



The census and you

WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

In Canada, a census is taken every five years. This includes the Census of Population, which provides a statistical portrait of Canada and its people, and the Census of Agriculture, a collection of information on agricultural operations in Canada. The next census will be conducted in May 2021.

For over a century, Canadians have relied on census data to tell them about how their country is changing and what matters to them. The census provides key socioeconomic information on population growth to estimate future demand for child tax benefits; old age security pensions; and community services such as schools, daycare centres and emergency services.

The 2021 Census questionnaire contains new and modified content that is critical to measuring equity, diversity and inclusivity. This content includes questions on gender expression, minority language rights-holders, self-identification, religion, the labour market, Indigenous groups, housing, income and expenditures, as well as population groups.

HOW IS THE CENSUS TAKEN?

Every dwelling will receive instructions about the census in early May 2021. At that time, you can decide if you will complete the questionnaire online or on paper. The safest way is to complete it online, but, like in the past, paper and phone completion is available.

The online 2021 Census will be available as of May 3, 2021. Completing the online questionnaire is an easy, secure and convenient option that can be used anywhere, anytime. No pre-registration or lengthy download processes are required. On each form, you will find a code, unique to your household, which you will use to complete your questionnaire. The online questionnaire will also feature helpful instructions.

Over 15 million households are expected to participate in the next census, with an anticipated 80% online participation rate!

IS IT SAFE TO DO THE CENSUS DURING A PANDEMIC?

Statistics Canada places the utmost importance on the safety of Canadians, and this is why the 2021 Census is completely contactless. Every Canadian will have the opportunity to complete their census questionnaire online, eliminating the need for census employees to visit in person. Whenever follow-up activities are required, Statistics Canada will be using practices aligned with the strictest health and safety directives from public health authorities.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE INFORMATION THAT I PROVIDE?

Statistics Canada is committed to respecting your privacy and maintaining the confidentiality of individual questionnaires at all times. In accordance with the *Statistics Act*, no information that identifies or could identify individuals, households, or businesses is released. The information you provide is securely held and may be used by Statistics Canada for statistical purposes in support of its other surveys, or for analysis. It can only be accessed by employees who have taken an oath of secrecy.

WHO MUST COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE?

To have the best picture of the nation and data for communities, participation in the census is mandatory for all residents. This includes Canadian citizens (by birth or naturalization), landed immigrants, refugee claimants (e.g., asylum seekers), Canadian Foreign Service officers, Canadian Armed Forces members stationed abroad, and people who hold a work or study permit.

If you are completing the online questionnaire but are unsure about whom to include, include everyone in your household. The online questionnaire is also designed to help you determine which members of your household should be included in your response.

If you are completing a paper questionnaire, information on whom to include in the questionnaire can be found on the census website and on the paper questionnaire itself, in the section “Whom to include in Step B.”

HOW ARE MY RESPONSES USED?

Your responses to the census are added to the responses of the entire Canadian population, to compile statistics that help communities plan programs and services that support education, employment, transportation, health care and housing.

WHO USES MY CENSUS RESULTS?

Census data will be used by all levels of government, businesses and associations, municipal community organizations, Indigenous communities, educators and researchers, and policy makers. Your information

will be used to make informed decisions that affect the lives of everyone living in Canada and Canadians abroad.

WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT TO ME?

You, your family and your community benefit from the census. The information you provide will help to ensure that the 2021 Census accurately reflects Canada's changing society. When you participate in the census, it means better information for your community regarding daycare centres, schools, health care, emergency services, roads, public transportation, employment skills training and residences for senior citizens.

WE DEPEND ON YOU!

To shape the future of Canada accurately, completing the census is both your civic duty and a legal obligation for all residents, as stated in the *Statistics Act*. Canada needs you, so complete the census today!

WHAT IF I NEED HELP?

For answers to frequently asked questions, please visit www.census.gc.ca—if you do not have access to the Internet, contact the Census Help Line at 1-855-340-2021. Respondents with access to TTY (a telecommunications device for deaf people) should call 1-833-830-3109.