



05 May 2020

# Press Information Notice

## Census of Population and Housing 2021

### Background

The Census of Population and Housing 2021 will be held on Sunday 10 October 2021. The Census is a nationwide project held every ten years and involves the carrying out of a comprehensive survey to enumerate all permanent residents in Malta. The 2021 edition will be the 18th in a line of national censuses conducted since 1842. The Census is a snapshot of the people residing in Malta and the dwelling stock at a point in time. This point is the aforesaid 10 October 2021, and all data collected will refer to midnight of 9/10 October. In census terminology this date is called Census Day/Night.

In October 2019 Mr Etienne Caruana, Director General of the National Statistics Office, was appointed Census Officer by the Prime Minister. The Census Officer heads the preparations for Census 2021 and deals with all pertinent issues. To help him in this project, the Census Officer appointed Mr Silvan Zammit, Director Data Capability and Mr Matthew Zerafa, Director Social Statistics, as Deputy Census Officers.

### Scale

Census 2021 will involve surveying an estimated population of around half a million living in private households and in about 250 institutional households. The entire population spread over 68 local councils will be evenly divided into over 1,000 enumeration areas. An enumeration area consists of several streets or parts thereof in a locality and typically encompasses an average of 220 dwellings. The enumeration areas will be assigned to about 1,000 field interviewers recruited purposely for the Census. These will collect the data directly from the households.

Census 2021 will be marked by important innovations. In line with both Government and NSO policy in adopting environment-friendly measures as well as to automate the collection of data, for the first time, people can opt to fill in the questionnaire through an online form. The time needed to complete the online questionnaire is approximately 20 minutes for a conventional household of three persons. Another novelty is that the interviewers visiting the households will record the information in tablet computers rather than through the traditional paper questionnaire. The main advantage of this innovation is enhanced information security given that all collected data will be encrypted so that only authorised Census personnel with access to a secret key or password can read it. Other advantages are reduced paper use and more efficiency. Forms will still be printed to cover all possible exigencies of the households responding to the questionnaire.

The enumeration process this time round will include geocoding, which involves recording the coordinates of each dwelling and studying census results based on a 1 km<sup>2</sup> grid. This will allow a geospatial element at the analysis stage, resulting in the compilation and publication of first-ever geospatial census results by the National Statistics Office.

A theme characterising Census 2021 is inclusiveness since the census project purports to cover all groups in the population. The salience of the theme is reflected in the choice of slogan: "Everyone Matters". One practical consideration is to make the questionnaire available in various languages.

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## Census Questionnaire

The questionnaire aims to collect key socio-economic information, in line with national legislation - [Census Act 1948](#) and EU regulatory requirements - [Regulation \(EC\) No 763/2008](#), as well as the recommendations, concepts and definitions on population censuses made by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The EU Regulation currently covers the topics in the attached list. These topics cover 70 key variables of which 30 focus on housing.

Part of the Census process is a public consultation on additional themes and questions that could potentially be included in the Census. This stage is essential to ensure that the needs of users are carefully considered. Such needs must, however, be balanced by issues of response burden, cost-effectiveness, data quality and above all, the need to keep the questionnaire to a reasonable length.

## Public Consultation

The National Statistics Office is launching the public consultation through this communication. Stakeholders are invited to send their written submissions to email [populationcensus.nso@gov.mt](mailto:populationcensus.nso@gov.mt) by Sunday 31 May 2020.

## Outcome

A preliminary report featuring the main demographic variables (among which: sex, age, nationality and citizenship) will be published in the first quarter of 2022. A detailed analysis covering all population and housing variables collected in the Census will be released in thematic publications starting from the last quarter of 2022. As said earlier, the geospatial theme will cut across population, housing and related social and economic themes.

Attached: Topics to be covered in Population and Housing Censuses as per Regulation (EC) No 763/2008.

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# List of Topics to be covered in Population and Housing Censuses

## Population

- Sex
- Age
- Country of birth
- Country of citizenship
- Location of place of usual residence
- Ever resided abroad and year of arrival in country
- Previous place of usual residence
- Relationship between household members (to derive household status, family status, type of family nucleus, size of family nucleus, type of private household, size of private household)
- Legal marital status
- Educational attainment
- Labour status
- Status in employment
- Occupation
- Industry
- Locality of place of work

## Dwellings (main and secondary dwellings)

- Type of living quarters
  - Type of building
  - Period of construction
  - Number of rooms in housing unit
  - Type of ownership
  - Tenure status of household
  - Water supply system
  - Bathing facilities
  - Toilet facilities
  - Type of heating
  - Occupancy status
  - Number of occupants
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