Western Development Commission (WDC) Response to the CSO Consultation on Census 2027

Introduction

The Western Development Commission proposed two new questions for the Census of Population 2027. The submission was made online using the CSO's survey format. This is a record of what was drafted for submission.

Helen McHenry
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FIRST QUESTION

Q2.1   Q2.2 Please provide a wording for your proposed new or changed question

We propose a follow on or additional question to Question 19 on how people travel to work school college or childcare:

Do you use any other modes as part of this journey? (please mark all that apply)
1. On foot
2. Bicycle
3. Bus, minibus or coach
4. Train, DART or LUAS
5. Motorcycle or scooter
6. Driving a car
7. Passenger in a car
8. Van
9. Other (including lorry)

(Same list as provided in Q19.)

Q2.3 Reason for submission

Q3.1 What is the purpose of the user need?

People often use more than one mode of travel when making a journey. We need better information on whether multiple modes are used, and which these are and how they combine. Data on journeys collected in the Census concentrates on the main mode used, so our understanding of multi modal travel is limited. Increased use of other modes as part of a single journey will make an important of developing sustainable mobility. In order to better understand travel patterns and make relevant improvements in sustainable mobility options more data on modes used needs to be collected and available. Census data is one of the few comprehensive data sources which is particularly valuable for transport and local authority planning, given the sparsity of other data available at county level.

The specific need for the data at a small area level

Ideally these data would be available at the lowest spatial level, subject to confidentiality constraints. At a minimum these data need to be available at county level and town (>1,500) level.

The availability of county level data is critical to measuring economic and social change at a local level. This level of information would be very important for local authority planning and the development of local sustainable mobility options.

Q3.2 Please provide a description of the analysis that will be required, including cross tabular

The data on secondary travel modes should be available for analysis and cross tabs by
- Type of journey (work, school, college or childcare)
- rural and urban population by county
- Town > 1,500
- Age
- Occupation
- Number of cars in the household
- Combinations of mode types used.

SECOND QUESTION

Q2.1 **Q2.2 Please provide a wording for your proposed new or changed question**

We propose a follow on or sub question to Household Question 10. How many cars or vans are owned or are available for use by one or more members of your household?

What fuel type are the cars in your household? Please mark all those that apply [alternatively could request to write numbers in boxes]:

1. Petrol
2. Diesel
3. Hybrid
4. Plug in hybrid
5. Electric Vehicle
6. Other: this might include liquid biofuels, biogas, and potential hydrogen, but it is not expected there will be many in these categories.

(Alternatively the CSO categories used for data registration or licensing might be used, but some may be too complex)

Q2.3 Reason for submission

Q3.1 What is the purpose of the user need?

It is important we have more detailed understanding of types of cars/other vehicles in the household. We propose a simple fuel type question. While data is available on new car sales there is little detailed information on changes in the car fleet (through second hand sales and vehicle retirements etc.) that will be taking place over the coming decades. A question on fuel type in 2027 would be a very important measure of the change to more sustainable car fuel types, and the pattern of uptake over the longer term.

The specific need for the data at a small area level

Ideally these data would be available at the lowest spatial level, subject to confidentiality constraints. At a minimum these data need to be available at county level, with a rural urban breakdown. The availability of county level data is critical to measuring economic and social change at a local level. This level of information would is very important for local authority planning and the development of local sustainable mobility options.

Q3.2 Please provide a description of the analysis that will be required, including cross tabular

The data on car fuel type should be available for analysis and cross tabs by
- rural and urban population (at county level) by county
- town >1,500
- Age
- Occupation
- Number of cars in the household
- Mode of travel to work/school/childcare

Closing comments

Census data is one of the few comprehensive data sources which is particularly valuable for transport and local authority planning, given the sparsity of other data available at county level.

The WDC (www.wdc.ie) is a statutory agency with responsibility for promoting economic and social development in the Western Region[1]. One of the WDC's key roles is to advocate policy for the region, based on robust evidence and in doing this the WDC regularly analyses Census data. Of particular importance are the following variables; Population by area, Demographic results, Ages, Occupation and Industry, Migration, Education, Employment, Transport, Travel and Commuting.

The Census is one of the few data sources which provides information at county and sub county levels and is therefore a very important source for assessing the economic and social situation of the Western Region.

We hope that these suggestions are useful and will be adopted. We would be happy to discuss any of the points raised. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me at helenmchenry@wdc.ie

Q6
Census 2027 provides an opportunity to introduce questions which will provide us with key information and help us to monitor the transition to a low carbon society to 2050 and onwards.
It is an important area of social changes which needs to be captured in the Census over time.

Q7
The WDC (www.wdc.ie) is a statutory agency with responsibility for promoting economic and social development in the Western Region. One of the WDC's key roles is to advocate policy for the region, based on robust evidence and in doing this the WDC regularly analyses Census data. Of particular importance are the following variables; Population by area, Demographic results, Ages, Occupation and Industry, Migration, Education, Employment, Transport, Travel and Commuting.

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[1] Counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare.

We are also interested in economy and income data at county and sub regional level. The Geographic Profiles of Income produced by the CSO using census and secondary data is very important to and we hope it will be repeated after Census 2022. We have an interest in monitoring and understanding the move to a low carbon society in the coming decades. We hope the questions on renewable energy and remote working introduced for Census 2022 will also prove very useful.

The WDC region does not correspond to NUTS 2 or NUTS 3 regional classifications, therefore the availability of county level data is critical to measuring the WDC Western Region. The Census is one of the few data sources which provides information at county and sub county levels and is therefore a very important source for assessing the economic and social situation of the Western Region.

In order to better understand the transition to a low carbon society including more sustainable transport ,and to make relevant improvements in sustainable mobility options, more data on types of vehicles in households needs to be collected and available. Census data is one of the few comprehensive data sources which is particularly valuable for transport planning at a variety of spatial levels.
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Adoption of different vehicles fuel type is thought to have different patterns of adoption across Ireland. The WDC has developed a Sustainable Mobility Index (which uses some census and other secondary data sources). The index is replicable over time but there is a lack of available data on more sustainable car journey (based on fuel type). This proposed question would give us better insight into the way people travel and the choices they make about this.