

NETHERLANDERS¹ AND THE CANADIAN CENSUS

John Kraft

A major data source on Netherlanders in Canada is the decennial Canadian Census. This paper will first examine the concepts and some of the data on Netherlanders from the pre-1981 censuses. Following this historical overview, the data which will be available from the 1981 Census will be examined.

1. Who is a Netherlander in the Canadian Census?

Using census data, it is possible to identify Netherlanders in a number of different ways. In 1971, for example, a Netherlander could be identified by

- (i) his/her ethnic origin, i.e. the ethnic or cultural group to which the individual or his/her paternal ancestor belonged on first coming to this continent;
- (ii) the first language that the individual learned to speak as a child;
- (iii) the language which the individual speaks at home at the time that 1971 Census was taken;
- (iv) the country in which the given individual was born.

Each of these variables reflects different aspects of being a Netherlander in Canada.

It seems to me that the most appropriate measure to identify Netherlanders in Canada is through the use of ethnic origin. Although there are many problems with this concept and the questions which have been used in past and present censuses, (see for example Ryder Reprint No. 214; Kraft 1979), ethnic origin nevertheless still allows an approximation of the total number of persons who are Dutch immigrants or the descendents of relatively recent immigrants but who now use English or French. The place of birth question is even less appropriate as it cannot be used to identify even children of immigrant parents.

Using ethnic origin as the measure, persons whose roots can be traced to the Low Countries are classified as either Netherlanders (persons from the Netherlands), or Belgians (persons from Belgium). Persons from Luxembourg have only appeared once as a separate category, usually being included in the catch-all category "Other European not otherwise specified, or not elsewhere specified". Frisians have been classified as "Netherlanders". Persons reporting either Flemish or Walloon have been classified as "Belgian".

In the past, and for the upcoming 1981 census, no demand was expressed for the identification of Flemish as a separate ethnic origin category. Flemish is, however, identified as a separate language.

In Table 1, available data on the Netherlanders for the period from 1871 to 1971 are shown for the Netherlands, Belgian and Luxembourg groups.

After World War II, there was considerable immi-

gration from the Netherlands. By combining answers to various questions from the 1971 Census, an estimate of the pre-World War II immigrants children "Old Netherlanders," and the post-World War II immigrants and their children, "New Netherlanders", was derived.² The numbers and the province where each group resided in 1971 are shown in Table 2a.

From Table 2a, it is clear that Ontario is by far the most favoured province of residence for the Dutch. This is especially true for the Post-World War II immigrants and their children. Quebec has not had much attraction for the Dutch at all with only 3.0% of all the Dutch living in that province. However, for the Old Dutch, the Prairie provinces were much more attractive than the province of Ontario.

These differences are more marked when the percentages of each region's total Dutch is divided between New and Old Dutch. Most of the Dutch in the Atlantic region, for example, are old Dutch while most of the Dutch in Ontario (nearly three quarters) are New Dutch. Interestingly enough, Quebec is apparently more acceptable for the post-war immigrants than it was for the pre-war immigrants.

2. Language of Netherlands

In the late 1940's, in response to an inquiry from the then Dominion Bureau of Statistics (D.B.S.), the Netherlands embassy informed D.B.S. that the name of the language spoken in the Netherlands was "Netherlands", and so it appeared from 1951-1971.³ During these years, a distinction was made between "Flemish" and "Netherlands". "Frisian" and "Afrikaans" were however lumped together with "Netherlands".

In the 1976 Census, Canadians were asked to report the language which they first learned and still understand. A number of languages originating from the Low Countries were identified separately in 1976. Table 3 shows the extent to which these languages were reported in 1976.

Although the results for Flemish and Dutch do not show many surprises, the extremely low number of persons reporting only Frisian was completely unexpected, especially as these numbers were increased to an unknown extent by a machine problem during the data capture stage. Based on the author's own experience, it had been expected that there should be at least 10,000 persons reporting Frisian as mother tongue. It seems likely that many persons simply reported Dutch or Netherlands, probably assuming that federal bureaucrats would not know the difference between Frisian and Dutch.

In 1976, Belgian and Luxembourgs were identified

as separate answers. However, these answers were assigned to either Flemish or French in the case of Belgian or to Dutch, German or French in the case of Luxembourgs.⁴

It is apparent from Table 4 that Dutch is not likely to survive for a great length of time in Canada. Of the 425.9 thousand Dutch in Canada, only 32.3% report Dutch as their mother tongue. What is surprising is that over half of the New Dutch also report English as a mother tongue. Nearly 80% of old Dutch report English as their mother tongue.

When the languages used in the homes of the Dutch are examined, it is clear that Dutch is rarely spoken. Only 7.2% of the all Canadian Dutch still speak Dutch at home. Of the New Dutch, only 10% speak Dutch at home while only 2.7% of the Old Dutch still speak the language at home.

4. Religions of the Netherlands

In addition to Roman Catholicism which tends to be dominant in the southern part of the Low Countries, a large number of Netherlanders are adherents of one of the many Reformed denominations. In 1971, most of the Reformed groups were either assigned as Reformed Church of America or as Christian Reformed. Probably the single largest group erroneously assigned to this latter denomination were the Canada Reformed.

Data for the various religions of the Dutch are given in Table 5. From this table it is clear that most of the Canadians who are of Dutch origin tend to belong to a limited number of denominations; the Christian Reformed denomination, the Roman Catholic Church, or the United Church. When the distinction is made between "Old" and "New" Dutch, there are some striking differences. While 28.3% of the "New Dutch" are Christian Reformed, only 2.1% of the "Old Dutch" are, giving a clear picture of a denomination made up primarily of recent immigrants. Roman Catholics are also much more common among the "New Dutch" (28.8%) than among the "Old Dutch" (13.7%). However, while 10.8% of the "Old Dutch" are Anglicans and 28.6% belong to the United Church, only 2.6% and 12.5% of the "New Dutch" belong to these denominations.

5. Other socio-economic characteristics

In the Profile Study, *Ethnic Origins of Canadians*, data for the Dutch are given for such variables as education, occupation, fertility. In addition to the Dutch, comparable data are given for a number of other ethnic groups as well. Detailed information for small geographic areas is available for the Dutch ethnic group in the Volume series of Census publications, microfilm, microfiche, and magnetic tape. For further details contact User Services of Statistics Canada.

II. Data Prospects for 1981

Data similar to those outlined above will be collected in the 1981 Census. There will be some differences due to changes in several of the ques-

tions and the subsequent treatment of these questions.

1. The Ethnic Origin question

The problem of persons who have more than one ethnic origin has plagued this question since it was first asked in 1871. The historical solution was to ask respondents to provide the ethnic origin or ancestry of the paternal ancestor. Evidence from the 1971 Census suggests that in many instances, respondents did not follow this instruction (Kralt, 1980 pp. 26-27). As well, using the 1971 criteria, groups such as the Métis are not possible. It was therefore decided to drop the paternal ancestry criterion from the 1981 question.

The ethnic origin question would still be the best way to identify persons of Dutch ancestry. However, the misleading "purity" of the 1971 categories will not be present. Besides the single responses of Dutch (Netherlands), Belgian, and Luxemburgs, these answers will also be part of multiple responses - e.g. Dutch and British.

2. The Language Question

The question on home language and mother tongue will again be asked in 1981. Although the intent of the 1981 questions has remained unaltered from that of 1971, the wording of both questions has been changed slightly. The home language question used in 1971 was open to misinterpretation on the part of respondents. The intent of the question was to determine the language spoken most often by each family member individually, not by the family as a whole. There is some evidence to suggest persons answering this question frequently had the second and erroneous interpretation. The question on mother tongue has been altered slightly to conform to the definition given in the *Official Languages Act, 1968-69*.

3. Religion

The religion question has not changed from that used in 1971. However, there has been a considerable increase in the number of religions or denominations which will be coded separately. The major change which affects Netherlanders is the expansion of the categories for the various Reformed denominations into Reformed (Reformed Church of America), Christian Reformed, Canadian Reformed, and Other Reformed - this latter category includes groups such as Netherlands Reformed Congregation.

A fifth category, "Dutch Reformed", has often been reported and will be coded as a separate category. However, to the best of this author's knowledge, there is no Canadian denomination with this name. A very plausible solution suggested by many knowledgeable individuals is that the respondents have simply provided a literal translation of "Nederlands Hervormd" (the State church in the Netherlands) and these persons actually should report "Reformed".

4. Place of Birth and Year of First Immigration

These questions are unchanged from those used in 1971. However, all countries identified

separately in the Statesman's Year Book 1979-80, will be identified with a unique code. Because of a change in data capture methodology for the 1981 Census, individual years of immigration, allowing the calculation of age at immigration, will be available from the 1981 Census. This is a major change from earlier censuses in which only periods of immigration were available.

III Conclusion

The main concern in the analysis of data from various Census years is the comparability of these data. The major factor which will affect comparability

of the 1981 ethnic origin data with ethnic origin data of earlier censuses (specifically 1971) is the introduction of multiple ethnic origins. In order to keep these multiples to a manageable number, 5 it has been necessary to collapse the origins into broader categories, for example, persons reporting German, Dutch, English, Irish and Belgian would be classified as "British and European." (In 1971, this person would have been assigned to either German or Dutch or English or Irish.) For religion data, the increase in detail of religions from the Low Countries should provide better information from that collected in 1971.

	Total Population		Netherlands		Belgian		Luxembourgs	
	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%
1971	21,568.3		425.9	2.1	51.1	0.2	N.A.	N.A.
1961	18,238.2		429.7	2.4	61.4	0.3	N.A.	N.A.
1951	14,009.4		264.3	1.9	35.1	0.3	N.A.	N.A.
1941	11,506.7		212.9	1.9	29.7	0.3	.5	N.A.
1931	10,376.8		149.0	1.4	27.6	0.3	N.A.	N.A.
1921	8,787.9		117.5	1.3	20.2	0.3	N.A.	N.A.
1911	7,206.6		56.0	0.8	9.7	0.2	N.A.	N.A.
1901	5,371.3		33.8	0.6	3.0	0.1	N.A.	N.A.
1881	4,324.8		30.4	0.7	N.A.	-	N.A.	N.A.
1871	3,485.8		29.7	0.9	N.A.	-	N.A.	N.A.

Source: 1871-1951 Table 31, *1951 Census of Canada, Vol. I*, p. 31-1.
1961-1971 Table 1, *1971 Census of Canada, Vol. I*, 3-2, p. 1-1.
Data for Luxembourgs for 1941 is shown only in Table 1 *1941 Census of Canada Vol. IV*, p. 2.
¹ Excludes Newfoundland prior to 1951.

	Total		New		Old	
	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%
Canada	425.9	100.0	261.4	100.0	164.5	100.0
Atlantic	22.1	5.2	6.7	2.6	15.4	9.4
Quebec	12.6	3.0	8.5	3.3	4.1	2.5
Ontario	206.9	48.6	153.1	58.6	53.8	32.7
Prairies	112.9	26.5	50.8	19.4	62.1	37.7
British Columbia	70.5	16.6	42.0	16.0	28.1	17.4

Source: Table 10 in Kralt, *Ethnic Origins of Canadians*, p. 29

	Total		New		Old	
	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%	No.('000's)	%
Canada	425.9	100.0	261.4	61.4	164.5	30.6
Atlantic	22.1	100.0	6.7	30.2	15.4	69.8
Quebec	12.6	100.0	8.5	67.6	4.1	32.4
Ontario	206.9	100.0	153.1	74.0	53.8	26.0
Prairies	112.9	100.0	50.8	45.0	62.1	55.0
British Columbia	70.5	100.0	42.0	59.5	28.1	40.5

Source: Table 2 (above)

	Total	One Answer	more than one answer*
Dutch	128,223	112,284	15,339
Flemish	7,090	5,647	1,443
Frisian	4,461	975	3,486
Afrikaans	718	423	295
Belgian	4,943	4,128	815
Luxembourgs	418	255	163

Source: Table XII in Kralt, *A User's Guide to 1976 Census Data on Mother Tongue*, p. 71
* For a more detailed description of this data see Kralt, *User's Guide* cited above.

Table 4
Language Transfer and Language Retention for "New" and "Old" Dutch Canada, 1971

	All		English		French		Dutch		Other	
	Mother Tongue		Mother Tongue		Mother Tongue		Mother Tongue		Mother Tongue	
	No.	%								
Total Dutch	425.9	100.0	262.8	100.0	2.9	100.0	137.8	100.0	22.5	100.0
English home language	382.0	89.7	260.1	99.0	.9	31.2	106.8	77.5	14.2	63.1
French home language	2.6	.6	.2	.1	1.9	65.5	.4	.3	.1	.5
Dutch and Other home languages	41.4	9.7	2.5	.9	.1	3.3	30.6	22.2	8.2	36.4
New Dutch	261.4	100.0	134.8	100.0	1.4	100.0	119.7	100.0	5.6	100.0
English home language	229.9	87.9	132.8	98.5	.4	28.9	93.2	77.9	3.5	63.5
French home language	1.5	.6	.1	-	.9	66.1	.4	.3	.1	1.8
Dutch and Other home languages	30.1	11.5	2.0	1.5	.1	5.0	26.1	21.8	1.9	34.5
Old Dutch	164.5	100.0	128.0	100.0	1.5	100.0	18.1	100.0	16.9	100.0
English home language	152.1	92.4	127.4	99.5	.5	33.3	13.6	74.9	10.6	63.0
French home language	1.1	.7	.1	.1	1.0	65.0	-	.1	-	.1
Dutch and Other home languages	11.3	6.9	.5	.4	-	1.7	4.5	25.0	6.2	36.9

Source: Table 15 in Kraut, *Ethnic Origins of Canadians*, pp. 42-43

Table 5
Numerical and Percentage Distribution of Religions for the Dutch
Canada, 1971
(in '000's)

	Total		New		Old	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	425.9	100.0	261.4	100.0	164.5	100.0
Anglican	24.6	5.8	6.8	2.6	17.8	10.8
Baptist	15.5	3.6	5.5	2.1	10.0	6.1
Christian Reformed	77.6	18.2	74.1	28.3	3.5	2.1
Confucian & Buddhist	0.2	-	0.2	-	-	-
Greek Orthodox	0.3	-	0.2	-	0.1	-
Jehovah's Witness	5.2	1.2	2.3	0.9	2.9	1.8
Lutheran	8.0	1.9	3.7	1.4	4.4	2.7
Pentecostal	5.3	1.2	2.0	0.8	3.3	2.0
Presbyterian	20.3	4.8	13.6	5.2	6.7	4.1
Roman Catholic	98.1	23.0	75.4	28.8	22.6	13.7
Salvation Army	1.3	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.8	0.5
Ukrainian Catholic	0.2	-	0.1	-	0.1	-
United Church	79.7	18.7	32.6	12.5	47.1	28.6
No Religion	34.7	8.1	24.4	9.3	10.3	6.3

Source: Table 22 in Kraut, *Ethnic Origins of Canadians* p. 58-59

NOTES

¹Netherlanders are defined as persons from the Low Countries of Europe. However, tabular material will only be presented for the Dutch, persons having origins from the Netherlands.

²For a more detailed description of New and Old Netherlanders and how these categories were derived, see Kraut, *Ethnic Origins of Canadians*, pp. 23-25.

³I assume that "Netherlands" is a transliteration of the term "Nederlands" and refers to the language more popularly known as "Dutch".

⁴For a more detailed description of 1976 mother tongue data see Kraut, *J. A User's Guide to 1976 Census Data on Mother Tongue*.

⁵In 1971, theoretically there are $105(215) = 3,440,640$ combinations of multiple responses, a totally unmanageable number of answer combinations.

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