HETEROGENEITY/GRANULARITY IN ETHNICITY CLASSIFICATIONS OUTSIDE THE US

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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OUTLINE

- Background and aim

- Briefly –Methods/Scope of enquiry

- Results – focus on effects of migration

- Conclusions

COMPLEXITY OF GLOBAL MIGRATION FLOWS 2005-2010

■ The changing nature of global migration and increasing diversity of populations have transformed the social landscape of many countries.
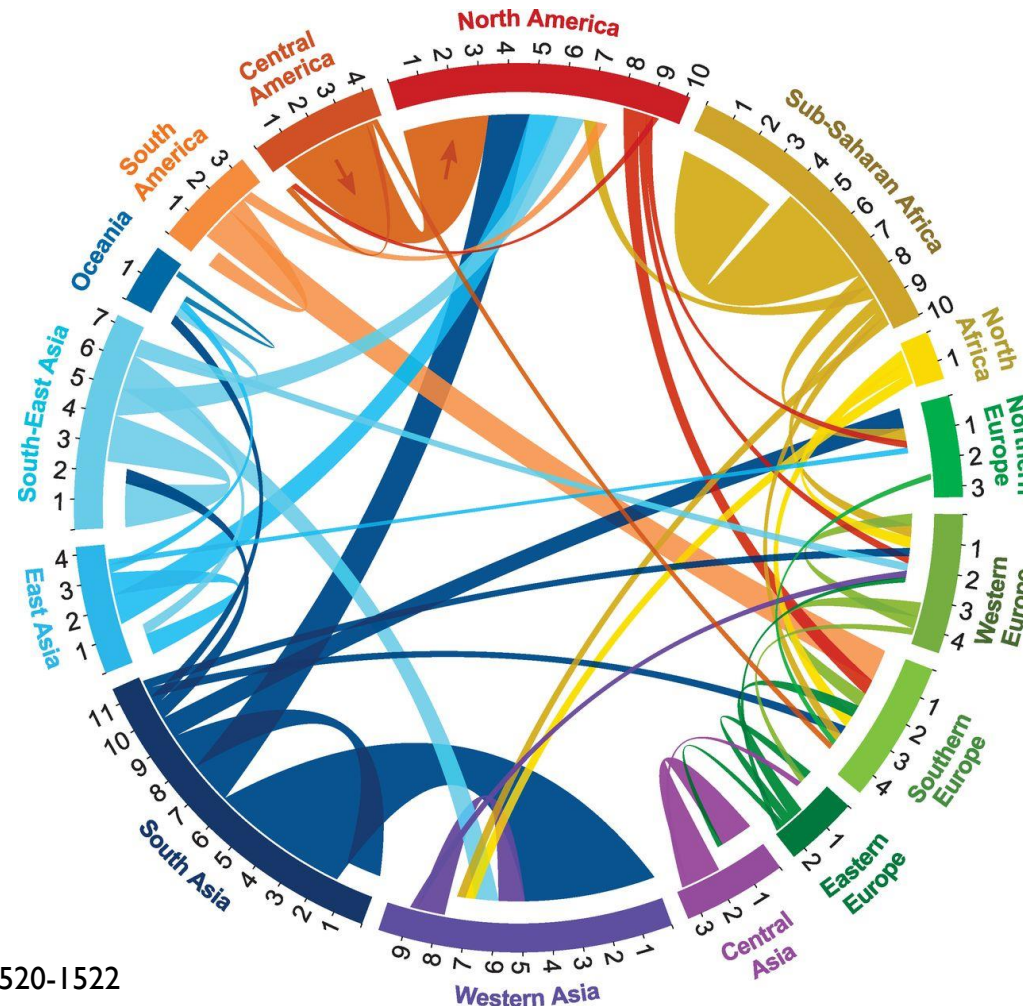
■ The number of international migrants (people residing in a country other than their country of birth) reached 244 million in 2015

BACKGROUND

- Working with such <u>complex social movements/formations</u> has challenged public health, and also other private/public agencies

- Demographic data are required (e.g. by ethnicity) that can appropriately capture such population heterogeneity and recognize how identities are produced and flux

- For public health, this information is necessary:

  - to identify the **health needs** of diverse groups

  - to detect and address **inequities** in healthcare provision and outcomes.

BACKGROUND AND AIM

- Project to identify and develop strategies and opportunities for disaggregating ethnic/racial group data in the US

- Approached UoE team. Aim: identify global approaches lessons from the EU and selected countries (outside Europe and the US) with exemplary models related to collecting, reporting on and analysing granular ethnic classifications

METHODS/SCOPE OF ENQUIRY

1. **European overview**

   - examined population registers and census of EU28 countries to identify granularity of approaches to classification

   - Definition of granularity based on the OMB Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity - considered to be granular (having a fine level of detail) those countries that collected more than 6 ethnic categories

2. **Seven in-depth reports** from countries identified as potentially having valuable lessons in their approaches to ethnic classification.

   - Partnered with expert investigators

   - Great Britain, Denmark, Hungary, Aotearoa New Zealand, Malaysia, Canada, Bolivia

RESULTS FOR EU-28 COUNTRIES
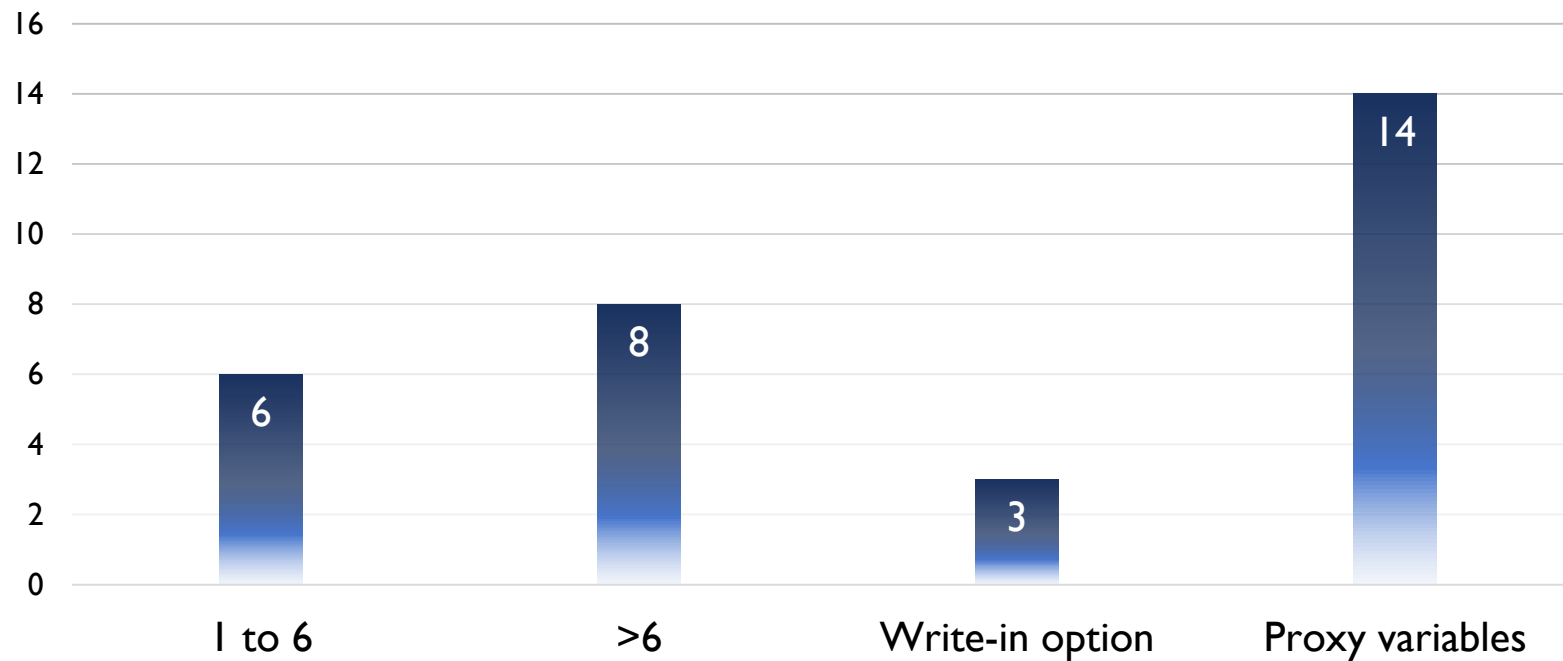
One to six ethnic group categories

More than six ethnic group categories

With only a write-in option for ethnicity

With proxy variables for ethnicity

RESULTS FOR EU-28 COUNTRIES

EU-28 countries and number of ethnic categories

RESULTS FOR EU-28 COUNTRIES

- Lack of data collection by ethnic categories in EU28

- Where ethnicity is recorded the number of <u>categories vary widely</u> and ethnicity is conceptualized in different ways with consequent diverse terminology

- Ethnic categories influenced by

  - historical events

  - politics and legislation

  - ideology and sensitivity towards cultural identity

  - ongoing migration patterns

There is diversity in how ethnicity is conceptualized and terminology used

A17	What is your ethnicity?
	1 Estonian **3** Ukrainian **5** Finnish
	2 Russian **4** Byelorussian **6** Other ethnicity (NOTE)............................

10. ETHNIC/RELIGIOUS GROUP

Is ....?

Greek Cypriot..	1
Armenian..	2
Maronite..	3
Latin..	4
Turkish Cypriot...	5

What is your ethnic group?

Choose **ONE** section from A to F, then tick **ONE** box which **best describes** your ethnic group or background

A. White
- ☐ Scottish
- ☐ Other British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy/Traveller
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Other white ethnic group, please write in…

B. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- ☐ Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in…

C. Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British
- ☐ Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- ☐ Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- ☐ Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British
- ☐ Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British
- ☐ Other, please write in…

Where there is granularity, there is variation in the focus of disaggregating categories

What is your nationality understood as the national or ethnic affiliation?
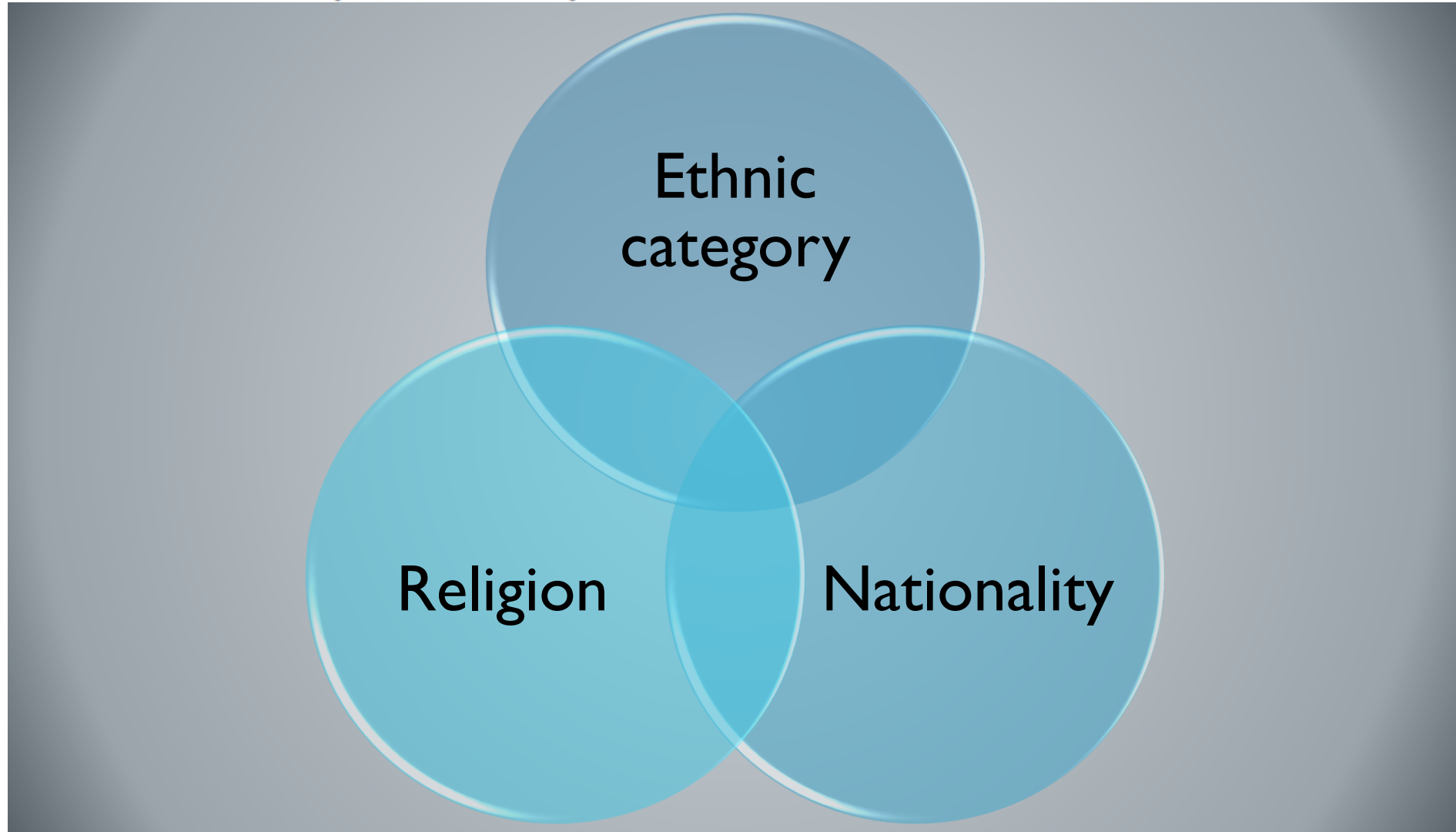
EXAMPLE: SOUTHERN-EUROPE (PROXY VARIABLES FOR ETHNICITY)

GEOGRAPHICAL REGION	COUNTRIES	CENSUS/POPULATION REGISTER YEAR	PROXY VARIABLES FOR ETHNICITY
SOUTHERN-EUROPE	MALTA	2011	CoB and citizenship
	SPAIN	2011	CoB, nationality and parents' CoB
	ITALY	2001	CoB, citizenship
	GREECE	2001	CoB, citizenship
	PORTUGAL	2011	Nationality

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

EACH PERSON IS FREE TO EXPRESS HIS OR HER OPINION, WITHOUT ANY CONSTRAINTS

WHAT ETHNIC GROUP DOES THE PERSON CONSIDER HE/SHE BELONGS TO? ....

11. Ethnicity
Information is not obligatory.
You may state two ethnicities.

RESULTS OF 7 IN DEPTH COUNTRY REPORTS

- These countries demonstrate a diversity of approaches to ethnic group classifications internationally which follow a complex pattern.

- Outside the EU:

  - Bolivia, Aotearoa New Zealand and Canada particularly focus on categorisation of their indigenous populations – relating to indigenous rights

  - Malaysia has a focus on identifying their Bumiputera population – a politically defined ethnic group

  - Aotearoa New Zealand appears to have the most developed and granular approach

- Many **contextual factors** influencing the development of systems of classification – whether ethnicity is collected, the degree of granularity, and the concepts/terminology

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Historical:
Colonisation
Migration (varying contexts & experiences)
Conflict
Abuse of data
Discrimination

Political
Political rights
Assimilation
Bi/Multi-culturalism
Immigration policies
Economic policies
Political agendas

Geographical
Global position
Shifting boundaries
Migration flows
Globalisation (increase 'mixed' populations)

Social
Indigenous rights
Activism/lobbying
Ethnocentrism
Stigma and discrimination
Social tension ('migrant crisis')

- Statistics New Zealand has a standard official definition of ethnicity

- 4 levels of categorisation ranging from 8 categories + free text response (level 1) to over 230 categories (level 4)

- Health sector protocols require ethnicity to be recorded at a minimum of level two (21 ethnic categories)

- Allows for multiple responses (up to 6 per person and counted in all groups)

- However, even with this system, still a tendency to revert to aggregate categories in analysis and reporting

11 Which ethnic group do you belong to?
Mark the space or spaces which apply to you.

- New Zealand European
- Māori
- Samoan
- Cook Island Maori
- Tongan
- Niuean
- Chinese
- Indian
- other (such as DUTCH, JAPANESE, TOKELAUAN). Please state:

WHY DISAGGREGATED DATA NOT COLLECTED

- Identified reasons why disaggregated data not collected:

  - organisational factors; for example, the logistics and cost of designing and implementing new categories (e.g. UK, Denmark)

  - methodological reasons and administrative barriers

  - a lack of advocacy for greater granularity

  - fear of stigma (e.g. Hungary) and potential for harm (e.g. Canada)

  - political reasons

  - tendencies towards still aggregating data at the point of analysis (e.g. Aotearoa New Zealand)

CONCLUSIONS

- Internationally there is <u>great variation in approaches to ethnic classification</u>, and granularity of data, including: underlying <u>concept of ethnicity</u>; the number of categories used; the way in which questions are phrased; the format of responses permitted; and to what level responses are analysed.

- These diverse approaches appear to be contingent on <u>contextual factors unique to each country</u>, including the country's social, political, economic, historical and geographical circumstances.

- Therefore <u>problematic to specify an ideal way 'globally'</u> that data should be collected, analysed and reported – we can identify and share good practice and work towards generating a set of consideration/principles

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WORLD CONGRESS ON MIGRATION, ETHNICITY, RACE AND HEALTH IN EDINBURGH IN MAY 2018

- **http://www.merhcongress.com/**

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