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Revising the Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses for the 2030 round:

Household & family characteristics

Developing the Recommendations on Household and Family Characteristics

Note by the Conference of European Statisticians Task Force on Household and Family Characteristics*

Summary

This document includes the draft chapter on Household and Family Characteristics for the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Recommendations for the 2030 round of population and housing censuses, and a summary of the changes introduced in comparison to the Recommendations for the previous, 2020 round. The main purpose of the document is to elicit comments and suggestions from national census experts on the proposed text, to ensure that it reflects the needs and priorities of national statistical offices.

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I. Introduction

1. Every ten years the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) issues Recommendations to guide countries in conducting their population and housing censuses. The Recommendations are developed by expert task forces overseen by the CES Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses.
2. The scope of this chapter is limited to census content describing relationships within households. The chapter is organized into three key topics:
 1. Household characteristics
 2. Family characteristics
 3. Household and family characteristics of persons
3. Each of these three topics follows a common organizational structure, specifically:
 1. Definitions
 2. Methodological considerations
 3. Core classifications
 4. Non-core classifications
4. The classifications recommended in this chapter are presented in Table 1:

Table 1

The classifications recommended in this chapter

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Core classifications</i>	<i>Non-core classifications</i>
Household characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private household size • Private household type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of institutional household
Family characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family nucleus type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstituted family type
Household and family characteristics of persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private household type of person • Household living arrangement and family nucleus status of person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of person's grandparent(s) in the household • Presence of person's parent(s) in household • Extended family status of person

5. Section II of this document summarizes the changes introduced in comparison to the Recommendations for the previous, 2020 round.
6. Section III presents the draft chapter on household and family characteristics for the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Recommendations for the 2030 round of population and housing censuses.
7. The main purpose of the document is to elicit comments and suggestions from national census experts on the proposed draft text, to ensure that it reflects the needs and priorities of national statistical offices.

II. Summary of changes from the 2020 round

8. The summary of changes from the 2020 round is presented in Table 2:

Table 2

Summary of key revisions to the Recommendations for Household and Family Characteristics

<i>Nature of change</i>	<i>Topic and description</i>	<i>Rationale for change</i>
Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durable consumer goods possessed by the household (non-core topic) • Number of cars available for the use of the household (non-core topic) • Availability of car parking (non-core topic) • Telephone and internet connection (non-core topic) • Other household classifications (non-core topic) 	These topics were considered outside the scope of the chapter, as household and family characteristics are restricted to <i>relationships between household members</i> .
	Homelessness	Most of the discussion of this topic will be incorporated into a section of the enumeration chapter focused on various subpopulations that are challenging to enumerate.
Additions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of person's parent in household (non-core topic) • Presence of person's grandparent in household (non-core topic) 	The task force agreed that these two non-core topics were merited given societal changes in many CES countries, which have led to a rise in these types of living arrangements.
Revisions	Replace term "lone-parent family" with "one-parent family"	Implemented to use more value-neutral language.
	Replace term "three-generation household" with "three-or-more-generation household"	Implemented to provide greater clarity as the associated definition refers to three or more generations, not only three generations.
Revisions to classification	All classifications	<p>All classifications were revised in an effort to clarify and simplify the text, focusing on key categorical distinctions that were most likely to have widespread relevance to member countries.</p> <p>Any distinctions related to sex, gender, specific types of couple unions and specific age groups are removed. It was agreed that it was unnecessary to impose such distinctions in classification recommendations, as the relevance and nature of these distinctions will vary depending on analytical goals and specific country settings.</p>

III. Draft text for the chapter on household and family characteristics for the Recommendations for the 2030 round of population and housing censuses

A. Introduction

1. Establishing household membership of the population

1. It is recommended that the usual place of residence be used to determine whether a person resides in an institutional household, a private household, or neither (i.e., the unhoused population). If only legal residence is available (for example when using a population register method), then that information can be used if it is judged to reflect the usual residence situation of the population with acceptable accuracy.

2. Clarifying the ‘universe’ or analytical perspective

2. Many phenomena can be examined equally from the perspective of the private household, the family nucleus, or the individual. For instance, statistics related to one-parent families could be examined from the perspective of the household (number of households composed of a one-parent family), the family (number of one-parent families), or the individual (number of parents in one-parent families or number of children in one-parent families); each perspective may yield substantively different results owing to the different numerators and/or denominators involved, and therefore the lens selected may have important policy and/or programme implications. Countries should therefore always make clear the analytical perspective (or “universe”) when disseminating products related to the topics of households, families and individual household and family characteristics.

3. Countries should also make it clear that any data or classifications relating to topics 2 (family characteristics) and 3 (household and family characteristics of persons) are restricted to private households and the population living in private households.

B. Topic 1: Household Characteristics

1. Institutional households

(a) Definitions

Institutional household

4. *A group of persons for whom housing and often daily necessities are being provided by an institution. An institution is understood to be a legal body for the purpose of long-term residence and provision of services to a group of people. Institutions usually have common facilities shared by the occupants (e.g., washrooms, lounges, dining facilities, dormitories and so forth).*

5. Some countries expand this concept to include non-institutional collective dwellings, for instance collective households of a commercial nature (e.g., worker dormitories, hotels, etc.) and/or those of a religious-communal nature. These conceptual expansions should be made clear in disseminated products; for instance, Canada and Mexico both use the term “collective dwelling” in place of “institutional household” to indicate that their concept is not restricted to institutional settings.

Person living in an institutional household

6. *A person whose usual place of residence is at an institution. This includes people who have no other usual place of residence and who are residing at an institution on the census reference date, provided they are in-scope for census enumeration.*

(b) Methodological considerations*Validation exercises*

7. Prior to the census enumeration, it is recommended that countries carry out an institutional household validation exercise. This validation exercise or other form of “frame maintenance” should be based on a database of all institutions that is updated in each pre-census cycle, utilizing administrative data where possible. Each known institution should be contacted to confirm its status and to obtain a correspondent’s contact information. This inquiry could take the form of a brief survey questionnaire to identify, among other things, the nature and functions of the collective living quarters, the presence of [private households attached to or within the institution](#), the type of populations who may reside there (i.e., adults only, adults and/or children, or children only) and whether certain key services are offered to members (the provision of care, food, etc.) For countries following a direct enumeration-based census approach, this communication should also include information about the forthcoming census enumeration and the method in which it will occur (electronic, in-person, the types of information that will be collected, etc.).

Distinction of private households within or attached to an institutional household

8. Any person living in a private household within or attached to the institution’s collective living quarters should be excluded from the [population living in an institutional household](#). For example, employees of the institution who live alone or with their family at the institution (or in housing units located beside but separate from the collective living quarters of the institution) should be treated as members of private households.

(c) Non-core classification*Type of institutional household*

Total – Institutional households:

- (1.0) Residential care facilities for adults and/or children (hospitals, hospices, palliative care units, residential units for people with (mental, physical or sensory) disabilities, rehabilitation facilities, reintegrative or transitional housing facilities, other long-term care facilities, such as homes for the elderly and nursing homes)
- (2.0) Correctional and custodial facilities (including those for juveniles)
- (3.0) Residences for students
- (4.0) Military bases and government vessels
- (5.0) Shelters or refuges for adults and/or children (e.g., temporary shelter for unhoused persons, asylum claimants, etc.)
- (6.0) Religious establishments
- (7.0) Other collective living facilities
 - (7.1) Commercial temporary accommodations (hotels, motels, campgrounds, parks, commercial vessels)
 - (7.2) Commercial employee group living quarters (work dormitories, training centres)
 - (7.3) Other collective living quarters.

Notes:

Given the large variation across countries in terms of the relative prevalence and nature of institutional households, this classification should be considered a guideline only regarding the most common institutional household types. The examples in parentheses should be considered as non-exhaustive examples.

Countries can opt to further distinguish types 1.0 to 6.0 where relevant for the country-specific setting. When possible, countries should distinguish residential care facilities and

other institutional establishments which provide accommodation and services exclusively to children (e.g., aged 0 to 17 years).

As noted in the definition of *institutional household*, some countries may distinguish other non-institutional collective living facilities such as those described in non-core classifications 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3. These variations should be clearly explained in disseminated products.

1. Private households

(a) Definitions:

Private household

9. The definition of a private household is different for countries that follow the housekeeping concept versus those that follow the household-dwelling concept. Specifically:

Private household (housekeeping variant)

10. A person or group of persons who occupy a whole or part of a private dwelling as their usual place of residence. Persons form a separate private household within a given dwelling if they live in a separate room (or rooms) which does not join with any of the other occupants of the dwelling. In multi-person private households, the persons may be related to one another, unrelated to one another, or some combination of the two.

11. When following this concept, countries should distinguish between *boarders* and *lodgers* where relevant. *Boarders* take meals with the rest of the housing unit and generally share the household facilities. Boarders should therefore be members of the same private household as the other occupant(s) of the household unit. *Lodgers*, however, rent part of the dwelling for their exclusive use. Lodgers should therefore belong to a different private household than the other members of the dwelling.

Private household (household-dwelling variant)

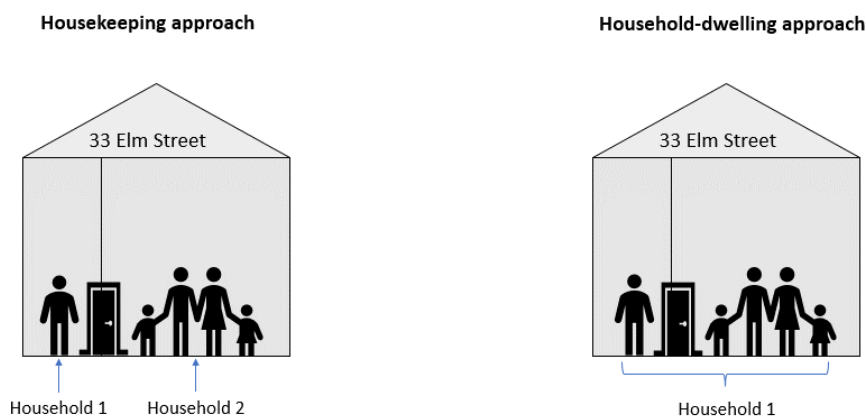
12. A person or group of persons who occupy a whole private dwelling as their usual place of residence. In multi-person private households, the persons may be related to one another, unrelated to one another, or some combination of the two.

13. As illustrated in [Figure 1](#), under the *housekeeping* approach, the number of private households is usually larger than the number of private occupied dwellings. In contrast, in the *household-dwelling* approach, the number of private households is equal to the number of private occupied dwellings.

Figure 1

Two main approaches to defining private households

What is a private household?



14. The private household definition variant used will have an important impact on the number and nature (type) of private households. The chosen methodology should therefore be clearly communicated in census products. See [Methodological considerations: Household-dwelling versus housekeeping approach](#) below for more details.

Three-or-more-generation household

15. A household that includes at least three separate generations of the same extended family (that is, persons linked by biological, spouse/partner or adoptive relationships). Most commonly, this includes one or more children, their parent(s) and their grandparent(s).

Skip-generation household

16. A private household that includes at least one grandparent and one or more of their grandchildren, with no parent of the grandchild(ren) present.

Note: countries that identify skip-generation households will need to decide whether these situations are considered to form either (a) a family nucleus, or (b) an extended family but not a family nucleus. This choice must be carefully considered and communicated. See [Methodological considerations: Skip-generation households](#) for more details.

(b) Methodological considerations

Household-dwelling versus housekeeping approach

17. Results of the 2023 country practices survey showed a near-equal division of countries that conceptualize households based on the [housekeeping approach](#) versus the [household-dwelling approach](#).

18. In recent decades, many countries have seen a growing prevalence of living arrangements such as living with extended family members, multiple families sharing a dwelling, or a family sharing their living space with one or more unrelated persons. Moreover, some governments are currently incentivizing these types of arrangements (via [tax breaks](#), for instance) to address housing affordability/availability challenges, or to counter social isolation and loneliness among older adults, among other reasons.

19. Given these trends, the chosen definition of what constitutes a private household is important, as the number of private households will usually be larger under the housekeeping concept in comparison with the household-dwelling concept—particularly the number of one-person households. The choice of private household conceptualization will also impact the relevance and distinction of certain classifications, as discussed later in this chapter. As a result, countries should clearly indicate in their disseminated products whether they use the housekeeping approach or the household-dwelling approach.

Register-based versus enumeration-based census methodology

20. Results of the 2023 survey of country practices indicated a near-equal division in terms of the number of countries who use a register-based census methodology, a census methodology based on direct enumeration, or a methodology combining direct enumeration, register and/or administrative data i.e., a “combined” approach. Like the choice of housekeeping versus household-dwelling approach, the overall census methodology used will impact the conceptualization of private households. For instance, countries utilizing a population register may not be able to determine all or any extended-family relationships, precluding the identification of certain types of households. Countries that use a register-based methodology are also less likely to have the information necessary to identify private households according to the housekeeping approach.

Skip-generation household distinctions

21. Some countries identify [skip-generation households](#). If identified, countries should make clear the following in their disseminated products:

- Whether skip-generation relationships are considered to form a [family nucleus](#) or not; and

- If skip-generation families are considered a family nucleus, this exception to the standard definition of a family nucleus must be clearly communicated. The consequences of this broadened conceptualization of a family nucleus on the classifications of household type, family nucleus type and various individual family and household characteristics must also be carefully considered and communicated. Otherwise, there may be conceptual discrepancies that arise across various inter-related classifications. For instance, if person A is a grandparent in a skip-generation family nucleus, it must then be determined whether that grandparent is then classified as having a family status of “grandparent in a skip-generation family nucleus” or alternatively as a “parent in a family nucleus”. Under the latter approach, it is imperative to clarify in notes that some persons in the “parent” category are grandparents in skip-generation families. The relative prevalence of skip-generation households in each country setting should guide this decision-making process.

(c) Core classifications

Private household size

Total – private households

- (1.0) 1 person
- (2.0) 2 persons
- (3.0) 3 persons
- (4.0) 4 persons
- (5.0) 5 persons
- (6.0) 6 or more persons.

Private household type

Total – private households

- (1.0) One-family-nucleus households without additional persons
 - (1.1) Couple without children
 - (1.2) Couple with children
 - (1.3) One-parent family
- (2.0) Other family households
 - (2.1) Three-or-more-generation households
 - (2.2) Multiple-family households (excluding three-or-more-generation households)
 - (2.3) One-family households with additional persons not in a family nucleus (excluding three-or-more-generation households)
- (3.0) Non-family households
 - (3.1) One-person households
 - (3.2) Two-or-more-person non-family households.

Note:

See Topic 2: Family Characteristics for the definition of family nucleus. See Topic 3: Individual Household and Family Characteristics for the definition of child in a family nucleus.

22. The distinction of household types 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 is optional. Particularly for countries following a housekeeping approach, it may not be possible to distinguish all or any

of these “other family households” which require the identification of various extended-family relationships.

23. In household types 2.1 and 2.2., other unrelated or related persons (or separate family nuclei) may also be present in the household.

24. In household type 3.2, none of the members form a family nucleus.

25. Countries may choose to further distinguish:

(a) The **type of couple** in household types 1.1 and 1.2 (for instance, distinguishing married versus non-married couples, and/or on the basis of the **sex or gender** of the persons in the couple);

(b) The sex or gender of the parent in household type 1.3;

(c) The age of children in family nuclei, if there are pertinent age grouping distinctions in that specific country setting (e.g., couples without children, couples with at least one child aged 24 or younger, couples with all children aged 25 or older).

26. Some countries using a register-based method may only identify married couples. If this is the case, the household types 1.1 and 1.2 must be labelled accordingly i.e., “Married couple with children”, “Married couple without children” See the section “[Methodological consideration: Couple-type distinctions](#)” for additional guidance related to this.

C. Topic 2: Family Characteristics

1. Definitions

(a) Family nucleus

27. Two or more persons living in the same private household who together form a couple (with or without children) or a one-parent family. Within a family nucleus, all inter-person relationships are limited to direct (first-degree) relationships, that is, between spouses/partners and/or between parents and children.

(b) Reconstituted family

28. A family nucleus composed of a couple with children in which at least one child is the biological or adoptive child of only one spouse or partner in the couple.

(c) Extended family

29. Two or more persons living in the same private household who are related to each other by blood, couple union, adoption, or foster relationship. All members of a given **family nucleus** are also members of the same extended family.

2. Methodological considerations

(a) Household-dwelling versus housekeeping approach; Register-based versus traditional census methodology

30. Countries that use a register-based or combined census methodology, as well as those that use a housekeeping approach to defining private households, are less likely to be able to produce information on **reconstituted families** and **extended families**. For this reason, the recommended classifications related to these family types are non-core.

(b) Reference-person approach versus relationship matrix approach

31. Information should be collected for all individuals living in private households on their relationship with other members of the household. Data on this topic are needed for use in:

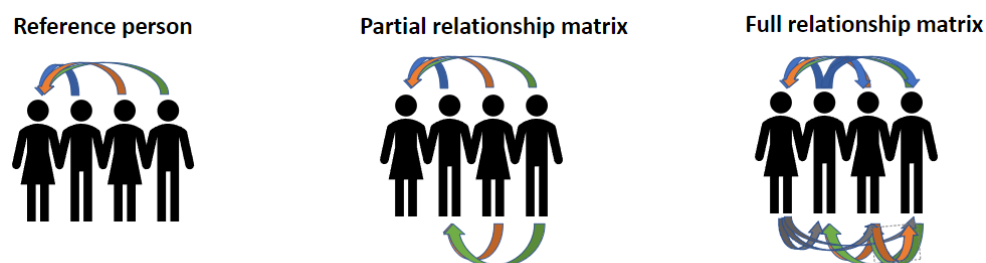
- (a) Identifying **private household types**;
- (b) Identifying **family nuclei** and **family nucleus types** within a given private household; and
- (c) Identifying the **household and family characteristics of persons** within a given private household.

32. There are various methods of determining relationships within a private household, each offering their own benefits and challenges. The three main approaches used by countries are illustrated in Figure 2 and described below.

Figure 2

Different approaches to determining relationships within the household

Approaches to determine relationships within the household



33. *Reference-person approach*: the relationship between one person—the “household reference person”—and each other member of the household is determined. Family and household types and individual family statuses are then derived from that information. According to the 2023 survey of country practices, most countries continue to use this traditional reference-person approach.

34. Determining which member of the household is the reference person requires careful consideration. In the past, the person considered to be the ‘head’ of the household was generally used as the reference person, but this concept is no longer used in many countries. It has also sometimes been proposed that the oldest person or the person who contributes the most income to the household should be the reference person. However, given that the question’s main purpose is to assign family status, family type and household type, both approaches have weaknesses. The automatic selection of the oldest person may be undesirable because in multi-generational households the broadest range of explicit kin relationships can be reported where the reference person is selected from the middle generation. Similarly, the selection of the person with the highest income may be a person who will not necessarily solicit the broadest range of explicit kin relationships.

35. For countries using a direct enumeration for their census methodology, it is recommended to provide clear instructions to the respondent to list the members of the household in a specific order:

- (a) Begin with an adult (the reference person), **followed by** their spouse or partner (if applicable) and then any children of that person (if applicable);
- (b) Next, add any other household members.

36. Despite providing clear instructions to respondents about how to order members of the household on the initial roster listing, inevitably these instructions will not always be followed as intended. To help mitigate this challenge, response options in terms of

relationships to the reference person should be exhaustive for all (other) household members, and not conditional on their listing order.

37. When the household's reference person is chosen carefully, this approach gives accurate information for most household and family types. In certain cases, however, such as in multiple-family households, this method will not always provide sufficient information; as a result, greater levels of imputation and inference are needed to determine each household member's family characteristics.

38. *Relationship matrix approach*: all possible inter-person relationships within a given private household are determined.

39. Used by a growing number of countries, the relationship matrix approach provides the most complete detail on living arrangements within the household, particularly for large households involving a mix of related and unrelated people. This approach also makes possible in theory the identification of relationships that are traditionally not captured by the reference-person approach, such as siblings living in the same household together as foster children, or various relationships existing within "other family households".

40. Conversely, the relationship matrix approach also presents several disadvantages. For countries whose census is based on direct enumeration, the additional information collection required makes the questionnaire more time-consuming and burdensome for respondents to complete—exponentially so for larger households—as well as literally lengthier in the case of paper-based questionnaires. In comparison with the reference-person approach, the relationship-matrix approach is also typically much more expensive from an operational perspective, i.e., requiring higher resources in terms of coding, processing and analysis than the reference-person approach.

41. These challenges can be mitigated somewhat by adopting a *partial relationship matrix* approach. In contrast to the full (complete) relationship matrix approach, under a partial relationship matrix approach, a complete relationship matrix is only collected for a subset of all household members (the first 5 persons listed in the household roster, for instance). Additional household members can then be asked, alternatively: only about their relationship to a household reference person; only about their relationship to their "nearest neighbour" in the household roster (e.g., person 6's relationship to person 5), or a combination of these two options.

42. While the relationship-matrix approach is more likely to be adopted by countries using direct enumeration for their census methodology, it is sometimes possible for countries using a register or combined methodology to take this approach to relationship identification, provided information about two given household members can be linked to one another on their respective register data.

43. In summary, countries contemplating the adoption of the relationship matrix approach should first execute thorough feasibility analyses of adopting this method, both in terms of public acceptability (via qualitative and quantitative testing) and by conducting a cost-benefit evaluation of the additional operational and resource requirements contrasted with the added nuance and richness of information. In some cases, the new processing requirements may be net neutral if for instance, by having complete household relationships it reduces the need for complex imputation processes that previously filled in the gaps. Where feasible, the relationship matrix method is the recommended approach to identify household relationships.

(c) Sex and/or gender-based distinctions

44. Along with societal changes over recent decades, the intersection of family, sex and gender in censuses is also changing. According to the 2023 survey of country practices, about half of surveyed countries made a distinction in their last census between opposite-sex and same-sex couples. In recent years, some CES countries have begun to distinguish sex from gender in their census, and to classify couples on the basis of the gender of each member of the couple. Other countries have plans to collect gender and/or sexual orientation in future censuses. At the same time, for some countries, these types of distinctions are not planned to be collected or disseminated. The terminologies, definitions and classifications used by

statistical agencies to measure these concepts are emerging and constantly evolving. See Chapter X: Sex and Gender for more information and guidance.

45. In contrast to the previous edition of these Recommendations, the present chapter does not make any sex or gender-based distinctions in its definitions or classifications related to household and family characteristics. Countries can nevertheless opt to make these additional distinctions when possible.

(d) Couple type distinctions

46. Countries will vary in the types of couple unions that are distinguished (based on legal or fiscal implications, for instance). Countries will also vary in terms of which types of couple unions can be measured in their censuses. For instance, it may be impossible to identify non-married or otherwise non-registered couples if countries are using a register-based census methodology; for others, only partial information may be available (e.g., for those unregistered or unmarried couples who share a common child). In the present chapter, definitions and classifications related to couples do not make distinctions based on couple type; that is, whether the couple is married, non-married in some type of legally or formally-recognized partnership, or other forms of non-married co-residing relationships. Countries can nevertheless opt to make these types of distinctions when possible. It is recommended that when these distinctions are made, that the various types of couples are clearly defined—particularly when there are legal implications attached.

47. The phenomenon of couples living apart is of growing interest, and countries are encouraged to evaluate the feasibility of collecting and disseminating information about this phenomenon via their censuses if not collected elsewhere. If collected, this phenomenon should be clearly distinguished from co-residing couples. Otherwise, countries should make clear in their disseminated products that information about couples and individual membership in a couple is restricted to persons who share a usual place of residence in a private household with their spouse or partner.

48. Similarly, countries should also make clear the distinction between a person's marital status versus their family characteristics (i.e., whether they are part of a couple family nucleus within a private household). Generally, marital status is collected for the total population (including those living in institutional households) while family characteristics are typically only collected for the population living in private households. There are also situations where a person may reside in a private household, and be married, but not have a spouse living in the same household; this phenomenon can occur for various reasons including, for example, when the person's spouse or partner is residing in a long-term care institution or other institution, during a pre-divorce separation period, or when economic or housing barriers prevent them from establishing a new residence together. In short, the total number of married persons will not necessarily equal the total number of married couples living in private households.

(e) Determining family nuclei in three-or-more-generation households

49. In cases where a private household includes three-or-more generations of the same family, family nucleus status should be prioritized for the two youngest generations where applicable. [Table 3](#) below provides examples of how family nucleus status should be determined.

Table 3
Determination of family nuclei within three-or-more-generation households

<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Age of Person</i>	<i>Relationship to Reference Person</i>	<i>Resulting family nucleus status of person</i>
1	Person A	25	Reference Person	In a family nucleus: One-parent family
	Person B	3	Son	
	Person C	58	Mother	Not in a family nucleus: Living with other relatives
2	Person A	25	Reference Person	In a family nucleus: One-parent family
	Person B	3	Son	
	Person C	58	Mother	In a family nucleus: Couple without children
	Person D	59	Father	

3. Core classification

(a) Family nucleus type

Total – family nuclei in private households

- (1.0) Couple family
 - (1.1) Without children
 - (1.2) With child(ren)
- (2.0) One-parent family.

Notes:

Countries can opt to make any of the following additional sub-classifications:

- *Of types 1.0, 1.1 and 1.2 based on the [type of couple](#), including [sex or gender-based distinctions](#);*
- *Of types 1.2 and 2.0 based on age groupings of the youngest child;*
- *Of type 1.2 based on whether the couple family is a reconstituted family (see the recommended non-core classification of [Reconstituted family type](#));*
- *Of type 2.0 based on the [sex or gender](#) of the parent.*

4. Non-core classifications

(a) Reconstituted family type

- (1.0) Total – Reconstituted families
 - (1.1) With no common children
 - (1.1.1) Only one spouse/partner has one or more biological/adoptive children
 - (1.1.2) Each spouse/partner has one or more biological/adoptive children who are not also the biological/adoptive children of the other spouse/partner
 - (1.2) With at least one common child
 - (1.2.1) and only one spouse/partner has one or more biological/adoptive children who are not also the biological/adoptive children of the other spouse/partner

(1.2.2) and each spouse/partner has one or more other biological/adoptive children who are not also the biological/adoptive children of the other spouse/partner.

Notes:

Countries can opt to make additional distinctions of reconstituted families based on the *sex or gender* of each member of the couple and/or the *type of couple*.

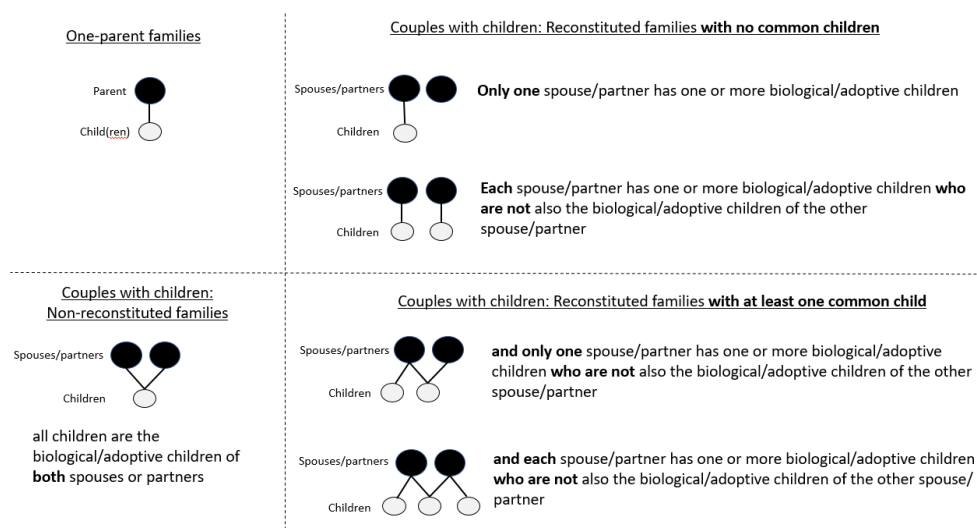
Reconstituted families can be classified in distinct tabulations from the main classification of family nucleus type. It is recommended, however, to also situate reconstituted families among other two-parent families or among all family nuclei with children to better contextualize this phenomenon's relative prevalence.

50. Countries that use direct enumeration for their census methodology and a reference-person approach to identifying household relationships will not be able to make distinctions beyond 1.1 and 1.2; these can only be identified by countries that use a relationship-matrix or partial-relationship-matrix approach to identifying household relationships.

51. It can be difficult to communicate the differences between the sub-types 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2.1 and 1.2.2; visual aids such as Figure 3 below have been found to be helpful in aiding comprehension.

Figure 3

Family nuclei with children including reconstituted families and their various configurations



D. Topic 3: Individual Household and Family Characteristics

52. Countries should follow international standards with respect to age-based restrictions for individual household and family characteristics. Specifically, only people aged 15 and older can live alone, be part of a couple, or be a parent. Persons aged 14 and younger should not be the 'reference person' when deriving household relationships; there should be at least one person aged 15 and older in every private household. Countries should ensure their editing and imputation processes consider these age-based standards when deriving individual household and family characteristics.

1. Definition:

(a) Child in family nucleus

53. A person who lives in the same private household as at least one of their biological or adoptive parents and who does not have a spouse, partner or child(ren) of their own living in the same household. The child in a family nucleus may be of any age or marital status.

54. Foster children are excluded from the family nucleus of the foster parent(s) but should be considered a member of the foster parent(s)' [extended family](#).

55. A child who alternates between two or more households (for instance following parental separation or divorce) should be a member of the household where they spend most of the time. Where a child spends an equal amount of time in two separate parental households, the child should be considered a member of the household where they are staying at the census reference date or, in the case of a register-based census, at the address on which they are registered in the population register at that date.

2. Methodological considerations

(a) Impact of overall methodology

56. As described in Topic 1 and Topic 2 earlier in this chapter, not all countries will be able to measure certain concepts and classifications related to individual family and household characteristics; moreover, the distinction of certain characteristics may not be particularly relevant to a country's specific context. For instance, countries that use a [housekeeping](#) approach (as opposed to the [household-dwelling](#) approach) to identify private households may have more difficulty identifying whether an individual is living with extended family. The same is true for countries which use a register-based (as opposed to enumeration-based) census methodology. Lastly, the extent to which a given individual's relationships with all other household members can be distinguished will also be more limited when using the [reference-person approach](#) as opposed to the [relationship matrix approach](#). The core and non-core classification recommendations for this topic reflect these considerations.

(b) Presence of grandparents in household of person

57. Some member countries have witnessed growth over recent decades in the phenomenon of three or more generations of a family sharing a usual place of residence. The flows of care and support within these households are not necessarily unidirectional and can depend on the age and individual family situation of each respective generation. Less commonly, grandchildren and grandparents may live together without the middle-parent generation present, in a [skip-generation household](#). The prevalence and therefore the relevance of these living arrangements vary across and within countries.

58. Countries interested in disseminating information on this phenomenon should do this not only from the perspective of the household but also from the individual perspective—specifically, from the perspective of young children (for example, those aged 14 and under). When examined from the point of view of young children, the rates of prevalence tend to be much higher and arguably more meaningful than those obtained from a household lens. For example, according to the [2021 Canadian census](#), three-or-more-generation households represented less than 3 per cent of all private households that year, whereas nearly 1 in 10 children aged 14 and under lived with at least one grandparent. Rates were even higher in certain regions of the country, representing the situation of 22 per cent of young children in Nunavut Territory that year. A non-core classification, "[Presence of person's grandparent\(s\) in the household](#)" is suggested for this purpose. Notably, countries utilizing a register-based census methodology and/or housekeeping approach to define private households may not be able to identify these living arrangement details.

(c) Presence of parents in household of person

59. Along with the phenomenon of grandchildren living with grandparents, most countries have seen an increasing number of older (adult) children sharing their home with their parent(s). Indeed, if considered as a form of multigenerational living, the phenomenon of 'two-adult-generation households' is likely much more prevalent than [three-or-more-generation households](#), as indicated in a recent [study of the United States](#). This living arrangement is most common among younger adults—a term which is intentionally not defined here, given the most relevant age groupings will vary depending on the societal context of a given country and over time. Adult children may live with their parents for a variety of reasons—to manage housing costs or in response to housing shortages, to support

and care for their aged parent, to receive informal childcare assistance from their child's grandparent, for companionship, for cultural normative reasons, etc.

60. A non-core classification, "Presence of person's parent(s) in the household" is suggested for examining this living arrangement. Countries utilizing a register-based census methodology and/or housekeeping approach to define private households may not be able to identify these particular living arrangement details.

3. Core classifications

(a) Private household type of person

61. The core classification **Private household type** specified earlier in Topic 1 can be transferred to the person level, i.e.,

Total – persons in private households

- (1.0) In one-family-nucleus households without additional persons
 - (1.1) Couple without children
 - (1.2) Couple with child(ren)
 - (1.3) One-parent family
- (2.0) In other family households
 - (2.1) In a three-generation household
 - (2.2) In a multiple-family household (excluding three-generation households)
 - (2.3) In a one-family-nucleus household with additional persons not in a family nucleus (excluding three-generation households)
- (3.0) In non-family households
 - (3.1) In a one-person household
 - (3.2) In a two-or-more-person non-family household.

(b) Family nucleus status and household living arrangement of person

Total – persons in private households

- (1.0) Person is in a family nucleus
 - (1.1) Spouse or partner in a couple
 - (1.1.1) Without children
 - (1.1.2) With child(ren)
 - (1.2) Parent in a one-parent family
 - (1.3) Child
- (2.0) Person is not in a family nucleus
 - (2.1) Living with others
 - (2.1.1) Living with other relatives (non-relatives may also be present), includes foster children
 - (2.1.2) Living with non-relatives only
 - (2.2) Living alone.

Notes:

The term “other relatives” refers to non-direct relatives of the person (by blood, couple union, adoption or foster relationships). Persons who are part of the same family nucleus are excluded.

Countries can opt to make any of the following additional sub-classifications:

- Of all 1.0 sub-types based on age groupings of the child
- Of type 1.1 based on the type of couple, including sex or gender-based distinctions
- Of type 1.1.1 based on whether the couple family is a reconstituted family or not (see the recommended non-core classification of *Reconstituted family type*)
- Of type 2.1.1 distinguishing between foster children and other types of relative relationships.

For the most complete portrait of an individual’s living situation, it is recommended to disseminate information that crosses the person’s household type with their family nucleus status.

4. Non-core classifications

(a) Presence of person’s grandparent(s) in the household

Total – persons in private households

- (1.0) Living with at least one grandparent
 - (1.1) And two parents
 - (1.2) And one parent
 - (1.3) And without parents
- (2.0) Living without grandparents
 - (2.1) With two parents
 - (2.2) With one parent
 - (2.3) And without parents.

Notes:

Under this classification, the family nucleus status of the person is irrelevant; in other words, it does not matter if the person is living with a spouse, partner or child of their own in the same private household.

Countries should include the age group and family nucleus status of the person as an additional variable in the disseminated table product to make the information more substantively meaningful.

Countries can opt to make any of the following additional sub-classifications:

- *Of type 1.0 based on whether one, two or three or more grandparents are present;*
- *Of type 1.0 based on the [sex or gender](#) of the grandparent(s);*
- *Of types 1.1 and 2.1 based on the [type of couple](#), including [sex or gender](#)-based distinctions;*
- *of type 1.2 and 2.2 based on the [sex or gender](#) of the parent.*

(b) Presence of person’s parent(s) in household

Total – persons in private households

- (1.0) Living with at least one parent
- (2.0) Not living with a parent.

Notes:

Under this classification, the family nucleus status of the person is irrelevant; in other words, it does not matter if the person is living with a spouse, partner or child of their own in the same private household.

Countries should include age group and family nucleus status of the person as additional variables in the disseminated table product to make the information more substantively meaningful.

Countries may also opt to further distinguish category 1.0 into persons living with one parent versus two parents.

(c) Extended family status of person

Total – Persons in private households

- (1.0) Person is in an extended family
 - (1.1) In a family nucleus
 - (1.2) Not in family nucleus
- (2.0) Person is not in an extended family.

Notes:

This classification can be used to derive sub-type 2.1, 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the classification [Family status and household living arrangement of person](#). Specifically, persons whose extended family status is type 2.0 (not in an extended family) who live in a multi-person household would have a family status and household living arrangement of “living with non-relatives only” Persons whose extended family status is type 1.2 (in an extended family, not in a family nucleus) would have a family status and household living arrangement category of “living with other relatives (non-relatives may be present)”

IV. Conclusion

62. The draft recommendations on household and family characteristics for the 2030 round of population and housing censuses are presented for comments and discussion.

Annex

I. Other non-core classifications and methodological considerations

1. The following non-core classifications and methodological considerations fall outside the boundaries of the conceptualization of this chapter i.e., they do not relate specifically to relationships within households. They instead refer to other characteristics which are examined from the perspective of private households.

A. Other non-core classifications

1. Sole or shared occupancy of private households within private dwellings

Total – private households

- (1.0) Private households which have sole occupancy of a private dwelling
- (2.0) Private households which share a private dwelling with one or more other private households

Notes:

This non-core classification can only be used by countries that use the housekeeping approach to define private households. For countries that use the household-dwelling approach, all private household will fall under Category 1.0.

Category 2.0 may be sub-divided to distinguish households sharing with one, two, or three or more other households.

2. Tenure status of household

Total – private households

- (1.0) Households of which at least one member is the owner of the housing unit
- (2.0) Households of which no member is the owner of all or part of the housing unit
 - (2.1) Households of which a member is a main tenant of all or part of the housing unit
 - (2.2) Households of which a member is a sub-tenant of an owner occupier or main tenant
- (3.0) Households occupying all or part of a housing unit under other form of tenure

Notes:

This classification is recommended at the one-digit level and optional at the two-digit level.

In view of the diversity of legal arrangements internationally, countries should describe fully in their census report or relevant metadata the coverage of each of the categories in the above classification. These descriptions should specify, where applicable, the treatment of households which:

- Live in housing units as members of different types of housing cooperatives;
- Live in housing units rented from an employer under the terms of the contract of employment of one of the household members; and
- Live in housing units provided free of charge by an employer of one of the household members or by some other person or body.

Some countries may wish to extend the recommended classification to distinguish these or other groups of households that are of interest for national purposes. Households that are in the process of paying off a mortgage on the housing unit in which they live or are purchasing

their housing unit over time under other financial arrangements, should be classed as (1.0) in the classification.

B. Other methodological considerations

1. Rent and other housing costs: methodological considerations

2. Rent is the amount to be paid in respect of a specified period for the space occupied by a household including, in some cases, local rates and ground rent. Payments for the use of furniture, heating, electricity, gas and water and for the provision of special services like washing, cooking, etc., should be excluded.

3. With regard to the costs of heating and hot water, the practices differ in different countries. In some countries the heating and/or hot water are normally included in the rent, in other countries they are not, while still in some other countries both practices can exist in parallel. It is important, therefore, that countries which include this topic in their census clearly define whether the heating and/or hot water are included in the rent or not. The recommendation would be to exclude heating and hot water expenditures from the rent. The ideal solution would be to produce the rent information separately without heating and hot water expenditures and to report the expenditures for heating, hot water (and electricity if applicable) separately.

4. Nominal rent paid may not correctly reflect the real rates. For instance, an individual housing allowance determined on the basis of a means test and paid by housing authorities directly to the landlord should be included in the rent; and if a public sector landlord on the basis of a means test charges a rebated rent, the full rent should be recorded. It may also be possible to collect information on, for example, whether the tenant is a relative or an employee of the landlord, or whether he performs any function or office as part of his rent, etc., in order to appraise the actual rent paid.

5. If this topic is included in the census, it may be desirable (and less sensitive) to obtain information on the range within which the rent paid falls rather than on the exact amount paid.

6. In addition to the amount of rent paid by renting households, it may be useful to collect information on the housing costs of each household. Such costs could include, for example, information on monthly mortgage payments, the provision of utility services, and local taxes if these are not available from the information collected from the housing topics.
