



Taking leave of our Census

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Summer 2010: Long Form Scrapped



- June 17: Cabinet votes to scrap it
- June 26: Published in the Canada Gazette
- June 30: Media picks up the story
- July 13: Government informs the public

Public Health Leads the Charge



488 Groups Oppose Government Decision

- Public health and health care professions
- Boards of trade
- Social justice groups
- Chambers of commerce
- Social planning councils
- Community groups
- Researchers
- Economists
- Epidemiologists
- Faith-based groups
- Charities
- Child welfare organizations
- Housing groups
- Educators
- Librarians
- Geographers
- Funders and foundations
- Lawyers
- Restaurants and food service businesses
- Historians
- Immigrant and settlement groups
- Demographers
- Sociologists
- Office of the Ombudsman
- Transit experts
- Civil rights groups
- Academics
- City planners
- Independent business
- Municipalities
- Provincial governments
- Aboriginal groups
- Anti-poverty activists
- Food bank
- Former bank economist
- Newspaper editorial boards
- Journalists
- Statisticians
- Consultants
- Unions
- Seniors
- Women's groups
- Human rights commission
- Students
- Social workers
- Actuaries
- LGBT groups
- Marketers
- Polling companies
- Advocates for democracy
- Political parties
- Child care rights groups

Rally to Save the Census on Parliament Hill



'Count Me In'



Chief Statistician Resigns

“This is a methodology that Statistics Canada offered us and if it’s good enough for Statistics Canada, it should be good enough for some of our critics.”

- Minister Clement

“I came to the conclusion that I cannot be the head of an agency whose reputation has suffered.”

- Dr. Munir Sheikh following his resignation as Chief Statistician for Statistics Canada

All Hail the Chief (Statistician)



Statistics Canada Surveys: Cut or Compromised

- Workplace and Employee Survey discontinued 2009
- Survey of Household Spending - methodology changed to save money, lost data in the process
- Participation and Activity Limitation Survey – cancelled

“Without a foundation of reliable, consistent information, evidence-based public policy is impossible. It is troubling to think that our elected leaders think decision-based evidence-making is preferable.”

- Armine Yalnizyan,
Senior Economist,
Canadian Centre for Policy
Alternatives

Loss of the Long Form

- Dr. David Hulchanski, University of Toronto, **“Three Cities Research”**
- Social Planning Toronto, **“Toronto Social Landscape”, “Action on Poverty Ward Profiles”** and **“Sick and Tired: The Compromised Health of Social Assistance Recipients and the Working Poor in Ontario”**
- Toronto Public Health
 - Service planning
 - Understanding Toronto’s diverse population
 - Identifying priority populations
 - Describing and reporting on health status of groups (e.g. **“The Health of Toronto’s Young Children”**) and continued surveillance
 - Identifying and understanding health inequalities (**“The Unequal City”**)
 - Identifying sub-populations by number and location to increase the effectiveness of disease prevention and control strategies

Alternate Data Sources

- Taxfiler data – no socio-cultural information
- Statistics Canada surveys – statistical weights based on the long form
- Do your own survey – funds, response bias
- Qualitative research – opportunities for partnership, ways to better understand equity-seeking groups, not a replacement for population health data

National Household Survey

- Statistics Canada estimates 50% response rate
- Response bias inherent to all surveys
- \$30 million additional cost for worse outcome
- Complicating factors:
 - Boycott over loss of mandatory long form
 - Boycott over arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin involvement

The Right to Be Counted

Charter Challenge

- Section 15 (1) equality rights provision of charter
- Right to be counted on basis of race, ethnic origin, Aboriginal ancestry and disability status
- Speaks to importance of census in reflecting back to us who we are as a country and who belongs
- 2011 census creates a distinction between groups that are counted (age, sex, marital status) and those that are not
- Exclusion of groups constitutes discrimination and perpetuates the stereotype that certain communities are less worthy of being seen as part of Canada's national portrait than others

Taking the Long View on the Long Form

- Next federal election
– October 19, 2015
- Next census - 2016
- Build community and political support
- Return to a gold standard of data collection

Thank You!

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