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Reference Guide

Place of Birth, Generation Status, Citizenship and Immigration Reference Guide



National Household Survey, 2011

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The following symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- p preliminary
- r revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- * significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

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Definitions and concepts

The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) collects a wealth of information on the backgrounds of people living in Canada, including information on their place of birth, their parents' places of birth, their citizenship and their immigrant status.

The place of birth question asks for the province or territory in Canada, or the country outside Canada, where people were born. This question provides information on population movements within Canada, and from other countries to Canada. It also provides information on the diversity of Canada's population.

The place of birth of father and mother questions in the NHS are used to define generation status, that is, if the person or his/her parents were born in Canada. The generation status helps identify if the person is the first, the second or the third generation or more. There is growing interest in how children of immigrants are integrating into Canadian society. Information on generation status and that from the other ethnocultural questions combined provide another aspect to the diversity of Canada's population. It also helps to understand how Canada's immigration history has shaped the different generations of Canadians who today make up the population.

The question on citizenship provides the citizenship status of Canada's population. This information is used to estimate the number of potential voters or to plan citizenship classes and programs. It also provides information about the population who have multiple citizenships and on the number of immigrants in Canada who hold Canadian citizenship.

The NHS questions on landed immigrant status and year of immigration provide further information about the immigrants in Canada. Immigrants refers to persons who are or have ever been a landed immigrant/permanent resident; in other words, they have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities.

Immigration variables are often used in conjunction with age, sex, language, visible minority, education, labour and income variables to provide a demographic picture of the immigrant population; to assess the social and economic conditions of immigrants; to review immigration and employment policies and programs; as well as to plan education, health, and other services.

The 2011 NHS also included information about non-permanent residents in Canada. Non-permanent residents are defined as persons from another country who, at the time of the survey, held a work or study permit or who were refugee claimants, as well as non-Canadian-born family members living in Canada with them. The non-permanent resident population is identified from responses to the citizenship and landed immigrant status questions. Persons who are not Canadian citizens by birth and who answered 'No' to the landed immigrant status question are considered non-permanent residents.

The inclusion of non-permanent residents in the NHS facilitates comparisons with provincial and territorial statistics (marriages, divorces, births and deaths) which include this population and provides information for planning of services, such as health care, education and employment programs. As well, the inclusion of non-permanent residents brings Canadian practice closer to the United Nations recommendation that long-term residents (persons living in a country for one year or longer) be enumerated.

Although every attempt has been made to enumerate non-permanent residents, factors such as language difficulties, the reluctance to complete a government form or to understand the need to participate may have affected the estimate of this population.

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Please consult the [National Household Survey Dictionary](#), Catalogue no. 99-000-X, for more detailed information on the definition of these variables created with place of birth, citizenship and immigration data collected during the NHS on May 10, 2011:

- [Place of birth of respondent](#)
- [Place of birth of father](#)
- [Place of birth of mother](#)
- [Generation status](#)
- [Citizenship](#)
- [Immigrant status](#)
- [Year of immigration](#)
- [Period of immigration](#)
- [Age at immigration](#)

To better understand the relationship between the immigration and place of birth concepts, please refer to [Figure 1.5](#) in the *National Household Survey Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 99-000-X.

To better understand the relationship between the immigration and citizenship concepts, please refer to [Figure 1.6](#) in the *National Household Survey Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 99-000-X.

Classifications

Data from the place of birth, place of birth of parents, citizenship, landed immigrant status and year of immigration questions are used to produce summary and detailed variables which provide a portrait of the population living in Canada. Tables accessible from the '[Data and other products](#)' section of this document show the specific variables used in data products for the 2011 NHS.

The 2011 National Household Survey includes data for close to 200 countries of birth. [Appendix 1.5](#) of the *National Household Survey Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 99-000-X, presents the classification used to disseminate data for Place of birth of respondent, Place of birth of father and Place of birth of mother variables. It is based on the [Standard Classification of Countries and Areas of Interest \(SCCAI\) 2010](#).

The classification of country of citizenship used in the 2011 NHS is available in [Appendix 1.6](#) of the *National Household Survey Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 99-000-X. It is based on the standard [Classification of Country of Citizenship 2010](#).

Questions

Most 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) respondents received the [2011 National Household Survey Form N1 questionnaire](#), while respondents living on Indian reserves, in Indian settlements and in other remote areas received the [2011 National Household Survey Form N2 questionnaire](#).

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From responses to Questions 9, 10, 11, 12, 25(a) and 25(b) in both versions of the questionnaire, the following variables on place of birth, generation status, citizenship, and immigration were directly created or derived:

- Place of birth: Question 9
- Citizenship: Question 10
- Landed immigrant status: Question 11
- Year of immigration: Question 12
- Place of birth of father: Question 25(a)
- Place of birth of mother: Question 25(b)
- Generation status: Derived from Questions 9, 25(a) and 25(b)
- Immigrant status (including the non-immigrants, immigrants and non-permanent residents): Derived from Questions 10 and 11
- Immigrant status and period of immigration: Derived from Questions 10, 11 and 12
- Age at immigration: Derived from Questions 3 and 12.

The questions asked on the N2 questionnaire were the same as on the N1 questionnaire, however respondents living on Indian reserves were asked to skip the questions on citizenship, landed immigrant status and year of immigration.

To assist people whose first language was neither English nor French, the NHS questions were translated into 31 other languages, including 11 Aboriginal languages.

More information on the wording and the format of the 2011 NHS immigration, place of birth and citizenship questions and the instructions which were provided to respondents for those questions can be found in the [2011 NHS questionnaire](#), [National Household Survey \(NHS\) guide: short version](#), [National Household Survey \(NHS\) guide: long version](#) and [National Household Survey Dictionary](#), Catalogue no. 99-000-X.

Data and other products

Data for the 2011 National Household Survey Place of birth, Generation status, Citizenship and Immigration variables were released on May 8, 2013 as part of an integrated release with other ethnocultural and Aboriginal variables.

The products published using 2011 NHS Place of birth, Generation status, Citizenship and Immigration data include:

- [Data products](#)
 - NHS Profile
 - NHS Data Tables
- [Analytical products](#)
- [Reference products](#)

For more information on and access to 2011 NHS data, please refer to the [2011 National Household Survey \(NHS\) website](#).

Data quality

The National Household Survey (NHS) underwent a thorough data quality assessment similar to what was done for the 2011 Census of Population and past censuses. It consisted of an assessment of various data quality indicators (such as response rate), and an evaluation of the overall results, in comparison with other data sources such as Census of Population data.

Based on the results of this exercise, the NHS estimates for citizenship and immigration variables at the national level are consistent with, or similar to, estimates and trends from other data sources such as the 2006 and 2001 censuses, and administrative data from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Survey process

Quality indicators were calculated and assessed at each of the key steps of the survey. During the collection and processing of the data, the quality and consistency of the responses provided were assessed as were the non-response rates. The quality of the imputed responses was assessed after the completion of the control and imputation steps.

Certification of final estimates

Once data processing and imputation were completed, the data were weighted to represent the total Canadian population. These weighted data (the final estimates) were then certified to determine if they were coherent and reliable in comparison to other independent data sources. This is the final stage of data validation. The main highlights of this assessment are presented below.

Non-response bias

Non-response bias is a potential source of error for all surveys including the NHS. The risk of non-response bias increases as the response rate declines. This issue arises when the characteristics of those who choose to participate in a survey are different than those who refuse. Statistics Canada adapted its collection and estimation procedures in order to mitigate, to the extent possible, the effect of non-response bias. (For more details please refer to the [National Household Survey User Guide](#), Catalogue no. 99-001-X.)

Several data sources were used to evaluate the NHS estimates for citizenship and immigration variables such as: The Longitudinal Immigrant Database (IMDB), 2011 Census results for mother tongue (since a relationship exists between language and other ethnocultural characteristics such as place of birth), the 2001 and 2006 censuses, population projections based on microsimulation, and administrative data pertaining to permanent residents and non-permanent residents from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

It is impossible to definitively determine how much the NHS may be affected by non-response bias. However, based on information from other data sources, evidence of non-response bias does exist for certain populations and for certain geographic areas.

For example, based on the estimates and trends from the sources mentioned above, evidence suggests that the NHS estimate for the population born in the Philippines is overestimated at the national level. According to population estimates¹, the number of immigrants from the Philippines who entered Canada from January 2006 until June 2011 is 141,502, while the NHS estimate of the population born in the Philippines who immigrated between January 2006 and the survey date, May 10, 2011 is larger (152,270). As well, the population born in Pakistan is suggested to be underestimated in the 2011 NHS.

In addition, consistent with observations from past censuses (refer to the 2006 Census Coverage Technical Report), evidence suggests that there is undercoverage of recent immigrants in the 2011 National Household Survey.

Generally, the risk of error increases for lower levels of geography and for smaller populations. At the same time, the data sources used to evaluate these results are also less reliable making it difficult to certify these smaller counts.

For more information on NHS non-response bias and mitigation strategies employed by Statistics Canada, please refer to the [National Household Survey User Guide](#), Catalogue no. 99-001-X.

Data quality indicators

Of all the quality indicators used for the evaluation, two are presented: the global non-response rate and the imputation rate by question.

- The global non-response rate combines the non-response at the household level and the non-response at the question level. It is provided for geographic areas. The global non-response rate is the key criterion that determines whether or not the NHS results will be released for a given geographic area. Information on the global non-response rate is available in the [National Household Survey User Guide](#), Catalogue no. 99-001-X.
- The imputation rate is the proportion of respondents who did not answer a given question or whose response is deemed invalid and for which a value was imputed. Imputation can improve data quality by reducing the gaps caused by non-response.

The imputation rates for the NHS citizenship and immigration variables are similar to those of the 2006 Census (see Table 1). The imputation rates, at the national level, for the 2011 National Household Survey are: Citizenship (2.3%), Place of birth (2.0%), Place of birth of mother (5.7%), Place of birth of father (6.0%), Landed immigrant status (1.3%), and Year of immigration (12.5%). For the 2006 Census, at the national level, the imputation rates were: Citizenship (2.9%), Place of birth (2.0%), Place of birth of mother (4.3%), Place of birth of father (4.3%), Immigrant status (4.6%), and Year of immigration (12.1%).

1. Statistics Canada. *Table 051-0006 - Immigrants to Canada, by country of last permanent residence, quarterly (persons)*, CANSIM (database), (accessed March 25, 2013).

Table 1 Imputation rates in the National Household Survey by variable, Canada, provinces and territories

Provinces and territories	Citizenship	Place of birth	Place of birth of mother	Place of birth of father	Landed immigrant status	Year of immigration
	percentage					
Canada	2.3	2.0	5.7	6.0	1.3	12.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	2.3	1.4	4.5	4.2	1.1	20.1
Prince Edward Island	2.5	1.8	5.1	4.9	1.4	15.3
Nova Scotia	1.9	1.4	4.3	4.4	1.1	16.4
New Brunswick	1.9	1.4	4.2	4.3	1.1	20.7
Quebec	2.1	1.5	4.3	4.4	1.1	11.5
Ontario	2.5	2.4	6.6	6.8	1.5	12.5
Manitoba	2.1	1.7	5.3	5.6	1.2	13.7
Saskatchewan	2.1	1.6	4.8	5.2	1.2	12.1
Alberta	2.2	1.9	5.9	6.3	1.3	13.0
British Columbia	2.5	2.6	6.7	7.1	1.4	12.5
Yukon	5.6	2.5	6.3	7.2	1.8	14.0
Northwest Territories	2.3	0.9	1.4	1.8	0.4	13.3
Nunavut	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.5	0.7	16.1

Citizenship and immigration data on Indian reserves and Indian settlements

Persons living on Indian reserves and Indian settlements who were enumerated with the 2011 NHS N2 (on-reserve) questionnaire were not asked the questions on citizenship (Question 10), landed immigrant status (Question 11) and year of immigration (Question 12). Consequently, citizenship, landed immigrant status and year of immigration data are not available for Indian reserves and Indian settlements at census subdivision and lower levels of geography where the majority of the population was enumerated with the N2 questionnaire, rather than with the N1 questionnaire which was administered to the off-reserve population. Citizenship and immigration data are, however, included in the totals for larger geographic areas, such as census divisions and provinces.

For more information on citizenship and immigration data on Indian reserves and Indian settlements, see the [Data Quality and Confidentiality Standards and Guidelines](#) for the National Household Survey.

Comparability with other data sources

The National Household Survey (NHS) is currently Statistics Canada's primary source of data on place of birth, generation status, citizenship and immigration. Prior to 2011, the Census of Population collected information on these concepts.

In addition to the National Household Survey, Statistics Canada has other key data sources on the immigrant population, such as the [Longitudinal Immigration Database \(IMDB\)](#), the [Labour Force Survey](#), the [General Social Survey](#) and the [Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada](#).

Comparing place of birth, generation status, citizenship and immigration data across sources should take into account a number of factors, such as differences in survey target populations, reference period, sampling and collection methods; question wording, questionnaire format, examples and instructions; approaches to data processing; the social and political climate at the time of data collection. For additional information, please see the [National Household Survey User Guide](#), Catalogue no. 99-001-X.