicated that they would select both options if they had realized they were able to do so. They further indicated that they would write-in "Spaniard" for both of the detailed follow-up questions for White and Hispanic and Latino.
- Related to the issue of looking for the write-in under "White" (potentially due to previously having race and ethnicity asked as two separate questions), one respondent was confused about what to write in until they saw the follow-up question with detailed categories for Hispanic and Latino.
- "Even though Hispanic may be confused with Portuguese, Hispanic more accurately describes Spanish descendants – like Latino." (Of note, this respondent chose Hispanic or Latino when they saw 'Salvadorian' and they indicated that because of this they put Brazilian as country of origin.)

Main finding: At least three respondents mentioned difficulties with providing detailed race and/or ethnicity information once they had selected Hispanic or Latino. Two of these three respondents had difficulty providing detailed information for themselves, and one had difficulty reporting detailed information for a proxy respondent. Comments on respondents about this included:

- "I have no idea how to answer this."
- "Uhh, none of the above." When probed, this respondent indicated they did not know the detailed race and/or ethnicity information.
- "I don't know."

At least two respondents mentioned preferring the old format, where race and ethnicity were asked separately:

- "It was easier when Hispanic or Latino was on its own."
- "When people conflate race and ethnicity, it causes issues particularly for those who identify as Hispanic or Latino. Would prefer that ethnicity is asked separately, the questions can perpetuate Hispanic being conflated with race."

Terminology Comments:

- "I know what you mean by Hispanic or Latino, but I use Latinx or Latino/a."
- "Latino includes Colombian, southern and central hemisphere. Hispanic just because we have been told, previously had the term Chicano – defining each other culturally - a Spaniard would be considered White, American Spaniard, or Hispanic."

- "Some of the groups don't make sense, not everyone knows what their Hispanic comes form, some are mixed, you are getting too explicit, it doesn't really matter that much."

Mexican versus Mexican American:
- "The Mexican or Mexican American designates more a linage for someone who has come from Mexico. Even myself, even though you have Mexican American. I am a Mexican of American descent. An American born of Mexican and European descent." (Note this respondent did not select "White" and "Hispanic or Latino", just "Hispanic or Latino").
- One respondent that discussed the issue of "Mexican" compared to "Mexican American" terminology felt that they were unique terms. "Mexican: several generations into living and lifestyle, family within Mexico. Mexican American: has one parent that is American, and one parent comes over here – blended race. As opposed to American of Mexican descent, born here, had grandparents that immigrated into the US."

### Black or African American:
There were eight respondents who self-identified as Black or African American. The two write-ins that were used by this group were "Black American" and "Bantu". Comments received included:

Terminology Comments:
- "Black is a race and African American is an ethnicity."
- "I feel like African American is a term that should be used more than Black."
- One respondent that initially included North African and Bantu both under "Black or African American" said that "Bantu is African," and included that as the detailed response write-in.
- "General statement, to me, African American is not a race, I am American. I would say that is my race. If you ask someone from Cuba, they are Cuban. Are you American? American is the only place we try and segment by the type of pigment in their skin."
- "I am Black American; my descendants may be from Africa but I haven't ever been to Africa. I may have descended from Africa, but my family was born here in America. So, I identify as Black American" This respondent used the write-in to say, "Black American" rather than "African American".

American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS):
- One respondent said he would have selected ADOS if it was presented, and said, "It would have clarified things more for me, not knowing where we originally came from." It wasn't really wouldn't matter if there were more categories, the real idea would be to know but if you don't know, that African American is what best applies with the information that I have."

Issue with repeating response options in the detailed question:
- "To me that second question was a little bit off, I have already identified as African American, you are asking about countries outside of America, to me this question does not apply. There is no source or linage outside of America, I was born in the US. There is no root to any other country."

### Asian:

There were four respondents who self-identified as Asian. The write-in option was not utilized for this group. Comments received included:

General comments:
- One respondent noted that "A lot of times Asian and native Hawaiian are lumped together."
- One respondent that speaks Japanese was asked about translating the question to Japanese said, "Race and ethnicity translates similarly in Japanese - so [the question] seems okay."

### American Indian or Alaska Native:

There were four respondents who self-identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. Examples of write-ins used include, "Choctaw", "Tupi (Brazilian)", "Indigenous", "Seminole", and "Dine". Comments received included:

Comment on the proposed change to remove tribal status or affiliation:
- One respondent initially indicated that they appreciated having the change to the AIAN status but sent a follow-up email to the researchers elaborating: "When tribal registration and card verification are removed as validation for those claiming Native American heritage, the number of Caucasian applicants identifying themselves as such will noticeably increase. History has proven where there is an opportunity to level the playing field or somehow help the historically socially disadvantaged move forward, lawsuits ensue, fraud occurs, and monies are quickly liquidated with little to none of it actually reaching or benefitting the ones for whom it was designed. So, while there are potential advantages for removing the requirement for unregistered non-card-carrying Native Americans, the disadvantages will probably result in yet another injustice."

Terminology comments:
- One respondent felt that American Indian or Alaskan Native did not allow her to adequately describe her race/ethnicity and would prefer the term "Indigenous."
- "People on the American continent should be called 'indigenous' and refer to 'tribal land,' my mindset is related to tribal land."
- One respondent initially thought that "American" meant North American, but when they saw some of the example Tribes listed, like Aztec or Mayan, thought that it could include Central American Indigenous Peoples, and wrote in "Tupi," a Brazilian tribe.
- One respondent specifically pointed that it would be more helpful to provide additional example tribes from Central and South America. "Instead of using 'etc.' you could specifically include Central and South American tribe examples."

Not everyone initially provided or specified their tribe or group:
- In regard to proxy reporting, when one respondent read the phrase "another group," they just responded with "another group" and had to be asked a follow-up question to please specify the group, said "Seminole."

- Initially responded with "another group", had to be asked to specify a group, then said Choctaw.

### Middle Eastern or North African:

There were two respondents who self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African. The only write-in that was used by this group was Iraqi. Comments received included:

- One respondent initially did not mark MENA due to not hearing it as an option, but when discussing being of African American/Black descent, mentioned that they did have North African in their ancestry. This respondent said that they would have selected MENA if they were aware of that option. This respondent further said that they would select 'Egyptian' and 'Moroccan', but they were not 100% certain.
- "Technically because Iraq is part of the Middle East, in many surveys it doesn't exist, [it's] usually lumped with White. When you asked me the first time, I heard it, so I selected it. If MENA wasn't there, I would have selected Caucasian/White, in other surveys it doesn't exist as an option." This respondent's mother's side is Turkish, and their father's side is Iraqi.
- One respondent that was asked about their preference to report MENA separately from White said, "I don't really have a preference, but either way, [MENA] is more specific, it doesn't matter to me."

### Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:

There were two respondents who self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The write-in option was not utilized for this group. Comments received included:

- "You could ask if they were Māori [New Zealand]. There are a lot of Fijian Indian people here (Asian Indian) who are here, they were taken to Fiji to work on plantations."
- "[USDA] is not well tuned in to ethnicity of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander farming community."

### Multiracial and/or Multiethnic:

A few respondents specifically made comments about people who may be of multiracial and/or multiethnic. Their comments are below:
- "Black Cubans are left out. If you make it more complicated, it is difficult for people who are mixed."
- One respondent asked where a Black Brazilian would go. "I didn't want to describe in the [write-in] box that I am a descendant of Africans that were taken to Brazil, from the Congo, but I am not 100% African American, a term that is associated with Africans that were taken to the Americas as Slaves." This respondent ultimately ended up choosing Black or African American, selecting African American and also writing in Brazilian.

### Mode-Specific Findings

We made note of specific issues that arose for the two modes that we tested.

For CATI, the main finding was that respondents often interrupted the enumerator before the enumerator read all of the response options. This tendency increased when a respondent was proxy reporting.

For PAPI, the main finding was respondents did not check boxes for both the broad reporting category and the detailed categories. For example:

- One respondent initially marked Japanese in the detailed categories but did not mark Asian, and afterwards went back and saw that it should be clicked. "I think it is cumbersome to check two boxes. Would rather be able to just [check] Japanese."
- Another respondent asked if they needed to check 'Hispanic or Latino.'
- Without seeing the full list of racial and/or ethnic examples for the detailed questions, some respondents had questions about where specific racial and/or ethnic groups should go. For example, one respondent asked about Spanish and Portuguese, "where would they go?

## Other General Findings:

Several respondents mentioned the politicalization of asking about race and ethnicity.

- "I'm just kind of laughing because I think these questions they've been asked for years and there's been no change in them and I don't think there really needs to be because you're White, or you're Black, or you're Asian, or you're Hispanic, you know, and then we've got the Indian and Samoan in there. I completely understand that we've added the Samoan in the past several years. I don't know how many years, but it was always kind of basically those same questions. And you know, I just feel like we're trying to get too politically correct now."
- "If you are part of an area that is in conflict, asking these questions is actually kind of dividing rather than uniting, people start fighting based on origin. It brings to me, these questions, especially in areas with conflict, they became more reasons for conflict rather than unity."
- "They may concern some people, but I don't know why, most people are sensitive to what they are and why. I have deep concerns about people when they say they are Spanish or Portuguese, they are American, that is the only thing that matters to me – the rest of it, it incites people."

Some respondents mentioned that in general, talking about race and ethnicity can be negative or bothersome to people:

- "Talking about ethnicities sometimes bothers people, not sure how the information is going to be taken or used against them. Especially if they feel like they are not legal, there are things they don't want to do, how do you make them feel comfortable if they are not a legal citizen."
- "I feel like race has a negative connotation now days. I like ethnicity a little better."

Several respondents mentioned that they wanted to know what the survey was about, why we were collecting this information, or how it relates to agriculture. Some comments are below:

- "I don't know why you are doing this or asking about this."
- "I don't know why the government needs to ask these questions. I think it separates us

more. Are they going to do something more for one than the other? Would rather we do it by non-American citizens and American citizens. I don't mind you asking our citizenship. We are supposed to be indivisible, are we going to punish or reward more than the other? I resent being asked."

- "What does this have to do with agriculture?"
- "I am channeling our farmers, what do you want the information for?"
- "It depends on why you are asking the question. Otherwise, you are just being nosy – other than for grants and government support, can't think of why this would be asked. Aside from statistics."
- One respondent suggested that the survey should have provide additional contact information, suggesting "we would like to know this so we can better serve." The respondent elaborated that they are suggesting "extra text to let them know why [NASS] want[s] the information. It always helps if people know why."

Several respondents mentioned that they have done an ancestry kit (such as 23 and Me), which has impacted their understanding of their race/ethnicity. For instance, some respondents mentioned that they had different races or ethnicities come up in their kit/testing, but that they did not report those results in the questions. For example:

- "I did a DNA test, I reported based on percentages, Western and Southern Europe, small percentage of Irish, Celtic people were all over Europe, my father's siblings were all 30%. [It is] a matter of culture; my Spanish was different, my food was different."
- "I was thinking back when my son when he had his DNA stuff done. Do I put English, French, Irish – do I put all of that? Just because I know that now?"

## 4. WEB SURVEY FINDINGS

### Web Surveys

All self-administered web surveys were conducted in May and June 2023, in multiple waves. Recruitment for the web surveys was done via email through the Qualtrics survey platform. Roughly 2,000 agricultural producers were sent an email invitation to complete a web survey. The producers were randomly selected into a version and emailed the corresponding survey link. Each version had about 500 emails sent. There were four different survey versions that were tested, varying by including either the detailed and minimum reporting categories or just the minimum reporting categories for the race and/or ethnicity and by the inclusion of short or detailed instructions.

### Definitions of race and ethnicity

Main finding: Respondents had varying definitions of what race and ethnicity meant in their own words, but similar terminology was used in the responses from the web surveys as was found in the cognitive interviews.

### Race:

Definitions of race centered around a few common themes, such as genetics, skin color, and ancestry. Examples are provided below:

- "Genetically distinct groups"

- "Genetic heritage"
- "Genetic lineage"
- "Common genetic traits with certain other historically geographically defined groups."
- "Race means my identity. What is my origin, people group, or country?"
- "Physical traits the belong to a particular region."
- "Country of origin and its native language"
- "Ancestral origin"
- "Ancestry"
- "Ancestry background"
- "Family origins"
- "What my descendants were?"
- "The Caucasian group is White, Black is another race as well as Asian"
- "Color of skin"
- "What skin color I have"
- "Skin color"
- "Color of skin"
- "People, group you identify with"
- "A group of people with same or similar physical features"
- "Race = human race only
- "What I am, how people see me"
- "Race to me refers to my ethnic background"
- "Your family blood line is race"

Comments were also received about how the term "race" could be misconstrued or indicating that they did not want to provide a definition:
- "Insignificant"
- "Why?"
- "50-yard dash"
- "To me 'race' means competition, like racing my horse against my neighbor's horse!"

**Ethnicity:**
Definitions provided on ethnicity centered around a few common themes such as culture and country of origin. Examples are provided below:

- "Culture or ethnic group you come from"
- "Culture"
- "Cultural identity"
- "Ethnicity to me refers to my heritage or cultural background"
- "Culture background"
- "Group of people having a similar culture"
- "Country of cultural origin"
- "A group of people with same or similar cultural background or belong to a specific national group"
- "Country or countries of personal or ancestral origin"

- "What country I'm from"
- "Self-assigned grouping with cultural similarities"
- "Ethnicity is the country I came from"
- "Country of origin"
- "Ethnicity is a subgroup. It is not the majority population"
- "Family cultural habits"
- "Heritage"
- "Who I am"
- "Genetic origin"
- "Who I identify as race wise, outside of what other people see me as"
- "Ethnicity to me means, where are your roots"

Several respondents indicated that they thought that race and ethnicity had similar meanings. Examples are provided below:
- "Narrowed down of race, White but Hispanic"
- "To me ethnicity and race have similar meaning"
- "Same as race"

## Missed reporting and detailed instructions:

To try to capture if respondents may have missed reporting a race and/or ethnicity, we included a question asking if the respondent knew they could select more than one race and/or ethnicity. If a respondent indicated that they did not know they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity, they were asked a follow-up question on whether they wanted to report any other races and/or ethnicities. These questions were asked on all four web versions, which included both long and short instructions for the race and ethnicity questions. This was done to see if more detailed instructions would assist with respondents knowing they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity. The long instructions were: "Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group." The short instructions were: "Please select all that apply."

Main finding: Across all versions of the web surveys, which included both long and short instructions, many respondents indicated that they did not realize they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity. While many respondents subsequently indicated they would not report any additional information, three respondents said they would have reported additional race and/or ethnicities if they knew they could. While the more detailed instructions did not eliminate the issue, there were fewer respondents who did not know they could report more than one race and/or ethnicity. More details about these findings are below.

## Long instructions:

Of the respondents who received long instructions (those who received Versions 1 and 3 of the survey), 12 said that they knew they could select more than one race and/or ethnicity and eight said that they did not. Of those that said they did not know they could select more than one race and/or ethnicity, two said they would have selected at least one additional group. One respondent said they would have also selected "White," and another respondent said they would have selected "Native American" and "White."

### Short instructions:

Of the respondents who received short instructions (those who received Versions 2 and 4 of the survey), five said that they knew they could select more than one race and/or ethnicity and seven said that they did not. Of those that said they did not know they could select more than one race and/or ethnicity, one said they would have selected an additional group, "Texican or Tejano." It is important to note that this particular respondent did not receive the detailed race and ethnicity question, only the minimum reporting categories, so they may not have made this comment if they were able to provide more detailed race and/or ethnicity information.

### Minimum vs. detailed reporting; accurate description of respondents

To capture how accurately the race and ethnicity question(s) allowed respondents to describe themselves, we asked respondents, "How well did the question that asked you to provide race and/or ethnicity information allow you to accurately describe yourself?" The response options provided were Very well, somewhat well, not too well, and not well at all. If a respondent chose a response other than "very well," they were allowed space to provide information about why the question(s) may not have allowed them to describe themselves accurately.

Main finding: Overall, many respondents indicated that the questions allowed them to describe themselves accurately. It is important to note that when looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, the respondents who only received the minimum reporting question indicated higher rates of that question allowing them to describe themselves more accurately, than those respondents who received the detailed questions.

### Detailed reporting:

Of the respondents that received the detailed race and/or ethnicity questions, six respondents said that it allowed them to describe themselves "very well," seven said it allowed them to describe themselves "somewhat well" and six respondents indicated that they questions allowed them to describe themselves "not too well" or "not well at all."

In looking at the comments about why the questions only allowed the respondents to describe themselves "somewhat well," respondents provided comments about wanting to report as "American," wanting to provide more detailed information, and comments about Hispanic being considered White. Some examples:

- "I consider myself American"
- "Not detailed for mixed race"
- "No place to show %"
- "Mixed white American and Mexican American"
- "Hispanic is considered White"

In looking at the comments about why the questions did not allow the respondents to describe themselves well, respondents provided comments that the questions should not be asked, and preferring to identify as something other than the options they were given:

- "Questions like this should not be asked in your surveys"

- "Poorly questioned and imo [in my opinion] inappropriate to ask in the current environment."
- "I don't identify with a specific country in Europe. I would prefer to state "White/of European descent."
- "Tex Spanish. Not Latino or Mexico Spanish"

## Minimum reporting:

Of the respondents that received the minimum reporting race and/or ethnicity question, 16 respondents said that it allowed them to describe themselves "very well," two said it allowed them to describe themselves "somewhat well," and two respondents indicated that the questions allowed them to describe themselves "not too well" or "not well at all."

In looking at the comments about why the minimum reporting question only allowed the respondents to describe themselves "somewhat well," respondents provided the following comments:
- "I think nationality is relatively important to agricultural work. Lower wealth nationalities are more likely to have less money, but they still work hard or harder."
- "Seemed like none of your business."

In looking at the comments about why the questions did not allow the respondents to describe themselves well, respondents provided the following comments:
- "White is not a description of ethnicity."
- "Because I'm a Mexican, not Latino or Hispanic!"

## Minimum vs. detailed reporting; level of detail provided by respondents:

To capture if the level of detail we asked respondents to provide was appropriate for them when they responded to the race and ethnicity question(s), we asked them:

When you were asked to provide your race and/or ethnicity, was the level of detail requested too detailed, not detailed enough, or just right?

Main finding: When looking at the minimum versus detailed reporting, it is important to note that more respondents who answered the minimum reporting question indicated that the level of detail requested was "just right" when compared to the respondents who answered the detailed questions.

## Detailed reporting:

Of the respondents that received the detailed race and/or ethnicity questions, five respondents said the level of detail was "too detailed," six respondents said the level of detail requested was "not detailed enough" and six respondents said that the level of detail requested "just right."

## Minimum reporting:

Of the respondents that received the detailed race and/or ethnicity questions, two respondents said the level of detail was too detailed', one respondent said the level of detail requested was 'not detailed enough' and 12 respondents said that the level of detail requested 'just right'.

Proxy responses:

To capture how easy or difficult it was for respondents to provide race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent, we asked them:

> How easy or difficult were the race and/or ethnicity questions for you to answer about [name]? Very difficult, difficult, neutral, easy or very easy.

Respondents were also asked a follow-up up question to elaborate on why it was either easy or difficult to answer race and/or ethnicity questions about another person.

Main finding: Across all versions of the web survey, respondents indicated that it was relatively easy to provide race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent. Only one respondent indicated that they found it difficult to provide the information and none said it was very difficult. Reporting detailed or minimum category information did not seem to impact the difficulty of reporting race and/or ethnicity information for a proxy respondent. Details are included below. It is important to note that many of our respondents indicated that they had a familial relationship (e.g., spouse or sibling) with the proxy respondent which may have made it easier to report that information.

Detailed reporting:

Of the respondents that received the detailed race and/or ethnicity questions, five respondents said it was "very easy" to answer the race and/or ethnicity questions about another person, one it was "easy," two said "neutral," and none said it was "difficult" or "very difficult" to answer race and/or ethnicity questions about another person.

We received two comments that elaborated about why it was easy to answer the race and/or ethnicity information about another person:
- "Hispanic is a clear option and his obvious race"
- "Race and/or ethnicity is single sourced (not mixed)"

Minimum reporting:

Of the respondents that received the minimum category race and/or ethnicity question, three respondents said it was "very easy" to answer the race and/or ethnicity questions about another person, two it was "easy," one said "neutral," one respondent said it was "difficult," and none said it was "very difficult" to answer race and/or ethnicity questions about another person.

We received several comments that elaborated about why it was easy to answer the race and/or ethnicity information about another person:
- "Because I know him very well"
- "It's the truth."
- "Straight and what I believe."
- "She is my sister."

We received only one comment about why it was difficult to answer the race and/or ethnicity question about another person:

- "Her genetic makeup is quite diverse as determined by 23andme analysis."

### Refusals:

Main finding: across the web surveys, we only received one refusal for the race and/or ethnicity questions and it was a refusal on a proxy respondent. This respondent refused to provide a race/ethnicity for a proxy respondent because they indicated that "White" was not an ethnicity.

### Race/Ethnicity Specific Findings

Below are specific findings or comments from the web surveys related to a specific race or ethnic group.

### White:

There were 21 respondents who self-identified as White. Examples of write-ins used included: mixed race, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, American, Czech, and Hispanic.

Comments received:

- "Hispanic is considered White."
- "The Caucasian group is White"
- "….Black and White are not indictive of ethnicity"

### Hispanic or Latino:

Main finding: at least five respondents marked Hispanic or Latino and subsequently wrote in variations on the term "Spanish."

There were 16 respondents who self-identified as Hispanic or Latino. Examples of write-ins used included: Cuban, Spanish, Spaniard, Spanish American, Spanish, Spanish Basque.

Comment received:

- "I am a Mexican native and I associate better with the term Hispanic better than with any other term."
- "Need to put races better classified. Spanish or His-spanish"

### Black or African American:

There were three respondents who self-identified as Black or African American. The write-in option was not utilized for this group.

Comment received:

- "Race to me refers to my ethnic background. I am a descendent of African heritage, which is described in some instances as Black, African American and when I was young the reference was Negro."

### Asian:

There were five respondents who self-identified as Asian. The write-in option was not utilized for this group. No comments were received.

### American Indian or Alaskan Native:

There were two respondents who self-identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. The only write-in used for this group was "Cherokee". No comments were received.

### Middle Eastern or North African:

No respondents in the web sample self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African; as such, the write-in option was not utilized for this group. No comments were received.

### Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:

There was one respondent who self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The write-in option was not utilized for this group. No comments were received.

### Multiracial and/or Multiethnic:

We received two comments specifically about people who may have difficulty in reporting when someone is multiracial and/or multiethnic:

- "It will become confusing when our children must report, and they are mixed. Also the difference between race and ethnicity is not clear to me."

One respondent who indicated difficulty in reporting race and/or ethnicity information followed up in an email to the researchers. Their comment was:

- "My point is that people really do not fall nicely into any checklist when it comes to racial or ethnic classification. I enclosed a screenshot of a close relative's genetic makeup per 23andme. See if you can figure out what boxes s/he should check on any racial or ethnic identify form." For the purposes of confidentiality, the picture is not included in the report, but the image showed more than 10 different races and/or ethnicities that could potentially be reported for this individual.

### Additional feedback that was provided related to not asking race and/or ethnicity:

- "These questions will 'turn off' many people responding to your surveys."
- "This feels wrong."
- "I thought this is an agricultural thing. Qué pasó? What gives?"
- "NASS is worried about race & ethnicity? (You must be a Democratic organization)"
- "Don't ask..."
- "As Americans we must stop putting so much pressure on 'race' and/or ethnicity. No hyphenated Americans, we are Americans."
- "The only way we can truly treat all people the same is to discontinue asking these questions because all people are created equal and to continue to promote separation based on race/ethnicity continues to create and divide and keep division alive. We should think in terms of all people equal and not try to differentiate, especially in today's society where races and ethnicity are more and more commonly mixed."

Other general comments received:

- "I am not sure it is a useful question unless you start requiring genetic testing. Even then it's hard to interpret. I think you are just asking what self-assigned 'racial' group the person identifies with. Maybe you should just ask that." (It is important to note that this person reported on the minimum reporting question and did not receive detailed race and/or ethnicity questions.)
- "Be more inclusive of culture/national origin, Black and White are not indictive of ethnicity." It is important to note that this person reported on the minimum reporting question and did not receive detailed race and/or ethnicity questions.
- "If you are interested in capturing information regarding race/ethnicity you could ask about countries of citizenship and/or birth origin. This would capture people representing larger agricultural groups responding on behalf of multinational or foreign companies." (It is important to note that this person reported on the detailed race and/or ethnicity questions.)

## Appendices

Appendix A includes cognitive interview scripts and guides for CATI interviews and PAPI interviews, and examples of the PAPI questions. Appendix B includes MS Word versions of the four web surveys.

Appendix A

**CATI Script for Cognitive Testing  - Long Instructions**

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**
**[INCLUDE] family members and hired managers.**
**[EXCLUDE] hired workers unless they were a hired manager or family member.**

**I will now ask questions for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ **Male**
☐ **Female**

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**First Race Question**

What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity?  I am going to read you seven groups.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**Second Question Follow-up**

---

**White**

You said that [Name] is White.  I am going to read you several groups.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

_____

---

**Hispanic or Latino**

You said <Name> is Hispanic or Latino. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

_____

---

**Black or African American**

You said <Name> is Black or African American. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said <Name> is Asian. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Chinese
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Filipino
☐ Korean
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is American Indian or Alaska Native.  Are you/they Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

[ENUM] You may enter more than one.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said <Name> is Middle Eastern or North African. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Lebanese
☐ Syrian
☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan
☐ Egyptian
☐ Israeli
☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said <Name> is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian
☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.
_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**Is <Name> retired from farming or ranching?**
☐ Yes
☐ No

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is this person's name?** _____

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ **Male**
☐ **Female**

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**

_____

**First Race Question**

What race and/or ethnicity is [name]? I am going to read you seven groups.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**Second Question Follow-up**

**White**

You said that [Name] is White.  I am going to read you several groups.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

_____

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said <Name> is Hispanic or Latino. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

_____

 **Black or African American**
You said <Name> is Black or African American. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said <Name> is Asian. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Chinese
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Filipino
☐ Korean
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is American Indian or Alaska Native.  Are you/they Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

[ENUM] You may enter more than one.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said <Name> is Middle Eastern or North African. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Lebanese
☐ Syrian
☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan
☐ Egyptian
☐ Israeli
☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said <Name> is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian
☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____

At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?

☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

Is <Name> retired from farming or ranching?
☐ Yes
☐ No

How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

Draft paper version of this question:

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ German | ☐ Irish | ☐ English |
| ☐ Italian | ☐ Polish | ☐ French |

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Mexican or Mexican American | ☐ Puerto Rican | ☐ Cuban |
| ☐ Salvadoran | ☐ Dominican | ☐ Colombian |

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ African American | ☐ Jamaican | ☐ Haitian |
| ☐ Nigerian | ☐ Ethiopian | ☐ Somali |

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Chinese | ☐ Filipino | ☐ Asian Indian |
| ☐ Vietnamese | ☐ Korean | ☐ Japanese |

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

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

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Lebanese | ☐ Iranian | ☐ Egyptian |
| ☐ Syrian | ☐ Moroccan | ☐ Israeli |

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Native Hawaiian | ☐ Samoan | ☐ Chamorro |
| ☐ Tongan | ☐ Fijian | ☐ Marshallese |

*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

**CATI Script for Cognitive Testing - Short Instructions**

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**
**[INCLUDE] family members and hired managers.**
**[EXCLUDE] hired workers unless they were a hired manager or family member.**

**I will now ask questions for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ **Male**
☐ **Female**

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**First Race Question**

---

What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity?  I am going to read you seven groups.  Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

---

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**Second Question Follow-up**

---

**White**

You said that [Name] is White.  I am going to read you several groups.  Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

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**Hispanic or Latino**

You said <Name> is Hispanic or Latino. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply. Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾

---

**Black or African American**

You said <Name> is Black or African American. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

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**Asian**

You said <Name> is Asian. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Chinese
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Filipino
☐ Korean
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

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**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is American Indian or Alaska Native.  Are you/they Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

[ENUM] You may enter more than one.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said <Name> is Middle Eastern or North African. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Lebanese
☐ Syrian
☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan
☐ Egyptian
☐ Israeli
☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said <Name> is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian
☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**Is <Name> retired from farming or ranching?**
☐ Yes
☐ No

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is this person's name?** _____

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ **Male**
☐ **Female**

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**First Race Question**

What race and/or ethnicity is [name]? I am going to read you seven groups.  Please select all that apply. Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**Second Question Follow-up**

**White**

You said that [Name] is White.  I am going to read you several groups.  Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

_____

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said <Name> is Hispanic or Latino. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply. Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

_____

**Black or African American**
You said <Name> is Black or African American. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said <Name> is Asian. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Chinese
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Filipino
☐ Korean
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is American Indian or Alaska Native.  Are you/they Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

[ENUM] You may enter more than one.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said <Name> is Middle Eastern or North African. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:

[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Lebanese
☐ Syrian
☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan
☐ Egyptian
☐ Israeli
☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said <Name> is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. I am going to read you several groups. Please select all that apply.  Are you/they:
[ENUM] Select all that apply.

☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian
☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____


At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?

☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

Is <Name> retired from farming or ranching?
☐ Yes
☐ No

How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

Draft paper version of this question:

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ German | ☐ Irish | ☐ English |
| ☐ Italian | ☐ Polish | ☐ French |

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

[                                        ]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Mexican or Mexican American | ☐ Puerto Rican | ☐ Cuban |
| ☐ Salvadoran | ☐ Dominican | ☐ Colombian |

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

[                                        ]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ African American | ☐ Jamaican | ☐ Haitian |
| ☐ Nigerian | ☐ Ethiopian | ☐ Somali |

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

[                                        ]

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Chinese | ☐ Filipino | ☐ Asian Indian |
| ☐ Vietnamese | ☐ Korean | ☐ Japanese |

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

[                                        ]

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

[                                        ]

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Lebanese | ☐ Iranian | ☐ Egyptian |
| ☐ Syrian | ☐ Moroccan | ☐ Israeli |

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

[                                        ]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Native Hawaiian | ☐ Samoan | ☐ Chamorro |
| ☐ Tongan | ☐ Fijian | ☐ Marshallese |

*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

[                                        ]

# PAPI Instrument - Short Instructions

---

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**

_____

---

Answer the following questions for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of **December 31, 2022.**

---

**Person 1**

**Name**

_____

---

**Sex**

◯ Male

◯ Female

---

**What was this person's age on December 31, 2022?**

_____

---

**What is this person's race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

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

_____

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

_____

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

_____

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Asian Indian
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

_____

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.* (1) _____

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Lebanese
- ☐ Syrian
- ☐ Iranian
- ☐ Moroccan
- ☐ Egyptian
- ☐ Israeli
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

_____

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Fijian
- ☐ Chamorro
- ☐ Marshallese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

_____

**At which occupation did this person spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

○ Farm or ranch work

○ Work other than farming or ranching

---

**Is this person retired from farming or ranching?**

○ Yes

○ No

---

**How many days did this person work off the farm in 2022?** Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.

○ None

○ 1-49 days

○ 50-99 days

○ 100-199 days

○ 200 days or more

End of Block: Default Question Block

**Person 2**

**Name**

_____

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

**Sex**

○ Male

○ Female

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

**What was this person's age on December 31, 2022?**

_____

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

**What is this person's race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ **WHITE** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ German
- ☐ Italian
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ English
- ☐ French
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

_____

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Mexican or Mexican American
- ☐ Salvadoran
- ☐ Puerto Rican
- ☐ Dominican
- ☐ Cuban
- ☐ Colombian
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

_____

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ African American
- ☐ Nigerian
- ☐ Jamaican
- ☐ Ethiopian
- ☐ Haitian
- ☐ Somali
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

_____

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Asian Indian
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

_____

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.* (1) _____

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Lebanese
- ☐ Syrian
- ☐ Iranian
- ☐ Moroccan
- ☐ Egyptian
- ☐ Israeli
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

_____

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Fijian
- ☐ Chamorro
- ☐ Marshallese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

_____

**At which occupation did this person spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

○ Farm or ranch work

○ Work other than farming or ranching

---

**Is this person retired from farming or ranching?**

○ Yes

○ No

---

**How many days did this person work off the farm in 2022?** Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.

○ None

○ 1-49 days

○ 50-99 days

○ 100-199 days

○ 200 days or more

End of Block: Person 2

# PAPI Instrument - Long Instructions

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**

_____

---

Answer the following questions for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of **December 31, 2022.**

---

**Person 1**

**Name**

_____

---

**Sex**

○ Male

○ Female

---

**What was this person's age on December 31, 2022?**

_____

---

**What is this person's race or ethnicity?**

*Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below.  Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** - *Provide details below.*

☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

_____

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** - *Provide details below.*

☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ *Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

_____

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** - *Provide details below.*

☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

_____

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Asian Indian
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

_____

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.* (1) _____

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Lebanese
- ☐ Syrian
- ☐ Iranian
- ☐ Moroccan
- ☐ Egyptian
- ☐ Israeli
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

_____

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Fijian
- ☐ Chamorro
- ☐ Marshallese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

_____

**At which occupation did this person spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

○ Farm or ranch work

○ Work other than farming or ranching

---

**Is this person retired from farming or ranching?**

○ Yes

○ No

---

**How many days did this person work off the farm in 2022?** Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.

○ None

○ 1-49 days

○ 50-99 days

○ 100-199 days

○ 200 days or more

End of Block: Default Question Block

**Person 2**

**Name**

_____

---

**Sex**

◯ Male

◯ Female

---

**What was this person's age on December 31, 2022?**

_____

---

**What is this person's race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.*

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

_____

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

_____

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

_____

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Asian Indian
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

_____

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.* (1) _____

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Lebanese
- ☐ Syrian
- ☐ Iranian
- ☐ Moroccan
- ☐ Egyptian
- ☐ Israeli
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

_____

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*

- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Fijian
- ☐ Chamorro
- ☐ Marshallese
- ☐ *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

_____

**At which occupation did this person spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**

○ Farm or ranch work

○ Work other than farming or ranching

---

**Is this person retired from farming or ranching?**

○ Yes

○ No

---

**How many days did this person work off the farm in 2022?** Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.

○ None

○ 1-49 days

○ 50-99 days

○ 100-199 days

○ 200 days or more

**End of Block: Person 2**

Race Ethnicity Interview Guide – CATI
March - June 2023
Project Leads: Struther Van Horn and Kathy Ott

| | |
|---|---|
| Interviewer's name | |
| POID | |
| PID | |
| State | |
| Date of interview | |
| List frame race/ethnicity variables | |
| Observed or list frame gender of respondent | |
| Observed or list frame age of respondent (18-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60+) | |
| How long did it take to fill out the questionnaire? | |
| Other Information 1 | |
| Other Information 2 | |

*Recording permission?*

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research study. The Federal government is working on improving some questions that will be used across many federal surveys. Before new survey questions are asked, it's important to test them out with people like you, to make sure that they make sense and are easy to follow. There are no right or wrong answers; we're looking for your reactions and honest feedback.*

*So this is what I'm going to ask you to do today: I will ask you some demographic and farmer characteristic questions and record the answers you provide to me. After that, we will go back and I'll ask you some follow-up questions on why you answered the way you did, how you interpreted certain questions and discuss any issues and/or terms that you found confusing or did not understand. All your answers and everything we discuss today will be kept completely confidential.*

*Do you have any questions before we proceed?*

## Farm Operation

1. Tell me a little bit about your operation, including the commodities you grow or raise.

*If reading the survey/administering over the phone:*
- *I will read the survey aloud to you, please tell me your answers.*
- *If there are any questions you would rather not answer, let me know.*

## General emergent probes for any/all questions:

- *How did you arrive at that answer?*
- *What does this question mean to you?*
- *Do you have any feedback about this question or the response options?*
- *For this question you answered _____. Can you tell me more about that?*
- *Can you tell me what you were thinking when you answered this question?*
- *Are you able to answer this question for other people involved in your operation?*
- *<For cognitive interviews - If participant seems to have any difficulty understanding a question> you seemed to have trouble answering the question about <topic of question>, can you tell me about that?*

## Observations

2. Evidence that participant understands the question.

3. Was a question or part of a question re-read, if so, please document.

4. PAPI only
5. PAPI only
6. PAPI only

7. Does participant go back and change any answer at any point?

8. Does participant appear to have difficulty with deciding on a response?

9. Does participant ask for clarification?

10. Is there a literacy and/or a language barrier?

For any question:

11. <ask any emergent probes that ask about any issues observed as they completed the questions, >

For Race/ethnicity only:

Thank you for your responses. Next, I would like to ask you some specific questions about your responses to the race and ethnicity questions.

I would like to discuss the first race and ethnicity question that was asked. Just to remind you that question was: *What is your race and/or ethnicity? I am going to read you some groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Are you/they: White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*

12. PAPI only
13. PAPI only

14. What information did you think this question was asking you for?

15. How did you choose your answer for this question?

16. <If participant selected only one> Did you know you could select more than one race and/or ethnicity?

17. <If participant selected more than one>: How did you decide to mark more than one answer?

18. Did the race and/or ethnicity groups listed for this question accurately describe your race and/or ethnicity? Just to remind you, those groups were: *White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*

    If not, what groups were missing?

I would next like to discuss the next race and ethnicity question that was asked. Just to remind you that question was: *The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected. You said <Name> is [Race or Ethnicity]. I am going to read you some groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Are you/they:*

Ask for each Race/Ethnicity follow-up question.

19. How did you choose your answer for this question?

20. <If participant selected only one> Did you know you could select more than one race or ethnicity for this question?

21. <If participant selected more than one>: How did you decide to mark more than one answer?

22. Did the detailed race and ethnicity groups accurately describe your race and/or ethnicity? If not, what groups were missing?

23. For American Indian or Alaska Native: one of the proposed changes is removing the condition that a person has to have a tribal affiliation or community recognition. The proposal leaves that more open. What is your perspective on that? Which do you prefer?

24. You specified ____ For what reason did you specify _____? What does <term respondent wrote> mean to you?

25. For the last response option, *Another [Race/Ethnic] group, please specify, for example, etc* I notice you didn't specify anything here. Can you tell me for what reason? Was it clear to you that you could specify another race or ethnicity group that was not listed?

### Proxy

26. How easy or difficult would these questions you to answer for someone else, involved in your operation?

### Other feedback

27. Other emergent probe questions, as appropriate.

28. Do you have any additional feedback for us about these questions?

(*If time allows*)

(*If time allows*)

Long/short instructions -

29. Thank you for walking me through how you answered that question. I would like to get your feedback on another proposed version of the race and ethnicity question. (If initially shown long version, share/read short version) (If initially shown short version, share/read long version).

30. General feedback/thoughts about this version of the question

Race Ethnicity Interview Guide - PAPI
March - June 2023
Project Leads: Struther Van Horn and Kathy Ott

| | |
|---|---|
| Interviewer's name | |
| POID | |
| PID | |
| State | |
| Date of interview | |
| List frame race/ethnicity variables | |
| Observed or list frame gender of respondent | |
| Observed or list frame age of respondent (18-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60+) | |
| How long did it take to fill out the questionnaire? | |
| Other Information 1 | |
| Other Information 2 | |

*Recording permission?*

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research study. The Federal government is working on improving some questions that will be used across many federal surveys.  Before new survey questions are asked, it's important to test them out with people like you, to make sure that they make sense and are easy to follow. There are no right or wrong answers; we're looking for your reactions and honest feedback.*

*So this is what I'm going to ask you to do today: We will have you go through some demographic and farmer characteristic questions and have you record your answers. After that, we will go back and I'll ask you some follow-up questions on why you answered the way you did, how you interpreted certain questions and discuss any issues and/or terms that you found confusing or did not understand. All your answers and everything we discuss today will be kept completely confidential.*

*Do you have any questions before we proceed?*

## Farm Operation

1. Tell me a little bit about your operation, including the commodities you grow or raise.

*If reading the survey/administering over the phone:*
- *I will read the survey aloud to you, please tell me your answers.*
- *If there are any questions you would rather not answer, let me know.*

### General emergent probes for any/all questions:

- *How did you arrive at that answer?*
- *What does this question mean to you?*
- *Do you have any feedback about this question or the response options?*
- *For this question you answered _____. Can you tell me more about that?*
- *Can you tell me what you were thinking when you answered this question?*
- *Are you able to answer this question for other people involved in your operation?*
- *<For cognitive interviews - If participant seems to have any difficulty understanding a question> you seemed to have trouble answering the question about <topic of question>, can you tell me about that?*

## Observations

2. Evidence that participant understands the question.

3. Evidence that a question or part of a question is re-read.

4. Evidence that participant skips parts of a question or reads only answer categories.

5. <For long version 1> Does participant both mark a box and provide a write in, if appropriate?

6. <For long version 1> Does participant fill both race and ethnicity questions in order?

7. Does participant go back and change any answer at any point?

8. Does participant appear to search for anything or have difficulty in locating a response?

9. Does participant ask for clarification?

10. Is there a literacy and/or a language barrier?

For any question:

11. <ask any emergent probes that ask about any issues observed as they completed the questions, >


**For Race/ethnicity only:**
Thank you for your responses. Next, I would like to ask you some specific questions about your responses to the race and ethnicity questions (if necessary, pull up the race and ethnicity questions to share over the screen OR offer to re-read the question stem for CATI interviews).

12. <For in-depth instructions> Did you read the instructions for this question?  What are those instructions telling you to do?

13. We are considering whether to use the word "or" or the phrase "and/or" for this question. Do you think that changes the way you would answer this question?

14. What information did you think this question was asking for?

15. How did you choose your answer for this question?

16. <If participant selected only one> Did you know you could check more than one race or ethnicity?

17. <If participant selected more than one>:  How did you decide to mark more than one answer?

18. Did the race and ethnicity categories accurately describe your race or ethnicity? If not, what categories were missing?


I would next like to discuss the next race and ethnicity question that was asked. Just to remind you that question was: *The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected. You said <Name> is [Race or Ethnicity]. I am going to read you some*

*groups. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Are you/they:*

Ask for each Race/Ethnicity follow-up question.

19. How did you choose your answer for this question?

20. <If participant selected only one> Did you know you could select more than one race or ethnicity for this question?

21. <If participant selected more than one>: How did you decide to mark more than one answer?

22. Did the detailed race and ethnicity groups accurately describe your race and/or ethnicity? If not, what groups were missing?

23. For American Indian or Alaska Native: one of the proposed changes is removing the condition that a person has to have a tribal affiliation or community recognition. The proposal leaves that more open. What is your perspective on that? Which do you prefer?

24. For what reason did you write in _____? What does <term respondent wrote> mean to you?

25. I notice you didn't write anything here [in the write-in line]. Can you tell me for what reason?

26. Was/would this question be easy or difficult for you to answer for someone else?

27. Other emergent probe questions, as appropriate.

28. Do you have any additional feedback for us about these questions?

(*If time allows*)

29. Long/short instructions -

30. Thank you for walking me through how you answered that question. I would like to get your feedback on another proposed version of the race and ethnicity question. (If initially shown long version, share/read short version) (If initially shown short version, share/read long version).

31. General feedback/thoughts about this version of the question

Appendix B


**Web Questionnaire, Version 1, Detailed Questions, Long Instructions**

**Intro screen: Thank you for participating in this research. We will ask you some demographic and producer characteristic questions, along with some follow-up questions about your responses.**

**What types of agriculture is your operation involved in? Please select all that apply.**
☐ Crops
☐ Livestock
☐ Other, specify: _____

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**

_____

**[If respondent answers 1]**
**Are you the person that was involved in decisions for this operation?**
☐ Yes [Skip to "What is your name?"]
☐ No

[If "No"]
You said that you are not involved in the decisions for this operation. If that is correct, choose "End Survey" below and click "NEXT." This will complete the survey.
If you are involved in the decisions for this operation, hit the "PREVIOUS" button and review the previous question again.
☐ End Survey

**[If respondent answers 2 or more]**
**The next questions will be for two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation? **Please list yourself first**, even if you are not the primary decision maker on the operation.

_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022?**
**Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**

⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next questions collect detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**White**
You said that [Name] is **White**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said that [Name] is **Hispanic or Latino**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

**Black or African American**

You said that [Name] is **Black or African American**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:

☐ African American

☐ Nigerian

☐ Jamaican

☐ Ethiopian

☐ Haitian

☐ Somali

☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said that [Name] is **Asian**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:

☐ Chinese

☐ Vietnamese

☐ Filipino

☐ Korean

☐ Asian Indian

☐ Japanese

☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is **American Indian or Alaska Native**. Is <Name> Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group? Note, you may report more than one group.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said that [Name] is **Middle Eastern or North African**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:

☐ Lebanese

☐ Syrian

☐ Iranian

☐ Moroccan

☐ Egyptian

☐ Israeli

☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

---

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**
You said that [Name] **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian
☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

---

**PROBE:** When you were asked to provide your race and/or ethnicity, was the level of detail requested too detailed, not detailed enough, or just right?
O Too detailed
O Not detailed enough
O Just right

**PROBE:** How well did the questions that asked you to provide detailed race and/or ethnicity information allow you to accurately describe yourself?
- o        Very well
- o        Somewhat well
- o        Not too well
- o        Not well at all

**IF QX = 'Not too well', or 'Not well at all' then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question did not allow you to describe your race and/or ethnicity well.

**IF QX = 'Somewhat well', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question only allowed you to describe your race and/or ethnicity "somewhat well."

**PROBE:** On the first question that asked for your race and/or ethnicity, you answered **[pre-fill with R/E choice]**

Other options that were available were: **[Pre-fill with R/E Options Not Chosen]** White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Did you know you could select more than one race and/or ethnicity for this question?
- o        Yes
- o        No

**PROBE**: [If 'No'] Would you have selected more than one race and/or ethnicity if you knew you could?
     o     Yes
     o     No

**PROBE**: [If 'Yes'] What other races and/or ethnicities would you have chosen if you knew you could?

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'race' means in your own words.

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'ethnicity' means in your words.


**[If Respondent reported 2 or more for Q1]**

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the second person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s relation to you?**
☐ Spouse
☐ Family member
☐ No relation

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:**

☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity selected.**

**White**
You said that [Name] is **White**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.
_____

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said that [Name] is **Hispanic or Latino**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.
_____

**Black or African American**
You said that [Name] is **Black or African American**.  Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:
☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian

☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**
You said that [Name] **Asian**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:
☐ Chinese
☐ Vietnamese
☐ Filipino
☐ Korean
☐ Asian Indian
☐ Japanese
☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**
You said <Name> is **American Indian or Alaska Native**. Is <Name> Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group? Note, you may report more than one group.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**
You said that [Name] is **Middle Eastern or North African**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:
☐ Lebanese
☐ Syrian
☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan
☐ Egyptian
☐ Israeli
☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**
You said that [Name] is **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**. Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group. Is <Name>:

☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Tongan
☐ Samoan
☐ Fijian

☐ Chamorro
☐ Marshallese
☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____

**PROBE:** How easy or difficult were the race and/or ethnicity questions for you to answer about <Name>?

O Very difficult
O Difficult
O Neutral
O Easy
O Very easy

**IF QX = 'very difficult or 'difficult', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity questions were difficult to answer.

**IF QX = 'very easy or 'easy', then ask:**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity questions were easy to answer.

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback about the race and/or ethnicity questions?

___

**PROBE:** Do you have any other additional feedback?

Thank you for your time!

**Web Questionnaire, Version 2, Detailed Questions, Short Instructions**

**Intro screen: Thank you for participating in this research. We will ask you some demographic and producer characteristic questions, along with some follow-up questions about your responses.**

**What types of agriculture is your operation involved in? Please select all that apply.**
☐ Crops
☐ Livestock
☐ Other, specify: _____

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**

_____

**[If respondent answers 1]**
**Are you the person that was involved in decisions for this operation?**
☐ Yes [Skip to "What is your name?"]
☐ No

[If "No"]
You said that you are not involved in the decisions for this operation. If that is correct, choose "End Survey" below and click "NEXT." This will complete the survey.
If you are involved in the decisions for this operation, hit the "PREVIOUS" button and review the previous question again.
☐ End Survey

**[If respondent answers 2 or more]**
**The next questions will be for two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation? **Please list yourself first**, even if you are not the primary decision maker on the operation.

_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022?**
**Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**

───────

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next questions collect detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity you selected.**

**White**
You said that [Name] is **White**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:
☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

──────────────────────

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said that [Name] is **Hispanic or Latino**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:
☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

──────────────────────

**Black or African American**

You said that [Name] is **Black or African American**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ African American

☐ Nigerian

☐ Jamaican

☐ Ethiopian

☐ Haitian

☐ Somali

☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said that [Name] is **Asian**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Chinese

☐ Vietnamese

☐ Filipino

☐ Korean

☐ Asian Indian

☐ Japanese

☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is **American Indian or Alaska Native**.  Is <Name> Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said that [Name] is **Middle Eastern or North African**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Lebanese

☐ Syrian

☐ Iranian

☐ Moroccan

☐ Egyptian

☐ Israeli

☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said that [Name] **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Native Hawaiian

☐ Tongan

☐ Samoan

☐ Fijian

☐ Chamorro

☐ Marshallese

☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____

**PROBE:** When you were asked to provide your race and/or ethnicity, was the level of detail requested too detailed, not detailed enough, or just right?

O Too detailed

O Not detailed enough

O Just right

**PROBE:** How well did the questions that asked you to provide detailed race and/or ethnicity information allow you to accurately describe yourself?

- o Very well
- o Somewhat well
- o Not too well
- o Not well at all

**IF QX = 'Not too well', or 'Not well at all' then ask**

**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question did not allow you to describe your race and/or ethnicity well.

**IF QX = 'Somewhat well', then ask**

**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question only allowed you to describe your race and/or ethnicity "somewhat well."

**PROBE:** On the first question that asked for your race and/or ethnicity, you answered **[pre-fill with R/E choice]**

Other options that were available were: **[Pre-fill with R/E Options Not Chosen]** White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Did you know you could select more than one race and/or ethnicity for this question?

- o Yes
- o No

**PROBE**: [If 'No'] Would you have selected more than one race and/or ethnicity if you knew you could?

    o       Yes

    o       No

**PROBE**: [If 'Yes'] What other races and/or ethnicities would you have chosen if you knew you could?

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'race' means in your own words.

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'ethnicity' means in your words.

**[If Respondent reported 2 or more for Q1]**

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the second person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s relation to you?**
☐ Spouse
☐ Family member
☐ No relation

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**The next question(s) collect(s) detailed information for each race and/or ethnicity selected.**

**White**
You said that [Name] is **White**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:
☐ German
☐ Italian
☐ Irish
☐ Polish
☐ English
☐ French
☐ Another White group, please specify, for example Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.
_____

**Hispanic or Latino**
You said that [Name] is **Hispanic or Latino**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:
☐ Mexican or Mexican American
☐ Salvadoran
☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Dominican
☐ Cuban
☐ Colombian
☐ Another Hispanic or Latino group, please specify, for example Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.
_____

**Black or African American**
You said that [Name] is **Black or African American**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:
☐ African American
☐ Nigerian
☐ Jamaican
☐ Ethiopian
☐ Haitian
☐ Somali
☐ Another Black or African American group, please specify, for example Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

_____

**Asian**

You said that [Name] **Asian**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Chinese

☐ Vietnamese

☐ Filipino

☐ Korean

☐ Asian Indian

☐ Japanese

☐ Another Asian group, please specify, for example Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

_____

**American Indian or Alaskan Native**

You said <Name> is **American Indian or Alaska Native**.  Is <Name> Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another group?  Note, you may report more than one group.

Specify: _____

**Middle Eastern or North African**

You said that [Name] is **Middle Eastern or North African**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Lebanese

☐ Syrian

☐ Iranian

☐ Moroccan

☐ Egyptian

☐ Israeli

☐ Another Middle Eastern or North African group, please specify, for example Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

_____

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**

You said that [Name] is **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander**.  Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>:

☐ Native Hawaiian

☐ Tongan

☐ Samoan

☐ Fijian

☐ Chamorro

☐ Marshallese

☐ Another Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, please specify, for example Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

_____

**PROBE:** How easy or difficult were the race and/or ethnicity questions for you to answer about <Name>?

O Very difficult
O Difficult
O Neutral
O Easy
O Very easy

**IF QX = 'very difficult or 'difficult', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity questions were difficult to answer.

**IF QX = 'very easy or 'easy', then ask:**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity questions were easy to answer.

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback about the race and/or ethnicity questions?

---

**PROBE:** Do you have any other additional feedback?

Thank you for your time!

**Web Questionnaire, Version 3, Minimum Question, Long Instructions**

**Intro screen: Thank you for participating in this research. We will ask you some demographic and producer characteristic questions, along with some follow-up questions about your responses.**

**What types of agriculture is your operation involved in? Please select all that apply.**
☐ Crops
☐ Livestock
☐ Other, specify: _____

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**

_____

**[If respondent answers 1]**
**Are you the person that was involved in decisions for this operation?**
☐ Yes [Skip to "What is your name?"]
☐ No

[If "No"]
You said that you are not involved in the decisions for this operation. If that is correct, choose "End Survey" below and click "NEXT." This will complete the survey.
If you are involved in the decisions for this operation, hit the "PREVIOUS" button and review the previous question again.
☐ End Survey

**[If respondent answers 2 or more]**
**The next questions will be for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation? **Please list yourself first**, even if you are not the primary decision maker on the operation.

_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**

_____

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>?:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**PROBE:** When you were asked to provide your race and/or ethnicity, was the level of detail requested too detailed, not detailed enough, or just right?
O Too detailed
O Not detailed enough
O Just right

**PROBE:** How well did the question that asked you to provide race and/or ethnicity information allow you to accurately describe yourself?
- o      Very well
- o      Somewhat well
- o      Not too well
- o      Not well at all

**IF QX = 'Not too well', or 'Not well at all' then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question did not allow you to describe your race and/or ethnicity well.

**IF QX = 'Somewhat well', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question only allowed you to describe your race and/or ethnicity "somewhat well."

**PROBE:** On the question that asked for your race and/or ethnicity, you answered **[pre-fill with R/E choice]**

Other options that were available were: **[Pre-fill with R/E Options Not Chosen]** White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Did you know you could select more than one race and/or ethnicity for this question?
To      Yes
o        No
PROBE: [If 'No'] Would you have selected more than one race and/or ethnicity if you knew you could?
     o        Yes
     o        No

PROBE: [If 'Yes'] What other races and/or ethnicities would you have chosen if you knew you could?

PROBE: Please describe what 'race' means in your own words.

PROBE: Please describe what 'ethnicity' means in your words.


**[If respondent reported 2 or more for Q1]**

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the second person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s relation to you?**
☐ Spouse
☐ Family member
☐ No relation

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply and note that you may report more than one group.  Is <Name>:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**PROBE:** How easy or difficult was the race and/or ethnicity question for you to answer about <Name>?

O Very difficult
O Difficult
O  Neutral
O Easy
O Very easy

**IF QX = 'very difficult or 'difficult', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity question was difficult to answer.

**IF QX = 'very easy or 'easy', then ask:**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity question was easy to answer.

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback about the race and/or ethnicity questions?

---

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback on any of the questions?

Would you be interested in providing additional feedback on the race and ethnicity questions over the telephone or on a Zoom call with a USDA researcher?

If you select 'Yes', a USDA researcher will reach out to you to schedule a time to speak.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Thank you for your time!

**Web Questionnaire, Version 4, Minimum Question, Short Instructions**

**Intro screen: Thank you for participating in this research. We will ask you some demographic and producer characteristic questions, along with some follow-up questions about your responses.**

**What types of agriculture is your operation involved in? Please select all that apply.**
☐ Crops
☐ Livestock
☐ Other, specify: _____

**In 2022, how many people were involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**[If respondent answers 1]**
**Are you the person that was involved in decisions for this operation?**
☐ Yes [Skip to "What is your name?"]
☐ No

[If "No"]
You said that you are not involved in the decisions for this operation. If that is correct, choose "End Survey" below and click "NEXT." This will complete the survey.
If you are involved in the decisions for this operation, hit the "PREVIOUS" button and review the previous question again.
☐ End Survey

**[If respondent answers 2 or more]**
**The next questions will be for up to two individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

What is the name of the first person who is involved in decisions for this operation? **Please list yourself first**, even if you are not the primary decision maker on the operation.

_____

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.  Is <Name>?:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**PROBE:** When you were asked to provide your race and/or ethnicity, was the level of detail requested too detailed, not detailed enough, or just right?
O Too detailed
O Not detailed enough
O Just right

**PROBE:** How well did the question that asked you to provide race and/or ethnicity information allow you to accurately describe yourself?
  o        Very well
  o        Somewhat well
  o        Not too well
  o        Not well at all

**IF QX = 'Not too well', or 'Not well at all' then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question did not allow you to describe your race and/or ethnicity well.

**IF QX = 'Somewhat well', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why that question only allowed you to describe your race and/or ethnicity "somewhat well."

**PROBE:** On the question that asked for your race and/or ethnicity, you answered **[pre-fill with R/E choice]**

Other options that were available were: **[Pre-fill with R/E Options Not Chosen]** White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Did you know you could select more than one race and/or ethnicity for this question?

o        Yes
o        No

**PROBE**: [If 'No'] Would you have selected more than one race and/or ethnicity if you knew you could?
        o        Yes
        o        No

**PROBE**: [If 'Yes'] What other races and/or ethnicities would you have chosen if you knew you could?

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'race' means in your own words.

**PROBE:** Please describe what 'ethnicity' means in your words.

**[If respondent reported 2 or more for Q1]**

**Now we will ask about another individual involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2022.**

**What is the name of the second person who is involved in decisions for this operation?**
_____

**What is <Name>'s relation to you?**
☐ Spouse
☐ Family member
☐ No relation

**At which occupation did <Name> spend the majority (50 percent or more) of his/her worktime in 2022?**
☐ Farm or ranch work
☐ Work other than farming or ranching

**How many days did <Name> work off the farm in 2022? Include days in which the person worked at least four hours per day in an off-farm job. Include work on someone else's farm for pay.**
☐ None
☐ 1-49 days
☐ 50-99 days
☐ 100-199 days
☐ 200 days or more

**What is <Name>'s sex?**
☐ Male
☐ Female

**What was <Name>'s age as of December 31, 2022?**
_____

**What is \<Name>'s race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.  Is \<Name>:**
☐ White
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Black or African American
☐ Asian
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**PROBE:** How easy or difficult was the race and/or ethnicity question for you to answer about \<Name>?

O Very difficult
O Difficult
O  Neutral
O Easy
O Very easy

**IF QX = 'very difficult or 'difficult', then ask**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity question was difficult to answer.

**IF QX = 'very easy or 'easy', then ask:**
**PROBE:** Please tell us why the race and/or ethnicity question was easy to answer.

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback about the race and/or ethnicity questions?

---

**PROBE:** Do you have any additional feedback on any of the questions?

Would you be interested in providing additional feedback on the race and ethnicity questions over the telephone or on a Zoom call with a USDA researcher?

If you select 'Yes', a USDA researcher will reach out to you to schedule a time to speak.

☐ Yes
☐ No

 Thank you for your time!

# Bureau of Labor Statistics:
# Selected Summary Findings from Testing a Proposed Combined Race and Ethnicity Question

Tywanquila Walker, Robin Kaplan,

Victoria R. Narine, Erica Yu, and Rebecca L. Morrison


U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Survey Methods Research

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, the Chief Statistician of the United States convened the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (ITWG). The ITWG was charged with recommending ways to revise the current Federal race and ethnicity data standards, which were last revised in 1997. The ITWG examined ways to improve the quality and usefulness of Federal race and ethnicity data and ensure the data better reflects the diversity of the United States. This report outlines one part of that work.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics conducted two quantitative studies with nonprobability panels and two qualitative studies with convenience samples to examine the potential effects of combining the race and ethnicity questions proposed in Federal Register Notice 88 FR 5375 (OMB, 2023). Overall, participants understood what the race and ethnicity questions were asking. They were able to select broad and detailed categories that reflected their race or ethnicity. Participants used the write-in boxes to provide additional categories, explain their ancestry, or provide commentary about why they selected a particular category.

Item non-response to the race and ethnicity questions was low. Across the quantitative and qualitative studies, approximately 99% of participants selected a broad race or ethnicity category. More than 80% selected a detailed category. In the quantitative studies, 74% of participants did not provide a write-in response, indicating that although participants are willing to answer the race and ethnicity questions, they may not make additional effort to provide written responses.

In the quantitative studies, combining the race and ethnicity question format did not affect response distributions for the broad categories, detailed categories, or write-ins. There were no significant differences by treatment group. Neither question stem nor instruction details affected participants' responses. Furthermore, changing question wording or instruction details did not affect understanding or self-identification.

In the qualitative studies, *List Wording* and *Yes/No Wording* protocols were used. For the *List Wording* protocol, participants were not clear about whether they could select more than one category. They also did not realize they could add a group that was not included in the detailed category list. For the *Yes/No Wording* protocol, participants generally understood that they could choose more than one broad or detailed category. Overall, there were fewer comprehension problems with the *Yes/No Wording* and the instructions were clearer than the *List Wording*.

Interviewers reflected on their experience administering the qualitative interview questions. Some interviewers described administering the race and ethnicity questions as uncomfortable. Specifically, they felt asking "What White groups are you?" was sensitive to administer. For the *Yes/No Wording* protocol, the inclusion of "etcetera" made the detailed categories sound like an afterthought.

Across all four studies, the majority of participants stated the questions reflected their race or ethnicity "very well" or "somewhat well." However, some participants who selected "not very well" noted that they did not identify with the categories, felt the detailed categories were more relevant to recent immigrants, did not understand the relevance for collecting the information, or identified as multiple races or ethnicities.

# INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the Chief Statistician of the United States convened the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (ITWG) to review and develop recommendations for revising the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). The ITWG was charged with examining, testing, and recommending ways to improve the quality and usefulness of SPD 15 to ensure Federal race and ethnicity data better reflects the diversity of the United States. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics conducted four studies to evaluate the proposed revisions to SPD 15.

Study 1 and Study 2 were quantitative studies. The studies were conducted as online surveys with nonprobability panels. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two questions stems ("race or ethnicity" vs. "race and/or ethnicity") and either brief or detailed instructions ("Select all that apply" vs. "Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group."). Participants were asked how well the race and ethnicity questions reflected how they see themselves. The data for Study 1 and Study 2 were combined, and the results are reported together.

Study 3 and Study 4 were qualitative studies. Both studies targeted topics unrelated to race and ethnicity and used convenience samples. Study 3 was conducted as cognitive interviews on work schedules. Study 4 was conducted as debriefing interviews on work-related activities. Participants responded to the race and ethnicity questions and several follow-up questions at the end of each study's interview protocol. Across the two studies, participants heard one of two different question wordings. Wording one (*List Wording*) was sourced from the Federal Register Notice 88 FR 5375 (OMB, 2023) and wording two (*Yes/No Wording*) was based on the re-interview protocol from the 2015 National Content Test (Mathews et al., 2017).

> List Wording: "The following questions ask about your race or ethnicity. I am going to read you a list of seven race or ethnicity categories. You may choose one or more categories."

> Yes/No Wording: "I am going to ask you a series of questions about race or ethnicity and would like you to respond to each one. You may say yes to as many as you wish. These questions may seem repetitive, but it is important that we ask them of each person to ensure we are collecting high quality data."

These wordings were selected for the qualitative study to explore multiple approaches to interviewer administration of the questions. Interviewers probed participants about their reactions to the race and ethnicity questions, how they chose their answers, and how well the questions reflected how they see themselves. Given that interview content was not expected to affect race and ethnicity responses, the results for Study 3 and Study 4 are reported together.

The main objectives of Study 1 and Study 2 were to assess whether changes to the question stem or instructions affected response distribution, participant understanding, or participant response. The main objectives of Study 3 and Study 4 were to explore protocols for interviewer administration.

The following research questions, developed by the Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (ITWG) Testing Team, guided the research objectives.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1a. How does the combined race and ethnicity question format affect response distributions?
- 1c. How does the combined question affect understanding and self-identification?
- 2a. What question stem better allows respondents to understand the question design, "What is your race or ethnicity?" or "What is your race and/or ethnicity?"?
- 2b. Does simplifying the instruction at the beginning of the combined question change how respondents understand and answer the question?

# METHODS

## STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2 (ONLINE, QUANTITATIVE STUDIES)

Participants (*N*=2364) were recruited from two nonprobability panels as part of online screener questionnaires for other surveys. A total of 175 participants partially completed the survey, meaning they completed some portion of the survey but did not click "submit" at the end of the survey. The screener took a median of 2.8 minutes to complete and participants were compensated $0.50 for completion.

After answering demographic questions about their age, sex, gender identity, and labor force status, participants answered the race and ethnicity questions. First, participants answered an open-ended question asking them to describe their race or ethnicity. Afterward, they were administered the closed-ended, combined race and ethnicity questions. See Appendix A for example screenshots of the questions.

Using a 2x2 design, participants were randomly assigned to receive one of two question stems asking about either their *race or ethnicity* versus their *race and/or ethnicity:*

1. What is your race or ethnicity?
2. What is your race and/or ethnicity?

In addition, participants were randomly assigned to receive either brief or detailed instructions on how to report their race and/or ethnicity:

1. Select all that apply.
2. Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

Participants first answered the question with the seven broad categories. Details were collected on the same screen with an unfolding design, where the detailed question appeared under the broad categories.

## STUDY 3 AND STUDY 4 (INTERVIEW, QUALITATIVE STUDIES)

A convenience sample of participants were recruited through advertisements on Craigslist and a neighborhood email group for studies on work schedules (Study 3, *N* = 20) and work-related activities (Study 4, *N* = 38). A total of 45[1] participants (Study 3, *n* = 16; Study 4, *n* = 29) were administered the race and ethnicity questions. Interviews were conducted via a video conferencing platform and lasted either 60 minutes (Study 3) or 45 minutes (Study 4), with the race and ethnicity questions being asked by the interviewer at the end of the interview. Participants were compensated $50 upon completion of the interview.

Three interviewers administered the race and ethnicity questions, either individually or in pairs (i.e., one interviewer, one observer). Two different protocols were tested in Study 3 and Study 4. The first protocol (*List Wording*) was administered to 32 participants (Study 3, *n* = 16; Study 4, *n* = 16). The interviewer read the list of seven minimum categories, then followed up to collect subgroups of each selected category using a question in the format of "Which of the following [Category] groups are you? Example 1, example 2, example 3, example 4, or another [Category] group?"

The second protocol (*Yes/No Wording*) was administered to 20 participants (Study 4). The interviewer waited for a "yes" or "no" response to each of the seven minimum categories, then followed up to collect subgroups of each selected category using a question in the format of "Earlier you said you were [Category]. Please specify one or more groups, for example, example 1, example 2, example 3, example 4, etc."

The goal of using different wordings was not to find differences in reporting behaviors but rather to explore different interviewer-administered approaches to collecting race and ethnicity. See Appendix B for the protocols and follow-up probes.

# RESULTS

## STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2 (ONLINE, QUANTITATIVE STUDIES)

### Participant Demographics

Quantitative data were collected from two different nonprobability panels. As with most nonprobability panels, participants tended to skew younger, highly educated, and white (Paolacci and Chandler, 2014). Thus, results are not generalizable to the U.S. population. Participants in Panel A (*N*=1363) were recruited for a study about their jobs and work schedules and had to be currently employed. Participants in Panel B (*N*=1001) were recruited for a study about health conditions and work and had to have a health condition that limited the kind or amount of paid work they could do.

Because the two studies were completed using different panels and had different recruitment criteria, we expected there to be some differences in demographics between the panels. We found

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[1] Due to time constraints, a subset of participants across Studies 3 and 4 did not receive the race and ethnicity questions and subsequent probes.

differences in participants' age, sex, employment status, education level, and some of the broad races/ethnicities selected (i.e., White and Asian). No significant differences were found for detailed races/ethnicities selected by panel (all $ps > .05$). Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of participants in each panel; those marked with an asterisk (*) indicate a significant difference was found.

### Table 1

*Participant Demographics by Panel (N=2364)*

| | Panel A (*n* = 1363) | Panel B (*n* = 1001) | Significance Test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mean age* | 40.5 | 42.2 | $t(2320) = 3.4$, $p < .001$ |
| Sex* | 46% Female 54% Male | 60% Female 40% Male | $X^2(1) = 49.4$, $p < .001$ |
| Employment* | 87.8% Full-time 7.0% Part-time 3.2% Self-employed 0.7% Unemployed, looking for work 1.2% Unemployed, not looking for work | 48.9% Full-time 12.0% Part-time 15.4% Self-employed 8.8% Unemployed, looking for work 14.9% Unemployed, not looking for work | $X^2(4) = 485.3$, $p < .001$ |
| Education* | 0.1% Less than high school 7.3% High school, no college 23.8% Some college/associates 68.7% Bachelor's or higher | 0.7% Less than high school 14.5% High school, no college 36.9% Some college/associates 48.0% Bachelor's or higher | $X^2(3) = 108.7$, $p < .001$ |
| White* | 78.8% | 84.3% | $X^2(1) = 11.3$, $p < .001$ |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6.8% | 7.7% | $p = 0.38$, n.s. |
| Black or African American | 9.9% | 9.7% | $p = 0.90$, n.s. |
| Asian* | 9.0% | 5.1% | $X^2(1) = 12.7$, $p < .001$ |
| AIAN | 1.5% | 2.2% | $p = 0.19$, n.s. |
| MENA | 1.1% | 1.0% | $p = 0.81$, n.s. |
| NHPI | 0.6% | 0.2% | $p = 0.15$, n.s. |

## Race or Ethnicity by Panel

Table 2 to Table 5 show the counts of the number of races/ethnicities selected by panel. No association was found between panel and number of broad races/ethnicities selected ($p = .29$). However, associations between panel and counts were found:

- count of number of detailed races/ethnicities selected, excluding "other" write-ins, [$X^2(8) = 63.9$, $p < .001$];
- count of "other" write-ins [$X^2(4) = 30.0$, $p < .001$]; and
- count of number of detailed races/ethnicities selected, including "other" write-ins, [$X^2(8) = 69.7$, $p < .001$].

This suggests that the panels differed in the number of detailed categories selected and the number of write-ins provided. Specifically, the differences seem driven by Panel A tending to select just one detailed race/ethnicity, whereas those in Panel B were more likely to select two or more detailed categories and provide more write-in responses.

## Table 2

*Count of Broad Race/Ethnicities Selected by Panel (p = .29)*

| | Count and Percent of Broad Race/Ethnicities Selected (N = 2364) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Panel Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Panel A | 4 | 1276 | 71 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| (n=1363) | (0.3%) | (93.6%) | (5.2%) | (0.6%) | (0.1%) | (0.1%) | (0.0%) | (0.1%) |
| Panel B | 2 | 914 | 71 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| (n=1001) | (0.2%) | (91.3%) | (7.1%) | (1.2%) | (0.1%) | (0.1%) | (0.0%) | (0.0%) |
| Total | 6 | 2190 | 142 | 20 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 |

## Table 3

*Count and Percent of Detailed Race/Ethnicities Selected, Excluding "Other" Write-Ins by Panel (p < .001)*

| | Count and Percent of Detailed Race/Ethnicities Selected, Excluding "Other" Write-Ins | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Panel Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| Panel A | 184 | 773 | 250 | 111 | 37 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| (n=1363) | (13.5%) | (56.7%) | (18.3%) | (8.1%) | (2.7%) | (0.4%) | (0.1%) | (0.0%) | (0.1%) |
| Panel B | 134 | 430 | 250 | 112 | 49 | 16 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| (n=1001) | (13.4%) | (43.0%) | (25.0%) | (11.2%) | (4.9%) | (1.6%) | (0.7%) | (0.2%) | (0.1%) |
| Total | 318 | 1203 | 500 | 223 | 86 | 21 | 9 | 2 | 2 |

## Table 4

*Count and Percent of "Other" Write-Ins by Panel (p < .001)*

| | Count and Percent of "Other" Write-Ins | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Panel Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| Panel A | 1064 | 282 | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| (n=1363) | (78.1%) | (20.7%) | (1.1%) | (0.1%) | (0.1%) |
| Panel B | 685 | 299 | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| (n=1001) | (69.6%) | (29.5%) | (1.7%) | (0.0%) | (0.0%) |
| Total | 1749 | 581 | 32 | 1 | 1 |

Table 5

*Count and Percent of Detailed Races/Ethnicities Selected, Including "Other" Write-Ins by Panel
(p < .001)*

| | Count and Percent of Detailed Race/Ethnicities Selected, Including "Other" Write-Ins | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Panel Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| Panel A | 70 | 785 | 289 | 139 | 65 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| (*n*=1363) | (5.1%) | (57.6%) | (21.2%) | (10.2%) | (4.8%) | (0.7%) | (0.1%) | (0.1%) | (0.1%) |
| Panel B | 37 | 443 | 255 | 148 | 73 | 29 | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| (*n*=1001) | (3.7%) | (44.3%) | (25.5%) | (14.8%) | (7.3%) | (2.9%) | (0.8%) | (0.6%) | (0.2%) |
| Total | 107 | 1228 | 544 | 287 | 138 | 39 | 10 | 8 | 3 |

Poisson regressions were conducted to determine whether any differences were observed by panel as a function of treatment group on the number of broad or detailed race/ethnicity categories selected. None were significant (all $ps > .05$), suggesting that there was no interaction between panel source and treatment condition on the number of broad or detailed race/ethnicity categories selected (including or excluding write-ins).

To assess differences by treatment group, a series of Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if there was an association between treatment group and selection of broad and detailed race categories. Detailed categories with low counts of 5 or fewer could not be computed[2]. No effects of treatment group were found on selection of broad or detailed race/ethnicity category selection (all $ps > .05$). No other differences between Panel A and Panel B were found by treatment; thus, the remainder of the analyses combine participants from both panels.

## Item Nonresponse for Broad Category by Treatment Group

Item nonresponse for the broad category race or ethnicity question was low ($n = 6$; Table 6). Although they did not select a broad category for race or ethnicity, all six participants provided a response to an open-ended question that asked "How would you describe your race or ethnicity (race and/or ethnicity)?" Participants wrote that they were White ($n = 3$), Multi-racial ($n = 1$), Mixed ($n = 1$), and White American with a Native American grandmother ($n = 1$). Breakoffs did not differ by treatment group, $X^2(3) = 7.2$, $p = .07$.

Table 6

*Item Nonresponse for Race and Ethnicity by Treatment Group*

| Treatment Group | Nonresponse (%) | | Response (%) | | *n* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| race and/or ethnicity; select all | 2 | (0.34) | 593 | (99.66) | 595 |
| race and/or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 2 | (0.33) | 598 | (99.67) | 600 |
| race or ethnicity; select all | 1 | (0.17) | 582 | (99.83) | 583 |
| race or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 1 | (0.17) | 585 | (99.83) | 586 |
| Total | 6 | (0.25) | 2358 | (99.75) | 2364 |

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[2] Statistics could not be computed for the following detailed groups: Black – Ethiopian, Haitian, Somali; NPHI – Tongan, Fijian, Chamorro, Marshallese.

## Page Submit Time by Treatment Group

Paradata was collected for the total amount of time it took participants to submit their responses to the combined race and ethnicity questions (Table 7 and Figure 1). The page contained the broad categories, detailed categories, and a question about how well the categories reflected the participant's race or ethnicity. Average time to submit the page was not significantly different between treatment groups, $F(3, 2360) = 2.23$, $p = .083$.

Table 7

*Average Time (in seconds) to Submit Page for Broad and Detailed Categories by Treatment Group*

| Treatment Group | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|
| race and/or ethnicity; select all | 35.36 | 3.35 | 275.75 |
| race and/or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 41.73 | 3.81 | 823.73 |
| race or ethnicity; select all | 39.15 | 4.71 | 639.64 |
| race or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 42.01 | 4.02 | 783.38 |
| Total | 39.56 | 3.35 | 823.73 |

Figure 1

*Average Time to Submit Page for Broad and Detailed Categories by Treatment Group*
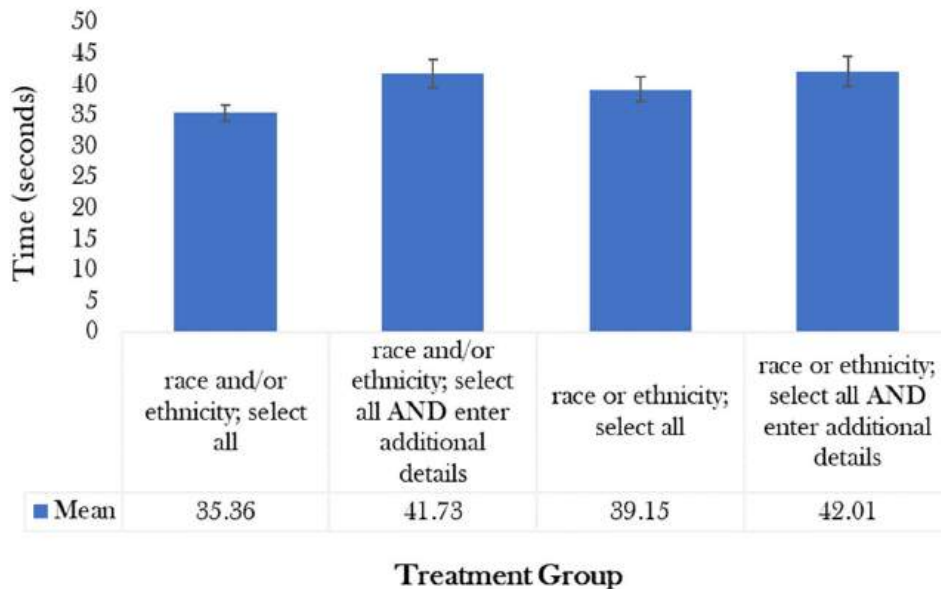


*Note.* Error bars represent standard error.

## Broad Categories Selected

Most participants selected at least one broad category for race or ethnicity (Table 8). 92.6% selected one broad category. 6% selected two broad categories. 0.25% did not select a broad category, although all six participants wrote responses to an open-ended question asking how they

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would describe their race or ethnicity. The participant who selected all seven categories wrote "prefer not to disclose" in response to the open-ended question.

See Appendix C for a detailed breakdown of the broad categories selected.

Table 8

*Number of Broad Categories Selected*

| Number Selected | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 6 | 0.25 |
| 1 | 2190 | 92.64 |
| 2 | 142 | 6.01 |
| 3 | 20 | 0.85 |
| 4 | 3 | 0.13 |
| 5 | 2 | 0.08 |
| 6 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | 1 | 0.04 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

## Broad Categories Selected by Treatment Group

Across treatment groups, participants selected, on average, one broad category (Table 9). Average number of broad categories selected was not significantly different between treatment groups, $F_{(3, 2360)} = 1.84$, $p = .138$.

Table 9

*Average Number of Broad Categories Selected by Treatment Group*

| Treatment Group | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|
| race and/or ethnicity; select all | 1.11 | 0 | 5 |
| race and/or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 1.07 | 0 | 3 |
| race or ethnicity; select all | 1.07 | 0 | 7 |
| race or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 1.09 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | 1.08 | 0 | 7 |

## Detailed Categories Selected and Write-ins

Most participants selected a detailed category (Table 10). 86.55% of participants selected one or more detailed categories. 13.45% did not select a detailed category.

Table 10

*Number of Detailed Categories Selected*

| Number Selected | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 318 | 13.45 |
| 1 | 1203 | 50.89 |
| 2 | 500 | 21.15 |
| 3 | 223 | 9.43 |
| 4 | 86 | 3.64 |
| 5 | 21 | 0.89 |
| 6 | 9 | 0.38 |
| 7 | 2 | 0.08 |
| 8 | 2 | 0.08 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

Most participants did not write details about their race or ethnicity (Table 11). 74% of participants did not provide a write-in response. 26% wrote something in at least one text box. One participant wrote "unknown" in all seven boxes.

Table 11

*Number of Write-Ins*

| Number of Write-Ins | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 1749 | 73.98 |
| 1 | 581 | 24.58 |
| 2 | 32 | 1.35 |
| 3 | 1 | 0.04 |
| 4 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | 1 | 0.04 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

Most participants selected a detailed category, provided a write-in response, or did both

Table 12) 4.5% of participants did not select a detailed race or ethnicity or write in the box provided.

Table 12

*Number of Detailed Categories Selected and Write-Ins*

| Selections and Write-Ins | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 107 | 4.53 |
| 1 | 1228 | 51.95 |
| 2 | 544 | 23.01 |
| 3 | 287 | 12.14 |
| 4 | 138 | 5.84 |
| 5 | 39 | 1.65 |
| 6 | 10 | 0.42 |
| 7 | 8 | 0.34 |
| 8 | 3 | 0.13 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

## Detailed Categories Selected by Treatment Group

Across treatment groups, participants selected an average of 1.44 detailed categories (Table 13). Average number of detailed categories selected was not significantly different between treatment groups, $F(3, 2360) = 1.44$, $p = .231$.

Table 13

*Average Number of Detailed Categories Selected by Treatment Group*

| Treatment Group | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|
| race and/or ethnicity; select all | 1.44 | 0 | 8 |
| race and/or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 1.40 | 0 | 6 |
| race or ethnicity; select all | 1.41 | 0 | 7 |
| race or ethnicity; select all AND enter additional details | 1.52 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 1.44 | 0 | 8 |

## Write-Ins by Treatment Group

Across treatment groups, participants provided few write-in responses (Table 14). Average number of write-ins was not significantly different between treatment groups, $F(3, 2360) = 0.44$, $p = .728$.

Table 14

*Average Number of Write-ins by Treatment Group*

| Treatment Group | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|
| race and/or ethnicity; select all | 0.29 | 0 | 2 |
| race and/or ethnicity; select AND enter additional details | 0.27 | 0 | 2 |
| race or ethnicity, select all | 0.29 | 0 | 7 |
| race or ethnicity, select all AND enter additional details | 0.27 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 0.28 | 0 | 7 |

## Use of Write-in Boxes

In addition to specifying their detailed race or ethnicity, participants used the write-in boxes to explain their ancestry or provide additional commentary. For example, participants wrote "unknown" or "unsure" because they or a parent were adopted. Additional commentary included information about ancestry, DNA, and family history: "7 generations all US born." "I am mixed like most people. Would have to get a DNA test to know for sure what exactly." "I am not from Africa. Black American is the correct term please." "Mother is from the US, father is from the UK." "4 grandparents are Eastern European/Romanian/Scottish/British." In short, participants provided information about their family origins or explained why they did not, or could not, specify a detailed race or ethnicity.

## Reflection of Self in Race or Ethnicity Question

After answering the questions about their race or ethnicity, participants were asked "Now thinking about the last question, how well did it reflect how you see your race and/or ethnicity?" Participants were given four options: very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all. The question appeared on the same page as the broad categories, detailed categories, and write-in boxes.

Most participants said the question reflected their race or ethnicity well (Table 15). 75% of participants said the question reflected their race or ethnicity "very well." 16.9% chose "somewhat well."

### Table 15

*How Well Question Reflected Race or Ethnicity*

| Response | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Did Not Respond | 1 | 0.04 |
| Not well at all | 58 | 2.45 |
| Not too well | 130 | 5.50 |
| Somewhat well | 399 | 16.88 |
| Very well | 1776 | 75.13 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

Across the broad race or ethnicity categories, most participants said the question reflected their race or ethnicity "very well" or "somewhat well" (Table 16).

Table 16

*How Well Question Reflected Race or Ethnicity Separated by Broad Category*

| Race/Ethnicity and Response | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **White** | **1756** | |
| Did Not Respond | 1 | 0.06 |
| Not well at all | 49 | 2.79 |
| Not too well | 113 | 6.44 |
| Somewhat well | 315 | 17.94 |
| Very well | 1278 | 72.78 |
| **Black or African American** | **193** | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 0.52 |
| Not too well | 5 | 2.59 |
| Somewhat well | 24 | 12.44 |
| Very well | 163 | 84.46 |
| **Asian** | **144** | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 0.69 |
| Not too well | 2 | 1.39 |
| Somewhat well | 21 | 14.58 |
| Very well | 120 | 83.33 |
| **Hispanic or Latino** | **82** | |
| Not too well | 2 | 2.44 |
| Somewhat well | 10 | 12.20 |
| Very well | 70 | 85.37 |
| **White, Hispanic or Latino** | **61** | |
| Not too well | 2 | 3.28 |
| Somewhat well | 11 | 18.03 |
| Very well | 48 | 78.69 |
| **White, Asian** | **23** | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 4.35 |
| Somewhat well | 3 | 13.04 |
| Very well | 19 | 82.61 |
| **White, American Indian or Alaska Native** | **19** | |
| Not too well | 3 | 15.79 |
| Somewhat well | 3 | 15.79 |
| Very well | 13 | 68.42 |
| **White, Black or African American** | **13** | |
| Not too well | 2 | 15.38 |
| Somewhat well | 3 | 23.08 |
| Very well | 8 | 61.54 |
| **White, Middle Eastern or North African** | **13** | |
| Somewhat well | 1 | 7.69 |
| Very well | 12 | 92.31 |

| Race/Ethnicity and Response | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native | 7 | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 14.29 |
| Very well | 6 | 85.71 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American | 6 | |
| Very well | 6 | 100 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 6 | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 16.67 |
| Very well | 5 | 83.33 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American | 5 | |
| Very well | 5 | 100 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 5 | |
| Somewhat well | 1 | 20.00 |
| Very well | 4 | 80.00 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 4 | |
| Somewhat well | 1 | 25.00 |
| Very well | 3 | 75.00 |
| White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 4 | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 25.00 |
| Very well | 3 | 75.00 |
| White, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 3 | |
| Somewhat well | 2 | 66.67 |
| Very well | 1 | 33.33 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 2 | |
| Very well | 2 | 100 |
| White, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African | 2 | |
| Somewhat well | 2 | 100 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | |
| Somewhat well | 1 | 100 |
| White, Black or African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |

| Race/Ethnicity and Response | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | |
| Not well at all | 1 | 100 |
| Asian, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| White, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | |
| Somewhat well | 1 | 100 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | |
| Very well | 1 | 100 |
| Did Not Select Race/Ethnicity | 6 | |
| Not well at all | 2 | 33.33 |
| Not too well | 1 | 16.67 |
| Very well | 3 | 50.00 |
| Total | 2364 | |

## Origin, Categories Selected, and Write-Ins

Participants saw three pairs of statements about their origin. "Next you'll read pairs of statements about how you might think about your origin (for example, German, Mexican, Jamaican, Chinese, etc.) For each pair, which statement comes closer to your view – even if neither is exactly right?"

Pair 1: My origin is not central to my identity; My origin is central to my identity

Pair 2: I am not too familiar with my origins; I am very familiar with my origins

Pair 3: I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family; I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family

For each pair of statements, the number of broad categories selected, detailed categories selected, and write-ins was analyzed.

For Pair 1, the average number of broad categories selected was not significantly different between the two statements (Table 17), $F(1, 2362) = 0.09$, $p = .767$. The average number of detailed categories selected was significantly different between the two statements (Table 18), $F(1, 2362) = 36.5$, $p < .001$. The number of detailed categories selected was slightly higher for "My origin is not central to my identity" ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 1.14$) than for "My origin is central to my identity" ($M = 1.27$, $SD = 0.95$). The average number of write-ins was significantly different between the two statements (Table 19), $F(1, 2362) = 22.06$, $p < .001$. The number of write-ins was slightly higher for "My origin is not central to my identity" ($M = 0.32$, $SD = 0.53$) than for "My origin is central to my identity" ($M = 0.22$, $SD = 0.45$).

Table 17

*Pair 1: Origin Central to Identity and Number of Broad Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| My origin is not central to my identity | 1.09 | 1443 | 61.04 |
| 0 | | 5 | 0.35 |
| 1 | | 1336 | 92.58 |
| 2 | | 86 | 5.96 |
| 3 | | 10 | 0.69 |
| 4 | | 3 | 0.21 |
| 5 | | 2 | 0.14 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.07 |
| My origin is central to my identity | 1.08 | 921 | 38.96 |
| 0 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| 1 | | 854 | 92.73 |
| 2 | | 56 | 6.08 |
| 3 | | 10 | 1.09 |
| Total | 1.08 | 2364 | 100 |

Table 18

*Pair 1: Origin Central to Identity and Number of Detailed Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean* | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| My origin is not central to my identity | 1.55 | 1443 | 61.04 |
| 0 | | 198 | 13.72 |
| 1 | | 633 | 43.87 |
| 2 | | 364 | 25.23 |
| 3 | | 160 | 11.09 |
| 4 | | 64 | 4.44 |
| 5 | | 15 | 1.04 |
| 6 | | 5 | 0.35 |
| 7 | | 2 | 0.14 |
| 8 | | 2 | 0.14 |
| My origin is central to my identity | 1.27 | 921 | 38.96 |
| 0 | | 120 | 13.03 |
| 1 | | 570 | 61.89 |
| 2 | | 136 | 14.77 |
| 3 | | 63 | 6.84 |
| 4 | | 22 | 2.39 |
| 5 | | 6 | 0.65 |
| 6 | | 4 | 0.43 |
| Total | 1.44 | 2364 | 100 |

*$p < .001$

Table 19

*Pair 1: Origin Central to Identity and Number of Write-Ins*

| Statement and Number of Write-ins | Mean[*] | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **My origin is not central to my identity** | 0.32 | 1443 | 61.04 |
| 0 | | 1015 | 70.34 |
| 1 | | 407 | 28.21 |
| 2 | | 19 | 1.32 |
| 3 | | 1 | 0.07 |
| 4 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.07 |
| **My origin is central to my identity** | 0.22 | 921 | 38.96 |
| 0 | | 734 | 79.70 |
| 1 | | 174 | 18.89 |
| 2 | | 13 | 1.41 |
| Total | 0.28 | 2364 | 100 |

[*]$p < .001$

For Pair 2, the average number of broad categories selected was not significantly different between the two statements (Table 20), $F(1, 2360) = 0.04$, $p = .837$. The average number of detailed categories selected was not significantly different between the two statements (Table 21), $F(1, 2360) = 2.23$, $p = .136$. The average number of write-ins was not significantly different between the two statements (Table 22), $F(1, 2360) = 0.13$, $p = .719$. Two participants were excluded from the analyses because they did not answer the question for Pair 2.

Table 20

*Pair 2: Origin Familiarity and Number of Broad Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **I am not too familiar with my origins** | 1.08 | 911 | 38.57 |
| 0 | | 2 | 0.22 |
| 1 | | 849 | 93.19 |
| 2 | | 49 | 5.38 |
| 3 | | 9 | 0.99 |
| 4 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| **I am very familiar with my origins** | 1.09 | 1451 | 61.43 |
| 0 | | 4 | 0.28 |
| 1 | | 1339 | 92.28 |
| 2 | | 93 | 6.41 |
| 3 | | 11 | 0.76 |
| 4 | | 3 | 0.21 |
| 5 | | 1 | 0.07 |
| Total | 1.08 | 2362 | 100 |

Table 21

*Pair 2: Origin Familiarity and Number of Detailed Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **I am not too familiar with my origins** | 1.48 | 911 | 38.57 |
| 0 | | 129 | 14.16 |
| 1 | | 428 | 46.98 |
| 2 | | 208 | 22.83 |
| 3 | | 94 | 10.32 |
| 4 | | 40 | 4.39 |
| 5 | | 8 | 0.88 |
| 6 | | 3 | 0.33 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| **I am very familiar with my origins** | 1.41 | 1451 | 61.43 |
| 0 | | 188 | 12.96 |
| 1 | | 774 | 53.34 |
| 2 | | 292 | 20.12 |
| 3 | | 129 | 8.89 |
| 4 | | 46 | 3.17 |
| 5 | | 13 | 0.90 |
| 6 | | 6 | 0.41 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.07 |
| 8 | | 2 | 0.14 |
| Total | 1.44 | 2362 | 100 |

Table 22

*Pair 2: Origin Familiarity and Number of Write-Ins*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **I am not too familiar with my origins** | 0.27 | 911 | 38.57 |
| 0 | | 681 | 74.75 |
| 1 | | 218 | 23.93 |
| 2 | | 10 | 1.10 |
| 3 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| 4 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.11 |
| **I am very familiar with my origins** | 0.28 | 1451 | 61.43 |
| 0 | | 1067 | 73.54 |
| 1 | | 362 | 24.95 |
| 2 | | 22 | 1.52 |
| Total | 0.28 | 2362 | 100 |

For Pair 3, the average number of broad categories selected was not significantly different between the two statements (Table 23), $F(1, 2361) = 0.8$, $p = .372$. The average number of detailed categories selected was significantly different between the two statements (Table 24), $F(1, 2361) = 17.81$, $p < .001$. The number of detailed categories selected was slightly higher for "I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family" ($M = 1.53$, $SD = 1.12$) than for "I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family" ($M = 1.34$, $SD = 1.03$). The average number of write-ins was significantly different between the two statements (Table 25), $F(1, 2361) = 4.58$, $p = .032$. The number of write-ins was slightly higher for "I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family" ($M = 0.3$, $SD = 0.52$) than for "I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family" ($M = 0.25$, $SD = 0.47$). One participant was excluded from the analyses because they did not answer the question for Pair 3.

Table 23

*Pair 3: Origin Connection and Number of Broad Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 1.08 | 1209 | 51.16 |
| 0 | | 4 | 0.33 |
| 1 | | 1127 | 93.22 |
| 2 | | 66 | 5.46 |
| 3 | | 8 | 0.66 |
| 4 | | 2 | 0.17 |
| 5 | | 1 | 0.08 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.08 |
| I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 1.09 | 1154 | 48.84 |
| 0 | | 2 | 0.17 |
| 1 | | 1062 | 92.03 |
| 2 | | 76 | 6.59 |
| 3 | | 12 | 1.04 |
| 4 | | 1 | 0.09 |
| 5 | | 1 | 0.09 |
| Total | 1.08 | 2363 | 100 |

Table 24

*Pair 3: Origin Connection and Number of Detailed Categories Selected*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean* | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 1.53 | 1209 | 51.16 |
| 0 | | 167 | 13.81 |
| 1 | | 538 | 44.50 |
| 2 | | 296 | 24.48 |
| 3 | | 134 | 11.08 |
| 4 | | 57 | 4.71 |
| 5 | | 11 | 0.91 |
| 6 | | 5 | 0.41 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.08 |
| I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 1.34 | 1154 | 48.84 |
| 0 | | 151 | 13.08 |
| 1 | | 664 | 57.54 |
| 2 | | 204 | 17.68 |
| 3 | | 89 | 7.71 |
| 4 | | 29 | 2.51 |
| 5 | | 10 | 0.87 |
| 6 | | 4 | 0.35 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.09 |
| 8 | | 2 | 0.17 |
| Total | 1.44 | 2363 | 100 |

*$p < .001$

Table 25

*Pair 3: Origin Connection and Number of Write-Ins*

| Statement and Number Selected | Mean* | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 0.30 | 1209 | 51.16 |
| 0 | | 871 | 72.04 |
| 1 | | 321 | 26.55 |
| 2 | | 15 | 1.24 |
| 3 | | 1 | 0.08 |
| 4 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6 | | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7 | | 1 | 0.08 |
| I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family | 0.25 | 1154 | 48.84 |
| 0 | | 877 | 76.00 |
| 1 | | 260 | 22.53 |
| 2 | | 17 | 1.47 |
| Total | 0.28 | 2363 | 100 |

*$p$ = .032

## Response to Open-Ended Race or Ethnicity Question

Participants were asked an open-ended question about their race or ethnicity: "How would you describe your race or ethnicity (race and/or ethnicity)?" In order to tally the number of unique write-in responses, data were cleaned and recoded (e.g., corrected typos; removed unnecessary punctuation; removed unnecessary words ["my race is"]; ensured consistency of category names [Filipino vs. Filipina]). Uninterpretable responses (e.g., "good"; "I belongs [*sic*] to major community") were recoded as "Not Codable." After cleaning and recoding the data, there were 230 unique write-in responses.

Although there were many unique write-ins, participants' responses were generally in line with the race and ethnicity categories specified on the U.S. Census Bureau's (2021) Hispanic Origin and Race Code List. Several participants wrote "Jewish," which is not on the Census code list. Multiple participants wrote "Multiracial," "Mixed", or "Biracial," but did not provide additional information about their race or ethnicity. Therefore, broad and detailed categories could not be identified for those participants.

See Appendix D for a complete list of the cleaned, recoded open-ended responses. Additional analysis of the open-ended responses will be conducted in the future.

## STUDY 3 AND STUDY 4 (INTERVIEW, QUALITATIVE STUDIES)

### Participant Demographics

Participants in Study 3 were recruited for a study on work schedules and participants in Study 4 were recruited for a study on work-related activities. Although both studies sought to recruit a diverse sample of participants from across the country, such as employed, unemployed, business owners, and students, the final samples are small and not representative of the U.S. population. Participant demographics are shown in Table 26.

### Table 26

*Participant Demographics by Study (n = 45)*

|  | Study 3 ($n$ = 16) | Study 4 ($n$ = 29) |
|---|---|---|
| Age |  |  |
| Mean (years) | 38 | 38 |
| Sex |  |  |
| Female | 10 | 16 |
| Male | 6 | 12 |
| Education |  |  |
| Less than high school |  | 0 |
| High school, no college |  | 4 |
| Some college/associates |  | 5 |
| Bachelor's or higher |  | 19 |

*Note.* Education was not collected in Study 3.

### Race or Ethnicity

Table 27 shows the counts of the number of races/ethnicities selected during interviewer administration of the race or ethnicity questions. Due to the small cell sizes, data from Study 3 and Study 4 and all question wordings are reported together.

Table 27

*Study 3 and Study 4: Participant Race or Ethnicity (n = 45)*

| Broad and Detailed Race/Ethnicity Selected | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **White** | 21 | 46.67 |
| Did Not Select a Detailed Category | 1 | 2.22 |
| English | 4 | 8.89 |
| French | 1 | 2.22 |
| German | 2 | 4.44 |
| German, English, Irish | 1 | 2.22 |
| German, Irish, Scandinavian | 1 | 2.22 |
| Irish, Italian | 1 | 2.22 |
| Irish, Polish, French | 1 | 2.22 |
| Irish, Welsh | 1 | 2.22 |
| Italian | 2 | 4.44 |
| Mexican | 1 | 2.22 |
| Polish | 3 | 6.67 |
| Refused to Answer | 2 | 4.44 |
| **Black or African American** | 19 | 42.22 |
| African | 1 | 2.22 |
| African American | 12 | 26.67 |
| African American, Ghanaian | 1 | 2.22 |
| Did Not Select a Detailed Category | 2 | 4.44 |
| Ethiopian | 1 | 2.22 |
| Haitian | 1 | 2.22 |
| Ethiopian, Somali | 1 | 2.22 |
| **Asian** | 1 | 2.22 |
| Filipino | 1 | 2.22 |
| **Hispanic or Latino** | 1 | 2.22 |
| Puerto Rican | 1 | 2.22 |
| **Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American** | 1 | 2.22 |
| Dominican, South African | 1 | 2.22 |
| **White, Black or African American** | 1 | 2.22 |
| American | 1 | 2.22 |
| **White, Black or African American, Asian** | 1 | 2.22 |
| Irish, African American, Chinese | 1 | 2.22 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

## Understanding of Multiple Category Selection

Whether participants understood that they could choose more than one broad category and more than one detailed category depended on the question wording protocol, such that participants were less clear about whether they could select more than one category in the *List Wording* protocol than in the *Yes/No Wording* protocol. For example, one participant thought they had to pick only one broad category, and then realized during debriefing that they could pick multiple categories.

One participant who heard the *List Wording* and ultimately selected White and Black or African American said she was not sure how she would respond until she heard the full list because "sometimes they give you 'multi-racial' so I was waiting to see if you might offer that." This participant described preferring to respond as multi-racial rather than multiple individual categories because being multiracial "there's a whole lot that goes into it."

When collecting detailed category information, several participants did not realize they could select multiple detailed categories. One participant ultimately said she would choose not to answer the detailed question due to being limited to reporting only one detailed category, and several participants commented that a question collecting only one detailed category seemed restrictive or "weird." Despite the *List Wording* protocol asking about "another" group, several participants did not realize they could add a group that was not included in the detailed category list. One participant reported during debriefing that he would have reported Ghanaian, but "it wasn't on the list." In contrast, two participants said they understood that you cannot list everything.

In general, participants understood that they could choose more than one broad or detailed category in the *Yes/No Wording* but there were comprehension problems with the *List Wording*.

## Interpretations of the Objectives of the Race or Ethnicity Questions

Participants said they were used to being asked about the broad categories for race or ethnicity. They called these "normal" questions, and they relied on their experience completing other surveys and applications to answer the questions. The broad race or ethnicity question was "easy" to answer.

However, participants expressed a range of conflicting interpretations of the questions. Interpretations included: how you see yourself; how you identify; what is your background; what is your heritage; what is your ancestry or DNA; and what is your culture. For example, one participant during debriefing said that she had Mexican ancestry ("25% Mexican") but selected only the "White" category during the interview because she does not identify with her Mexican heritage. Another participant selected "Polish" but during debriefing said, "I don't necessarily think of myself that way." One participant said it was a "question of identity and who you are and [who you are] not."

In addition to known ancestry, family origins, and place of birth, some participants may use other information to help them select race or ethnicity categories. Multiple participants mentioned that DNA tests and/or ancestral research could result in participants selecting additional broad or

detailed categories in the future compared to what they had selected during the interview. One participant used the language they spoke as a source of information.

Multiple participants emphasized the importance of citizenship or where the person was born. Particularly in the detailed category, several participants explained that they selected "African American" rather than a specific African country to emphasize their American citizenship status. One participant wanted to see an extra box for someone born in the United States. They selected a broad category (Black or African American) and a detailed category (Haitian) that represented where their parents were born, but the participant was born in the United States and identified as American. Another participant responded to both interview questions as simply "American."

Two participants wondered about the difference between race and ethnicity. They have seen surveys break out Hispanic or Latino separately, but they "don't aways know why or what that means." They thought the questions could be confusing when people were asked about race and ethnicity. However, despite the possible confusion, both participants understood the race or ethnicity questions; they thought other people would also be able to answer the questions.

## Reactions to the Detailed Race or Ethnicity Questions

Most participants were surprised by the level of detail requested for race and ethnicity. Three participants who received the *List Wording* commented on the number of options presented for the detailed categories. Across both the *List Wording* and *Yes/No Wording* protocols, several participants who selected "White" for the broad category were surprised and unsure of how to answer the detailed categories; one participant remarked: "For the second question thought you gotta be kidding me, what kind of white I am?" and another stated "Most people know they're white but don't know what white group they are. They don't really think about it." Four participants were unsure of the purpose for collecting detailed information. They were unsure about the information's relevance and confused about why some detailed categories were listed and others were not. One participant thought of the detailed categories as a "historical question" that is not relevant to day-to-day life.

Multiple participants remarked that people may not know the level of detailed being requested, but they appreciated having the option to select multiple categories or add another group. Multiple participants expressed uncertainty about their responses for the subgroup question. For example, one participant said "For some people it's based upon rumor or anecdotes. I don't think for me I actually really know." Another participant said "It's hard to know, I don't know. I would probably say, one of my great grandmothers is from England, so I'll say England."

## Reactions to the Middle Eastern or North African Category

No participants selected the Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) category. One participant reported that it "stood out" because they had not seen or heard that option before. Another participant initially selected the category during the interview but probing during debriefing found that the selection was an error. The participant misheard the category name and selected it only

because of hearing "African"; this participant was able to report a subgroup ("Israeli") but during debriefing explained that she does not identify with that subgroup and had not meant to select the Middle Eastern or North African category in the first place, only the Black or African American category.

## Reactions to the Hispanic or Latino Category

Several participants selected the Hispanic or Latino category. One participant, who heard the *Yes/No Wording* and ultimately selected Hispanic or Latino and specifically Mexican, had significant difficulty responding. When asked if he was "White", the participant said, "I have to wait for the next option." During debriefing, he explained, "I was reluctant to answer whether I'm White or not. Usually there is a section. I wasn't sure if it was going into that direction." The interviewer returned to the "Are you White?" question after reading all of the minimum categories and the participant selected "Yes." However, at the detailed follow-up question for the White category, the participant said, "None of those actually, so I guess I'm not White." The participant did not identify with any of the White groups and so thought he should change his initial response and not select the initial White category. The other participants heard the *List Wording* protocol and did not experience this difficulty.

## Reflection of Self in Race or Ethnicity Question

Thirty-eight participants (Study 3, $n = 15$; Study 4, $n = 23$) were asked "How well did those questions reflect how you see your race or ethnicity?" and offered a response scale including "very well", "somewhat well", "not very well" and "not well at all". Twenty-seven participants said the questions reflected their race or ethnicity "very well," 9 said "somewhat well," and 2 said "not very well." One participant selected "somewhat well" because they were conducting research to figure out their DNA and ancestry and their answer may change because of their research. Another participant selected "somewhat well" and described their reasoning as "It's more of my own lack of knowledge. I'm not sure what percentage of everything I am." A participant who selected "not very well" responded as Italian but elaborated that they don't connect to being Italian, just "White." The second participant who selected "not very well" thought that the detailed questions seemed targeted to people who had recently emigrated from those countries.

## Response Process for Answering Race or Ethnicity Question

Participants were asked "How did you come up with those answers?" and "What were you thinking about when you answered the questions?" Five participants said they knew their own ethnicity, identity, or origins. Four thought about their grandparents' or parents' heritage (e.g., where they were from, where they were born, nationality or ancestry). Three were thinking about their own heritage. Two participants based their responses on what family members had told them and one participant thought about which race they related to the most.

In response to the detailed categories, one participant remarked that they never thought about what White group they belonged to. Another participant mentioned it was not something they think about often. Two others said they thought about DNA tests and their family tree. One participant selected English because they spoke English.

## Answering Race or Ethnicity Questions Differently

As time permitted, some participants were asked "Now thinking of your experience answering surveys in general, do you ever answer the race or ethnicity questions differently?" The majority of participants said they do not ever answer the race or ethnicity question differently. However, one participant, who selected three broad categories (White, Black or African American, Asian), sometimes answers the race or ethnicity question differently if it is asked multiple times. They usually choose one race (Black) because that's how they identify. Another participant stated that when given the option to select multiple broad categories they could select up to three (Caucasian, Asian, Black or African American), but they do not. They only choose one category (African American) because that's how they identify. One participant said they never answer the race or ethnicity questions differently because they would be manipulating the data and not being genuine.
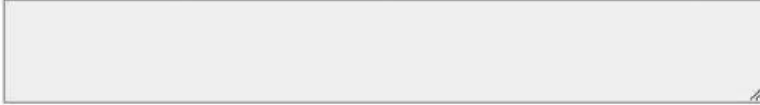
## Interviewer Experience

All interviews were conducted via video conferencing, thus simulating the experience of face-to-face interviews. Unlike self-response modes, this mode of administration contains social interaction between the interviewer and respondent. Some interviewers described administering the race and ethnicity questions as uncomfortable at times, particularly for the *Yes/No Wording* protocol. Specifically, the forced-response format of the broad categories required the interviewer to pause after each category. Additionally, the inclusion of "etc." after the list of examples for the sub-categories sounds as if the examples are an afterthought. It was also unclear to the interviewers if the scripted "etcetera" was meant to be read aloud to the respondent. Finally, the question "What [Category] group(s) are you?" was difficult to administer because of the direct language used, particularly in the case of "What White groups are you?" which some interviewers felt was sensitive to administer.

# APPENDIX A

## EXAMPLE SCREENSHOTS OF RACE AND ETHNICITY SURVEY QUESTIONS

How would you describe your race or ethnicity?

---

**What is your race and/or ethnicity?**

Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

☐ **WHITE**
   For example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO**
   For example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN**
   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 Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN**
   For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Israeli, etc.

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER**
   For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

**You said that you are WHITE. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ German     ☐ Irish     ☐ English

☐ Italian     ☐ Polish     ☐ French

Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

[text box]

**You said that you are HISPANIC OR LATINO. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ Mexican or Mexican American     ☐ Puerto Rican     ☐ Cuban

☐ Salvadoran     ☐ Dominican     ☐ Colombian

Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

[text box]

**You said that you are BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ African American     ☐ Jamaican     ☐ Haitian

☐ Nigerian     ☐ Ethiopian     ☐ Somali

Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.

[text box]

**You said that you are ASIAN. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ Chinese     ☐ Filipino     ☐ Asian Indian

☐ Vietnamese     ☐ Korean     ☐ Japanese

Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

[text box]

**You said that you are AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE. Please enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.**

[text box]

**You said that you are MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ Lebanese     ☐ Iranian     ☐ Egyptian

☐ Syrian     ☐ Moroccan     ☐ Israeli

Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.

[text box]

**You said that you are NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER. Provide details below.**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ Native Hawaiian     ☐ Samoan     ☐ Chamorro

☐ Tongan     ☐ Fijian     ☐ Marshallese

Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.

[text box]

Now thinking about the last question, how well did it reflect how you see your race or ethnicity?

○ Very well

○ Somewhat well

○ Not too well

○ Not well at all

**Which statement comes closer to your view—even if neither is exactly right?**

○ My origin is not central to my identity

○ My origin is central to my identity

**Which statement comes closer to your view—even if neither is exactly right?**

○ I am not too familiar with my origins

○ I am very familiar with my origins

**Which statement comes closer to your view—even if neither is exactly right?**

○ I do not feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family

○ I feel a strong connection with the cultural origin of my family

# APPENDIX B

## QUALITATIVE PROTOCOLS AND FOLLOW-UP PROBES

### Protocol 1 (List Wording)

The following questions ask about your race or ethnicity. I am going to read you a list of seven race or ethnicity categories. You may choose one or more categories. Are you...

- o White
- o Hispanic or Latino
- o Black or African American
- o Asian
- o American Indian or Alaska Native
- o Middle Eastern or North African OR
- o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander?

<br>

- o **IF WHITE, ASK**
  Which of the following White groups are you? German; Irish; English; Italian; Polish; French; or another White group?
- o **IF HISPANIC OR LATINO, ASK**
  Which of the following Hispanic or Latino groups are you? Mexican or Mexican American; Puerto Rican; Cuban; Salvadoran; Dominican; Colombia; or another Hispanic or Latino group?
- o **IF BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASK**
  Which of the following Black or African American groups are you? African American; Jamaican; Haitian Nigerian; Ethiopian; Somali; or another Black or African American group?
- o **IF ASIAN, ASK**
  Which of the following ASIAN groups are you? Chinese, Filipino; Asian Indian; Vietnamese; Korean; Japanese; or another Asian group?
- o **IF AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE, ASK**
  What American Indian or Alaska Native group are you? For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, National Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, or another original people of North, Central, and South America?
- o **IF Middle Eastern or North African, ASK**
  Which of the following Middle Eastern or North African groups are you? Lebanese; Iranian; Egyptian; Syrian; Moroccan; Israeli; or another Middle Eastern or North African group?
- o **IF Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, ASK**
  Which of the following Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander groups are you? Native Hawaiian; Samoan; Chamorro; Tongan; Fijian; Marshallese; or another Pacific Islander group?

## Protocol 2 (Yes/No Wording)

I am going to ask you a series of questions about race or ethnicity and would like you to respond to each one. You may say yes to as many as you wish. These questions may seem repetitive, but it is important that we ask them of each person to ensure we are collecting high quality data.

- o Are you White? (Yes/No)
- o Are you Hispanic or Latino? (Yes/No)
- o Are you Black or African American? (Yes/No)
- o Are you Asian? (Yes/No)
- o Are you American Indian or Alaska Native? (Yes/No)
- o Are you Middle Eastern or North African? (Yes/No)
- o Are you Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander? (Yes/No)

- o IF WHITE, ASK
  Earlier you said you were White. Please specify one or more groups, for example, German; Irish; English; Italian; Polish; French; etc.
- o IF HISPANIC OR LATINO, ASK
  Earlier you said you were Hispanic or Latino. Please specify one or more groups, for example, Mexican or Mexican American; Puerto Rican; Cuban; Salvadoran; Dominican; Colombia; etc.
- o IF BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASK
  Earlier you said you were Black or African American. Please specify one or more groups, for example, African American; Jamaican; Haitian Nigerian; Ethiopian; Somali; etc.
- o IF ASIAN, ASK
  Earlier you said you were Asian. Please specify one or more groups, for example, Chinese, Filipino; Asian Indian; Vietnamese; Korean; Japanese; etc.
- o IF AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE, ASK
  Earlier you said you were American Indian or Alaska Native. Please specify one or more groups, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, National Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, etc.
- o IF Middle Eastern or North African, ASK
  Earlier you said you were Middle Eastern or North African. Please specify one or more groups, for example, Lebanese; Iranian; Egyptian; Syrian; Moroccan; Israeli; etc.
- o IF Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, ASK
  Earlier you said you were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Please specify one or more groups, for example, Native Hawaiian; Samoan; Chamorro; Tongan; Fijian; Marshallese; etc.

## Probes

- o In your own words, what were those questions on race or ethnicity asking you?
- o How well did those questions reflect how you see your race or ethnicity? Would you say: Very well, somewhat well, Not too well, Not well at all
- o How did you interpret the questions?
- o On what basis did you answer the questions?
- o How did you come up with those answers?
- o What were you thinking about when you answered the questions?

- o Now thinking of your experience answering surveys in general, do you ever answer the race or ethnicity questions differently?
- o When?
- o Why?
- o Does context matter?
- o Does identity matter?
- o Do the response options matter?

# APPENDIX C

## DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF BROAD CATEGORIES SELECTED FOR STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2 (ONLINE, QUANTITATIVE STUDIES)

*Broad Categories Selected*

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White | 1756 | 74.28 |
| Black or African American | 193 | 8.16 |
| Asian | 144 | 6.09 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 82 | 3.47 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino | 61 | 2.58 |
| White, Asian | 23 | 0.97 |
| White, American Indian or Alaska Native | 19 | 0.80 |
| White, Black or African American | 13 | 0.55 |
| White, Middle Eastern or North African | 13 | 0.55 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native | 7 | 0.30 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American | 6 | 0.25 |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 6 | 0.25 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 5 | 0.21 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American | 5 | 0.21 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 4 | 0.17 |
| White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 4 | 0.17 |
| White, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 3 | 0.13 |
| White, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African | 2 | 0.08 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 2 | 0.08 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic or Latino, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Black or African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, Middle Eastern or North African | 1 | 0.04 |
| Did Not Select a Category | 6 | 0.25 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

# APPENDIX D

## RESPONSE TO OPEN-ENDED RACE OR ETHNICITY QUESTION FOR STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2 (ONLINE, QUANTITATIVE STUDIES)

*Response to Open-Ended Race or Ethnicity Question*

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White | 1271 | 53.76 |
| Caucasian | 228 | 9.64 |
| Black | 102 | 4.31 |
| Asian | 69 | 2.92 |
| White, Caucasian | 64 | 2.71 |
| African American | 60 | 2.54 |
| Hispanic | 53 | 2.24 |
| White American | 35 | 1.48 |
| Asian American | 26 | 1.10 |
| White, Non-Hispanic | 25 | 1.06 |
| Mixed | 21 | 0.89 |
| Latino | 19 | 0.80 |
| White, European | 18 | 0.76 |
| Caucasian, White | 15 | 0.63 |
| American | 14 | 0.59 |
| Black American | 13 | 0.55 |
| White, Hispanic | 12 | 0.51 |
| Hispanic, White | 8 | 0.34 |
| Mexican American | 7 | 0.30 |
| European | 7 | 0.30 |
| Chinese | 6 | 0.25 |
| European American | 5 | 0.21 |
| Multiracial | 5 | 0.21 |
| Native American | 5 | 0.21 |
| South Asian | 5 | 0.21 |
| Asian Indian | 4 | 0.17 |
| Pacific Islander | 4 | 0.17 |
| White, Jewish | 4 | 0.17 |
| White, Latino | 4 | 0.17 |
| Biracial | 3 | 0.13 |
| Caucasian, Non-Hispanic | 3 | 0.13 |
| Indian | 3 | 0.13 |
| Mexican | 3 | 0.13 |
| Middle Eastern | 3 | 0.13 |
| White, Caucasian American | 3 | 0.13 |
| White, European American | 3 | 0.13 |
| White, Native American | 3 | 0.13 |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| African American, Black | 2 | 0.08 |
| American, White | 2 | 0.08 |
| Arab | 2 | 0.08 |
| Asian American, Chinese | 2 | 0.08 |
| Asian, Chinese | 2 | 0.08 |
| Biracial, Black, White | 2 | 0.08 |
| Black, African American | 2 | 0.08 |
| Black, Mexican | 2 | 0.08 |
| Caucasian, European American | 2 | 0.08 |
| Caucasian, Native American | 2 | 0.08 |
| Chinese American | 2 | 0.08 |
| Hispanic, Caucasian | 2 | 0.08 |
| Irish American | 2 | 0.08 |
| Korean | 2 | 0.08 |
| Latin | 2 | 0.08 |
| Latino, Mexican | 2 | 0.08 |
| Native Hawaiian | 2 | 0.08 |
| Non-Hispanic | 2 | 0.08 |
| Vietnamese American | 2 | 0.08 |
| White, Asian | 2 | 0.08 |
| White, German | 2 | 0.08 |
| White, German, Irish | 2 | 0.08 |
| White, Middle Eastern | 2 | 0.08 |
| African | 1 | 0.04 |
| Afro-American | 1 | 0.04 |
| American Indian | 1 | 0.04 |
| American, Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| American, Eastern European | 1 | 0.04 |
| American, English, Italian, French, German, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| American, Irish, German | 1 | 0.04 |
| American, Lebanese | 1 | 0.04 |
| Armenian, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Ashkenazi | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian American, Filipino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian American, Han Chinese | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian American, Thai American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Filipino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Korean | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Middle Eastern | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Thai | 1 | 0.04 |
| Asian, Vietnamese | 1 | 0.04 |
| Biracial, Asian, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Biracial, Southeast Asian, Non-Hispanic, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black African | 1 | 0.04 |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Black African, American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black American, American Descendants of Slavery | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black American, Jamaican | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black American, Native American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, African American, Non-Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Haitian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Hispanic, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Hispanic, White, Native American, Multiracial | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Latino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, Native American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Black, White, Mexican | 1 | 0.04 |
| Cantonese American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian American, European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian American, Northern European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Croatian, Swedish, Finnish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, German, English, Scottish, Dutch, Native American, Penobscot | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, German, Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Hispanic, Spaniard | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Irish, Polish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Italian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Italian, French, Irish, English | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Multiracial | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Non-Hispanic, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Puerto Rican | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Spanish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, Western European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Caucasian, White American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Celtic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Cuban, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Danish, German, French, Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| East Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| East European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Eastern European American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Eastern European, Polish, American, Native American Indian | 1 | 0.04 |
| English | 1 | 0.04 |
| Eurasian, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| European Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| European White | 1 | 0.04 |
| European, Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| European, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| European, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Filipino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Filipino American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Finnish American | 1 | 0.04 |
| French, Native American, Spanish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, Latin | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, Latino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, Mexican American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, Puerto Rican | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, Puerto Rican, African American, Biracial | 1 | 0.04 |
| Hispanic, White, Indian, Mixed | 1 | 0.04 |
| Indian, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Irish, Scottish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Italian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Italian, Australian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Italian, German, Czech, Cuban | 1 | 0.04 |
| Japanese American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Japanese, Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Japanese, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Jewish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Latino American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Latino, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Latino, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Latinx | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mestizo | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mexican American, Latino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mexican American, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mexican, Dutch, German, Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mexican, Honduran | 1 | 0.04 |
| Middle Eastern, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed White, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, American, Moroccan | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, Biracial | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, Biracial, White, Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, Black | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, Black, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, Caucasian, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, American, Cree | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, Black | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, Jewish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Mixed, White, Native American | 1 | 0.04 |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Multiracial, Turkish, Mexican | 1 | 0.04 |
| Multiracial, White, Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Multiracial, White, East Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Native American, Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Native American, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Native Black American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Nigerian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Non-Hispanic, Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Non-Hispanic, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Non-Hispanic, White, Caucasian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Northern European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Northwest European | 1 | 0.04 |
| Polish, White | 1 | 0.04 |
| Puerto Rican, Latino | 1 | 0.04 |
| Scottish American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Sephardic Jewish | 1 | 0.04 |
| South Asian, Filipino | 1 | 0.04 |
| South Asian, Pakistani | 1 | 0.04 |
| Southeast Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Southeast Asian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Spanish | 1 | 0.04 |
| Taiwanese, Hong Kongese American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Trinidadian | 1 | 0.04 |
| Vietnamese | 1 | 0.04 |
| Vietnamese Asian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| Vietnamese, Chinese | 1 | 0.04 |
| White American, European | 1 | 0.04 |
| White American, German | 1 | 0.04 |
| White American, Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White American, Polish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, American Indian | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Ashkenazi Jewish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Asian American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Caucasian, Native American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Caucasian, Non-Hispanic | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Don't Know, Northern European | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, English, Irish, Hispanic, Spaniard, Puerto Rican | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Filipino | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, German, Hungarian, Italian | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, German, Scottish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Italian | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Italian, American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Japanese | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Jewish, European American | 1 | 0.04 |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| White, Jewish, Native American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Latin American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Lebanese | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Mexican | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Mixed | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Native American, Creek | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Non-Hispanic American | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Nordic | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Puerto Rican | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Scots-Irish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Slavic | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Southeast Asian | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Spanish | 1 | 0.04 |
| White, Swiss, German | 1 | 0.04 |
| Not Codable | 14 | 0.59 |
| Don't Know | 2 | 0.08 |
| Prefer Not To Disclose | 2 | 0.08 |
| Total | 2364 | 100 |

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# OMB TESTING PACKAGES

Study 1 and Study 3: Cognitive Testing of ATUS 2024 Leave Question
https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=202009-1220-006&icID=258854

Study 2: 2024 CPS Disability Supplement Cognitive Testing
https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=202009-1220-006&icID=259315

Study 4: CPS Debriefing Interviews Study
https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=202009-1220-006&icID=258626

**Bureau of Justice Statistics Race and Ethnicity Standards Pilot Results**

Under the direction of the Chief Statistician of the United States, OMB charged the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (Working Group) to review OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD 15), Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity and provide recommendations for revision. SPD 15 provides minimum standards that ensure the ability to compare information and data across federal agencies, and to understand how well federal programs serve a diverse America. The initial proposal from this group includes several revisions to the categories currently in use.

The Working Group has proposed changing the way the federal government collects information on race and ethnicity. Specifically, the proposed changes are "collecting race and ethnicity together with a single question; adding a new response category for Middle Eastern and North African (MENA), separate and distinct from the "White" category; and updating SPD 15's terminology, definitions, and question wording.[1] In addition to the new minimum category, the working group has also recommended that more detailed information be collected on each of the individual categories and that each of the categories should be further disaggregated by country of origin.

In response to the proposal put forward by the Working Group, BJS began two pilot studies to begin assessing the implications of implementing changes to the race and ethnicity categories used in future data collection efforts. Specifically, one pilot targeted law enforcement agencies, and the second focused on correctional agencies. The goal of this work was to gain an understanding of how law enforcement agencies, correctional, and juvenile justice agencies collect and store data related to race and ethnicity and to assess the burden that these agencies would face if asked to report for new categories of race. Each of these pilots will be described below. Overall recommendations will also be provided.

### *Race and Ethnicity Coding in Law Enforcement Agencies*

Law enforcement describes the agencies and employees responsible for enforcing laws, maintaining public order, and managing public safety. The primary duties of law enforcement include the investigation, apprehension, and detention of individuals suspected of criminal offenses. Some law enforcement agencies, particularly sheriffs' offices, also have a significant role in the detention of individuals convicted of criminal offenses.

BJS maintains several national data collections, covering federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and special topics in law enforcement. Data are typically collected directly from law enforcement and related agencies, including crime laboratories, police departments, sheriffs' offices, and training academies. Most data collections are conducted every 2 to 4 years

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[1] See White House publication, [Initial Proposals for Revising the Federal Race and Ethnicity Standards](#).

and report aggregate findings. From these collections, BJS publishes national estimates for personnel, equipment, operations, policies, budgets, and job functions across agencies.

BJS's current law enforcement agency surveys utilize a single combined race and ethnicity question that captures the following categories:

a. White, non-Hispanic
b. Black or African American, non-Hispanic
c. Hispanic or Latino
d. American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
e. Asian, non-Hispanic
f. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic
g. Two or more races
h. Not known

In order to gain an understanding of the capacity of law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to report race and ethnicity data compliant with the new recommendations, BJS worked with its data collection agent for the Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies (CSLLEA), RTI International, to interview a sample of LEAs to explore what information they regularly collect and how the information is stored. As a part of these interviews, RTI also assessed the ability of agencies to provide more detailed race and ethnicity information on federal surveys. Fifty agencies were targeted for participation and 32 LEAs agreed to be interviewed.

The study (described below) was designed to (1) increase understanding of how LEAs collect and store race and ethnicity data on sworn and nonsworn staff, (2) assess the capability of LEAs to report on the newly proposed Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) category, and (3) determine the feasibility of including more detailed questions on race and ethnicity, such as country of origin, on law enforcement administrative surveys.

**Methods**

*Sample Frame Development*

RTI recruited LEA personnel from a list of individuals who had participated in the 2022 CSLLEA. These participants were asked during the CSLLEA collection to indicate their willingness to be contacted for future research efforts and expressed interest in doing so. A total of 284 LEAs were represented in this sample and grouped into eight categories according to agency type and size:

a. constables, LEAs serving public buildings/facilities (comprised largely of college and university campus police),
b. sheriffs' offices – large,
c. sheriffs' offices – medium,
d. sheriffs' offices – small,
e. local police departments – large,

  f. local police departments – medium, and
  g. local police departments – small.

Sheriffs' offices and local police departments with 100 or more full-time equivalent sworn personnel were deemed large, those with 50 to 99 were deemed medium, and those with less than 50 were classified as small. RTI and BJS developed a cap of 50 completed interviews with unique agencies. To ensure that completed interviews reflected a broad scope of LEA types and sizes, RTI developed maximum targets for each agency category (see *Table 1*). The proportions reflect the proportions of agencies in the 2022 CSLLEA frame.

*Table 1: Target Interview Cap by Agency Type and Size Category*

| | Constable | Public Buildings | Sheriff - Large | Sheriff - Medium | Sheriff - Small | Local Police - Large | Local Police - Medium | Local Police - Small | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interview Target | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 10 | **50** |

*Recruitment Strategy*

Recruitment of LEA contacts began in late February 2023, with an email to contacts thanking them for their participation in the 2022 CSLLEA and reminding them of their indicated willingness to participate in future research efforts. The email notified the agency contacts of BJS's research to study the feasibility and implications of changes to the race and ethnicity questionnaire categories and let them know that RTI would be reaching out via phone to begin scheduling interviews to discuss the topic. This email was sent to 50 agencies, with the target number in each category (see *Table 1*) selected randomly from the entire list of LEAs gleaned from the 2022 CSLLEA respondents (described in the previous section).

Following OMB's approval of this research effort, RTI sent an email to the 50 agencies initially targeted, asking to schedule a short phone call to discuss how their agency collects and stores race and ethnicity data on their personnel. These emails were followed by a phone call from a scheduler 3 business days later to any contact who did not reply to either the initial or follow-up email. A total of three calls were placed to each of these initial 50 contacts before a nonresponding agency was replaced by another selected from the CSLLEA sample list. Replacement agencies were chosen from the same category of agency as the one being replaced. Once a replacement agency was selected, RTI's scheduler sent an invitation email to the contact. Further recruitment outreach then followed the same protocol, with the first phone call being placed three business days after the email and two additional calls being made before selecting another replacement in the case of nonresponse. All scheduled interviews were assigned to one of three interviewers, who would call the agency contact at the appointment time and administer the interview protocol script.

In total, RTI completed interviews with 32 LEAs, with all eight agency categories represented (see *Table 2*).

*Table 2: Interview Completions by Agency Type and Size Category*

|  | Constable | Public Buildings | Sheriff - Large | Sheriff - Medium | Sheriff – Small | Local Police - Large | Local Police - Medium | Local Police - Small | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Completed Interviews | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 | **32** |

*Findings*

The cognitive interviews followed a protocol with preapproved scripted probes. However, interviewers also used spontaneous probes to gain a better understanding of how the LEAs would respond to potential changes in data collection requests. Following the administration of the cognitive interviews, the following general issues/themes became apparent:

- **No interviewed LEA currently includes the proposed "Middle Eastern or North African" (MENA) category in its records or reporting system for sworn or nonsworn personnel.** This implies that all or most LEAs requested by BJS to provide counts of personnel fitting into this category will not have these data immediately available.
- **The level of burden that interviewed LEAs believe it would require to report personnel counts fitting in the MENA category varied by agency size.** Interviewed representatives from small local police departments and sheriffs' offices were almost all able to either provide the count of staff that would identify as MENA from knowing all their colleagues or reported that they would be able to quickly gather this information by asking staff. Some representatives from larger agencies, by contrast, believe that reporting the number of staff who identify as MENA would be very burdensome.
- **Among the 24 interviewed agencies that reported formally collecting and reporting data on the race or ethnicity of personnel, only half (12) use categories that match the current federal standards (*American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and White*).** Twenty-nine percent (7) of the interviewed agencies use categories that do not match the current federal standards, and 21% (5) were unsure which categories their agency uses. Of those whose agencies reported different categories than what are included in the current federal standards, some chose to use categories requested on reporting forms by a law enforcement accreditation agency.

- **No interviewed LEA currently collects or stores information on the race or ethnicity of personnel that is more detailed than a major category (e.g., whether a Hispanic officer is of Cuban or Mexican descent).**

*Recommendations and Conclusions*

The proposal to add MENA to BJS's questionnaires requesting counts of LEA personnel by race and ethnicity category could have significant implications for data quality and response rates of future data collection efforts. Of the 32 LEAs that RTI interviewed, none currently collect this data point on a formal basis. While many interviewed agencies report that providing a count of staff identifying as MENA would be simple, many others described this notion as burdensome and pointed to challenges that could drive them to either leave this question unanswered or provide only an estimate. LEAs with a small staff count (i.e., <50) may be largely unaffected by the proposal, as reaching an answer may only require that a staff member take a quick tally of a few colleagues. Larger agencies are more likely to be burdened by the proposed change, as several interviewed staff from these LEAs indicated that providing an answer would require reaching out to tens or hundreds of personnel—a task that would take too long and which many expressed an unwillingness to pursue. Some of these agencies may either not respond or provide rough estimates that may impact data quality. It may also be difficult for these agencies to answer this question in future months or years as some agencies described challenges with updating their record systems to include additional race or ethnic categories and almost none regularly update these records. For these reasons, 13 of the 32 interviewed LEAs (41%) believe that responding to a question asking for the number of their sworn or nonsworn staff who identify as MENA would carry some burden or be infeasible altogether.

Another challenge with the addition of the MENA category in LEA personnel race and ethnicity data collection efforts is that this change may add a burden to agencies that regularly report these data to accreditation groups. Some interviewed LEAs report that their systems for tracking race and ethnicity of staff are currently set up to match the categories used by accreditation agencies to which they regularly report statistics. Agencies may be unwilling to change their systems or collect information on MENA self-identification if they believe that it could impact their ability to provide required data to accreditation agencies. Should the proposed changes be implemented, BJS would need to consider securing buy-in from these groups to ensure greater consistency of data requests for LEAs.

Finally, it is notable that of the 24 LEAs interviewed by RTI that report formally tracking the race and ethnicity of their sworn or nonsworn personnel, only 12 (50%) use categories that match the current federal guidelines used by BJS. Asking agencies to adapt to changes in the questionnaire when so many may already find it difficult to report counts under the categories used today could culminate in significant burden to respondents.

*Race and ethnicity coding in adult correctional and juvenile justice agencies*

BJS maintains over 30 corrections-related data collections, with most being annual collections of administrative data from correctional administrators. Data collected through these efforts range from basic population counts and offender demographic characteristics to facility capacity, programs, staff, and resource data.

One of these annual collections is the Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV). The SSV is part of BJS's National Prison Rape Statistics Program, which gathers mandated data on the incidence and prevalence of sexual victimization in adult correctional and juvenile justice facilities, under the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA; P.L. 108-79). This is an administrative data collection based on reported allegations of sexual victimization perpetrated by other inmates, youth in custody, or staff. The collection includes an enumeration of allegations and substantiated incidents reported to state prison systems; state juvenile correctional systems; the federal prison system; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); the U.S. military; and a sample of jail jurisdictions, privately operated adult prisons and jails, facilities in Indian country, and local and private juvenile justice facilities. Additional information is collected on substantiated incidents on the victim(s), perpetrator(s), characteristics of the incident, and outcomes.

Adult correctional facilities included in the SSV each year are drawn from frames of BJS's Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities (CCF), Census of Jails (COJ), and the Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country. Juvenile justice facilities are sampled from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC) and Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement (CJRP). The SSV collects data from across the entire spectrum of adult and juvenile facilities and therefore is an ideal collection on which to test potential changes to race or ethnicity items.

The SSV substantiated incident form must be submitted for every reported allegation of sexual victimization that was investigated and the preponderance of evidence determined that it occurred. There are two versions of this form, one for adult correctional facilities (SSV-IA) and one for juvenile justice facilities (SSV-IJ), and the items for race or ethnicity are standardized across both forms. Data are collected for up to 15 victims involved in an incident and up to 8 inmate/youth or staff perpetrators.

The SSV-IA and SSV-IJ use a single combined race and ethnicity question with the following response categories:

a. White *(not of Hispanic origin)*
b. Black *(not of Hispanic origin)*
c. Hispanic or Latino
d. American Indian/Alaska Native *(not of Hispanic origin)*
e. Asian *(not of Hispanic origin)*
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander *(not of Hispanic origin)*
g. Other racial category in your information system – *Specify*

In 2022, BJS began work to evaluate and revise instruments for the SSV. This work was carried out with the SSV annual data collection partners in the Economic Reimbursable Surveys Division (ERSD) of the U.S. Census Bureau and with members Data Collections Methodology & Research Branch (DCMRB) of the Census Bureau. The instrument evaluation included an expert review of the summary forms that collect facility and system-wide allegations of sexual victimization and the outcomes of investigations and the incident forms that collect detailed information about substantiated incidents of sexual victimization. Following these reviews, early-stage scoping interviews with nine participants were conducted to help inform potential changes to these forms. In early 2023, plans were made to conduct cognitive interviews that tested changes to both the summary and incident forms. In this interest of contributing to the Working Group's goals, the cognitive interview testing of the incident forms was amended to include both the short form and long form versions of the race and ethnicity items being proposed. Additionally, an effort to widen the scope of participants and feedback was made by conducting unmoderated cognitive testing of the short- and long-form items. These dual efforts are described below.

**Methods**

*Cognitive interviews*

BJS and the Census Bureau team aimed to conduct 30 interviews with respondents over two rounds of iterative testing. Respondents were recruited based on a history of timely submission of SSV data and prior interest in contributing to research or providing feedback on the collection. Most worked as PREA coordinators for their facilities or state systems and are the primary contacts for the annual SSV. They were sent email invitations asking their preference for interview dates and times through Qualtrics. They were also asked to complete a consent form that affirmed their participation was voluntary and the information provided was confidential and only to be seen by Census Bureau employees and those with special sworn status. Interviews were conducted in Microsoft Teams with Qualtrics being used to store the items and protocol questions. Respondents had their own Qualtrics screen in which they viewed items being tested and researchers from DCMRB conducted the interviews and took notes in a separate protocol area of the Qualtrics system. In the first stage, which included the testing of the long and short form race or ethnicity items, 15 respondents were interviewed (see *Table 3*).

*Table 3. Round 1 Cognitive Interview Participation*

| Respondent affiliation | Incident form type | Number of participants interviewed |
|---|---|---|
| Federal Bureau of Prisons | SSV-IA | 1 |
| State prison systems | SSV-IA | 2 |
| Local jails | SSV-IA | 3 |
| Private prisons, ICE facilities, U.S. military facilities, tribal jails | SSV-IA | 1 |
| State juvenile systems | SSV-IJ | 3 |
| Local or private juvenile facilities | SSV-IJ | 5 |

Probes were used to assess respondents' understanding of the two items that measured race and ethnicity of the inmate or youth victim and the staff perpetrator (See *Appendix B*). The focus of these probes was to understand the current categories in their inmate/youth information systems and the human resources information systems that store data about staff.

*Unmoderated cognitive testing*

For the additional unmoderated cognitive testing effort, BJS and the Census Bureau team contacted about 500 prospective respondents with the goal of getting 100 completed responses to an online questionnaire (see *Table 4*). These respondents were chosen from the list of adult correctional and juvenile justice administrators from facilities and systems that were included in the 2021 SSV sample and had provided data for that year. Contacts were sent a prenotification email from the SSV data collection web address system that is used to contact administrators annually to complete the survey. They were then sent an email invitation via Qualtrics to complete a short questionnaire online. All participants were informed that their responses were voluntary and that the information they provided was confidential and to be seen only by Census Bureau employees and those with special sworn status. Consent was obtained through Qualtrics. The questionnaire utilized display logic to accurately prompt respondents to answer probes based on previous responses (See *Appendix C*). These responses were recorded in Qualtrics over a period of 10 days, with respondents who had not yet completed the survey on day four being sent an email reminder. Responses were pulled from Qualtrics by the DCMRB and analyzed by BJS[2]. Expectations for response rates were substantially exceeded in the categories of local jails and local or private juvenile justice facilities.

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[2]The DCRMB separately analyzed responses from the survey. Other results from the SSV unmoderated cognitive testing effort that were compiled from earlier or later in the data collection phase may not match the findings presented here.

*Table 4. Unmoderated cognitive testing recruitment and responses achieved*

| Respondent affiliation | Incident form type | Number of facility representatives contacted | Goal number of responders | Number of responders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State prison system | SSV-IA | 20 | 15 | 13 |
| Local jails | SSV-IA | 250 | 30 | 104 |
| Private prisons, ICE facilities, U.S. military facilities, tribal jails | SSV-IA | 80 | 15 | 17 |
| State juvenile systems | SSV-IJ | 20 | 15 | 10 |
| Local or private juvenile facilities | SSV-IJ | 130 | 25 | 45 |
| Total | - | 500 | 100 | 189 |

*Findings*

- **The race or ethnicity categories included in both the short- and long-form items do not match exactly with the categories in agency inmate/youth or staff record systems.** About 56% of adult correctional administrators and nearly 70% of juvenile justice administrators reported the short-form-version categories matched the categories in their information systems for inmates or youth in custody. Respondents noted that their records systems may have had additional categories not included in the proposed items. Specifically, they noted the presence of the category of "Other" in which they could specify a different race or ethnicity not included in the existing list of categories. Some also indicated their records had a category of "Bi-racial" or "Two or more races." When asked about whether their records allowed for the selection of multiple categories, several were unsure if this was possible, and others noted they could only select one category to identify race or ethnicity. Of respondents who knew about their system's capabilities, 25% of adult correctional and 47% of juvenile respondents indicated they had the ability to report more than one category for race and ethnicity.

- **Agencies do not have a category in their information systems of "Middle Eastern or North African."** Respondents for adult correctional and juvenile justice facilities reported that their information systems did not include this category. About 76% of respondents to the unmoderated cognitive testing did not have a MENA category in their systems for inmates or youth in custody, and 82% did not have the category for staff. However, they noted that if this was an added category and they had a record of this information through an "Other" specification in their system, they would include it here. They also noted that questions on the SSV inform what records they collect from a substantiated incident investigation, therefore if the question changed, they would consider changing their records.

- **Agencies do not collect data on race or ethnicity to the level of detail that would allow them to provide responses to the longer version of the item.** Respondents expressed that their records of race or ethnicity for inmates, youth in custody, or staff did

not contain detailed country of origin or ancestry. Nearly 77% of administrators said they could not provide the necessary details for inmate/youth and 76% could not for staff. They expressed that it would be difficult to collect this information from inmates, youth or staff because incidents of sexual victimization may be investigated, substantiated, and recorded in the SSV form after the person has left the facility. They also noted the sensitive nature of being involved in a substantiated incident of sexual victimization would make a respondent unlikely to follow up with an inmate or perpetrator to ask these questions. Even if the person was still in custody and they were able to contact them to ask this information, respondents were not confident they would be able to provide the level of detail required. Several administrators noted it would even be hard for them to personally answer this level of detail so they did not think the inmates or youth in their facilities could do so if given the opportunity. Respondents indicated that there may be proxy information in a record for an inmate or youth that could help identify a country of origin or ancestry, such as affiliation with a gang that has ties to a certain nationality.

- **Respondents expressed more uncertainty and difficulty in answering the questions about race or ethnicity of staff in their facilities than questions about the inmates or youth held in their facilities.** Most respondents noted that records about the race or ethnicity of staff were held in human resources systems that they may not have access to. They relied on investigative records about the incident and people involved, and if those records did not already contain race or ethnicity details, they would need to reach out to a different department to find out the information for a staff perpetrator when completing the SSV-IA or SSV-IJ. They also were less sure about some of the finer details of those information systems for staff, such as if it was possible to report multiple races or ethnicities. Records for inmates and youth were easier to access by PREA coordinators and administrators who usually complete the SSV. In the unmoderated cognitive testing results, 92% of respondents indicated it was easier to access inmate or youth records than staff records.

*Recommendations and Conclusions*

Administrative data respondents representing federal, state, and private prisons, local jails, state juvenile systems, and local and privately-operated juvenile justice facilities universally noted that they could not provide accurate and reliable data about the inmates, youth and staff in their facilities to the level of detail requested in the long-form item measuring race and ethnicity. Adding the long-form detailed question to the form would place unnecessary burden on respondents and lead to poor quality or missing data. The single race or ethnicity short-form question more closely aligns with how the SSV already collects data about inmates, youth, and staff.

Nearly all representatives from adult correctional and juvenile justice agencies reported that their information systems did not contain a MENA category. However, the addition of a MENA category to the SSV questions about victim and perpetrator race and ethnicity did not appear to

overly burden respondents. They indicated they could use this category if the write-ins from the "Other – specify" categories in their systems aligned with the category. While the inclusion of a MENA category may not be a burden or negatively impact SSV responders, data in this category may not be accurate since the facilities themselves do not include it in their information systems. If it is not a category they have already, it is not likely to be used when a respondent is completing the SSV-IA or SSV-IJ.

Administrative data providers in correctional and juvenile justice facilities were not able to provide details about the country of origin/nationality/ancestry of inmates, youth in custody, or staff.

*Overall Conclusions and Recommendations*

The proposal to add MENA to BJS's questionnaires could have significant implications for data quality and response rates of future data collection efforts. While many interviewed agencies report that providing a count of staff or inmates identifying as MENA would be simple, many others described this notion as burdensome and pointed to challenges that could drive them to either leave this question unanswered or provide only an estimate. It may also be difficult for agencies to answer this question in future months or years since some described challenges with updating their record systems to include additional race or ethnic categories and almost none regularly update these records.

Another challenge that federal agencies may face with the addition of the MENA category to their administrative data collections is that doing so may add a burden to agencies that regularly report these data to accreditation groups. Some interviewed agencies reported that their systems for tracking race and ethnicity of staff are currently set up to match the categories used by accreditation agencies to which they regularly report statistics. Agencies may be unwilling to change their systems or collect information on MENA self-identification if they believe that it could impact their ability to provide required data to accreditation agencies. Should these changes be implemented, it would be key to consider securing buy-in from these groups to ensure greater consistency of data requests for data providers.

It is notable that few of the agencies interviewed formally track and use categories that match the current federal guidelines. Further, administrative data providers in correctional and juvenile justice agencies are not able to provide details about the country of origin/nationality/ancestry of inmates, youth in custody, or staff. Asking agencies to adapt to changes in the questionnaire when so many may already find it difficult to report counts under the categories used today could culminate in significant burden to respondents. Further, many correctional agencies felt the change was unnecessary as the existing categories could be utilized to capture the information.

Finally, it is important to note that although most LEAs and correctional agencies included in this pilot indicated that they are unable to provide MENA breakdowns at this time, there were

important differences in the concerns they expressed over this potential change. LEAs were generally negative about adding additional reporting categories however correctional agencies had greater concerns about removing existing options (e.g., eliminating the ability to specify other categories in their system). This suggests that any implementation of the recommendations would need to be tailored both to the type of collection (e.g., staff counts vs inmate counts) and the type of agency being surveyed.

*Appendix A*

## Cognitive Interview Protocol

DATE: ___ ___ / ___ ___ / 2 0 23

 M     M     D     D

START TIME: ___ ___ : ___ ___     AM  /  PM

Hello, I'm [NAME] with RTI, calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Thanks for agreeing to help us develop and test questions for future Law Enforcement Surveys at BJS. This call will take about 30 minutes. If this time still works for you, I'd like to start with a short summary of the goals for today's call and explain a bit about how I'll conduct the interview.

IF NO LONGER A GOOD TIME, OFFER TO RESCHEDULE

IF STILL A GOOD TIME, CONTINUE

The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has proposed changes to the way information on race and ethnicity is collected by the federal government. The purpose of this conversation is to get your feedback on draft questions to help BJS understand Law Enforcement Agency's ability to collect such data if changes are implemented.

**Please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to my questions. One of our main goals is to draft questions that make sense, so if anything about the questions is confusing or unclear, you can help by pointing this out to me. Also, if you're not sure how you would respond to any of the draft questions, please tell me that, too.**

I am interested in hearing all your feedback, but because there is a lot to discuss, sometimes I might ask that we move on to the next question before you've had a chance to share everything on your mind. At the end of the interview, you can share any important feedback that you didn't have a chance to share earlier. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you do not have to answer any question you do not wish to, but your responses will help improve our data collections.

**Do you have any questions before we begin?**

**To help me take as good of notes as I can, I would like to record our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record?**

IF NO: That's fine, we can still proceed with the discussion, but I will not record

IF YES: Thank you [START RECORDING]. I am speaking with [Name of interviewee], who has consented to have the conversation recorded

**First, I'd like to ask about how your agency collects and stores information about race and ethnicity of your sworn and nonsworn personnel.**

- How is the information on staff race and ethnicity collected? (e.g., questionnaire, observation, self-report vs. proxy, mode of collection)?
    - Where is that information stored? Who has access to it?
    - When is that information collected? Is it ever updated? When? How often? Under what circumstances?
    - Is that information available for every [employee] for most, for some, or for a few?

**Next, I have a few questions about the race and ethnicity information your agency collects.**

- What race and/or ethnicity categories are used in your records?
    - Probe on categories/fields in records and if they follow current federal standards **(American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White)** or something else.
- Do your records system(s) provide a way to record staff who identify as multi-racial or of more than one ethnicity?
- **IF CATEGORIES DO NOT MATCH CURRENT FEDERAL STANDARDS** *(American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White)***:** How difficult would it be for your agency to use the current federal standards categories **(American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White)**? What would the process be for making the decision to implement this change?
- OMB currently recommends that federal agencies collect information on race using a minimum of 5 reporting categories **(American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White)**. One of OMB's proposals is to add a new category for Middle Eastern or North African (MENA). Do your systems include information about whether a staff member is Middle Eastern or North African? Would you be able to respond to a survey with counts of how many of your staff identify as Middle Eastern or North African?
- Do your information systems collect information about employees' race/ethnicity that is more detailed than the five recommended race categories?
    - For example, do your records systems include information on an employee's specific ethnic background, such as whether an Asian officer is of Chinese or Korean descent, or whether a Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander officer is of Samoan or Tongan descent?
- Do your systems collect additional information about staff members who are Hispanic/Latino?

- o Are you able to provide any more detailed information on this item? For example, whether a Hispanic/Latino officer is of Mexican or Cuban descent?

General Questions:

- Are there any race or ethnicity terms that we have asked about today that you aren't familiar with? Tell me more about those.
- What other issues related to the collection of information on race and ethnicity are important to your agency that you believe would be important for BJS to know before changing the way we collect this information?

**Thank you very much for taking the time to provide feedback. Your responses to this interview will be summarized to better understand the impact revisions may have on reporting.** The Office of Management and Budget has released its initial proposals for revising the federal race and ethnicity standards (Directive No. 15) for public comment. The feedback of state and local agencies that collect and provide data into federal data collections is critical and referenced many times in OMB's initial proposal. If you would like to provide feedback directly to OMB that will become part of the public record, please let us know and we can email you with a link to the federal register.

*Appendix B*

**SSV Cognitive Interview Protocol**

Version A

What is the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply.

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

1. This question asks about the race or ethnicity of the victim.
    a. What are the race or ethnicity categories that you have in your records?
        i. How would you manage categories in your system that are not shown here?
    b. You will notice that there is a new response category of "Middle Eastern or North African." Does your information system include this race category?
    c. There is no longer an option of "other" and a space to write in different race or ethnicity categories. Would this be a problem for you? Does your information system include another option not listed here?
    d. This question instructs you to select multiple races or ethnicities options. Do your information systems also have the option for multiple races or ethnicities to be recorded?
2. I'd like to show you an alternative option for this question that includes additional information.

**Version B**

What is the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below.
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ German   ☐ Irish   ☐ English

  ☐ Italian   ☐ Polish   ☐ French

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ Mexican or Mexican American   ☐ Puerto Rican   ☐ Cuban

  ☐ Salvadoran   ☐ Dominican   ☐ Colombian

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ African American   ☐ Jamaican   ☐ Haitian

  ☐ Nigerian   ☐ Ethiopian   ☐ Somali

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ Chinese   ☐ Filipino   ☐ Asian Indian

  ☐ Vietnamese   ☐ Korean   ☐ Japanese

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackj Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.*

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ Lebanese   ☐ Iranian   ☐ Egyptian

  ☐ Syrian   ☐ Moroccan   ☐ Israeli

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*

  ☐ Native Hawaiian   ☐ Samoan   ☐ Chamorro

  ☐ Tongan   ☐ Fijian   ☐ Marshallese

*Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

3. Would you be able to provide information about the victim's race or ethnicity to this level of detail?

4. As with the question related to inmate/youth ethnicity and race, we have included a revised question about the involved staff member's race or ethnicity.
   a. Do your records or staff race or ethnicity align with the categories shown here? If not, how would you go about answering this question?
   b. An option for "Middle Eastern or North African" has been added. Is this a category in your staff information system?

    c.   The option for reporting an "other" race category has been removed. Do your information systems collect a different racial category that you may need to specify?

5.  As you will recall when we discussed the inmate/youth victim's characteristics, I showed you an extended version of this question that contained detailed information about the country of origin within larger racial and ethnic categories. Would you be able to provide this level of detail for staff?

*Appendix C*

**Unmoderated Cognitive Testing Protocol**

The next two questions ask about the victim's race or ethnicity. Please look over the questions and answer categories for the victim's race or ethnicity and answer the questions below.

Version A:

**Please answer the question(s) below for the following question and answer categories:**

Question 3. What was the victim's race or ethnicity?
*Select all that apply.*

- ☐ White
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Do the race or ethnicity categories shown here match your system's records for inmates?

- Yes
- No

[If No, display the following two items –]

What are the race or ethnicity categories in your system's records? _____

How would you answer the question if your race or ethnicity categories differ from the ones shown here? _____

Do your system's records include the category of Middle Eastern or North African for inmates?

- Yes
- No

Does your record system for inmates allow you to select more than one category for race or ethnicity?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Victim Race or Ethnicity – Version B

This question is an alternate version of the question about race or ethnicity. Please look over the question and answer categories and answer the questions below.

Note: You do not have to report to this particular question, instead, we are only asking for your review as part of our evaluation.

Please answer the question(s) below for the following question and answer categories:

**Victim #1: What was the victim's race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

☐ German ☐ Irish ☐ English
☐ Italian ☐ Polish ☐ French
*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

[                    ]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Mexican or Mexican American ☐ Puerto Rican ☐ Cuban
☐ Salvadoran ☐ Dominican ☐ Colombian
*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

[                    ]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ African American ☐ Jamaican ☐ Haitian
☐ Nigerian ☐ Ethiopian ☐ Somali
*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

[                    ]

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Chinese ☐ Filipino ☐ Asian Indian
☐ Vietnamese ☐ Korean ☐ Japanese
*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

[                    ]

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

[                    ]

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Lebanese ☐ Iranian ☐ Egyptian
☐ Syrian ☐ Moroccan ☐ Israeli
*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

[                    ]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Native Hawaiian ☐ Samoan ☐ Chamorro
☐ Tongan ☐ Fijian ☐ Marshallese
*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

[                    ]

Would you be able to provide data about the race or ethnicity of an inmate to the level of detail requested by this version of the question?

- Yes
- No

[If No, display the following –]

How would you go about answering this question if it appeared on the SSV? _____

Please answer the question(s) below for the following question and answer categories:

Version A:

Question 3. What was the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply.

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Version B:

Victim #1: What was the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.
Note, you may report more than one group.

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

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

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

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

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** – Enter, for example,
  Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of
  Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.
  [_____]

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

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

Now that you've seen two versions of a question on race or ethnicity, which version would you be able to answer with accuracy for inmate victims at your facility?

- Version A
- Version B
- No preference

**Please answer the question(s) below for the following question and answer categories:**

Question 8. What was the staff perpetrator's race or ethnicity?
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Do the race or ethnicity categories shown here match your system's records for staff?

- Yes
- No

[If No, display the following two items –]

What are the race or ethnicity categories in your system's records? _____

How would you answer the question if your race or ethnicity categories for staff differ from the ones shown here? _____

Do your system's records include the category of Middle Eastern or North African for staff?

- Yes
- No

Does your record system for staff allow you to select more than one category for race or ethnicity?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Staff Race or Ethnicity – Version B

This question is an alternate version of the question about race or ethnicity. Please look over the question and answer categories and answer the questions below.

Note: You do not have to report to this particular question, instead, we are only asking for your review as part of our evaluation.

**Please answer the question(s) below for the following question and answer categories:**

Question 9.

> **Staff #1: What was the staff perpetrator's race or ethnicity?**
> *Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below.*
> *Note, you may report more than one group.*
>
> ☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ German | ☐ Irish | ☐ English |
> | ☐ Italian | ☐ Polish | ☐ French |
>
> *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ Mexican or Mexican American | ☐ Puerto Rican | ☐ Cuban |
> | ☐ Salvadoran | ☐ Dominican | ☐ Colombian |
>
> *Enter, for example, Guatemalan. Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ African American | ☐ Jamaican | ☐ Haitian |
> | ☐ Nigerian | ☐ Ethiopian | ☐ Somali |
>
> *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ Chinese | ☐ Filipino | ☐ Asian Indian |
> | ☐ Vietnamese | ☐ Korean | ☐ Japanese |
>
> *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** – *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ Lebanese | ☐ Iranian | ☐ Egyptian |
> | ☐ Syrian | ☐ Moroccan | ☐ Israeli |
>
> *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*
> [                    ]
>
> ☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*
>
> | ☐ Native Hawaiian | ☐ Samoan | ☐ Chamorro |
> | ☐ Tongan | ☐ Fijian | ☐ Marshallese |
>
> *Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*
> [                    ]

Would you be able to provide data about the race or ethnicity of a staff perpetrator to the level of detail requested by this version of the question?

- Yes
- No

[If No, display the following –]

How would you go about answering this question if it appeared on the SSV? _____

Version A:

Question 8. What was the staff perpetrator's race or ethnicity?
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Version B:

Staff #1: What was the staff perpetrator's race or ethnicity?
*Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ WHITE – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ German | ☐ Irish | ☐ English |
| ☐ Italian | ☐ Polish | ☐ French |

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

☐ HISPANIC OR LATINO – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Mexican or Mexican American | ☐ Puerto Rican | ☐ Cuban |
| ☐ Salvadoran | ☐ Dominican | ☐ Colombian |

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

☐ BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ African American | ☐ Jamaican | ☐ Haitian |
| ☐ Nigerian | ☐ Ethiopian | ☐ Somali |

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

☐ ASIAN – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Chinese | ☐ Filipino | ☐ Asian Indian |
| ☐ Vietnamese | ☐ Korean | ☐ Japanese |

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

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

☐ MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Lebanese | ☐ Iranian | ☐ Egyptian |
| ☐ Syrian | ☐ Moroccan | ☐ Israeli |

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

☐ NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER – *Provide details below.*

| ☐ Native Hawaiian | ☐ Samoan | ☐ Chamorro |
| ☐ Tongan | ☐ Fijian | ☐ Marshallese |

*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

Now that you've seen two versions of a question on race or ethnicity, which version would you be able to answer with accuracy for staff perpetrators at your facility?

- Version A
- Version B
- No preference

# Findings from Cognitive Testing for the Annual Business Survey – Race and Ethnicity Question Testing

Prepared for:

OMB Interagency Technical Working Group (ITWG) on Race and Ethnicity Standards: Phase 3 Testing Track

Prepared by:

Krysten Mesner, Census Bureau

Amy Anderson Riemer, Census Bureau

Jessica White, Census Bureau


Economic Statistical Methods Division

Economic Programs Directorate [for external release]

U.S. Census Bureau

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# Executive Summary

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget's Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards requested that the Phase 3 Testing Team conduct evaluations of the newly proposed revised race and ethnicity questions (Federal Register - 88 FR 5375) at a variety of federal agencies.  The U.S. Census Bureau conducted moderated and unmoderated cognitive testing on these newly revised questions on the Annual Business Survey (ABS), which is collected by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation (NSF).

This report will discuss the methodology used to evaluate the proposed race and ethnicity questions along with a discussion of the major findings.

# Research Objectives

Annual Business Survey

The Annual Business Survey (ABS) provides a detailed, regularly collected source of data on the status, nature, and scope of women-, minority-, and veteran-owned businesses. The ABS provides estimates for the number of employer firms, sales and receipts, annual payroll, and employment by owners' gender, ethnicity, race, and veteran status. The ABS also provides information on research and development activity and cost for businesses with 1-9 employees and includes survey questions to measure business innovation in firms of all sizes.  Among other uses, the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) uses results from the ABS to assess business assistance needs and allocate available program resources.  Data collected on research and development (R&D) and innovation may be used to compare R&D costs across industries, determine where R&D activity is conducted geographically, and identify the types of businesses with R&D.  This data contributes to the Bureau of Economic Analysis's (BEA) system of national accounts, and helps to increase investments in R&D, strengthen education, and encourage entrepreneurship.  This data is also used compare US business innovation with innovation in other countries, including those in the European Union (EU).

The ABS is primarily collected via a self-administered questionnaire using the Census Bureau's online survey reporting system. Respondents are mailed a letter informing them of the requirement to complete the survey and providing them with access information.

Evaluating the Revised Race and Ethnicity Questions

The main objectives in evaluating the revised race and ethnicity long and short questions on the ABS included:

- Documenting how respondents comprehend the proposed long and short version of the revised race and ethnicity question;
- Identifying respondents' use of records or other response strategies for answering the long and short versions of the revised race and ethnicity question;
- Assessing respondents' ability to answer the long and short versions of the revised race and

ethnicity question;
- Identifying difficulties in completing the long and short versions of the revised race and ethnicity question;
- Identifying the prevalence of proxy reporting within the business establishment and its effect on responding to the revised race and ethnicity question.

## Research Methodology

In early 2023 moderated and unmoderated cognitive interviews were conducted with ABS respondents. A discussion of the methodology used for moderated and unmoderated cognitive interviews can be found in Appendix A.

Forty-five moderated cognitive interviews were conducted. The moderated cognitive testing included a subset of demographic questions for the top two owners within the company. These questions incorporated the proposed revised race and ethnicity short and long questions. A copy of the protocol questions that were asked for the short and long versions of the form can be found in Appendix B and C.

In addition to conducting 45 moderated interviews, feedback from an additional 157 respondents was collected using an unmoderated data collection instrument. Respondents were shown a subset of the ABS questions, including the revised race and ethnicity questions, and were asked closed and open-ended probes as they went through the survey instrument.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the companies that participated in the moderated and unmoderated cognitive interviews by the number of owners that were in the company.

Table 1. Cognitive Interview Participants by Number of Owners

|  | Moderated | Unmoderated | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 owner | 20 | 78 | **98** |
| 2 owners | 17 | 49 | **66** |
| 3 owners | 4 | 11 | **15** |
| 4 or more owners | 4 | 17 | **21** |
| Missing or Business is owned by a parent company, estate, trust, or other entity | N/A | 2 | **2** |
| **Total** | **45** | **157** | **202** |

Race and Ethnicity Questions Tested

The race and ethnicity questions that were tested are displayed in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1.  Short version of the revised race and ethnicity question.

Version A

What is the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply.

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Figure 2.  Long version of the revised race and ethnicity question.

Version B

What is the victim's race or ethnicity?
Select all that apply **AND** enter additional details in the spaces below.
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ German    ☐ Irish    ☐ English
    ☐ Italian    ☐ Polish    ☐ French
    *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ Mexican or Mexican American    ☐ Puerto Rican    ☐ Cuban
    ☐ Salvadoran    ☐ Dominican    ☐ Colombian
    *Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ African American    ☐ Jamaican    ☐ Haitian
    ☐ Nigerian    ☐ Ethiopian    ☐ Somali
    *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **ASIAN** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ Chinese    ☐ Filipino    ☐ Asian Indian
    ☐ Vietnamese    ☐ Korean    ☐ Japanese
    *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** - *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackj Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ Lebanese    ☐ Iranian    ☐ Egyptian
    ☐ Syrian    ☐ Moroccan    ☐ Israeli
    *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** - *Provide details below.*
    ☐ Native Hawaiian    ☐ Samoan    ☐ Chamorro
    ☐ Tongan    ☐ Fijian    ☐ Marshallese
    *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*
    [ _____ ]

<u>About ABS Respondents</u>

There are a variety of respondents that can be responsible for completing the ABS within a company.  In some situations, the owner of the company, or one of the owners (if there are multiple owners), completes the survey.  In some scenarios, the responsibility for completing the survey is given to other non-owner staff within the company.  These staff may have titles such as CFO, Controller/Comptroller,

Manager, Accountant, Executive Assistant, etc.  For evaluating the demographic questions that were tested, we categorize ABS respondents into three proxy and non-proxy groups:

1.  Proxy:  A non-owner is filling out the demographic information for the owner(s).
2.  Self-reporter:  the owner is completing information about themselves.
3.  Owner/Proxy:  One owner may be filling out demographic information about other owners.

Table 2 breaks down the types of respondents that participated in the moderated and unmoderated interviews by their proxy status.

Table 2.  Proxy Status During Moderated and Unmoderated Interviews

|  | **Moderated** | **Unmoderated** |
|---|---|---|
| Proxy | 16 | 64 |
| Self-Reporter/ Owner | 16 | 50 |
| Owner/Proxy | 13 | 43 |
| **Total** | **45** | **157** |

We address the implications of these three scenarios on the ability of the respondent to accurately report race and ethnicity data for the owner(s) in the findings below.

# Findings

## Short Race and Ethnicity Question

Finding #1 – Confidence in reporting: self-reporters

> Overall, owners (self-reporters) were very confident in their ability to answer these questions accurately and with little burden.

Finding #2 – Confidence in reporting: proxies

> Proxies often didn't consult records to answer this question.  They relied on their personal or professional relationships with the owner(s) to provide race and ethnicity information.  Proxies felt confident in their ability to answer this question accurately and reliably.  One proxy noted that she would have her supervisor (one of three owners) review responses before releasing them to the Census Bureau.  There was one proxy that would not feel comfortable requesting this information from the owner. They felt the question would be rude and intrusive.

Finding #3 – Confidence and comfort for unmoderated respondents

Overall, respondents who reported to the unmoderated survey reported both confidence in their responses and comfort in reporting race and ethnicity data. The connection between the unmoderated responses and the respondent's proxy status is unknown. It not clear if the proxy dynamic would have an influence on the respondent's comfort or confidence.

Finding #4 – Availability of race or ethnicity information in company records

Some companies have race and ethnicity data within their Human Resource systems for employees and owners. Approximately 1/3 of the respondents to the unmoderated interviews have this information in records. For moderated respondents, these systems tend to be third party systems with the race and ethnicity categories set by the third-party system. Some respondents commented that they may have the ability to work with the third-party system providers to customize the race and ethnicity categories offered. The systems mentioned consisted of HR and payroll databases such as Bamboo & Paylocity.

Several smaller companies noted that they didn't have official systems with this information but did recall having to complete paperwork for a variety of reasons that requested race and ethnicity information for the owner(s). These respondents considered this paperwork to be recordings of race and ethnicity. Respondents noted that they sometimes had to complete EEOC or I-9 paperwork that requested race and ethnicity information. Some companies were asked this information to be considered as a minority or women-owned businesses for certain work prospects. Some respondents alluded to other paperwork that they completed for their State or local government that collected this information. Other record sources that were mentioned included birth certificates, Tribal cards, or ancestry records.

Table 3 shows a breakdown of how many respondents had records related to race or ethnicity of their owners.

Table 3. Availability of race or ethnicity in records

Question: Does this business have records containing information about the race or ethnicity of the owner(s)?

|  | Moderated | Unmoderated |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 14 | 52 |
| No | 30 | 72 |
| Don't Know | -- | 31 |
| No repose | 1 | 2 |
| **Total** | **45** | **157** |

Finding #5 – Respondent access to records with race or ethnicity data

Some respondents had direct access to HR systems with this information. Other respondents would need to work with an employee in their HR department to gather this information. These respondents didn't feel that it would be difficult or uncomfortable to make a request for owner race or ethnicity from HR.

Finding #6 – Is race and ethnicity within records self-reported?

When race and ethnicity data is collected by the company it is often self-reported. In some companies, employees have direct access to these systems and can update their information, including race and ethnicity, if necessary. There were companies that collected this information on paper and then had an employee in HR key the race and ethnicity data into their systems.

Finding #7 – Ability of systems to store multiple races or ethnicities

HR systems often did not allow for the retention of more than one race or ethnicity for employees or owners. Some systems included a category for multiple races such as "Two or More," but did not allow the employee or owner to specify what those multiple races were.

Finding #8 – Terminology in the short version

Overall, respondents did not have an issue with the terminology used within the short version of the question. The options provided were familiar.

Finding #9 – Recognizing question instructions

Approximately half of the respondents who participated in the moderated interviews noticed the instructions allowing for the selection of multiple choices. Unmoderated results show that approximately 55% of respondents understood that they needed to select all choices that applied, 13% would only select one option, and 17% of respondents were unsure how to answer based on instructions provided.

Finding #10 – Reaction to the Middle Eastern or Northern African category (MENA)

Overall, respondents were happy to see the addition of the MENA category. Two respondents who are of MENA descent expressed very positive reactions to seeing this as an option. Many respondents who were not of MENA descent noticed this category and had a positive reaction to its inclusion. There was some concerns shared about collecting this data for the MENA population and how it would be utilized. There was mention of post 9-11 treatment of this population and speculation and concern that this data could be used against this population.

Finding #11 - Availability of Middle Eastern or Northern African category (MENA) within records

Overall, for respondents that do keep race and ethnicity information in records, most do not currently have indicators for employees or owners that are in the MENA category.

Finding #12 – Reaction to the order of the categories

There were several respondents who expressed concern about White being listed as the first race and ethnicity. They felt that this could be perceived as being the more favored race because of its position on the list. Most understood that the list was likely reflecting population counts for each of these races and ethnicities, but there was still some discomfort about White being listed first. This issue was raised by both White and non-White respondents. One alternative that some respondents recommended to make the list 'fair' was to present the options in alphabetical order. There was similar sentiment expressed in the unmoderated write-in responses.

Finding #13 – Reaction to using 'and/or' in the question

Several respondents felt that 'and/or' was a more inclusive phrase and preferred it. Some commented that adding this would make the question 'clearer' with one respondent noting that given the mix of races and ethnicities on the list, having 'and/or' would provide more clarity. Another respondent said that some people 'define race as different from ethnicity' and that if we want to capture both then having 'and/or' was a better way to phrase the question. This probe also prompted some respondents to reflect on what a race really is.

In addition, some respondents in the moderated and unmoderated testing pointed out the questionnaire mixed race with ethnicity. Some pointed out that "Middle Eastern or North African is an ethnicity or culture and not a distinct race from white."

Results from the moderated instrument showed more than 50% of respondents had no preference the inclusion of 'and/or' in the question.

Finding #14 – Allowing for a Don't Know or option to not answer

Although respondents were generally comfortable with providing this information, several did acknowledge that these questions might be seen as sensitive to some and that we should offer some way for them to decline answering it.

## Long Race and Ethnicity Question

Finding #15 - Confidence in reporting: self-reporters

Many owners (self-reporters) were able to successfully provide the level of detail requested on the longer question. Some respondents with a diverse lineage expressed trepidation about the level of detail that the questions required.

Finding #16 - Confidence in reporting: proxies

There were varying levels of confidence from proxies in reporting the detailed race or ethnicity for the owners in the company. One respondent was a proxy for a company with 3 owners. The respondent was very friendly with one owner, who was also the CFO. For the long question, this respondent did not feel comfortable guessing the detailed race and ethnicity for any of the

owners and would have passed the form on to the CFO to manage this question for all owners. Another respondent said that they likely won't take the effort to talk to the owners to find out their detailed race or ethnicity for the question. Other respondents would answer this question based on what they visually saw, (i.e., skin color).

Finding #17 - Confidence and comfort in reporting: unmoderated interviews

Eighty-seven percent of the unmoderated respondents state that they were confident in the ability to provide the detailed race and ethnicity information requested on the long version of the question.   It was unclear from the data if these respondents were proxies or self-reporters.

On the unmoderated survey, one-fourth of the respondents stated that they would consult with the owner(s) to collect this information and felt comfortable doing this.

Finding #18 - Availability of race or ethnicity information in company records

For companies that kept records on race or ethnicity, this level of information was not available in systems.

Finding #19 – Ability for companies to maintain detailed race or ethnicity

Companies do not keep this level of race and ethnicity detail in their records.  Respondents do not see a need for collecting or maintaining this type of detailed information about employees or owners.  Some did indicate that if this information were mandated to be maintained that company systems could possibly be updated in the future.

Finding #20 – Familiarity with subcategories

Overall, most of the respondents were familiar with the subcategories offered.  The only subcategory that respondents sometimes referenced as being unfamiliar was Chamorro.  Eighty-six percent of the unmoderated respondents stated that they were familiar with the terms on the long version of the question.

Finding #21 – Reaction to the order of the categories

Generally, respondents did not have issues with the order of the races or ethnicities listed as subcategories.  Several respondents suggested that the order of the detailed list of race and ethnicities be reconsidered with White being listed further down.  Some respondents recommended an alphabetical listing.  This is similar to the findings from the short version of the question (Finding #12).

## Preference: Short Versus Long Version of Race and Ethnicity Question

Finding #22 – Overall preference

Overall, moderate and unmoderated respondents preferred to short version of the race and ethnicity question.  Table 4 breaks down respondent preferences.

Table 4. Overall Preference for the Long or Short Versions of the Race and Ethnicity Question

|  | Moderated | Unmoderated |
|---|---|---|
| Long | 15 | 29 |
| Short | 23 | 58 |
| No preference | 7 | 51 |
| Missing | --- | 19 |
| **Total** | **45** | **157** |

Finding #23 – Reasons for preferring the short version

> Many respondents preferred dealing with the short version of the question.  Some of the reasons given were that they didn't feel that it was necessary to provide the level of detail that the long version was requesting.  Some of the proxy respondents didn't know the detailed race and ethnicity information for their owner(s) and would have to either skip the details or contact the owner(s) directly.

Finding #24 - Reasons for preferring the long version

> There were several respondents who liked the idea of being able to provide more details about themselves as owners to be better counted.  They felt that it would be important to have statistics available about businesses owned by certain minorities.  One respondent noted that he would like to be counted as an Asian Indian business owner rather than just an Asian owner, and the longer version of the question gave him that opportunity.

## Race and Ethnicity Topics

This section will discuss various findings associated with different races or ethnicities.

Finding #25 - Hispanic/Latino

> Moderated findings (45 participants):
> - Short question: Out of the 9 respondents that selected Hispanic or Latino, 5 of the respondents also identified as another race or ethnicity.  Most of those identified as White, some as Black and some as MENA.

- Long question: Out of the 9 respondents that selected Hispanic or Latino, 6 of the respondents also identified as another race or ethnicity.  Most of those identified as White, some as Black and some as MENA.  Other selections included Dominican, Puerto Rican, Columbian, Argentinian, Brazilian, and Belizean.

Unmoderated findings (157 participants):

- Short question: Out of the 7 respondents that selected Hispanic or Latino, 4 of those respondents also identified as White.
- Long question: Of the 6 respondents that selected Hispanic or Latino, 3 of those respondents selected White, 3 selected Mexican or Mexican American, 1 selected Cuban, and 2 had write-in responses of Chilean and Venezuelan respectively.

Overall, most of the respondents who selected the Hispanic/Latino category did not select a second choice (i.e., White, Black).

Finding # 26 – Middle Eastern or Northern African (MENA)

MENA respondents said that they typically had to select just the White category in the past and were happy to see an option that was a better fit.  One MENA respondent expanded on their history of picking White by saying that they had to choose this category in the past because it was the only one that fit.

Finding #27 - Iranian

Some respondents of Iranian descent were not comfortable with selecting the MENA option on the form and were more comfortable with selecting White.  One respondent (in the 55-65 age category) was very comfortable with selecting Iranian as their subcategory and didn't choose White.  This respondent noted that they are recently comfortable associating with the Middle Eastern category on government forms because of improving sentiment towards this group in the United States.

Finding #28 - Afro-Caribbean

A small number of respondents participated in the moderated interviews who are normally classified as 'Afro Caribbean.'  These respondents only selected Hispanic or Latino and did not select more than one category.

Finding # 29 - Southeast Asian

Several respondents commented about how Southeast Asians, particularly business owners of Asian Indian descent, aren't well represented in the short category of Asian.  Respondents pointed out that there is a wide variety of races within Asia.  One respondent commented that large populations like the Asian Indian population are forgotten.  This respondent noted that the number of Asian Indian owned businesses has been growing and the short version of the

question wouldn't be capturing this.   Some respondents felt that OMB should consider a separate category on the short version of the race and ethnicity question for Southeast Asians, especially considering that they are an incredibly fast-growing population in the world and likely in the United States as well.

Finding #30 - Use of Genetic Testing to guide choices

There were some respondents that used past results from genetic testing to make selections on the long version of the question.  One respondent even commented that they were selecting certain subcategories "just because it was on their genetic testing report" even though they had never identified with one particular subcategory before.  There was one respondent that specifically chose *not* to follow the details from their genetic testing report.  Overall, the respondents that did use their reports tended to stick with the larger race and ethnicities from their reports and didn't report ones with very small percentages.

Finding #31 – Overall questions and concerns

Respondents have several comments and questions about the race and ethnicity questions:

- What is OMB/Census looking for?
- Are you asking about culture, where I was born, ancestry, color of skin?
- Why are you asking this level of information (long version)?  How is this helpful?

# Appendix A: Moderated and Unmoderated Cognitive Interviews

Cognitive research is used in survey methodology "(a) to understand the thought processes used to answer survey items, and (b) to use this knowledge to find better ways of constructing, formulating, and asking survey questions" (Forsyth and Lessler, 1991).[1] Cognitive interviews traditionally focus on the four steps of Tourangeau's (1984) cognitive response model: comprehension, retrieval, judgment, and communication/reporting.[2] Comprehension refers to the respondent's interpretation and understanding of the question's language, structure, and grammar. In order to answer the question, a respondent must understand what information is being requested on the survey. Retrieval is the step where relevant information is obtained, either from records or from memory. The next step, judgment, describes the respondent's evaluation of the completeness or relevance of the data obtained. It is here that estimates are made based on partial or incomplete data. The last step, communication or reporting, deals with mapping the response to the answer space provided and possibly altering the answer.

While Tourangeau's model is suitable for household and social surveys, the establishment survey setting presents additional factors that must be considered. First, instead of or in addition to a reliance on memory, establishment surveys rely heavily on records and the information contained within them. Second, organizations tend to have distributed knowledge. Some people are experts in one type of information, while others keep information about something else. Third, competing priorities, both for the organization and the individual(s) completing the questionnaire, mean that the survey sometimes does not receive the amount of attention that researchers and data collectors would like. Finally, organizations regularly authorize only a few individuals to release data. If the data provider is not authorized to release the data, an additional step must be added to the response process. Tourangeau's model was expanded by Sudman *et al* (2000) to account for these factors. [3]

Unmoderated testing, also referred to as asynchronous testing, involves a participant completing predetermined tasks without guidance or assistance from a moderator. One advantage of unmoderated remote testing compared to moderated testing is that it eliminates any potential interviewer effect in the cognitive interview[4]. But without the presence of an interviewer, there is no opportunity to ask respondents additional unscripted probes. The amount of useful information initially given by cognitive interview respondents in the lab can be similar to or worse than that found in an unmoderated test[5].

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[1] Forsyth, B.H. and Lessler, J.T. (1991). "Cognitive Laboratory Methods: A Taxonomy." In <u>Measurement Errors in Surveys,</u> P.P. Biemer, R.M. Groves, L.E. Lyberg, N.A. Mathiowitz, S. Sudman (eds). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

[2] Tourangeau, R. (1984). "Cognitive Sciences and Survey Methods." In <u>Cognitive Aspects of Survey Methodology</u>, T.B. Jabine, M.L. Straf, J.M. Tanur, and R. Tourangeau (eds). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

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[5] Murphy, J., Keating, M., and Edgar, J. (2013). Crowdsourcing in the cognitive interviewing process. Presented at FCSM.

# Appendix B:  2023 ABS Race & Ethnicity Content Testing Protocol – Moderated

**General Research Questions:**
- Do respondents understand what information they were asked to provide with this question?
- Do respondents understand the terminology used in the question?
- Are respondents able to answer the question that is being asked?
- Is the question layout clear and understandable?
- Is the requested information available in respondent's records?
- Are the lists/categories organized effectively?
- Are the instructions helpful to respondents?

**Informed Consent:** Respondents will be asked to complete a consent form electronically before the time of the interview.

**Materials Needed:**
- Electronically signed consent form
- Copy of questionnaire

**Introduction**
- Introduce everyone on the call
- Thank respondent for completing the survey & their participation in the interview
- Brief overview:
  - The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has proposed changes to the way information on race and ethnicity is collected by the Federal government. The next set of questions is included to help us better understand an establishment's ability to provide such data if changes are implemented.
  - The Annual Business Survey (ABS) is conducted jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics within the National Science Foundation. ABS provides information on selected economic and demographic characteristics for businesses and business owners. Additionally, the survey measures research and development, innovation, and technology, as well as other business characteristics

- Tell respondent why we asked to speak with them
  - Suggestions for improvement
  - Refine questions and make them easier to answer
  - Understand the type of records that they keep

**Recording the interview**

- As mentioned in the consent form that you signed, we would like to record this interview so that we have an accurate record of your feedback. We plan to use your feedback to improve the design and layout of the form for future data collections. Only staff involved in this data collection will have access to the recording. Would that be ok?  [If respondent says no, move on.]

**General probes that may be used for any question throughout the interview:**

- In your own words, what is this question asking?
- Reflect back on respondent's answer: "you said…"
- How did you answer this question?
- What records (if any) would you look at?
- Specifically, what would you include in this answer? What would you exclude?
- Would you consult other people to obtain this answer?
- How easy or difficult is it to answer this question?

**About the Respondent**

- Can you tell us a little bit about your business -- what types of goods or services does this business provide?
- What is your role in the company? Are you an owner of this business?  What kind of responsibilities do you have?

**About the Owner(s)**

Now I will ask you some questions about your company's owner(s):

- Please describe your record file keeping system? Software, hard copies, etc.
- What records would you refer to when looking up information about the company's owner(s)?
- What type of information do those records include?
- Do you obtain ownership records from another department, such as HR?
- Do you directly ask the owner?

    o Number of owners

    o Prior Business Ownership

    o Education Prior to Owning the Business

    o Field of Highest Degree Prior to Owning the Business

    o Age

    o Sex

    o Citizenship- Do your records record if the owner was not originally a U.S. Citizen? If so, is their previous country of citizenship documented in your files?

    o Owner Disability

**Race & Ethnicity**

Now we will discuss how ethnicity and race is documented for your company's owner(s).

# Short Version First

*(If shown the short version first)* We are testing an alternative version of the race and ethnicity question and we need your feedback.

*(If shown the long version first)* We are also testing a shorter alternative version of the race and ethnicity question and we need your feedback.

Short Question Mockup

1. **Owner #1: What is Owner X's race or ethnicity?** (Select [**X**] **ALL** that apply.)
   a. White
   b. Hispanic or Latino
   c. Black or African American
   d. Asian
   e. American Indian or Alaska Native
   f. Middle Eastern or North African
   g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

1. How would you go about completing this question for the owner(s) of this business?
2. Tell me about the records you have about the race/ethnicity for the owner(s) of this business.
   a. How is that information collected? (e.g., questionnaire, observation, self-report vs. proxy, mode of collection)?
   b. What information do you have?
      i. Probe on categories/fields in records, if applicable.
   c. Where is that information stored? Who has access to it?
   d. When is that information collected? Is it ever updated? When? How often? Under what circumstances?
   e. Is that information available for every owner(s) of this business?
3. What are the race and/or ethnicity categories that you have available in your records? What are the terms that you use in your system(s)?
   a. Do they match the categories that are offered in this question?
   b. Which categories match? Which categories do not match?
   c. How would you manage handling categories do not match? Would you be able to provide any information for the categories that do not match?
4. Are there any race or ethnicity terms in this question that you aren't familiar with? Tell me more about those.
5. Do your records system(s) provide the option for multiple race and/or ethnicity options?
6. There is discussion about changing the question from 'race or ethnicity' to 'race and/or ethnicity.' How would adding and/or change your interpretation of the question?

7. OMB currently collects information on race using five minimum reporting categories (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White). One of OMB's proposals is to add a new category for Middle Eastern or North African. Do your company/employee/staff/student/prisoner records or information systems already include information about whether a person is Middle Eastern or North African?

8. (If time/data/resources allow) How will your business report change if these new categories are implemented?

# Long Version First

Long Question Mockup

1. **Owner #1: What is Owner X's race or ethnicity?** (Select [**X**] **ALL** that apply *AND* enter additional details in the spaces below. *Note, you may report more than one group.*)
    a. White- Provide details below.
       - ☐ German
       - ☐ Irish
       - ☐ English
       - ☐ Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc._____
       - ☐ Italian
       - ☐ Polish
       - ☐ French

    b. Hispanic or Latino- Provide details below.

       - ☐ Mexican or Mexican American
       - ☐ Salvadoran
       - ☐ Puerto Rican
       - ☐ Dominican
       - ☐ Cuban
       - ☐ Colombian
       - ☐ Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc. _____

    c. Black or African American- Provide details below
       - ☐ African American
       - ☐ Nigerian
       - ☐ Jamaican
       - ☐ Haitian
       - ☐ Ethiopian
       - ☐ Somali
       - ☐ Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc. _____

    d. Asian- Provide details below.
       - ☐ Chinese
       - ☐ Filipino
       - ☐ Vietnamese
       - ☐ Korean
       - ☐ Japanese

☐ Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong,
etc._____

e. American Indian or Alaska Native- Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Tribal Government, Tlingit, etc.

_____

f. Middle Eastern or North African- Provide details below.
   ☐ Lebanese
   ☐ Syrian
   ☐ Iranian
   ☐ Moroccan
   ☐ Egyptian
   ☐ Israeli
   ☐ Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc. _____

g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander- Provide details below.
   ☐ Native Hawaiian
   ☐ Tongan
   ☐ Samoan
   ☐ Fijian
   ☐ Chamorro
   ☐ Marshallese
   ☐ Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese,
   etc._____

*(If shown the short version first)* We are testing an alternative version of the race and ethnicity question and we need your feedback.

1. How would you go about completing this question for the owner(s) of this business?
2. Tell me about the records you have about the race/ethnicity of owner(s) of this business.
   a. How is that information collected? (e.g., questionnaire, observation, self-report vs. proxy, mode of collection)?
   b. What information do you have?
      i. Probe on categories/fields in records, if applicable.
   c. Where is that information stored? Who has access to it?
   d. When is that information collected? Is it ever updated? When? How often? Under what circumstances?
   e. Is that information available for every owner(s) of this business?

3. What are the race and/or ethnicity categories that you have available in your records?  What are the terms that you use in your system(s)?
   a. Do they match the categories that are offered in this question?
   b. Which categories match?  Which categories do not match?
   c. How would you manage handling categories do not match?   Would you be able to provide any information for the categories that do not match?
   d. Would you be able to provide any additional specific details about race/ethnicity below the major categories?
4. Are there any race or ethnicity terms that you aren't familiar with?  Tell me more about those.
5. Do your records system(s) provide the option for multiple race and/or ethnicity options?
6. There is discussion about changing the question from 'race or ethnicity' to 'race and/or ethnicity.'  How would adding "and/or change" your interpretation of the question?
7. OMB currently collects information on race using five minimum reporting categories (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White). One of OMB's proposals is to add a new category for Middle Eastern or North African. Do your company/employee/staff/student/prisoner records or information systems already include information about whether a person is Middle Eastern or North African?
8. (If time/data/resources allow) How will this business report change if these new categories are implemented?

**Wrap up**
- Do you have any other comments or additional feedback?

**Thank you for your time.**

# Appendix C: Protocol Questions – Unmoderated Cognitive Interviews

## 2023 Race and Ethnicity Questions on the Annual Business Survey

**Introduction:**

- Hello. Thank you for your time today. We are looking to obtain feedback on some draft questions for the Annual Business Survey.
- We plan to use your feedback to improve the survey questions and make sure they make sense to respondents like you.
- We are *not* testing you– we only want to evaluate the questionnaire.
- Today, we will have you complete the short questionnaire, then you will be asked some questions to get your feedback.
- This study is being conducted under the authority of Title 13 USC.

**Respondent Completes the Questionnaire:**

**Follow-up Probes:**

Thank you for completing the survey questions.  We have some follow-up questions about your experiences completing this survey.

# Short Version First

*(If shown the short version first)* We are testing an alternative version of the race and ethnicity question and we need your feedback.

*(If shown the long version first)* We are also testing a shorter alternative version of the race and ethnicity question and we need your feedback.

Short Question Mockup

2. **Owner #1: What is Owner X's race or ethnicity?** (Select [**X**] **ALL** that apply.)
   a. White
   b. Hispanic or Latino
   c. Black or African American
   d. Asian
   e. American Indian or Alaska Native
   f. Middle Eastern or North African
   g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

9. Are you one of the owners of this business? [Yes, No] If no, what is your role within the company?
10. Did you consult records or others within your company to answer the questions on race and ethnicity? Check all that apply.

   Yes, records (What types of records did you consult?)

   Yes, others within company (Who did you consult with?)

   No

11. If Yes, records #2, do the race and/or ethnicity categories in your records or systems match the categories offered in this question? If not, please describe the categories in your records or systems.
12. Are you familiar with the race and ethnicity categories in this question? [Yes, No] If no, please describe.
13. Which of the following do you prefer: 'race or ethnicity,' 'race and/or ethnicity,' or no preference?
14. If your company has race and ethnicity records on its owner(s), do the records or information systems already include the categories Middle Eastern or North African? [Yes, we keep both of these categories in our records; We keep only the Middle Eastern category in our records; We keep only the North African category; No, we do not keep Middle Eastern or North African categories]
15. How comfortable were you in answering these questions for your business's owner(s)?
- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Not very comfortable (Can you say more about this?)
- Not at all comfortable (Can you say more about this?)
16. How confident are you in your answers to these questions?
- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident (Can you say more about this?)
- Not at all confident (Can you say more about this?)

# Long Version

1. Are you able to provide this information at this level of detail? [Yes, No] If no, please describe why not.
2. Are you familiar with the race and ethnicity categories in this version of the question? [Yes, No] If no, please describe.
3. Do you have a preference for the first version, alternative version, or no preference? [I prefer the first version, I prefer the second version, I have no preference]

Wrap-Up

Do you have any other comments or suggestions? [text box]

Thank you very much for your time today. We really appreciate your help.

## Appendix D: Unmoderated Testing Statistics

*Percentages rounded to nearest whole number*

### Short Version Questions/Probes

**Does your company have records on the race or ethnicity of its owner(s)?**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 52 | 33% |
| No | 72 | 46% |
| Don't Know | 31 | 20% |
| Missing | 2 | 1% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Do the race and/or ethnicity categories in your records or systems match the categories offered in this question? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 45 | 29% |
| No, please describe the categories in your records or systems | 4 | 2% |
| Missing | 108 | 69% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**For the race or ethnicity records this business has on its owner(s), do the records or information systems already include the categories Middle Eastern or North African?**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, we keep both of these categories in our records | 10 | 6% |
| No, we do not keep Middle Eastern or North African categories | 34 | 22% |
| We keep only the Middle Eastern category in our records | 3 | 2% |
| Missing | 110 | 70% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Did you consult records or others within your company to answer the questions on race or ethnicity for the owner(s) of this business?  Check all that apply.**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No | 128 | 82% |
| Yes, others within company | 13* | 8% |
| Yes, records | 11* | 7% |
| Missing | 6 | 3% |
| **Total Responses** | **157*** | **100%** |

*Some respondents selected more than one answer response.

**Are you familiar with the race and ethnicity categories in this question? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe | 16 | 10% |
| Yes | 130 | 83% |
| Missing | 11 | 7% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**If an owner of this business identified as multi-racial and/or multi-ethnic, how would you go about answering this question?**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| I would select only one racial or ethnic category | 20 | 13% |
| I am unsure based on the instructions provided | 28 | 18% |
| I would select all relevant racial and/or ethnic categories | 93 | 59% |
| Missing | 16 | 10% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Do you have any thoughts on the order in which the categories for race or ethnicity are arranged in this question? [Yes, No] If yes, please describe. - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No | 132 | 84% |
| Yes, describe | 11 | 7% |
| Missing | 14 | 9% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Which of the following phrases do you prefer:**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 'race or ethnicity' | 15 | 10% |
| 'race and/or ethnicity' | 32 | 20% |
| no preference | 95 | 60% |
| Missing | 15 | 10% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**How comfortable were you in answering this question for your business's owner(s)?**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Not at all comfortable | 13 | 8% |
| Not very comfortable | 5 | 4% |
| Somewhat comfortable | 19 | 12% |
| Very comfortable | 107 | 68% |
| Missing | 13 | 8% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**How confident are you in the accuracy of your answers to this question?**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Not at all confident/ Not very confident | 3 | 2% |
| Somewhat confident | 12 | 7% |
| Very confident | 128 | 82% |
| Missing | 14 | 9% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Do you perceive questions about race or ethnicity to be sensitive? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No | 115 | 73% |
| Yes, please describe | 30 | 20% |
| Missing | 12 | 7% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

## Long Version Questions/Probes

**Are you able to provide this information at this level of detail for the owner(s) of this business? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe why not | 12 | 7% |
| Yes | 136 | 87% |
| Missing | 9 | 6% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Are you familiar with the race and ethnicity categories in this version of the question? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe why not | 11 | 7% |
| Yes | 136 | 87% |
| Missing | 10 | 6% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Are you able to provide this information at this level of detail for the owner(s) of this business? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe why not | 11 | 7% |
| Yes | 133 | 85% |
| Missing | 13 | 8% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Are you familiar with the race and ethnicity categories in this version of the question? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe | 10 | 6% |
| Yes | 134 | 86% |
| Missing | 13 | 8% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Would you consult the owner(s) of this business in order to respond to these detailed race/ethnicity categories? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe why not | 28 | 18% |
| Yes | 37 | 24% |
| Missing | 92 | 58% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

**Would you feel comfortable consulting the owner(s) of this business in order to answer to these detailed race/ethnicity categories? - Selected Choice**

| Response | Respondent Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No, please describe why not | 22 | 14% |
| Yes | 123 | 78% |
| Missing | 12 | 8% |
| **Total Responses** | **157** | **100%** |

# Race-Ethnicity Qualitative Establishment Testing: SAMHSA Report For The Interagency Technical Working Group On Race And Ethnicity Standards

Kathryn Downey Piscopo and Herman A. Alvarado

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Staff at agencies with experience performing cognitive testing with establishment data collections were asked by the Chairs of the "Testing Group" of the Interagency Technical Working Group (ITWG) On Race And Ethnicity Standards to help test the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) proposed new race and ethnicity (R/E) items. The Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), with a cooperative Generic Clearance from the U.S. Census Bureau, completed a total of 18 English and Spanish semi-structured in-depth interviews with representatives from mental health treatment facilities and state (or territorial) behavioral health departments.  The ITWG wanted to know: What records do establishments have concerning the race/ethnicity of their [owners, staff, students, prisoners, clients, etc.]? (Research question 3a) What are the best approaches for collecting information on race/ethnicity from establishments? (Research question 3b).

The researchers found many issues with OMB's proposed new R/E items:
- The "minimum" OMB version is similar to the current OMB standards (except of the addition of Middle Eastern and North African) and therefore would be easier to implement.
- There would be a low return on investment along with a heavy administrative burden for the "detailed" OMB version. The study participants expressed concerns that this level of detail would provide small cells sizes that will end up being aggregated. There were also concerns on the quality of data from write-in entries, particularly when coding processes are not standard.
- Some participants expressed concerns that the combined R/E question needs more guidance as it is unclear on what is being asked. These participants expressed that the question could be interpreted as asking for race, ethnicity, ancestry or national origin.
- Many facilities and states would code 2+ race as "other" anyway. In contrast, some states, such as New York, may have competing Executive Orders to report details on specific races, such as Asians or Pacific Islanders.
- Participants expressed needing some flexibility on how R/E data will be collected on the intake forms, as some of the proposed categories do not reflect the demographic reality of their state. For example, "American Indian or Alaska Native" might need to be collected separately in states with high presence of American Indian tribes. Participants are willing to comply on any required data reporting, as long as there is some guidance on how to crosswalk their data collections to the required categories. Data reporters would also need guidelines for the order of the response categories.
- One state used a similar approach to what OMB is proposing for some of their program evaluations and found that individuals were more likely to report the more general groups in the shorter option than the more detailed groupings in the longer option.

While most state representatives don't want to say no to Federal standards, it would be a huge burden for them and their reporting facilities with a low return on investment.  Representatives indicated that there would be an initial pushback from facilities and healthcare providers in terms of implementation. Additionally, some state "would take years" to update their database systems, which would filter down to providers.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) maintains government-wide standards for collecting Federal race and ethnicity data (R/E), as OMB Directive No. 15[1].  Since 1997, these government-wide standards ensure the consistent reporting of these data by federal statistical agencies, allowing the comparison of information and data across Federal agencies and informing Federal programs that serve a diverse America.  In 2022, OMB's Office of the Chief Statistician released a memo on the upcoming review of Directive No. 15 and the establishment of the Interagency Technical Working Group on Race-Ethnicity Standards (R/E ITWG) to revise OMB's statistical standards for collecting and reporting race and ethnicity data across Federal agencies[2]. On January 27, 2023, OMB published a Notice and Request for Comments on the R/E ITWG's initial proposals;[3] the initial proposals are also shown in Appendix A.

Within the R/E ITWG, a "Testing Group" was created to develop and implement household and establishment questionnaire testing of the proposed revised R/E items. The Testing Group leads personally invited staff with questionnaire testing experience at different Federal agencies, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), to help with such testing.  Given the need of the Testing Group to have a major representation of different establishment types, SAMHSA decided to focus the study on establishment-based data collections. This testing sought answers to the following research questions developed by the ITWG:

- What records do establishments have concerning the race/ethnicity of their [owners, staff, students, prisoners, clients, etc.]? (Research question 3a)
- What are the best approaches for collecting information on race/ethnicity from establishments? (Research question 3b)

Specifically, the goals of testing were to 1) assess how data collection participants currently complete their reporting of race and ethnicity items and what records may be used (similar to a Response Analysis Study[4]); 2) assess whether the proposed questions are measuring the underlying constructs of interest; 3) improve understanding of the feasibility of supplying the requested data; 4) examine the burden of compiling responses to the questions, and 5) examine the burden of implementing changes to the data items.

While SAMHSA has many establishment-based data collections, it does not hold an OMB Generic Clearance for such studies.  Given the escalated timeline for the study, SAMHSA and the U.S. Census Bureau partnered together so that SAMHSA could leverage Census's OMB Generic Clearance for Questionnaire Pretesting Research (0607-0725)[5]. Additionally, Census's testing methods and protocol for this project were like SAMHSA's testing methods and protocol.

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[1] https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/pdf/97-28653.pdf
[2] https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2022/06/15/reviewing-and-revising-standards-for-maintaining-collecting-and-presenting-federal-data-on-race-and-ethnicity/
[3] https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/27/2023-01635/initial-proposals-for-updating-ombs-race-and-ethnicity-statistical-standards
[4] See https://www.bls.gov/osmr/research-papers/1993/pdf/st930240.pdf for more information on Response Analysis Surveys.
[5] The cleared OMB PRA package can be found here:
https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=202209-0607-002&icID=259652.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Population of Interest:**  SAMHSA focused on two major groups of suppliers of establishment data, even though there are multiple establishment data collection studies.  The first group consisted of mental health facility managers or clinical directors at facilities providing treatment for mental disorders and completing the annual National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey (N-SUMHSS[6]) for SAMHSA. The second group focused on state representatives responsible for the submission of treatment admission data for the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS[7]) or the Mental Health Client Level Data (MH-CLD[8]) to SAMHSA.  Both data reporting activities involve the collection and reporting of demographic information such as R/E.

Facility Representatives. A convenience sample of 36 mental health treatment facilities was selected using SAMHSA's online treatment locator ([findtreatment.gov](findtreatment.gov)).  The 36 facilities represented different regions of the United States and its territories.  These facilities (either public or private) must have completed the N-SUMHSS to be listed on SAMHSA's treatment locator.  Mental health treatment facilities must provide client counts for specific demographic characteristics (among them R/E) as part of their reporting.  Thirty facilities were contact, which yielded interviews with 7 managers or directors of mental health treatment facilities from Alaska, California, Maine, Puerto Rico, and Virginia.  Interviews in Puerto Rico were conducted using the Spanish version of the interview protocol.

State Representatives. A convenience sample of 20 state substance abuse agencies or state mental health authorities was selected based on the list of state behavioral health agencies available on SAMHSA's online treatment locator. States are responsible for compiling admissions and discharges information from publicly funded facilities providing treatment services.  Fourteen state agencies were contacted, to yield 11 completed interviews (although one state desired to complete the questions via email since so many staff were involved in the answers). Representatives from the following mix of rural/urban and racially homogenous/heterogenous states and territories were interviewed: Alaska, Hawaii, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, New York, Arizona, and Utah. Interview in Puerto Rico was conducted using the Spanish version of the interview protocol. In most cases, interview sessions with states involved more than one participant.

In summary, at the end of the study we received feedback from a total of 18 entities: 7 mental health treatment facility managers and 11 state representatives. Four of these interviews were conducted in Spanish. This surpassed the original goal of 14 completed interviews.

**Timeline**:  Testing was conducted between May 25 and June 21, 2023. One state's representatives sent written comments on June 26, 2023.

**Language**:  Testing was conducted in English and Spanish (for those representatives or facilities in Puerto Rico). Spanish translations of the recruitment letter and protocol were performed by SAMHSA, with guidance from the Census Bureau.

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[6] https://www.samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/n-sumhss-national-substance-use-and-mental-health-services-survey
[7] https://www.samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/teds-treatment-episode-data-set
[8] https://www.samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/mh-cld-mental-health-client-level-data

**Method**: Cognitive interviewing is a qualitative research method used to minimize measurement error and maximize the validity of these questions by assessing whether the questions accurately measure the underlying construct of interest[9].  These moderated interviews pay particular attention to the mental processes respondents use to interpret and then respond to questions. Establishment respondents have the added complication of having to match questions to their administrative databases. Therefore, particularly attention was paid during the interviews on the processes for gathering and reporting out the administrative data. The semi-structured interview protocols and recruitment emails used for this study are on the MAX Testing Group site (English[10] and Spanish[11]). The end of the protocol includes the "Business Information Accessibility Scale" (Willimack et. al, 2023) that was modified for use in this study. Additionally, during the interview, to help recall of the data submission process to SAMHSA, facility representatives were shown the N-SUMHSS 2022 questionnaire[12], and state representatives were shown the instructions for R/E data from the TEDS State Instruction Manual[13].

The researchers did not have access to direct contact information for those who have completed the SAMHSA data collections.  Instead, multiple contacts via phone and/or email were made to locate either the facility or clinical director or the state's behavioral health statistics representative. The researchers attempted to use the recruitment plan that is standardized for Census economic surveys (Willimack et al., 2023):
1.  Recruitment email – describe the purpose and voluntary nature of the study, how to schedule appointment, and researcher's information
2.  Capabilities email after appointment scheduling – describe necessary computer capabilities, reaffirm willingness, and include *OMB proposed R/E items*
3.  Confirmation email sent morning of interview appointment – remind of time and any consent questions, and additional information
4.  Interview email 30 minutes prior to interview – confirm videoconference information and any survey items sent
5.  Interview conducted

The contact information for treatment facilities from the online treatment locator[14] was not useful for this study. Again, several phone calls were made to try to find either the Facility Manager or the Clinical Director, who were more likely to have completed the N-SUMHSS, TEDS, or MH-CLD for submission to SAMHSA. The researchers sent follow-up emails since sometimes, multiple people requested to be interviewed for a state behavioral health agency.

The interviewers for this study both have over a decade of experience in questionnaire testing and cognitive interviewing with establishment participants. The moderated interviews were conducted either through videoconference (MS Teams or Zoom) or over the phone.  No incentives were offered.

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[9] Campanelli, P.  2007. "Methods for Testing Survey Instruments."  *Short Course, Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM)*.  Arlington, VA.

[10]

https://community.max.gov/download/attachments/2355813782/English%20version%20Recruitment%20Email%20and%20Protocol%20-%20SAMHSA.pdf?api=v2

[11]

https://community.max.gov/download/attachments/2355813782/Spanish%20version%20Recruitment%20Email%20and%20Protocol%20-%20SAMHSA.pdf?api=v2

[12] https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/n-sumhss-2022-questionnaire

[13] https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt38667/Combined_SU_MH_TEDS_Manual_10-17-2022.pdf

[14] https://findtreatment.gov/locator

Consent to the interviews by participants were provided by email. Interviews with facility representatives averaged 30 minutes, while the interviews with state representatives averaged one hour, given the higher number of participants.

**FINDINGS**

For facilities and state behavioral health agencies, the first part of gathering data is to ask clients about their R/E. Behavioral health treatment facilities gather information from the clients at intake, follow-up, or assessment, either verbally or through a form. R/E information is provided by the client, but may be taken from a proxy (e.g., relative) if the person is in acute distress. The medical staff may also use other medical charts ("collateral information"). The information is input into an electronic health record (EHR). In many instances, reporting of client demographics is done by a separate facility department or staff that is not necessarily the survey respondent (facility manager), which represents an additional response burden.

The facilities, providers (or "local authorities"), or their hospital systems' central office provide data on admissions to and discharges from behavioral health treatment monthly to the state. Data include R/E items. The data may be entered directly by facilities, providers, or their system administrators into a centralized database for the state. The state representatives will extract it to send data to SAMHSA. Some states have developed their own systems, while most have used contractors for both development and maintenance (e.g., WITS by FEI Systems).

Below, we summarize the issues found for both facility and state representatives along Willimack and Nichol's (2010) seminal description of the hybrid response process model for business surveys:
1. Encoding / record formation
2. Respondent selection / identification
3. Assessment of priorities
4. Comprehension of the data request
5. Retrieval of data
6. Judging the adequacy of the response
7. Reporting the response
8. Release of the data

At the end of the findings section, we summarize respondents' ratings of the feasibility of implementation using a modified "Business Information Accessibility Scale" (based on Willimack et al., 2023[15]). Additional quotations from participants can be found in Appendix B.

**I.       Encoding/Record Formation**
- R/E is not required of clients, so facilities sometimes leave this blank or code as "unknown" or "not collected," particularly if clients are in acute distress during intake. Additionally, some facilities will follow-up on other demographics (such as gender) but not R/E. One state specifically mentioned that per law, R/E is not required. States even mentioned instances where providers simply use "other" when R/E is not collected. This represents an issue in the reported data, for example, the 2020 TEDS annual report showed that 9.7

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[15] Willimack, D.K., Ridolfo, H., Riemer, A.A., Cidade, M. and Ott, K. (2023). Advances in Question(naire) Development, Pretesting, and Evaluation. In Advances in Business Statistics, Methods and Data Collection (eds G. Snijkers, M. Bavdaž, S. Bender, J. Jones, S. MacFeely, J.W. Sakshaug, K.J. Thompson and A.v. Delden). https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119672333.ch17

percent of reported race was classified as "other" (Table 2.2b, page 57). For treatment facilities, reporting R/E of clients receiving treatment as "unknown" or "not collected" is also a major issue, regardless of the treatment setting (inpatient, residential, or outpatient). According to the 2021 N-SUMHSS Detailed tables, R/E were "unknown or not collected" between 32.3 and 56.3 percent (ethnicity) and 31.4 and 56.3 percent (race; Tables MH52b, MH53b, and MH54b, pages 346, 348, and 350).

- Privately-owned facilities do not necessarily follow OMB guidance on how to collect R/E data.
- There are also training-related issues when giving clients the demographic forms. One facility manager hypothesized that since R/E is taken by front desk people who tend to be from an older generation, that she believed they would not feel comfortable, and therefore not ask, for the detailed race information. (In addition, they may be too busy to collect non-required information.) However, they could be trained in cultural competency. Facilities train intake persons on EHRs, but few mentioned that they would train on R/E items if they were changed.

## II.     Respondent Selection / Identification

Facilities may allow a proxy (e.g., relative) to complete forms if the person is in acute distress. The medical staff may also use other medical charts ("collateral information") to find missing R/E information. However, as mentioned previously, R/E is not required for admission to treatment facilities, nor for state-level reports. Interestingly, one facility manager reported screening for Jewish-only clients.

## III.     Assessment of Priorities

Since this administrative data may be of low priority for facilities, there may be issues with satisficing, in this case, coding R/E as "unknown," "not available," or "other". One manager said it was "not a good use of our time" especially when patients are in psychological crisis. Also, sometimes the whole hospital system uses the same software, so ALL the hospitals would have to decide on any form changes; this would be by committee.

> "We serve rural populations that are very homogeneous; we do not see the relevance of collecting this level of R/E data"

Many state representatives wondered about the return on investment given the administrative burden. One said, "we serve rural populations that are very homogeneous; we do not see the relevance of collecting this level of R/E data" (in reference to the detailed version). While the states would collect Middle Eastern North American (MENA) if asked, they wouldn't use it for any analyses or policy issues. Two states mentioned that they would 1) never release the detailed information due to suppression rules (in racially homogeneous states) and 2) would never use some of these (e.g., White German) for policy needs.

On the other hand, one facility mentioned that the detailed R/E list could be used for disparity assessments or National Outcome Measures (NOMS).

## IV.     Comprehension Of The Data Request

There were many significant issues reported by participants. These are categorized below by parts of the OMB proposed new R/E items.

**Spanish translation**
- One facility pointed out the use of "y/o" ("and/or") in Spanish is incorrect. The "Real Academia Española" (organization responsible for Spanish language rules) discourages the term "y/o." The state representatives found no issues.
- One participant mentioned that the translation in Spanish is not parallel to the English version. The current translation in Spanish can be back-translated as "what is your race and/or your ethnicity?"

**Combined R/E into one item**
- One state representative mentioned that with two separate R/E items, people will pick answers for Hispanic ethnicity and then race. With a combined question, people will be less like to pick a both Hispanic ethnicity and a race. He was worried this would yield an undercount of Hispanics. He said, it is "a disaster waiting to happen".

**"And/or" in question text**
- In general, some participants thought it was a good idea to use "and," rather than just "or," as it implies wanting multiple responses. One state representative, though, brought to our attention that some legal departments at the state level would discourage the use of "and/or."

**Use of "ethnicity" in question text**
- One state representative mentioned not using the term "ethnicity" since it's confusing to lay people and not needed anyway. Another state representative said, "why not use only 'race' if that's what you are asking for in the first place?" Yet another representative said most people don't understand the term "ethnicity" so why use it.

> "Why not use only 'race' [instead of 'ethnicity'] if that's what you are asking for in the first place?"

- One state representative mentioned the subjectivity of the question and how the lack of guidance can lead to open interpretation. Some people might do a DNA test and change their categories, based on the results.
- Another representative said, "This list looks like nationality, not race". Plus, "how far removed from the nationality should people report?" If OMB is interested in nationality or origin, "they should ask about immigration (first/second generation) status". Yet another said, "I see race, ethnicity, and ancestry mixed all together in one question". One person said "it's a whole lot of information that doesn't relate to how a person identifies"; she also said that "race" should be defined so respondents know whether it's ancestry or identity.

> "I see race, ethnicity, and ancestry mixed all together in one question."

**Select all that apply**
- The approach to reporting multiple races by facilities and states was mixed, creating large data quality issues around multiracial identification. Some did not allow this in the EHR, while some had a "2+" race field. Some states entered this as "2+" race, whereas others have facilities (and therefore when combined at the state level) that require clients to pick their dominant race.
- Some EHR systems or state-level systems are programmed to not allow for more than one race. Even some states that are racially heterogenous do not allow for more than one race.
- ***Additional issues for "select all that apply" in the detailed version***

- There was confusion as to whether "report more than one group" referred to a category or subcategories/examples. It's also unclear how many examples should be checked within each race.
- A facility manager did not know how, if multiple subcategories/examples within a race were checked, whether it would be classified as multiracial ("two or more races") for the N-SUMHSS (Example: Dominican and Puerto Rican = multiple races?)
- The detailed list would yield "bad data" due to "too many selections". The smaller size cells could not be reported.
- The detailed list is a heavy burden on facility clients in psychological distress and would be even less likely to yield quality data than the minimum list.
- Many states questioned collecting this information if the states aren't going to use it, particularly the more racial homogeneous and/or rural states.
- With multiple checks within a race and then across races, the possible combinations to programmed in a database would be daunting. The number would have to be limited anyway for programming.

It is "invasive" and there's "not a good enough reason" to justify it.

- One state echoed what a facility coordinator discussed – that this will be asked on intake forms and healthcare workers will be too uncomfortable to ask. This will be the first meeting with the client. Also, some clients might not answer; that it is "invasive" and there's "not a good enough reason" to justify it.
- One state used a similar approach to what OMB is proposing for some of their program evaluations and found that individuals were more likely to report the more general groups in the shorter option than the more detailed groupings in the longer option.

**Order of racial categories**
- One facility mentioned that although she understands having standards, there should be some flexibility in the order of the categories. The proposed order (White listed first) seems arbitrary. A state representative said it's "privileging the [white] category" and should be alphabetical. The order of the listed examples/subcategories should also be alphabetical.
- Another state representative said, "We need flexibility in how the question is asked. The order of categories should reflect the demographic reality of our communities."
- For Puerto Rico, "Puerto Rican" should be listed first under Hispanic categories, as it is the largest population size.

**Differences in terminology**
- One facility did not have a "Native Hawaii or Other Pacific Islander" category and termed "White" as "Caucasian".
- One state representative said Latino should have both genders or "Latinx".
- For the proposed minimum item, a facility manager mentioned that sometimes clients want examples for R/E, particularly if they aren't English-speaking.
- *Examples/Subcategories used in the detailed forms*
  - One facility manager had significant issues with the examples/subcategories:
    - Black/African American (B/AA) has "Nigerian" as example, but other parts of Africa such as Egypt are put under MENA – confusing.
    - B/AA should have "African" as example.
    - "South African" shouldn't be assumed to be B/AA.

- o Haiti is under B/AA but could be Hispanic.
  - o Caribbean countries are sometimes B/AA examples, but Puerto Rico is not mentioned.
- This was also echoed by a couple of state representatives. One state representative said the list would be "creating more segregation" - for example, "African" not listed. Nigerians are African, but later "South African" is listed as an example under B/AA. Also, this assumes South African is B/AA not White. Additionally, it assumes that Haitian is B/AA but it could be Hispanic. One state pointed out unparallel categories on the detailed version. He questioned why on the "Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander" category there is a subcategory for Native Hawaiian, while on the "American Indian or Alaska Native" there is no subcategory for Alaska Native. Furthermore, a couple of representatives from rural states said:
  - o Brazilian isn't listed as Hispanic.
  - o The White category lists only European countries. For example, Russia isn't listed.
  - o South American countries aren't listed prominently.
  - o "African" isn't listed but "African-American" is.
  - o Some examples under the same race may cause political issues being listed together (such as "Israeli" and "Egyptian").
- One state has an Executive Order that mandates reporting extra detail for Asian and Pacific Islander populations[16]. In addition, that state has a JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) group at the state level that makes decisions on the names and categories for R/E data, such as "Native Americans/Indigenous" to be the term to use instead of American Indians, the use of "Latino/a/x" instead of "Latino," and the use of "Asian Indian (East Indian)" to refer to people from India. With this order, forms will ask about Race, Asian Origin, Pacific Islander Origin, and Hispanic Origin. Each one of these categories will list subcategories.
- One facility mentioned that that their DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility) experts at the hospital system level provide input on terminology used.
- One state representative (from a state with a large American Indian population) cautioned about asking for specific tribes under American Indian, as there is the potential for mistrust in the government, particularly around the purpose of collecting this level of microdata.
- One state representative questioned whether "Asian Indian" is the correct term: "Is 'Asian Indians' the correct term? I have never heard Indians referring themselves as 'Asian Indians' ".

> "Is 'Asian Indians' the correct term? I have never heard Indians referring themselves as 'Asian Indians' ".

**Any categories that need extra detail for facilities/states**
- Some facilities need extra information on refugee communities (e.g., Somali) or tribal affiliation for community outreach and client support.
- States with larger American Indian (AI), Alaska Native (AN), Native Hawaiian (NH), Pacific Islander (PI), or Asian populations need those categories collected separately. Some states utilize tribal affiliations. However, these could be combined for Federal reporting purposes.

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[16] See https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/new-york-state-disaggregate-data-asian-american-groups-rcna10237

- One state mentioned that the PI detailed question (I.e., Chamorra, Fijian, Tongan, etc.) was a separate "ethnicity" question.
- A couple of participants said the detail for Hispanics would be useful, especially to make distinctions on the specific outreach for particular populations.

**Whether could add MENA**

- One facility manager mentioned that it's "odd" they have a lot of "unknowns", but she hypothesized that this is probably due to people not having a Middle Eastern North African (MENA) category.  Most facilities found that it would be an easy addition to their intake forms; however, one facility said it would take a long time as ALL the hospitals in their group would have to vote on the changes.
- In general, states could track this information, although some representatives mentioned it was a low population.

**Feedback on text box**

- One representative noticed there are no clear instructions to respondents on how to enter information.
- One facility participant mentioned that in other surveys, it is clearly indicated how categories in write-in boxes need to be separated by commas for database construction.
- Many state representatives didn't think it would yield usable data and some states wouldn't even program it. First, it might not be completed by clients. Second, that with handwriting and spelling mistakes, it would not be codable. Third, one representative said that each analyst at the facility level will code text boxes differently. This makes the state-level aggregation have problematic data quality issues. Fourth, another state said that they would be unable to collect text box information and yet another stated that text boxes "would be devastating for data collection". Finally, another state representative said that she'd treat it as an "other" for counting purposes, and not retain the actual text field.

> Text boxes "would be devastating for data collection".

**Use of "other"**

"Other" is not included in the proposed R/E items (and is also not in the 1997 Directive [16]), but it is used by facilities and states.

- Some facilities sometimes use an "other" category when clients check more than one race.
- One state mentioned that while they currently have Hispanic origin and race as two separate questions, but most records for Hispanics have "unknown" or "other" listed as their race.

**V.     Retrieval Of Data**

As discussed previously, client intake forms are entered into electronic health records (EHR) and the EHR system is used to report to the state behavioral health agency. Sometimes, the facilities enter the information into the states' own database, which the state extracts.  The multiple levels of data entry are a unique problem with establishment-based data collections.  In some states, their EHR system is handled through one or more contracts. Any changes would have to cascade through multiple databases and forms.

**VI.     Judging The Adequacy Of The Response**

Many participants said they would need extensive crosswalks to match the proposed changes to current forms, as well as revised forms. One state representative mentioned the possibility of keeping the race question and the ethnicity questions separate and he would do any necessary crosswalks for reporting purposes. He is concerned about a potential undercount of Hispanic population, given that some will check only one race category.

VII.   **Reporting The Response**
- Many facilities mentioned that they try to follow the state's data needs.
- Most states receive their guidance from SAMHSA, although some may collect race data in different formatting to meet their needs (e.g., Alaska Native tribes). One state mentioned they follow the 1997 OMB Directive. Another mentioned following a state-level Executive Order that requires extra detail for certain racial groups.
- Although some states might collect R/E data in a different format, they will try to comply with any reporting requirements, if guidance is provided on how to crosswalk their collected information to the required data.
- Again, although states provide guidance to facilities on how to collect certain items, they cannot enforce compliance.

VIII.   **Business Information Accessibility Scale**
Below is the number of counts for each color of the Business Information Accessibility Scale (modified), by type of proposed R/E item: Minimum or detailed.  The most common report for the minimum R/E items was green, or easily implementable, whereas the hypothetical effort for detailed R/E item was major. Many participants said that the database development and training of staff was great; one state representative said it would take years to update databases (with costs and timing) and two said that it couldn't be changed.  One person said the detailed item would be "controversial" and entail lots of committees.

| Color | Concept | Description | Minimum R/E Item | Detailed R/E Item |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Green | Easily Accessible/ Implementable | The information is easily and readily available for each establishment. | 10 | 2 |
| Yellow | Accessible/ Implementable with minor effort | The information is available at a central location, but not in each establishment, which requires more effort. | 5 | 3 |
| Orange | Accessible/ Implementable with major effort | The information is available, but decentralized, which requires considerable effort to acquire. | 3 | 11 |
| Red | Inaccessible/ Not Implementable | The information is not available. | 0 | 2 |

**Appendix A: OMB's Proposed New R/E Items**
**Proposed New Item: "Minimum"**

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**Proposed New Item: "Detailed"**

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

☐ German    ☐ Irish    ☐ English

☐ Italian    ☐ Polish    ☐ French

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Mexican or Mexican American    ☐ Puerto Rican    ☐ Cuban

☐ Salvadoran    ☐ Dominican    ☐ Colombian

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ African American    ☐ Jamaican    ☐ Haitian

☐ Nigerian    ☐ Ethiopian    ☑ Somali

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Chinese    ☐ Filipino    ☐ Asian Indian

☐ Vietnamese    ☐ Korean    ☐ Japanese

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

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

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Lebanese    ☐ Iranian    ☐ Egyptian

☐ Syrian    ☐ Moroccan    ☐ Israeli

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

☐ Native Hawaiian    ☐ Samoan    ☐ Chamorro

☐ Tongan    ☐ Fijian    ☐ Marshallese

*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

**Appendix B: Additional Quotations from Interviews**

- "We would lose granularity" (if some of the proposed categories are combinations of standalone categories, for example, American Indian and Alaska Native).
- "Having numbers of White Germans in the state will not change things" (in reference on how so many of the subcategories can be trivial for policy purposes).
- "This will be a low return on investment compared to the effort that we have to go through" (in reference as implementing MENA, when the numbers of this population in this state is very low).
- "You'd be lucky if you get a name" (in reference to the intake form for patients needing crisis intervention, who need to receive services right away).
- This would "push off quality in other areas" of reporting that's needed for states, such as outcome tools for substance use disorder clients.
- This is a "burden, both in collecting and storing." Another state representative described the detailed version as "administratively burdensome."
- The detailed list is "weird set of items" that "looks like it's going down the path to be discriminatory" with the choice of examples, particularly for White.
- It would be a "pretty decent feat to get [R/E] reported accurately" with the detailed list.
- "Implementing this into a reporting [database] would be extremely difficult for most [establishments]."
- One representative said, I "don't want to say impossible… but it is" in regard to the detailed version.

# Testing the Office of Management and Budget's Proposed Questions Measuring Race and Ethnicity in the Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering

Prepared for
**National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics**

Prepared by
**Laura Burns Fritch and Rob Killough**
RTI International
3040 E. Cornwallis Road
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
RTI Project Number 0216901

# Contents

# Introduction

In January 2023, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published a Federal Register Notice requesting comments on the initial proposals from the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (Working Group) for revising OMB's 1997 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). In the notice, OMB sought public comment on two proposed example questions for the collection of race and ethnicity by self-report. In parallel with this effort, OMB requested that the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation (NSF) and other federal agencies test the two proposed questions with establishment survey respondents. NCSES selected the Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS) and the related Survey of Postdocs at Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC Postdoc Survey) for this research. This report presents the findings from interviews conducted with survey respondents from 27 GSS schools and 6 FFRDCs in April and May 2023.

GSS is an annual census of all U.S. academic institutions granting research-based master's or doctoral degrees in science, engineering, and selected health fields as of the fall of the survey year. The survey, sponsored by NCSES and the National Institutes of Health, collects the total number of master's and doctoral students, postdoctoral appointees (postdocs), and doctorate-holding nonfaculty researchers by demographic and other characteristics, such as primary source and mechanism of financial support. The FFRDC Postdoc Survey is a census of all FFRDCs in the United States that employed postdocs as of the fall of the survey year. The survey is conducted every other year and collects the total number of postdocs in each FFRDC by demographic characteristics, source of financial support, and field of research. Both the GSS and the FFRDC Postdoc Survey are establishment surveys rather than person-level self-report surveys. Staff at academic institutions and FFRDCs query administrative data that they maintain on their graduate students and postdocs and report counts in aggregate form.

In both surveys, there is a combined race and ethnicity and citizenship item, consistent with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) (see Figure 1). Thus, race and ethnicity are only collected for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. The race and ethnicity reporting categories are Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (one or more races), American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, White, More than one race (not Hispanic or Latino). Respondents are instructed to count individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino as "Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (one or more races)" regardless of any racial categories in which they may also identify. The survey instructs respondents to count non-Hispanic individuals identifying with more than one race just once in the "More than one race (not Hispanic/Latino)" category.

Figure 1. Example Screenshot from the GSS



| Citizenship, Ethnicity, and Race of Full-time Students (report full-time students in whole numbers) | | Total full-time | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male 1 | Female 2 | Total 3 |
| Foreign nationals holding temporary visas, regardless of ethnicity or race. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | A | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| U.S. citizens and permanent residents (non-U.S. citizens holding green cards) | | | | |
| • Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (one or more races) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | B | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| • Not Hispanic/Latino (one or more races) | | | | |
|     One race, American Indian/Alaska Native . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | C | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|     One race, Asian . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | D | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|     One race, Black/African American . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | E | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|     One race, Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander . . . . . . . . . . | F | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|     One race, White . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | G | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|     More than one race (not Hispanic/Latino) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | H | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| • Ethnicity/race unknown or not stated. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | I | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total full-time students (sum Rows A - I) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | J | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The two proposed questions in the OMB Federal Register Notice are intended for self-response data collections. They varied by the level of detail of race and ethnicity collected. One question represents the Working Groups' proposed minimum categories, which are for use when more detailed collection is not feasible or justified. It combines race and Hispanic ethnicity into a single question and adds a new minimum category for Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) (see Figure 2). The other question proposes an approach to collecting more detailed data, with the minimum categories disaggregated by country of origin (see Figure 3). This example was chosen by the Working Group because it reflects the approach that performed best among the options tested by the Census Bureau prior to the 2020 Census. The country options reflect the most common countries of origin in the U.S. population for each minimum category.

Figure 2. OMB's Proposed Combined Question with Minimum Categories for Self-Response Data Collections



**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Figure 3. OMB's Proposed Combined Question with Minimum and Detailed Categories for Self-Response

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply* **AND** *enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ German     ☐ Irish     ☐ English

   ☐ Italian     ☐ Polish     ☐ French

   *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

   [                                        ]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Mexican or Mexican American   ☐ Puerto Rican   ☐ Cuban

   ☐ Salvadoran     ☐ Dominican     ☐ Colombian

   *Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

   [                                        ]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ African American   ☐ Jamaican   ☐ Haitian

   ☐ Nigerian     ☐ Ethiopian     ☐ Somali

   *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

   [                                        ]

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Chinese     ☐ Filipino     ☐ Asian Indian

   ☐ Vietnamese     ☐ Korean     ☐ Japanese

   *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

   [                                        ]

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

   [                                        ]

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Lebanese     ☐ Iranian     ☐ Egyptian

   ☐ Syrian     ☐ Moroccan     ☐ Israeli

   *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

   [                                        ]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Native Hawaiian   ☐ Samoan   ☐ Chamorro

   ☐ Tongan     ☐ Fijian     ☐ Marshallese

   *Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

   [                                        ]

# Methods

## Sample

Fifty-one GSS schools (e.g., graduate schools, schools of medicine), representing as many GSS institutions, were selected with the goal of completing interviews with participants at 25 schools. The convenience sample was diversified by control (i.e., public or private), size, existence of postdoctoral appointees, state, and racial and ethnic composition.

Size was measured by the number of graduate students reported to the GSS in the 2021 survey cycle divided into six groups ranging from 50–99 graduate students to 3,000 or more graduate students. The convenience sample was selected to approximate the distribution of school size across all GSS schools, but schools with fewer than 50 graduate students were excluded.

Schools in the convenience sample were dispersed across the country so that as many state public university systems as possible would be represented because each system may have its own unique reporting standards. Additionally, since the racial and ethnic composition of different states' populations varies considerably, an effort was made to be inclusive of all regions of the country.

The distribution of racial and ethnic groups among U.S. citizen and permanent resident graduate students also factored into the selection of schools. The convenience sample included schools with an overrepresentation of each of the racial and ethnic groups currently collected in the GSS. Because the GSS does not currently collect counts of MENA individuals, it was not possible to use the GSS data to identify schools with relatively large MENA populations. Instead, Web searches were conducted to find schools that would likely have an overrepresentation of MENA graduate students, such as schools with large MENA student organizations.

Ten FFRDCs were selected with the goal of completing interviews with five. This convenience sample included more than one FFRDC from each the following four strata: (1) NSF-supported FFRDCs, (2) large Department of Energy labs managed by a nonprofit, (3) Department of Energy labs associated with a university, and (4) FFRDCs managed by an industrial firm.

## Recruitment

Data collection and reporting coordinators at each of the selected GSS schools and FFRDCs were e-mailed an invitation to participate in the interviews. When additional respondents were on the survey contractor's records for a school or FFRDC (e.g., when a coordinator delegates the survey response to other personnel), these individuals were copied on the e-mail. The e-mail informed recipients that the GSS or FFRDC Postdoc Survey must collect race and ethnicity data following standards established by OMB, that these standards are undergoing revision, and that OMB and NCSES are conducting interviews to learn how the revisions would affect their reporting processes and ability to provide these data. The e-mail included a link to a Web page where recipients could self-select a session, which allowed interviews to be scheduled efficiently on a compressed data collection schedule. The number of GSS schools and FFRDCs that self-scheduled within 1 week exceeded the goals, so there was no need for

follow-up prompting. E-mail invitations were sent on April 19, 2023, and interviews were conducted between April 21 and May 11, 2023.

## Data Collection

### Participating GSS Schools and FFRDCs

Interviews were conducted with participants representing 27 GSS schools. The GSS schools represented 22 public and 7 private academic institutions across 21 states and U.S. territories and the District of Columbia (see Table 1). They ranged in size from fewer than 100 graduate students to 3,000 or more graduate students reported to the GSS in the 2021 survey cycle. Two-thirds of the schools ($n$ = 18) also reported postdocs to the GSS in that year.

Table 1

Participating GSS schools, by select characteristics: 2021
(Number)

| Characteristic | $N$ |
|---|---|
| All schools | 27 |
| School type | |
| Private | 5 |
| Public | 22 |
| School size | |
| 50–99 graduate students | 3 |
| 100–299 graduate students | 10 |
| 300–599 graduate students | 2 |
| 600–999 graduate students | 3 |
| 1,000–2,999 graduate students | 5 |
| 3,000 or more graduate students | 4 |
| Has postdoctoral appointees | |
| Yes | 18 |
| No | 9 |

SOURCE: National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering, 2021.

For each racial and ethnic group, with the exceptions of American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, there was at least one school that reported more than 20% of its U.S. citizen and permanent resident graduate students in that group (see Table 2). Two schools had over 5% of its reported U.S. citizen and permanent resident graduate students classified as American Indian or Alaska Native.

Interviews were also conducted with participants representing six FFRDCs. Two were supported by NSF, one was a Department of Energy lab managed by a nonprofit, two were managed by an industrial firm, and one was a lab associated with a university. Among U.S. citizens and permanent residents, there was

less racial and ethnic diversity among postdocs at the participating FFRDCs (see Table 2) than graduate students at the participating GSS schools.

Table 2

Racial and Ethnic Composition of U.S. Citizen Graduate Students and Postdocs at Participating GSS Schools and FFRDCs: 2021

(Number)

| Characteristic | GSS schools (graduate students) | FFRDCs (postdocs) |
|---|---|---|
| All participating GSS schools or FFRDCs | 27 | 6 |
| Percent Hispanic (one or more races) | | |
| 0% | 1 | 2 |
| 1%–5% | 8 | 1 |
| 6%–10% | 11 | 2 |
| 11%–20% | 6 | 1 |
| 21%–100% | 1 | 0 |
| Percent American Indian/Alaska Native (one race) | | |
| 0% | 22 | 6 |
| 1%–5% | 3 | 0 |
| 6%–100% | 2 | 0 |
| Percent Asian (one race) | | |
| 0% | 3 | 2 |
| 1%–5% | 9 | 1 |
| 6%–10% | 6 | 0 |
| 11%–20% | 6 | 2 |
| 21%–100% | 3 | 1 |
| Percent Black/African American (one race) | | |
| 0% | 2 | 4 |
| 1%–5% | 10 | 2 |
| 6%–10% | 9 | 0 |
| 11%–20% | 5 | 0 |
| 21%–100% | 1 | 0 |
| Percent Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (one race) | | |
| 0% | 24 | 6 |
| 1%–5% | 2 | 0 |
| 6%–100% | 1 | 0 |
| Percent White (one race) | | |
| 0% | 0 | 0 |
| 1%–5% | 0 | 0 |
| 6%–10% | 1 | 0 |
| 11%–20% | 0 | 0 |
| 21%–100% | 26 | 6 |
| Percent More than one race (not Hispanic/Latino) | | |
| 0% | 4 | 3 |
| 1%–5% | 17 | 3 |
| 6%–10% | 4 | 0 |
| 11%–20% | 1 | 0 |
| 21%–100% | 1 | 0 |

FFRDC = federally funded research and development center; GSS = Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering.
SOURCE: National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering and Survey of Postdocs at Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, 2021.

## Interview Procedures and Protocol

Interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. With permission of the participants, all interviews were videorecorded and automatically transcribed via Microsoft Teams.

Representatives from agencies participating in the testing collaborated to develop a pool of interview questions from which individual agencies could select and tailor elements to develop an interview protocol designed to meet the unique needs of each survey. These interviews began with questions about race and ethnicity recordkeeping practices including how and when race and ethnicity data are collected and what standards are the basis for the categories used in the collection. The interviewer then displayed OMB's proposed question with detailed categories, referred to as Version A throughout this report (see Figure 3 or Attachment A). The interviewer asked participants for their first impression of the question before asking scripted probes about alignment of the proposed categories with their current categories and the feasibility of reporting using Version A. The interviewer then displayed OMB's proposed question with just the minimum categories, referred to as Version B throughout this report (see Figure 2 or Attachment B). The probes that were administered for Version A were re-administered for Version B. Then the interviewer asked participants which version they preferred and why. The interview concluded by giving the participants an opportunity to provide any final feedback and to ask questions. See Attachment C for the protocol used for these interviews.

## Analysis

Two analysts identified themes inductively by reading transcripts and referring to recordings as needed. An Excel file accessible to each analyst simultaneously was used for coding. The analysts created rows for each unique comment gleaned from the transcripts and columns for each GSS school and FFRDC. Analysts met regularly to discuss which comments entered in rows should be grouped together into themes.

Each analyst was responsible for coding a given transcript in its entirety to capture the full context of the interview. It should be noted that results in this report are not presented by probe. Initially, the analysts attempted to code responses to each probe but soon realized that any given theme could emerge as a response to more than one probe. Therefore, each interview needed to be considered holistically.

Analysts tallied participants' responses and comments in the Excel file. These counts are provided throughout this report to provide a sense of prevalence of the themes. However, given that many of the themes emerged organically, and not from direct questions with standardized options, it may be that some participants who did not mention a theme would have if they had been asked directly.

# Results

## Current Data Collection Practices and Feasibility of Changes

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## Key Findings

</div>

- Both schools and FFRDCs tend to collect and maintain data that is consistent with OMB's current statistical standards and other federal data collections, most notably the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
- None of the schools or FFRDCs collect race and ethnicity data in as much detail as OMB's newly proposed detailed question, and only a few collect Middle Eastern and North African data. Therefore, all participating GSS schools and FFRDCs would need to change the categories they use to collect race and ethnicity data to respond to Version A and almost all would need to do so to respond to Version B.
- Almost all schools collect race from Hispanic students even though they are not currently required to report race for these individuals in the GSS Survey. However, race information is less consistently collected for Hispanic postdocs at schools and FFRDCs. With OMB's combined questions, schools and FFRDCs that do not currently collect race for Hispanic individuals would need to begin doing so.
- Changes to the race and ethnicity categories will require significant coordination for schools and FFRDCs. This coordination could be institution wide, with the state, or with other organizations or standards.
- Schools and FFRDCs often indicated that if changes to the standards were mandated by the federal or state government, they would have to comply; without that authority, however, it would be less likely.
- Information on race and ethnicity is collected at the time of application for students and as part of onboarding for postdocs. Therefore, schools and FFRDCs will need lead time to revise their applications for entering students and postdocs.
- Schools and FFRDCs would be less likely to re-survey current students and postdocs using OMB's revised race and ethnicity categories. This suggests that uniform race and ethnicity data using a new OMB standard would not be available until all students and postdocs who reported these data using the current categories have left the school or FFRDC, which would likely take 5 years or more. This has implications for GSS and FFRDC Postdoc Survey data quality.
- There would likely be a period when schools and FFRDCs would have race and ethnicity data following the current standards for some individuals and following the revised standards for others, depending on whether the individual entered the school or FFRDC before or after the application forms were revised. NCSES would need to determine how to bridge these data and how to present trend data in reports.

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In this section, we present the results on current race and ethnicity data collection processes, standards, and categories at both GSS schools and FFRDCs. Additionally, we cover the impacts of question changes on the data collection process and reporting.

## GSS Schools

### *Current Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Process for Graduate Students*

- Almost all schools (*n* = 24) collected graduate student race and ethnicity data at the time of application. Four schools collect these data upon admission, including one that collects it both upon application and admission.
- Most schools (*n* = 20) indicated that students had the capability to review and update their race and ethnicity information at any time, but none required them to do so. A few schools (*n* = 4) indicated that they prompt students to review the information at routine times such as during registration or upon matriculation.
- Almost all schools (*n* = 24) indicated that they have some missing race/ethnicity data for graduate students. In the 2021 data collection, 4.8% of master's students and 4.5% of doctoral students were reported as unknown ethnicity and race to the GSS.

### *Current Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Process for Postdoctoral Appointees*

- There were 18 schools in the sample that have postdoctoral appointees. Overall, participants were less knowledgeable about how race and ethnicity data were collected for postdoctoral appointees than for graduate students.
- All but one of those who were knowledgeable indicated that this information is collected as part of the onboarding process (*n* = 11). One school indicated that it had so few postdocs to report to the GSS that it reached out to each one postdoc individually to gather this information for the GSS.
- The majority of schools with postdocs (*n* = 14) indicated that they have some missing race/ethnicity data for postdocs. In the 2021 data collection, 5.2% of postdoctoral appointees were reported as unknown ethnicity and race.
- Nine schools reported that postdocs were not asked to update their race and ethnicity information, but eight schools indicated that postdocs were able to do so if they chose.

### *Current Race and Ethnicity Data*

- Almost all schools (*n* = 25) indicated that they collect race and ethnicity for graduate students following federal guidelines, often referring specifically to IPEDS, a mandatory survey sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics.
- Several schools (*n* = 6) also followed a state-level standard for graduate student data, including 5 public institutions and 1 private institution. One school followed an institution-level standard.
- Seven participants indicated that the race and ethnicity categories they use for postdocs were based on federal standards, often naming IPEDS specifically. Other standards mentioned included employment regulations, state standards, institutional standards, and an agreement among a consortium of institutions. It was sometimes unclear when participants were referring to how they report these data to GSS and when they were referring to how they collect these data.
- Almost all schools (*n* = 23) allow graduate students to select multiple races.
- Almost all schools (*n* = 23) have data on race for Hispanic graduate students.

- Almost all schools (*n* = 23) have data for all the minimum categories (Version B), with the exception of the MENA category:
  - 24 schools do not currently have MENA data, including 1 school that also does not currently collect Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; and
  - 2 schools had data for all the minimum categories (Version B), including the MENA category; 1 school collected Middle Eastern data but not North African data.
- Eight schools with postdoctoral appointees indicated that they allow postdoctoral appointees to select multiple races.
- Nine schools with postdoctoral appointees indicated that they collect race for Hispanic postdoctoral appointees.
- None of the schools indicated that they collect race and ethnicity data in as much detail as OMB's detailed question (Version A).
  - Twelve schools indicated that they do not collect any details for the minimum categories in Version B.
  - Eight schools reported that they do collect some additional detail, but four of these noted that the subcategories they collect do not match the detailed categories in Version A. These schools collected additional detail based on the racial/ethnic composition of their student body which differs from the racial/ethnic composition of the United States which is the basis for the OMB detailed categories (Version A).
    - Three schools collected more detail for the Asian category such as Hmong and Laotian.
    - One school collected some detail for the Hispanic category, but not as granular as Version A.
    - One school said it collected very detailed information but that it was based on heritage rather than country of origin.
- Even if some details were collected, anecdotally some schools reported that these data are not currently stored in the databases that respondents use to report to the GSS.

*Impact of Question Changes on Data Collection Process and Reporting*
Given the challenges of changing the way these data are collected and reported, as described below, about half of the schools (*n* = 13) indicated that if the changes were mandated by the federal or state government, they would have to comply; without that authority, however, it would be less likely.

- None of the schools would currently be able to report detailed race and ethnicity data in Version A.
- Three schools would currently be able to report race and ethnicity data using the minimum categories in Version B.
- When schools were asked about the feasibility of collecting data using the proposed new questions, participants discussed the logistics and coordination required.
- Most schools (*n* = 19) discussed the need to change applications and processes:
  - 15 schools mentioned that they would need lead time to change their application; and
  - 8 schools said they would need time to resurvey their current graduate students and/or postdocs.
- Most schools (*n* = 18) mentioned ways in which the effort would need to be coordinated:

- o 8 schools discussed how they would need to coordinate with other organizations or their state to change the application or to collect the data;
  - o 8 schools noted that there would need to be an effort to get buy-in from the institution or that the change would need to be made institution-wide;
  - o 5 schools emphasized the need for coordination across all federal surveys, most notably IPEDS;
  - o 5 schools indicated that they need to align with state-level standards; and
  - o 4 schools mentioned that they would need to be able to align with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives (DEI) or EEO standards.
- When asked how much time their school would need to phase in new categories, the most common response was between 1.5 years and 2.0 years, but participants' answers ranged from a few months to at least 5.0 years. A few participants noted that they were only considering their own part of the process (e.g., updating code), while others were commenting on the whole process from coordination, updating application forms and systems, and reporting.
- Many schools (*n* = 10) mentioned that it would be quicker or easier to phase in Version B (minimum categories) than Version A (detailed categories). A few (*n* = 4) thought that both versions would take the same amount of time to implement because all the same steps would be required.
- Because schools would have to change their application forms to collect the new race and ethnicity categories, the lead time needed would depend partly on at what point during the application cycle they are informed of the new standards.
- Five participants mentioned re-surveying individuals already affiliated with their school as something that would factor into their schools' level of effort and timeline. On the other hand, 12 participants commented that they would be unlikely to resurvey students or postdoctoral appointees already affiliated with their school. For these schools, complete race and ethnicity data would not be available until all individuals enrolled or employed by the school had completed the updated version of the forms, which could take a number of years.

## Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs)

*Current Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Process for Postdoctoral Appointees*
- All six FFRDCs reported that race and ethnicity data for postdocs is collected through human resources onboarding or when they were hired.
- Three FFRDCs indicated that they have some missing race/ethnicity data for postdoctoral appointees:
  - o 2 FFRDCs mentioned that there is very little missing race/ethnicity data; and
  - o 1 FFRDC said it does a visual identification if a postdoc is classified as unknown.
- Three FFRDCs reported that postdoctoral appointees were not asked to update their race and ethnicity information, but five indicated that postdoctoral appointees were able to do so if they chose.
  - o One FFRDC did note that it was required to have demographic information on record for EEO1 reports.

*Current Race and Ethnicity Data*
- Three FFRDCs indicated that the race and ethnicity categories they use for postdoctoral appointees were based on federal standards.

- Two FFRDCs mentioned EEO reporting standards.
- As with GSS schools, it was sometimes unclear when participants were referring to how they report these data to the FFRDC Postdoc Survey and when they were referring to how they collect these data.
- Three FFRDCs allow postdocs to select multiple races.
- Two FFRDCs collect race for Hispanic graduate students.
  - Of note, one FFRDC mentioned postdocs can select Hispanic and indicate more than one race but that they cannot specify Hispanic and White, for example.
- One FFRDC was uncertain if it could select multiple races or Hispanic and another race rather only allowing postdocs to indicate "2 or more races."
- All six FFRDCs have data for all the minimum categories in Version B, with the exception of the MENA category.
- None of the FFRDCs indicated that they collect race and ethnicity data in as much detail as OMB's detailed question (Version A).
  - All six FFRDCs noted they do not collect details/subcategories for the minimum categories in Version B.

*Impact of Question Changes on Data Collection Process and Reporting*

Given the challenges of changing the way these data are collected and reported, as described below, three FFRDCs indicated that if the changes were mandated by the federal government, they would have to comply; without that authority, however, it would be less likely.

- All six FFRDCs would be able to report minimum categories in Version B, with the exception of the MENA category.
- None of the FFRDCs would currently be able to report detailed race and ethnicity data in Version A.
- When FFRDCs were asked about the feasibility of collecting data using the proposed new questions, participants discussed the logistics and coordination required.
- Four FFRDCs discussed the need to change applications and processes.
  - Four FFRDCs noted they would need time to resurvey current employees/postdocs.
  - Two FFRDCs mentioned that they would need lead time to change their application or systems.
- Four FFRDCs mentioned ways in which the effort would need to be coordinated.
  - Two FFRDCs noted they would have to discuss coordination with other organizations or contractors to change the application or to collect the data.
    - Specifically, a consortium of universities would have to be involved as they collect data for at least one FFRDC.
  - One FFRDC noted that there would need to be an effort to get buy-in from the institution or that the change would need to be made institution wide.
  - One FFRDC mentioned that it would need to be able to align with DEI initiatives or EEO standards.
    - Of note, this FFRDC indicated it would be difficult to aggregate the new categories in a way that would allow them to continue to conduct affirmative action efforts that were required by the Department of Labor.

- When asked how much time their FFRDC would need to phase in new categories, participants' answers ranged from 1 month to just over 1 year.
  - o Three FFRDCs indicated version B would require about half the time or less to phase in as version A.
  - o For FFRDCs that used a contractor or separate organization to collect their information, they indicated they were unsure of how much time would be needed to make programmatic updates.
- Three participants mentioned re-surveying individuals already affiliated with their FFRDC as something that would factor into their schools' level of effort and timeline. On the other hand, one participant commented that they would be unlikely to re-survey postdoctoral appointees already affiliated with their school.

## Feedback on OMB Questions (Version A and Version B)

In this section, we present the feedback received on Version A and Version B, including version preference, initial impressions, and strengths and weaknesses of both versions.

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# Key Findings

- The minimum category question (Version B) was preferred over the detailed question (Version A) by both schools and FFRDCs, although some participants saw value in the level of detail that Version A provides.
- Implementation of Version A would present many challenges for both schools and FFRDCs and would require a greater level of effort and more resources than Version B.
- Both schools and FFRDCs expressed concerns with Version A's level of detail. These concerns included the following:
  - o Questions about how the detailed categories were chosen and concerns that the detailed categories do not reflect their student or postdoc population well;
  - o Questions about the utility of the detailed categories;
  - o Concerns about data quality, including item nonresponse and inaccurate responses;
  - o Concerns about processing and reporting write-ins;
  - o Concerns about aggregating all individuals who select multiple races or ethnicities into a single multiracial/multiethnic category for reporting purposes;
  - o Concerns about burden on students and postdocs; and
  - o Concerns about disclosure risk.
- There were mixed opinions about whether the addition of MENA would improve or reduce data quality.
- Regardless of version, some schools and FFRDCs noted that the optics of the ordering for the minimum categories, especially the placement of White first, could create Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion concerns.

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GSS Schools

*Preference for Version A versus Version B*

- The majority (*n* = 17) of schools preferred the minimum category version (Version B).
- A few schools (*n* = 4) preferred the detailed version (Version A).
- Several schools (*n* = 6) schools had mixed feelings. These schools saw merit in collecting the details in Version A but also thought that it was not practical to do so.

*First Impressions of Version A and Version B*

**Version A (Detailed Categories)**

- The majority (*n* = 24) of schools mentioned the level of detail as one of their first impressions of version A.
    - Seventeen schools saw the level of detail as a negative:
        - Nine schools questioned why some subcategories were used but not others or indicated the subcategory list was not exhaustive enough if the details are required.
        - Seven schools believed it was too detailed or that there were too many options under specific categories.
        - Four schools believed the subcategories would be confusing for students to select because they would not know what their country of origin might be (domestic students).
        - Three schools questioned how useful this level of detail would be.
    - Eight schools saw the level of detail as a positive, believing it was a good start or stating that they liked the additional detail.
    - Eight schools mentioned the list included many details that they do not currently collect.
- Five schools indicated that the text fields would be difficult to report or reconcile, especially the American Indian and Alaska Native write-ins.
- Three schools indicated this would be very challenging to implement or could not be implemented with their current HR system
- Of important note: one school did question the order of the categories, specifically why White was listed first, and indicated this could present DEI issues.

**Version B (Minimum Categories Only)**

- The majority (*n* = 22) of schools indicated that Version B was similar to their current system or standard.
    - Nineteen schools specifically mentioned that it matched their current system, except for the addition of the MENA category.
- Just under half (*n* = 12) indicated they thought this version was cleaner, easier, or more doable than Version A (for students and/or the school).
- Four schools noted that this version was missing categories for Nonresident alien, Other, or Decline to answer responses.
- Two schools specifically mentioned DEI issues:

o   Two schools questioned why White was first and recommended that the list be alphabetized; and

o   One school noted that Black should not be grouped with African American.

*Strengths and Weaknesses of Version A and Version B*

**Strengths of Both Versions**
- Four schools mentioned that the addition of the MENA category was an improvement.

**Weaknesses of Both Versions**
- Three schools expressed concerns about the data quality related to the addition of the MENA category. Concerns mentioned related to ambiguity between African American and North African and lack of clarity for Jewish individuals.
- Two schools mentioned that having the White category first was problematic. They both recommended ordering the racial and ethnic categories alphabetically.
- Two schools pointed out that changes would disrupt trend data.

**Strengths of Version A (Detailed Categories)**
- Ten schools thought that collecting more details as in Version A was a good idea, with four specifically mentioning the usefulness for institutional analysis.

**Weaknesses of Version A**

- Most schools ($n$ = 16) noted that implementing Version A would require significant effort and resources or that implementing Version B would be easier.
- Many schools ($n$ = 12) expressed concern about data quality for the detailed categories in Version A. Participants were concerned that students would be confused by the question or the terminology, that students would not provide the details because it was too invasive or too burdensome, or that students would not know the details. One school was concerned about making inferences based on such small categories, one said that some detailed categories could fit within more than one minimum category, and one thought the question was conflating race and ethnicity.
- Many schools ($n$ = 11) thought the choice of detailed categories in Version A needed improvement. Most often, these schools questioned why some subcategories were included while others were not, sometimes noting that a large subpopulation at their school was not represented. One participant suggested that there be flexibility to include subcategories that made sense for their school.
- Several schools ($n$ = 7) questioned the utility of the detailed categories in Version A, particularly for the White race category.
- Many schools ($n$ = 9) mentioned that Version B would be burdensome or intrusive for students and/or postdoctoral appointees. Five schools recommended making responses to the details optional.
- Many schools ($n$ = 9) mentioned that storing and processing write-in responses would be very challenging.

- Participants at four schools mentioned that people who selected multiple options would have to be counted as multiracial so that no individual would be counted twice. This would be more of an issue for Version A (detailed categories) given that it has more categories than Version B (minimum categories).
- Two schools raised concerns about disclosure risk. One participant did not know if their school would even allow them to report the very small counts in some of the categories. Another participant thought that Middle Eastern students may be concerned about identifying themselves as such out of fear of discrimination.

## Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs)

### Preference for Version A versus Version B

- Four FFRDCS preferred the minimum category version (Version B).
- One FFRDC preferred the detailed version (Version A).
- One FFRDC had mixed feelings expressed by the several participants interviewed. One participant at this FFRDC liked the details in Version A, but all three participants agreed that the detailed version (Version A) would be difficult to implement.

### First Impressions of Version A and Version B

**Version A (Detailed Categories)**
- Almost all ($n = 5$) FFRDCs mentioned "level of detail" as one of their first impressions of Version A.
  - Four FFRDCs saw the level of detail as a negative:
    - Three FFRDCs believed the subcategories would be confusing for students to select because they would not know what their country of origin might be (domestic students).
    - Two FFRDCs questioned why some subcategories were used but not others or indicated the subcategory list was not exhaustive enough.
    - Two FFRDCs specifically pointed out that it was odd that American Indian or Alaska Native was the only category that did not have subcategories besides a write-in option.
  - One FFRDC saw the level of detail as a positive, believing it was a good start or stating that they liked the additional detail.
  - One FFRDC mentioned that the list included details that they do not currently collect.
- One FFRDC indicated this would be very challenging to implement or that it could not be implemented with their current human resources system.

**Version B (Minimum Categories Only)**
- All six FFRDCs indicated that Version B was similar to their current system or standard:
  - Five FFRDCs specifically mentioned that it matched their current system, except for the addition of the MENA category.
- Two FFRDCs indicated they thought this version was cleaner, easier, or more doable than Version A for postdocs or the FFRDC.
- One FFRDC indicated they would have to re-survey their entire workforce to get the information required.

**Strengths of Both Version A and Version B (Minimum Categories Only)**
- One FFRDC indicated it liked the addition of the MENA category—specifically noting that Middle Easterners may not know how to identify themselves without this category.

**Weaknesses of Both Version A and Version B**
- One FFRDC mentioned they did not collect MENA data so they would have to do a separate survey to be able to report that category.

**Strengths of Version A (Detailed Categories)**
Two FFRDCs mentioned at least one benefit of Version A.
- Both of these mentioned they liked the detail of Version A:
  - Specifically, one participant mentioned it was useful for institutional analysis or was, at the very least, moving in the right direction because Version B was too limited.
  - Another participant mentioned that Version B does not allow a respondent to identify specifically as African American because Black and African American are combined in one category; whereas in Version A, there is an African American subcategory.

**Weaknesses of Version A (Detailed Categories)**
All six FFRDCs mentioned at least one weakness of version A.
- Almost all (*n* = 5) FFRDCs indicated that Version A would be challenging to implement:
  - Five indicated that it would be a heavy lift to implement Version A.
  - Four indicated that Version B would specifically be easier for the school to implement.
  - One mentioned that Version A would take a lot more time and money to implement.
- Three FFRDCs mentioned that the utility of the subcategories was unclear. Specifically, two noted that the White subcategories were not adding any value.
- Three FFRDCs also noted they had concerns about the detailed categories' (Version A) data quality:
  - Two participants indicated that respondents may not know their ancestry.
  - One participant did suggest that there needed to be language that could assist postdocs in selecting their subcategories (such as examples or guidelines).
- Two FFRDCs also mentioned that the choices of detailed categories in Version A could create issues or questions of equity. For example, why were certain detailed categories chosen and not others, such as specific countries being shown for the Black minimum category but not other countries. Additionally, one FFRDC questioned why American Indian or Alaska Native was a write-in while all the other minimum categories had detailed categories listed.
- Two FFRDCs noted that they believed Version A would be a burden on the postdocs, especially compared to Version B.
- One FFRDC noted that the write-ins would make data processing much more difficult.

## Conclusions

In this section, we summarize the predominant themes of the interviews and implications for the GSS and the FFRDC Postdoc Survey. None of the participating GSS schools and FFRDCs currently collect all or even most of the detailed race and ethnicity categories in Version A. Further, only three of the GSS

schools and none of the FFRDCs currently collect the MENA minimum category. Therefore, all participating GSS schools and FFRDCs would need to change the categories they use to collect race and ethnicity data to respond to Version A, and almost all would need to do so to respond to Version B.

Some GSS schools and FFRDCs may also need to change the information they collect for Hispanic individuals. OMB's proposed questions combine Hispanic and Latino with the race categories in a single "select all that apply" format, suggesting that the Hispanic and Latino category should be reported in the same way as race categories. If OMB's future guidelines indicate that individuals who identify as Hispanic and one or more races should be counted in a multiracial or multiethnic category rather than solely as Hispanic or Latino, then schools and FFRDCs would need to collect race from Hispanic students and postdocs. Almost all GSS schools currently do so for graduate students. Many participating GSS schools with postdocs stated that race is collected for Hispanic postdocs, although participants were less confident about what information is collected for this group. Some of the FFRDCs collect race for Hispanic postdocs while others do not. Anecdotally, some schools indicated that even though their school collected multiple races or ethnicities, these data are transferred into another database that they access when responding to surveys, and these data are aggregated.

When discussing how long it would take to start collecting race and ethnicity data using a new question, participants explained that they would need to make changes to their applications. Therefore, they would need lead time before the next application cycle, often stating that this would require between 1.5 years and 2 years. A few GSS schools prompted current individuals currently affiliated with their institution to review their information at regular intervals such as upon registration, but many schools and FFRDCs were disinclined to formally re-survey their current students and postdocs to collect the new information. Even those that discussed the possibility of doing so expected a low response rate because the survey would not be mandatory. Therefore, high-quality, uniform data for all students and postdocs would not be available until all the existing graduate students and postdocs had left. Based on participants' comments, we infer that this would likely be 5 years or more after the new forms were introduced.

When asked about the likelihood of adopting the categories, a common response from participants was that their school would comply if it was mandated. However, to do so would require coordination within their school or FFRDC, with other organizations, and with state and other federal standards. For example, participants mentioned coordinating revisions to their forms with outside vendors and other institutions that shared the same forms; aligning with DEI initiatives, with state university system standards, or with EEO standards; the importance of alignment among all the federal surveys to which they respond (most notably, IPEDS); and the need to get buy-in at the highest administrative level of their institution and to make the changes institution wide.

The majority of GSS and FFRDC participants preferred the minimum category question (Version B) over the detailed category question (Version A). The most common explanation was that Version A would require a lot more effort and resources to implement than Version B. However, many participants also raised other issues with Version A.

Although many participants thought that having the details would be useful for institutional analysis or saw it as an improvement, several wondered how data at this level of detail would be useful for the GSS and FFRDC Postdoc Survey. Relatedly, four participants noted that any student or postdoc selecting more than one racial or ethnic identity could not be counted multiple times in an establishment survey

that measures population size. All these individuals would be counted in a multiracial or multiethnic category in the GSS or the FFRDC Postdoc Survey.

Also, many participants questioned how the detailed categories in Version A were chosen, sometimes stating that the categories did not reflect their institutions' population well or expressing concern that individuals would feel excluded because they were not represented in one of the detailed categories when many other groups were. A couple of participants commented on the fact that the American Indian and Alaska Native category had no subcategories listed at all. To address this, one participant suggested that the survey should allow institutions to select which detailed categories to offer on their forms, and another participant suggested removing the detailed categories and relying entirely on write ins. Although the write-in fields would allow for unlisted groups to be represented, many participants were very concerned about processing the write-in responses. They discussed the level of effort and difficulty of coding and reporting all the variations of these text entries.

Many participants expressed some concerns about data quality as well. They thought that some individuals would elect not to provide the details because the question is too burdensome or invasive. They thought that others would not understand the distinction between categories. They also thought that some individuals would not have accurate information about their countries of origin. A few participants provided as an example a White respondent whose descendants have lived in the United States for many generations.

One participant expressed concern about disclosure risk, stating that they were unsure if their institution would allow reporting at the level of detail in Version A because there would be so few individuals in some categories. This is a serious data quality concern for the GSS and the FFRDC Survey.

There were some comments that pertained to the minimum categories. A few participants were pleased with the inclusion of the MENA category, whereas a few others expressed concerns that the new category would be confusing to some respondents. Another participant thought people originating from Middle Eastern countries may not feel comfortable disclosing this information for fear of mistreatment. For two participants, their first impression of Version B was that White was listed first. They noted that this would be problematic in terms of DEI and recommended that the categories be arranged in alphabetical order.

Finally, several participants asked why the standards are changing now, stated that they did not see a compelling reason to change, or noted that the change would disrupt trend data. Therefore, regardless of what revisions to the standards OMB decides on, we recommend that the GSS and the FFRDC Postdoc Survey develop messaging to explain to respondents the impetus for the changes and how the new standard was chosen with the goal of encouraging support among survey respondents.

## Attachment A – OMB's Proposed Combined Question with Minimum and Detailed Categories for Self-Response Data Collections (Version A)

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply* **AND** *enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ German     ☐ Irish     ☐ English

   ☐ Italian     ☐ Polish     ☐ French

   *Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*

   [_____]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Mexican or Mexican American     ☐ Puerto Rican     ☐ Cuban

   ☐ Salvadoran     ☐ Dominican     ☐ Colombian

   *Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

   [_____]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ African American     ☐ Jamaican     ☐ Haitian

   ☐ Nigerian     ☐ Ethiopian     ☐ Somali

   *Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*

   [_____]

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Chinese     ☐ Filipino     ☐ Asian Indian

   ☐ Vietnamese     ☐ Korean     ☐ Japanese

   *Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*

   [_____]

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

   [_____]

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Lebanese     ☐ Iranian     ☐ Egyptian

   ☐ Syrian     ☐ Moroccan     ☐ Israeli

   *Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*

   [_____]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

   ☐ Native Hawaiian     ☐ Samoan     ☐ Chamorro

   ☐ Tongan     ☐ Fijian     ☐ Marshallese

   *Enter, for example, Palouan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*

   [_____]

## Attachment B – OMB's Proposed Combined Question with Minimum Categories for Self-Response Data Collections (Version B)

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

## Attachment C – Interview Protocol

**Protocol for GSS/FFRDC Race/Ethnicity Interviews**

| School/Case ID | | Interviewer | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Date | | Notetaker | |
| Start time | | Observer(s) | |
| End time | | | |
| School or FFRDC name | | | |
| Participants role(s)/title(s) | | | |

**Introduction:**

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) creates standards for reporting race and ethnicity in federal surveys such as the [GSS/Survey of Postdocs at Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs)]. The current standards for collecting and reporting this information have not been updated since 1997. OMB recently proposed revisions to these standards and we are seeking input from federal survey respondents including [institutions such as [school name]/FFRDCs such as [FFRDC name]].

The National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics within the National Science Foundation is sponsoring this research. We will be discussing what race and ethnicity data [school or FFRDC name] currently collects for [depending on the type of data reported by participant: graduate students/postdocs/graduate students and postdocs], and how changes to the race and ethnicity categories would affect your reporting to the [GSS/FFRDC postdoc survey].

The interview will take about one hour. Participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. So that we have a complete record of your comments, your interview session will be recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Teams. The recordings and transcription will be accessible to staff directly involved in this research project and will only be used to improve the questions we are testing. Results of these interviews will be reported in aggregate form.

Before we get started, do you have any questions?

Do I have your permission to record this interview?

[INTERVIEWER: WHEN RECORDING HAS STARTED, STATE DATE, SCHOOL ID, SCHOOL/FFRDC NAME AND CONFIRM PERMISSION TO RECORD]

**A. Race/Ethnicity Recordkeeping Practices**

**A1: Graduate student data recordkeeping practices {Applies to participants who handle graduate student data}**

    1. [If respondent handles student data reporting}

Let's discuss [school name]'s race and ethnicity records for graduate students.
    a. When and how is this information collected for graduate students (e.g., upon application, upon admission, other)?
        i. Do you have this race and ethnicity information for all graduate students in your systems or are there some students that you don't have information on?
            1. [If not all] Who are those students?
    b. Are students ever asked or required to update their race/ethnicity information?
        {If yes}
        i. When and under what circumstances?
        ii. When students are asked to update their race/ethnicity information, what is the response rate?
    c. Later we're going to get into more detail about the race and ethnicity categories [school name] uses, but for now we would like to know:
        i. To the best of your knowledge, are [school]'s categories for students based on a standard or requirement (e.g., institutional, state, federal)? If so, what is that?
        ii. Do your records allow for multiple races or ethnicities for a student or are such students classified as multiracial or multiethnic?
        iii. Do your records allow for students of Hispanic ethnicity to also be classified by race such as Hispanic and White, Hispanic and Black, etc.?

## A2: Postdoc data recordkeeping practices {Applies to participants who handle postdoc data}

2. [If respondent handles postdoc data reporting}
Let's discuss [school or FFRDC name]'s race and ethnicity records for postdocs.
    a. When and how is this information collected for postdocs (e.g., upon appointment, other)?
        i. Do you have this race and ethnicity information for all postdocs in your systems or are there some postdocs that you don't have information on?
            1. [If not all] Who are those postdocs?
    b. Are postdocs ever asked or required to update their race/ethnicity information?
        {If yes}
        i. When and under what circumstances?
        ii. When postdocs are asked to update their race/ethnicity information, what is the response rate?
    c. {IF DID NOT RESPOND TO A1}
Later we're going to get into more detail about the race and ethnicity categories [school or FFRDC name] uses, but for now we would like to know:
        i. To the best of your knowledge, are [school or FFRDC]'s categories for postdocs based on a standard or requirement (e.g., institutional, state, federal)? If so, what is that?

    ii.   Do your records allow for multiple races or ethnicities for a postdoc or are such postdocs classified as multiracial or multiethnic?

    iii.   Do your records allow for postdocs of Hispanic ethnicity to also be classified by race such as Hispanic and White, Hispanic and Black, etc.?

{IF ALSO RESPONDED TO A1} How do the race and ethnicity records for postdocs compare with the records for graduate students? Are there any differences or are they the same?

    iv.   {If different} How are they different? {Probe on whether the categories are the same or different, allowance for multiple races/ethnicities}

## A3: Other researcher data recordkeeping practices {Applies to participants who handle postdoc data}

3. [If respondent handles postdoc data reporting]
Although the [GSS/FFRDC postdoc survey] does not currently collect information on race and ethnicity data of research staff other than postdocs, NCSES is beginning to explore the possibility of doing so in the future.

What can you tell me about the information [school or FFRDC name]'s has on the race and ethnicity for other research staff? How do they compare to the information for postdocs? Are there differences or are they the same?

    i.   {If different} How are they different? {Probe on whether the categories are the same or different, allowance for multiple races/ethnicities}

## A4. Previous changes to race/ethnicity recordkeeping practices

4. To your knowledge, has [school or FFRDC name] ever changed the race and/or ethnicity categories it uses to collect that information? {If yes}
   a. Can you briefly describe how the categories changed, for example, if new categories were added or categories were combined or split apart, or something else?
   b. Did [school or FFRDC] make the change on its own or was it required to make the change? {If required} Who required the change?
   c. How did [school or FFRDC name] implement changes to the race and ethnicity categories it uses?
      i. Did [school or FFRDC name] re-collect this information from existing students and staff or just collect it using the new categories for individuals who became affiliated with [school or FFRDC name] from that point forward?
      ii. How long did it take for [school or FFRDC name] to phase in the change?

## B1: Race/Ethnicity Reporting – First Impression of Version A

NCSES is seeking feedback on two versions of a race and ethnicity question. We'll call the first version we'll show you Version A.

[INTERVIEWER: SHOW VERSION A ON SCREEN BUT MAKE SURE PARTICIPANT IS STILL ON SCREEN FOR THE RECORDING]

You may notice that the question is for an individual reporting their own race and ethnicity as opposed to a respondent like you who is providing counts of people in each category at your institution. For the purposes of this interview, let's just focus on the categories (e.g., White, German). I'll give you a minute to review these categories. Let me know when you are done.

[INTERVIEWER: PAUSE UNTIL PARTICIPANT IS READY TO CONTINUE.]

**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.*
*Note, you may report more than one group.*

☐ **WHITE** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ German | ☐ Irish | ☐ English |
| ☐ Italian | ☐ Polish | ☐ French |

*Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.*
[                                        ]

☐ **HISPANIC OR LATINO** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Mexican or Mexican American | ☐ Puerto Rican | ☐ Cuban |
| ☐ Salvadoran | ☐ Dominican | ☐ Colombian |

*Enter, for example, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*
[                                        ]

☐ **BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ African American | ☐ Jamaican | ☐ Haitian |
| ☐ Nigerian | ☐ Ethiopian | ☐ Somali |

*Enter, for example, Ghanaian, South African, Barbadian, etc.*
[                                        ]

☐ **ASIAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Chinese | ☐ Filipino | ☐ Asian Indian |
| ☐ Vietnamese | ☐ Korean | ☐ Japanese |

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
[                                        ]

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

☐ **MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Lebanese | ☐ Iranian | ☐ Egyptian |
| ☐ Syrian | ☐ Moroccan | ☐ Israeli |

*Enter, for example, Algerian, Iraqi, Kurdish, etc.*
[                                        ]

☐ **NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER** – *Provide details below.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Native Hawaiian | ☐ Samoan | ☐ Chamorro |
| ☐ Tongan | ☐ Fijian | ☐ Marshallese |

*Enter, for example, Palauan, Tahitian, Chuukese, etc.*
[                                        ]

5. What is your first impression of Version A?
   [NOTETAKER: DESCRIBE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, VERBAL UTTERANCES]

6. How well do these categories align with the categories [school or FFRDC] currently collects for students? Postdocs?
   [INTERVIEWER: IF PARTICIPANT FOCUSES EXCLUSIVELY ON THE HIGHER-LEVEL CATEGORIES (E.G., WHITE, HSIPANIC OR LATINO) LET THEM DO WHAT COMES NATURALLY TO THEM INIITALLY BUT EVENTUALLY DIRECT THEIR ATTENTION TO THE DETAILED CATEGORIES SO WE BE SURE THEY COMMENT ON THOSE TOO.]
   a. What categories does [school or FFRDC] currently collect for students? Postdocs?
   b. Which of the categories in Version A does [school or FFRDC name] currently collect, if any?
   c. Are there any categories in Version A that [school or FFRDC] does not collect? What are they?
   d. Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that are not in Version A? What are they?
   e. Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that would need to be split apart to map to OMB's newly proposed detailed categories (i.e., one-to-many)? What are they?
   f. Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that would need to be combined to map to OMB's newly proposed detailed categories (many-to-one)? What are they?
   g. {If MENA not spontaneously mentioned previously, probe specifically about this}
      One of the proposed categories is for Middle Eastern or North African. Do your records already include information about whether a person is Middle Eastern or North African?

7. Are there any terms that you aren't familiar with?
   a. {If yes} Tell me more about those.

8. Are there any categories that you think mean the same thing as a category that [school or FFRDC] uses, but are labelled differently? {If yes} Tell me more about those.

9. When reporting to the [GSS/FFRDC survey], how would you handle categories that do not match?

10. Given the data [school or FFRDC name] currently collects, how feasible or unfeasible would it be for you to report race and ethnicity data using these categories?
    {if unfeasible}
      i. What makes it unfeasible?
      ii. What would make it more feasible?

11. If these categories were adopted in the [GSS/FFRDC] survey, how likely or unlikely do you think [school or FFRDC name] would be to align the current categories on race and ethnicity that you ask about with these categories? Can you tell me more about that?

12. How long do you think [school or FFRDC] would need to phase in these categories?

**B2: Race/Ethnicity Reporting – First Impression of Version B**

Now let's look at Version B.

[INTERVIEWER: SHOW VERSION B ON SCREEN BUT MAKE SURE PARTICIPANT IS STILL ON SCREEN FOR THE RECORDING]

As with Version A, you'll notice that the question is for an individual reporting their own race and ethnicity. Again, let's just focus on the categories (e.g., White, Hispanic or Latino). I'll give you a minute to review it. Let me know when you are done.

[INTERVIEWER: PAUSE UNTIL PARTICIPANT IS READY TO CONTINUE.]



**What is your race or ethnicity?**
*Select all that apply.*

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

13. Now, what is your first impression of Version B?
    [NOTETAKER: DESCRIBE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, VERBAL UTTERANCES]

14. How well do these categories align with the categories [school or FFRDC] currently collects for students? Postdocs?

    [INTERVIEWER: FOR PROBES 14A – D, IF YOU ARE NOT VERY CONFIDENT IN HOW THEY WOULD RESPOND BASED ON INTERVIEW UP TO THIS POINT ERR ON THE SIDE OF RE-ASKING THE QUESTION. OTHERWISE, YOU MAY USE ACTIVE LISTENING ALTERNATIVE PROBE.]

Thinking about these categories, which of them does [school or FFRDC name] currently collect, if any?

OR

Just to make sure I understand what I heard before, you said [school or FFRDC name] currently collects [insert categories], is that correct?

a.  Are there any categories that [school or FFRDC] does not collect? What are they?

OR

Just to make sure I understand what I heard before, you said [school or FFRDC name] does not collect [insert categories], is that correct?

b.  Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that are <u>not</u> in Version B? What are they?

OR

Just to make sure I understand what I heard before, you said [school or FFRDC name] collects [insert categories not in Version B], is that correct?

c.  Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that would need to be split apart to map to the categories in Version B (i.e., one-to-many)? What are they?

OR

Active listening version

d.  Are there categories [school or FFRDC name] collects that would need to be combined to map to the categories in Version B (many-to-one)? What are they?

OR

Active listening version

15. [INTERVIEWER: IF APPROPRIATE, USE ACTIVE LISTENING, FOR EXAMPLE, PREVIOUSLY YOU SAID YOU WERE UNFAMILIAR WITH X. ARE THERE ANY OTHER TERMS SHOWN HERE THAT YOU ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH?]
Are there any terms that you aren't familiar with?
a.  {If yes} Tell me more about those.

16. [INTERVIEWER: IF APPROPRIATE, USE ACTIVE LISTENING, FOR EXAMPLE, PREVIOUSLY YOU SAID X WAS LABELLED DIFFERENTLY THAN A

CATEGORY [SCHOOL OR FFRDC NAME] USES. ARE THERE ANY <u>OTHER</u> CATEGORIES THAT YOU THINK MEAN THE SAME THING AS…?]

Are there any categories that you think mean the same thing as a category that [school or FFRDC] uses, but are labelled differently? {If yes} Tell me more about those.

17. Given the data [school or FFRDC name] currently collects, how feasible or unfeasible would it be for you to report race and ethnicity data using these categories?

      {if unfeasible}
          i.   What makes it unfeasible?
         ii.   What would make it more feasible?

18. If these categories were adopted in the [GSS/FFRDC] survey, how likely or unlikely do you think [school or FFRDC name] would be to align the current categories on race and ethnicity that you ask about with these categories? Can you tell me more about that?

19. How long do you think [school or FFRDC] would need to phase in these categories?

**B3: Race/Ethnicity Reporting – Overall Questions**

20. Thinking about both Version A and Version B, which version would you prefer? Tell me more about that.

21. Is there any other feedback you would like to provide about these proposed changes?

22. Those are all the questions I have for you today. Do you have any other comments or questions?

[INTERVIEWER: IF PARTICIPANT ASKS FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FUTURE WITH REGARDS TO RACE/ETHNICITY YOU CAN TELL THEM:
NO CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO THE 2023 DATA COLLECTION. AS WE LEARN MORE, NCSES AND RTI WILL KEEP YOU ABREADST OF THE DEVELOPMENTS AND WILL SEEK INPUT FROM COORDINATORS.]

[INTERVIEWER:

    a.   THANK RESPONDENT(S) FOR THEIR TIME AND STOP RECORDING
    b.   SAVE THE RECORDING AND TRANSCRIPT FILES USING THE NAMING CONVENTION:
         i.   SCHOOLID_[GSS/FFRDC]_RE_MMDD2023_YOURINITIALS
    c.   UPDATE THE INTERVIEW TRACKER TO REFLECT THAT THE INTERVIEW IS COMPLETE AND READY FOR NOTETAKING

]