

# Annex I. Other Census questions analysed but finally discarded

Many other questions were studied in both the draft and the suggestions received from the draft and considered as possible candidates for the Censuses. The following sections contain a review of some of the most relevant of these questions and a short justification of why they were not included in the end.

## 1. Residence situation and place of residence of non-residents.

### a) Usefulness

The distinction between *residents* (present and absent) and *non-residents*, as well as the establishing of the place of residence of these persons, allows for a certain approximation of the *genuine* population load in each municipality, which is not always well measured by using the *de jure* population.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- Extensive Census tradition.
- Complements data on the *de jure* population.

#### Against

- Does not measure well the total population *linked to* each municipality
- The concept of *non-resident* has been removed from the register regulations<sup>1</sup>
- The Census concept of *non-resident* (person not living in the dwelling in question at the time of the Census) is too *immediate* to be useful for this purpose
- Coherence between the concepts of present resident, absent resident and non-resident is more theoretical than practical and is, in any case, very difficult to check<sup>2</sup>
- They are not essential for the RI<sup>3</sup>

### c) Justification for not including question

It is preferable to replace the concept of *non-resident* and, therefore, the concept of *de facto population*, with *linked population*, which is understood to be those persons who have some kind of regular link with the municipal in question, whether that is because they live there, work there or study there, or because even though it is not their regular residence, they usually spend certain periods of time there (summers, bank holidays, weekends).

<sup>1</sup> Given the close link proposed between the Register and the Census, the population concepts used in both should be the same.

<sup>2</sup> In particular, it was not possible to check that the person who was registered as a non-resident in one municipality registered as absent and not present in the municipality of residence. This mistake, encouraged by the extensive duration of collection work, could artificially increase the *de facto* population (a significant part of the half a million difference between this population and the *de jure* population in the 91 Census could be caused as a result of this).

<sup>3</sup> The Population Censuses in countries surrounding Spain have developed more and more closely towards the 'de jure' version as in Spain.

## 2. Second place of residence

### a) Usefulness

Knowledge of other places, apart from the regular residence, where members of each household usually spend certain periods of time (with a fixed number  $x$  of days a year), provides very valuable auxiliary information, which improves the estimation of the *genuine* population load of each municipality.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- Will replace the concept of *non-resident*,

#### Against

- Not essential for the RI and is more informative
- As an individual question, it would substantially increase the amount of Census work
- There are less expensive methods, which are similarly precise of obtaining this information (such as the question on 'availability of second dwelling')
- The fixing of a minimum period could be subjective and significantly influence the results

### c) Justification for not including question

Even though it is recognised that, together with the questions on place of work and place of study, this could be the most direct method of measuring the new proposed concept of *linked population*, the question on availability of second dwelling (analysed in the chapter on common variables to each household) provides more information and, being one question only for the whole household, increases the workload to a much lesser extent (it is also easier to define and answer; finally, as the investigation is limited to the municipality where the second dwelling is located, suspicions will not be raised).

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## 3. Living together with relatives

### a) Usefulness

This question, aimed at persons who are classified as related in the *relationship with person n<sup>s</sup>1*, ensures the automatic establishment of all families present in each household-dwelling. More specifically, it allows the detection of non-nuclear families to which person n<sup>s</sup>1 does not belong.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- Guarantees total thoroughness in the

#### Against

- The group at which it is aimed is

automatic identification of families

of little significance (in 1991, persons not related to n<sup>s</sup> 1: less than 150,000; households with 2 or more families: 3,500)

- Not essential for the RI

**c) Justification for not including question**

Its usefulness is too marginal to warrant complicating the questionnaire design in order to include the question. Moreover, there are three other questions referring to relationships and surnames in order to identify with enough precision this rare group of around 3500 households in which 2 or more families live.

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#### 4. Last migration (in the last ten years)

**a) Usefulness**

This type of question measures *migrations* better than the questions relating to a fixed date, which in turn are more useful for comparing Census figures and making subsequent projections. All in all, both types of question are adequately complemented in the research on migration movements.

**b) Arguments for its inclusion**

**For**

- In the 1991 Census, it was included
- In the 2001 Census, the continuous Register won't have been operating for long well covered
- The total measuring of migratory phenomena is increasingly more important for population estimates and projections

**Against**

- Once the continuous Register is up and running, it will be a direct sub-product of its management.
- The migratory section can be well covered without this question (particularly with the new question on the year of arrival to the municipality and place of origin)
- Not essential for the RI

**c) Justification for not including question**

Although its usefulness is valued, it is not considered sufficient to include it as a direct Census question, given that enough information will be provided almost for free from waiting for sufficient years of register management to build up. Moreover, the question on year and place of origin is more useful (which is another variable on latest migration that influences more on the geographical perspective) and including both (and the place of residence ten years ago) would over represent the migratory variables.

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#### 5. Number of live births

**a) Usefulness**

Summarises the fertile behaviour of each woman throughout her life, allowing differential fertility to be studied according to the other Census variables; this is an unquestionably current aspect, given the very low rates birth recorded in Spain in the last few years.

#### b) Arguments for its inclusion

##### For

- Extremely current topic
- Extensive Census tradition

##### Against

- Not essential for the RI
- In '1991', it offended sensibilities (some women believed they were being asked about the number of abortions); in the first test, 20% of women found the question unpleasant and the majority said they would therefore not answer it
- All the basic aspects of the fertility study have been covered in the 1999 Fertility Survey
- A similar question was also included in the previously mentioned Survey on Disabilities (with a considerable sample size: around 75 thousand households)
- This data is not so necessary for small geographical areas (the provincial detail is enough)

#### c) Justification for not including question

The only time this question needs to be inexorably included in the Census is in the case of geographical areas smaller than provinces. No comments have been received from the draft that sufficiently justify using this question (perhaps because of the methodological problems, which migrations and mortality cause at this level of fine detail). As the provincial level is considered to be sufficiently covered (previous Census and VS, Fertility Survey, Survey on Disabilities) and it is a question that is not well received, overloading the household questionnaire (where it should go) with its inclusion cannot be justified.

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## 6. Year of wedding

### a) Usefulness

Given that the number of weddings taking place each year is measured by the Vital Statistics, interest in including this variable comes from the possibility of studying its relationship with other Census variables and, in particular, with the recently analysed statistics on *number of children*. On the other hand, it allows a fixed date to be assessed (the time of the Census) of the dates when all women resident in Spain got married. This *stock* type of information is not available in the Vital Statistics.

## b) Arguments for its inclusion

### For

- Extensive Census tradition
- Information continues to be useful

### Against

- Not essential for the RI
- Has been included in the Fertility Survey and much more specifically
- If it can't be related to the number of children, its usefulness decreases
- Its usefulness for small geographical areas is not clear: provincial detail should be enough

## c) Justification for not including question

The specific usefulness of including this question in the Census does not seem to justify its cost, particularly in terms of the household questionnaire design, which is already maximised

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## 7. Knowledge of foreign languages

### a) Usefulness

Knowledge of foreign languages (particularly English and French) is a very relevant employment qualification factor. Forthcoming and historic advances in the European Union process will increase the importance of this factor even more.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- It's a symbolic *gesture* towards the process of RI Monetary Union, which will be in the final stages in 2001
- The information is useful for the adjustment of education policies

#### Against

- Not essential for the RI
- It would substantially increase the work load
- It can be shocking for some groups (for example, old people from a rural background)
- It's necessity for small geographical areas isn't clear

### c) Justification for not including question

Its inclusion in a Census is not recommended, as it is considered preferable (and necessary) to research it using sample surveys.

## 8. Other social variables (relating to health, income).

### a) **Usefulness**

In other countries (particularly Anglo Saxon countries), Censuses are used for including many other socially interesting characteristics, such as the suffering of persons with disabilities, income levels, religion, race, etc.

In Spain, two of the topics that require more in depth research because of their current relevance (the Fertility Study and social assistance requirements) have been researched specifically using sample surveys. One of these (the Survey on disabilities) has a very generous sample size (around 75 thousand households).

### b) **Justification for not including question**

It is not advisable to include questions on **disabilities**, because they are too specialised and difficult to answer in a Census and because the Survey on Disabilities perfectly covers this lack of important information. Nevertheless, a new category has been included in the question on the relation with activity, which will allow for an estimation of the number of *dependent* persons at such a detailed level as required. One question on the **level of income** of households would be extremely interesting from a methodological point of view, but the questionnaire results from the first test couldn't be more conclusive: around 50 percent of persons considered the question to be unpleasant and the majority of them said that they would therefore leave the question blank.

In terms of the other social variables, although more information is always needed and it is always tempting to include more questions in the Census, it is advisable **not to include any more questions aimed at persons**, as it is important to guarantee that the operation is well received (low workload for citizens, questions that are not too sensitive) and to reduce costs and deadlines.

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## 9. Availability of garage

### a) **Usefulness**

It is an indicator of dwelling comfort and, put in relation with the question on availability of motor vehicles, would provide information on the need for additional parking spaces in garages in each geographic area.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### **For**

- This topic is very current and important

- Particularly useful in a Census for providing data for small geographic areas

#### **Against**

- Not essential for the RI
- Can be researched with less workload at a building level (as in 1990)

### c) **Justification for not including question**

It will be researched, as in 1990, at a building level

## 10. Number of rooms used for professional uses and other questions on the internal distribution of dwellings

### a) Usefulness

The question on *rooms used exclusively for professional uses* allows us to better specify the available space in a dwelling for residential purposes.

The question on *kitchens* should provide (even though in 1991 the formulation was not adequate and didn't achieve this) more information on the distribution of the dwelling.

The question on *the number of bedrooms* (not included in 1991) has this same aim.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

#### Against

#### *Number of professional rooms*

- When comparing with the number of residents, it is advisable to deduct them from the total rooms
- Not essential for the RI

- In 1991, only 2 percent of dwellings had any professional rooms, 90 percent of which only had one

#### *Kitchen*

#### For

#### Against

- Essential for the RI

- In 1991, only 0.3 percent answered no
- The definition proposed in the RI does not make sense in Spain (all dwellings would have a *kitchen* according to this definition)
- Even in terms of an *independent kitchen*, the question doesn't appear to be very useful (according to the Household Panel, more than 98 percent have a kitchen)

#### *Number of bedrooms*

- Would allow for a better understanding of the distribution of dwellings for the RI
- Not essential

- The concept of *bedroom* is also less clear and relevant than current architectural trends

### c) Justification for not including question

The *kitchen* is expressly advised against, as it is not considered to be relevant (according to Spanish custom, practically all main dwellings have a kitchen and the vast majority have an independent kitchen).

In terms of the *number of professional rooms*, it is not clear whether this question's usefulness is enough to justify its inclusion as a separate variable.

Finally, the *number of bedrooms* is also not interesting enough, nor has it received any support in the suggestions received during the draft stage.

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## 11. Drinking water pipe material

### a) Usefulness

This would allow us to estimate the number of dwellings that continue to have lead piping, which, according to a recent European directive on water quality for human consumption, might need to be replaced in buildings that are more than 20 years old.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- This topic is important for public health
- Particularly useful in a Census to provide data for small geographical areas

#### Against

- Not essential for the RI
- Difficult to answer

### c) Justification for not including question

Despite valuing its potential usefulness, it does not appear to be an adequate question for the Census: in the first test, 40 percent of persons said that they wouldn't respond to this question, as they didn't know the answer. Moreover, as it is not possible to use the information on an individual basis due to statistical secrecy, its practical usefulness is considerably reduced.

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## 12. Living together with father, mother and spouse/partner

### a) Usefulness

These three questions would have been used to automatically determine all nuclear families (see the definition in chapter 4) and to complete the information on relationships in the previous question, *Relationship with person 1*, which is insufficient for identifying the nuclear units to which this person does not belong when the family structure is complex.

### b) Arguments for its inclusion

#### For

- Allows us to completely automate the formation of nuclear families

#### Against

- With simple family structures it is not necessary (the *relationship with person 1* is enough) and its repetition, causes inconsistency rather than

helping

- Easy to understand
- Tends to present mistakes (because the person that completes the questionnaire sometimes makes mistakes when putting themselves in the position of other members)

**c) Justification for not including question**

Previous knowledge, via the Register, of such determining relationship variables as age, sex and surnames, mean that it is inefficient to ask this question indiscriminately to all persons in all households (as was done in the 1991 Census, where the aforementioned information was not available).

In the first pilot test the option of including this question in all household questionnaires was tried (independently of the complexity of the family structure, which is deduced from the Register data), but asking that only persons who have marked a non-trivial category in the question on *Relationship with person 1* answer (spouse, children and siblings in particular are excused from answering this question). As well as the inconvenience, understood in advance, of the question featuring in all questionnaires, taking up space (therefore making the design difficult) and increasing the *subjective* effort made by citizens, the results of the first test show a significant percentage answer the question without having to, further complicating the joint filtering of the questions on relationships.

Thus, the possibility of removing this question from all questionnaires was studied (the perfect solution from all points of view). And the result has been positive, as we have ensured that the availability of surnames, the adequate selection of person 1 and some other controllable methodological details (for example, the use of a number of envelopes for the same space in order to have a number of person 1s) can reduce the number of ambiguous cases to a perfectly (qualitative and quantitative) workable minimum.