

Census of Population 2026

Changes and updates to methodology

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New elements for the 2026 cycle

1. New Frame

- The **Statistical Building Register (SBgR)** was used to define the list of dwellings in the target population

2. Collection processes

- **Collection wave methodology** – invitation letters, reminders, and follow up
- An **Alternate Secure Access Code (SAC)** option was available to respondents as an additional way to access the Electronic Questionnaire (EQ)
- **Early Enumeration** took place again
- A **chatbot** was introduced

3. Expanded use of **administrative data** (through a small-scale Live Test)

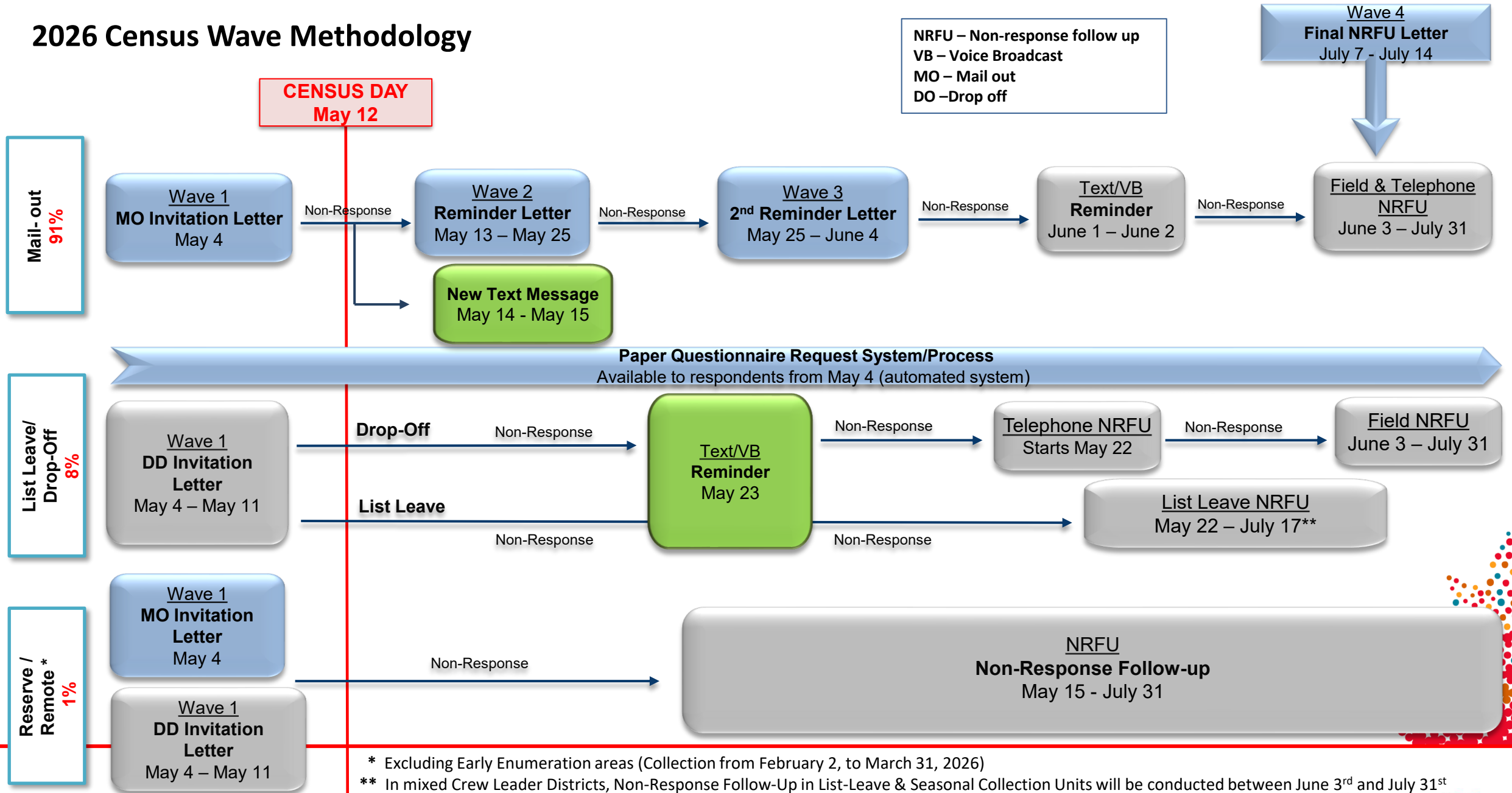


The Statistical Building Register (SBgR)

- The **Statistical Building Register (SBgR)** is a new frame
 - The SBgR replaced the Address Register
 - About the SBgR
 - The SBgR covers the entire country
 - The SBgR is built from various administrative sources which collectively provide a comprehensive list of residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings
 - The SBgR contains building attributes, geo-location, occupancy and contact information
 - Approximately 91% of the residential buildings on the SBgR have mailable addresses
 - The 2026 Census used the SBgR to identify the dwellings associated to residential building addresses that received invitation letters requesting respondents to complete their questionnaire online
 - For areas with non-mailable addresses, invitations are dropped-off by field operations staff or were enumerated through a list-leave approach
 - **2026 result → transitioning to the SBgR was a success!**



2026 Census Wave Methodology



* Excluding Early Enumeration areas (Collection from February 2, to March 31, 2026)
** In mixed Crew Leader Districts, Non-Response Follow-Up in List-Leave & Seasonal Collection Units will be conducted between June 3rd and July 31st

Collection Initiatives

- **The Alternate Secure Access Code (SAC) was a new initiative**
 - Allowed respondents to fill in the EQ without having their initial SAC that was mailed to them
 - Was tested in 2024
 - Aims to enhance the respondent experience and make self-response easier
 - The EQ portal allows the respondent to generate a new SAC
 - Respondents provide their address
 - The SAC request is matched to our systems, and a new SAC is generated
 - Unmatched SAC requests are resolved posteriorly
 - Privacy and security are preserved
 - This response option reduced the number of people calling the Census Help Line because they cannot find their SAC
 - The linkage processes and resolution process for unlinked SAC requests were optimized for 2026 following rigorous development and testing
 - **2026 result → around 735,000 cases of respondents accessed the EQ this way**



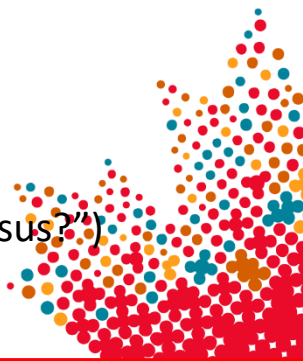
Collection Initiatives

- **Early Enumeration returns**

- Re-introduced for 2026; was cancelled in 2021 due to COVID
- Aims to enumerate people in some northern reserve and remote areas when it is easier to access these areas (e.g. through ice road access) and when people are more likely to be at their main residence
- Collection process
 - Pre-listing – Jan 2026 (where possible)
 - Collection – started Feb 2, 2026 (included follow-up)
 - Collection was done through listing and drop-off of invitation letters, online completions via the EQ where possible, and in-person interview enumerations
 - The alternate SAC portal was not available
 - Census Help Line support was available
- **2026 result → 160 communities were enumerated!**

- **The chatbot was a new initiative**

- Introduction of a Chatbot to help respondents get the information they need
 - Provided consistent, accurate and approved responses to common questions (e.g. “Why are you doing a census?”)
 - Provided automated support to census respondents with an option to transfer to a live agent
- **2026 result → 130,700 sessions conducted!**



Expanding the use of Admin Data

Background

- Research activities are ongoing for an increased use of admin data toward a **combined census** in 2031 where information collected directly from respondents will be integrated with administrative data that individuals have already provided to other government organizations and agencies, for the purpose of enumerating the population
- A combined census would leverage the **Statistical Demographic Database (SDD)** which is built from the integration of already-acquired federal and provincial government admin data sources, and includes demographic information at the person level
- Statistical models are used to create administrative households of in-scope people at a given administrative address

The 2026 Live Test

- Aims to test replacement using administrative data and the combined census model
- The data replacement would be for a limited number of short form variables
- The Test targeted to use administrative data for a small volume of dwellings with high quality admin data which are still unresolved at the start of the non-response follow-up (approximately 130,000 were selected)
- To ensure geographic diversity, the sample was spread out across the mail-out and mail-out with drop-off collection units in the country and was limited it to a maximum of five occupied dwellings and two unoccupied dwellings per collection unit
- **2026 result → 93,500 responses will be enumerated using admin data**

