The Canadian Census of Population Experience on Using Respondents' Feedback to Improve Collection

UNECE Expert Meeting on Statistical Data Collection

June 12th - June 14th, 2023

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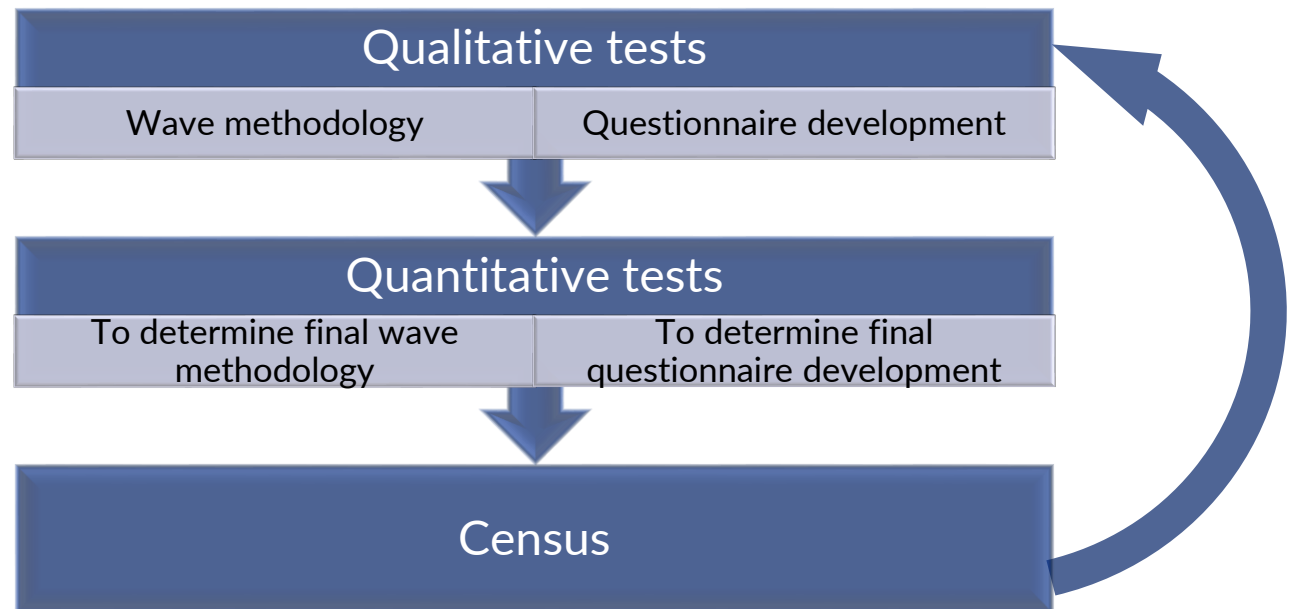Delivering insight through data for a better Canada

Canada

Background

- The Canadian Census of Population is conducted every five years (the most recent collection: summer of 2021)

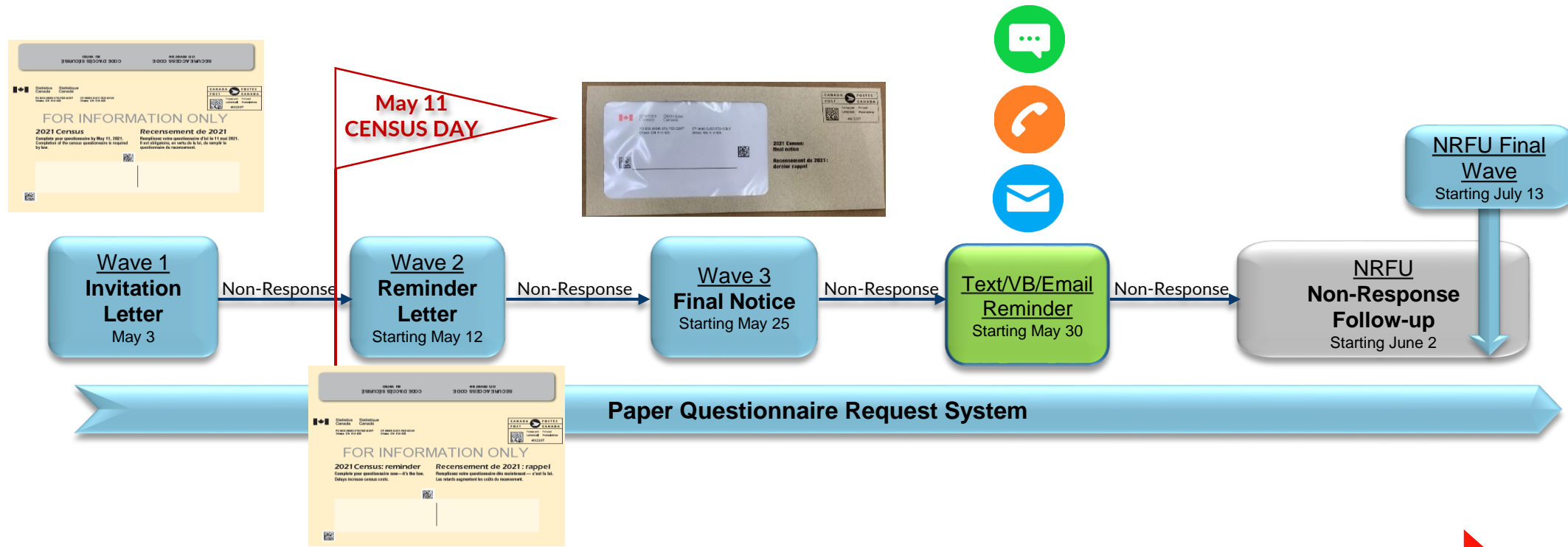- Has a tradition of using the scientific approach to make continuous improvements

Qualitative tests	
Wave methodology	Questionnaire development

Quantitative tests	
To determine final wave methodology	To determine final questionnaire development

Census

*The content of this presentation represents the position of the authors and may not necessarily represent that of Statistics Canada

2021 Census Wave Methodology

- Consists of a series of well-timed contacts with non-responding households to prompt response

May 11
CENSUS DAY

Wave 1
Invitation Letter
May 3

→ Non-Response →

Wave 2
Reminder Letter
Starting May 12

→ Non-Response →

Wave 3
Final Notice
Starting May 25

→ Non-Response →

Text/VB/Email Reminder
Starting May 30

→ Non-Response →

NRFU
Non-Response Follow-up
Starting June 2

NRFU Final Wave
Starting July 13

Paper Questionnaire Request System

Increased focus on mandatory nature of the Census and consequences of not responding

3

Qualitative Tests

- one-on-one cognitive interviews with participants

  - on wave methodology and questionnaire development
  - to assess the effectiveness of the wave reminders, questionnaire content changes, and other possible improvements for future Censuses
  - to narrow down the options to test for the quantitative phase

- The participants were selected intelligently to ensure that diverse sociodemographic profiles are represented

- Valuable feedback from participants helped in determining what should be tested quantitatively

Quantitative Tests

- Large scale probabilistic sample (sample size ~135K dwellings in 2019)

- Representative for mail-out in all provinces

- Experimental design with panels (control vs. treatment) to test
    - Wave methodology
    - Questionnaire development

- Weights and bootstrap weights for valid statistical inference
    - To suggest final wave methodology and questionnaire for the Census

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Quantitative Test in 2019 (Wave 3)

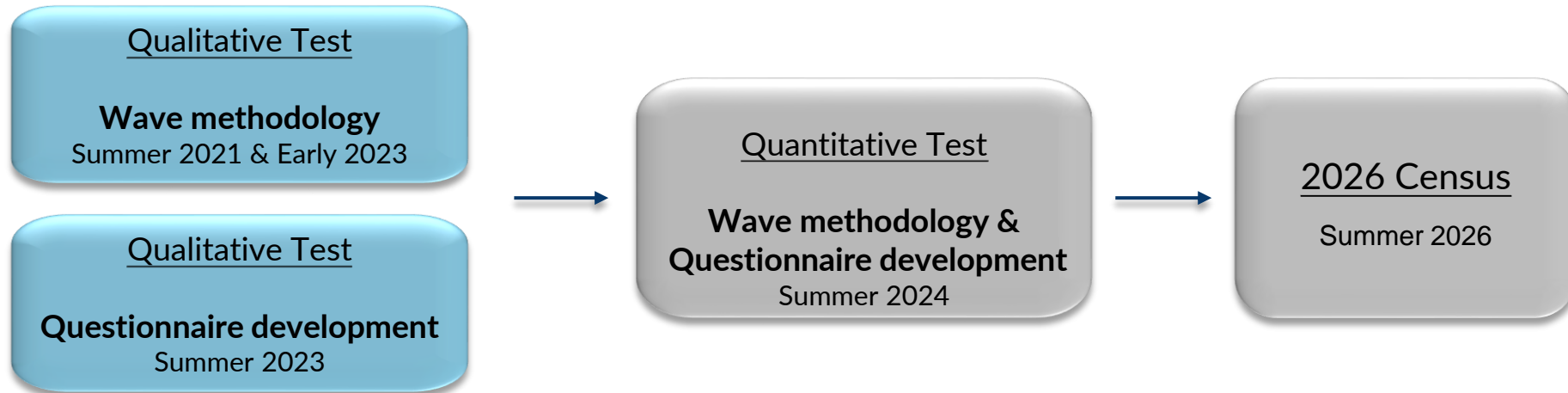| Questionnaire Package	Self-Mailer	Letter With Envelope

The 2021 Census

- Successful during pandemic
  - High response, self-response, EQ rates

Census Year	Response Rates (Global)	Self-Response Rates	EQ Rates
2021	98.0%	88.1%	84.1%
2016	98.4%	88.8%	68.3%

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Strategy Preparing the 2026 Census

Qualitative Test

Wave methodology
Summer 2021 & Early 2023

Qualitative Test

Questionnaire development
Summer 2023

Quantitative Test

**Wave methodology &
Questionnaire development**
Summer 2024

2026 Census

Summer 2026

Conclusion

- Scientific approach

- Leverage respondents' feedbacks
  - Multiple phases
  - Multiple purpose

- Iterative process

Thank you! / Merci!

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