



National Household Survey

National Household Survey: content, collection, quality and dissemination

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Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada



Outline of the presentation

- Context of the National Household Survey (NHS)
- Content and survey universe
- Sample and collection design
- Dissemination



National Household Survey (NHS) – the context

- Statistics Canada conducted the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS) in 2011, at the same time as the Census
- This is the largest voluntary household survey conducted by Statistics Canada

Survey objective: to provide users with data at the small geography level and for small populations



NHS content and universe

- NHS content is identical to what would have been collected in the 2011 Census long-form
- Survey universe is similar to that of the 2011 Census
- Reference date is the same as the 2011 Census:
May 10, 2011



NHS content

- Demography: age, sex, marital status, household relationships (new: stepfamily, same sex married spouse, foster child)
- Activities of daily living
- Socio-cultural information: citizenship, immigration, languages, ethnicity, population group, religion (new: terminology for Aboriginal peoples)
- Mobility (now asked for all persons in each household)
- Place of birth of parents (now asked for all persons)



NHS content

- Education
- Labour (new: unpaid work will be part of the General Social Survey; time taken to commute to work; vehicle occupancy; more modes of transportation; payments for child required to work at a paid job; and, child or spousal support payments to a former spouse or partner)
- Income (new: capital gains or losses)
- Dwelling (housing) (new: subsidized housing; renters in condominiums)



NHS sample design

Objective: to better control potential data bias

- Two phases of sampling: the initial sample and sub-sample to follow up non-responding household



NHS sample design

Phase 1 of sample selection (the initial sample)

Objective: to ensure uniform likelihood of releasing reliable data for small geographies and small populations

- a large random sample of 4.5 million dwellings, approximately one-third of all dwellings in Canada (a general sampling fraction = 30%)
- sampling allocation (fractions) slightly adjusted based on collection mode (mail-out, list/leave, canvasser)



NHS sample design

Phase 2 of sample selection (the sub-sample)

Objective: to control for potential bias and, to some extent, sampling variation

- a random sub-sample selected from the non-responding households (as of July 14, 2011), which were selected for the initial sample in Phase 1
- an allocation of sub-sample varied by geography and was a function of the level of non-response and the degree of population homogeneity



Collection design: 'wave' methodology

'Wave' methodology

Objective: introduce effective invitations to encourage high level of respond to the survey in general and the use of the Internet as the preferred response mode specifically

- different types of reminders to complete a questionnaire used at specific times throughout a collection period



Collection: how did we do?

Response rate for the NHS at the Canada level:

- 68.6% (unweighted) for occupied private dwellings
- very high response from the Internet (44.7%)



NHS collection response rate by province and territory

Province and territory	Unweighted response rate (%)	Weighted response rate (%)
Canada	68.6	77.2
Newfoundland & Labrador	63.3	72.5
Prince Edward Island	60.4	70.0
Nova Scotia	65.0	74.8
New Brunswick	63.9	74.2
Quebec	71.9	80.7
Ontario	67.6	76.3
Manitoba	69.1	76.3
Saskatchewan	63.8	73.1
Alberta	67.3	75.4
British Columbia	69.5	77.1
Yukon	64.9	72.7
Northwest Territories	83.9	83.8
Nunavut	76.3	76.3



Collection: how did we do?

- **Within provinces and territories:** response was good in all large urban population centers;
- **For returned questionnaires:** completeness of responses to questions related to respondents demographic, socio-cultural, language, mobility and education characteristics are comparable to the 2006 Census long-form responses; for the remainder (the last parts of the questionnaire), non-response is higher than in 2006
- **Challenges:** forest fires in Northern Alberta and Northern Ontario; widespread flooding in Manitoba and Quebec; postal disruptions across the country



Communicating data quality to users

Several documents will be prepared and available with released data:

- NHS User Guide
- Reference guides specific to NHS topics
- NHS Dictionary
- Measure of sampling error



NHS release dates and topics

The NHS data will be released in three installments:

- **May 8, 2013:** immigration, citizenship, place of birth, language, ethnic origin, visible minorities, religion, Aboriginal peoples
- **June 26, 2013:** labour, education, place of work, commuting to work, mobility and migration, language at work
- **August 14, 2013:** income, earnings, housing, shelter costs



Products available from NHS

- Similar set of data products as with the 2006 Census long-form data are planned, subject to data quality
- Similar strategy will be used as with releases of the 2011 Census data (staggered releases):
 - on release day: a main analytical document, *NHS in Brief* with supplementing analysis, a basic set of data tables, NHS (community) profiles
 - subsequent products: to be determined depending on quality of NHS results