

Current Research for Improving Race and Ethnicity Federal Data: Maintenance, Collection, and Presentation

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Maintenance of Race and Ethnicity Data

- Maintenance of race and ethnicity data requires:
 - High quality, accurate, and reliable data
 - Ability to track trends over time
- Statistical techniques, like bridging and imputation, help to maintain trends and present complete data across different agencies.



Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data

- Data collection instruments need to be understandable for respondents.
- Outdated terms and unclear instructions hinder the ability of agencies to collect accurate and reliable data.
- Census 2020 will implement changes aimed at improving the way race and ethnicity data are collected.
- Research by the IWG was primarily aimed at ways to improve the **collection** of race and ethnicity data, but attention was given to maintenance and reporting as well.



Presentation of Race and Ethnicity Data

- Once collected, data on race and ethnicity are often presented to the public.
- It's important that these data are presented in a way that is clear and understandable for general audiences.
- The way that data are collected and reported doesn't always align, especially for small groups where data may not meet agency standards for publication. Clear documentation to help constituent groups understand this issue is important.

Discussion Questions

- Aside from conforming to the OMB Standards, what sort of sources/evidence do Federal agencies consider in regard to improving data on race and ethnicity?
- How do Federal agencies weigh potential changes in the collection of race and ethnicity data against the desire to maintain consistent trends? How are changes in data collection efforts reported to the public?
- Are there things that agencies can do to more clearly communicate data on race and ethnicity to the general public?