



*Steering Committee of the International
Monitoring Operation on the Population and Housing
Censuses in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Sixteenth Assessment Report

11 – 14 February 2014

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. A Population and Housing Census shall take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in accordance with the Law on the Census of the Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 as adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 3 February 2012. The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina has invited the European Commission to organise the international monitoring of the Census. Therefore, the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina signed on 18 April 2012 a Memorandum of Understanding to agree upon the following:

- The general objective of the International Monitoring Operation (IMO) of the Population and Housing Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to monitor the compliance of the whole Census exercise, from the preparation to the data dissemination, with:
- International standards on population and housing censuses as defined by UNECE and Eurostat, and as adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians as Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing;
- Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 on population and housing censuses, and its implementing measures;
- The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted by the UN Statistical Commission, as well as the European Statistics Code of Practice, promulgated by the European Commission;
- Standards on data protection and confidentiality, as provided for in the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data of the Council of Europe, and the relevant European Union regulations in force.

2. The Operation will be carried out by a Committee of International Organisations, the Management Group (IMO MG) assisted by a Senior Census Expert, experts in population censuses, one or more experts in information technology and persons monitoring the census enumeration in the field.

3. The Senior Census Expert, the Census Experts and the IT Experts will assess the compliance of the Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the requirements listed in the Memorandum of Understanding, but they will not provide technical assistance.

4. Under the guidance of the Committee and the Senior Census Expert, the Census Experts shall:

- Examine the technical preparation of the Census including the pilot Census and post-enumeration survey, in particular the drafting of questionnaires and manuals;
- Monitor the collection, processing and dissemination of Census data, verifying the accordance with the requirements defined above;
- Control the fair and proper computation at all levels and whether the confidential nature of the individual data is fully guaranteed;
- Investigate any other matter with relevance for the Census.

5. The Management Group has designated Mr. Jean-Michel Durr as Senior Census Expert and Mr. Roberto Bianchini, Mr. Bent Noerby Bonde, Ms. Meryem Demirci, Ms. Kateri-

na Kostadinova-Daskalovska, and Mr. Guido Pieraccini as experts in population censuses. The Senior Census Expert and the Experts in population censuses form the IMO Steering Committee (IMO SC) of international experts.

6. The first mission of the IMO SC was conducted from 23 to 26 April 2012. The objective of this mission was to assess the preparations for the population and housing census in their main components, including the preparation of the pilot census. The report of the SC was sent by the Senior Census Manager on May 12 to the IMO MG.

7. The second mission was conducted from 26 to 29 of June 2012. The objective of this mission was to assess the progress made since the first mission in preparations for the population and housing census, including the preparation of the pilot census.

8. The third mission took place on 17 and 18 of September 2012 and was conducted by two members of the SC, namely, Mr. Jean-Michel Durr and Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska. The objective of the mission was to assess the implementation of recommendations made in previous reports and to assess the preparation of the pilot census, planned for October 15-29.

9. The fourth mission took place between 10 and 29 of October 2012 and was conducted successively by the members of the SC (5 days each, except the senior expert from 10 to 19 of October). The objective of the mission was to observe the conduct of the pilot census in the field. In addition, a team of four observers, composed of Lidija Naumovska, Gabor Rosza, Jean-Paul Sardon and Per Schöning was present during the whole period of the pilot census. Each of them covered several municipalities, in order to observe the pilot census field operations in all the 60 enumeration areas (EAs) sampled in the pilot.

10. The fifth mission took place from 19 to 21 of November 2012 (3 days) and was conducted by one member of the SC, Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska. The objective of the mission was to observe the conduct of the Post enumeration survey (PES) of the Pilot census in the field. The expert covered all 6 EAs (in 6 municipalities) sampled in PES sample in order to observe the PES field operations.

11. The sixth mission took place from 10 to 13 of December 2012 and was conducted by four members of the SC: Mr. Roberto Bianchini, Mr. Bent Noerby Bonde, Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska and Mr. Guido Pieraccini. The objective of the mission was to hear from the Statistical Institutions about the lessons learned from the Pilot Census and to assess whether the preparations are on level that could allow conducting a census in April 2013.

12. The seventh mission took place from 12 to 15 February 2013 and was conducted by one member of the SC, Mr. Roberto Bianchini. The objective of the mission was to assess the situation on the progress of preparation and implementation of the IMO recommendations in the new context of the postponement of the census, with a focus on the achievement of the deadlines regarding cartographic preparations. A second objective was to collect information and materials for a more detailed assessment on the progress of census preparatory activities to be made by all members of the SC in March 2013.

13. The eighth mission was conducted by the complete SC from 18 to 22 March 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess in detail progress made in the preparations with regard to the milestones given after the sixth mission in December 2012, when the SC recommended to postpone the census to October 2013.

14. The ninth mission was conducted by two members of the SC, Jean-Michel Durr and Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska from 22 to 25 April 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess the progress made in the preparations with regard to the milestones given in the sixth mission and updated in previous missions.

15. The tenth mission was conducted by the full SC from 28 to 31 May 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess whether the progress made in the preparations was sufficient to consider that the country was ready to conduct a census in October 2013.

16. The eleventh mission was conducted by three members of the SC, Mr. Jean-Michel Durr, Mr. Bent Noerby Bonde and Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 16 to 19 July 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess whether the preparations were still on track after the positive assessment of the 10th mission to conduct a census in October 2013. A special focus was put on the preparation of data processing.

17. The twelfth mission was conducted by four members of the SC, Mr. Roberto Bianchini, Mr. Bent Noerby Bonde, Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska and Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 3 to 6 September 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess the state of play regarding to forthcoming census field activities (including PES) and data processing activities following the field activities as well as the overall census preparations in accordance to the Census milestones and SC recommendations and advices given through the previous missions and SC reports.

18. The thirteenth mission was conducted by five members of the SC: Mr. Roberto Bianchini and Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 27 September to 4 October, Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska from 4 October to 11 October; and Mr. Jean-Michel Durr and Ms. Merzem Demirci from 11 October to 18 October. The objective of the mission was to monitor the enumeration of the census, including its final preparations and final operations. During this mission, the SC was assisted by a team of 27 international observers, deployed all over the country.

19. The fourteenth mission was conducted by one member of the SC: Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska from 1 to 3 November 2013. The objective of the mission was to monitor the conducting of the Post-enumeration survey following the Census. During this mission, the SC was assisted by a team of 5 international observers, deployed all over the country from 1 to 10 November.

20. The fifteenth mission was conducted by one member of the SC: Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 17 to 18 December 2013. The objective of the mission was to assess that the data processing system was functional and in accordance with the SC recommendations.

21. The sixteenth and present mission was conducted by five members of the SC from 11 to 14 February 2014. The objective of the mission was to assess the starting of the data processing and the implementation of the SC recommendations.

22. The expert wish to express his gratitude to the directors and staff of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS), the Statistical Institutes of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska (RS) for their availability and collaboration, and to the staff of Council of Europe for the organisation of the mission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

23. The objective of the mission was to assess the starting of the data processing and the implementation of the SC recommendations. The SC met with the three Statistical Institutions and visited the data processing centre to assess in depth the procedures implemented.

24. The data processing centre is now operational and fulfils the conditions for storage and processing of census materials, including security. 298 staff have been recruited and trained. Data capture is in final testing phase but is already performing adequately. The SC made recommendations to optimize the process in order to reduce the time needed and allow earlier dissemination of the census results.

25. Significant progress in improving the methodology of data captures and matching procedures of the Post Enumeration Survey have been observed. However, the SC recommends revising the timeliness of the activities to complete them in shorter time than planned.

26. In terms of communication, the SC observes that the lack of pro-active response to critics, constantly deplored during its previous missions, has now a negative impact on the confidence in the data processing phase and in the results that will be released later.

27. The situation of the Director and Deputy Directors of the Agency is still unclear. Their position has been prolonged until the end of February but no information about their replacement is available. This situation bears the risk of a lack of management of the operation in its critical phases of data processing and dissemination.

28. It is reminded to the Agency the obligation to provide documents translated in English to the SC members, to enable their assessment.

29. Finally, the SC considers that the measures proposed by the Agency to ensure security and confidentiality of data are efficient and adequate, but strongly recommends that at the end of the data processing the images of the questionnaires be destroyed and the personal data be removed from the Census database.

30. In conclusion, the SC considers that the data processing phase is starting well and in accordance with the SC recommendations, but that some optimization of the timeliness is possible. In the coming months the SC will closely monitor the census data processing to assess its compliance with international standards and best practices. Therefore, regular information in English on the progress and updated timetable are requested from the Agency for Statistics.