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

Twentieth Assessment Report

18 – 21 November 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. Katerina 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. Meryem 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 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 seventeenth mission was conducted by one member of the SC: Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 21 to 23 May 2014. The objective of the mission was to control that the

data processing was working smoothly and that the timing for completion of the phase was in accordance with the SC recommendations.

23. The eighteenth mission was conducted by four members of the SC from 3 to 6 June 2014. The objective of the mission was to assess the situation of data capture and the state of preparation of further steps, editing and dissemination as well as the Post Enumeration Survey.

24. The nineteenth mission was conducted by two members of the SC, Ms. Katerina Kostadinova-Daskalovska and Mr. Guido Pieraccini from 15 to 17 September 2014. The objective of the mission was to assess the data capture and editing phases, as well as PES and dissemination preparation.

25. The twentieth and present mission was conducted by the complete SC from 18 to 21 November 2014. The objective of the mission was to assess in detail progress made in the data processing phase, as well as PES and dissemination preparation.

26. The experts wish to express their 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

27. The entire process of data capture was completed at the end of October. As in the previous two missions, the SC has performed a quality assessment on a number of captured questionnaires that confirms the high level of quality of the data capture operation.

28. Coding of activity, occupation and education, as well as geographic variables and ethnicity, religion and mother tongue is currently underway and is foreseen to be completed by the end of the year to provide a complete census database available for data editing and correction. Coding of the sensitive question is conducted in accordance with the recommendations of the SC to keep all original declarations in the census database.

29. The rules for the determination of the residence status are under discussion. Five sets of rules were defined involving the questions 1 to 7 (designed to determine the residence status) as well as additional questions such as the place of work. The results of the various models being similar, the SC recommends to choose the simplest one, based on the questions 1 to 7 only. A decision should be taken urgently in order to not delay further steps of the data processing phase.

30. With the help of the two International Experts, the definition of the procedure of edit and imputation to approach the correction of the Census micro-data is under finalization. This step should be finalised and run on the complete database by the end of February 2015.

31. There is significant improvement in the PES activities in line with the set methodology and successful support from the IT staff. However, matching procedures and calculation of estimates of the coverage should be completed by the end of the year, once the decision on the residence status has been made.

32. The Agency has strengthened the capacity of the communication, publication and dissemination of the statistical office and this is indeed a positive move for the months to

come with the increased scrutiny from the media and the first census results to be published. However, the staff involved in public relations shall maintain very close links with the staff performing the data in order to keep abreast of issues needing the preparation of communication material.

33. There were some developments in the preparation of the census data dissemination since the last SC mission. The SC recommendations and advices referring to user consultation and preparation of tabulation procedures were taken into account and respective activities were completed or are under way. Taking into account the time necessary for technical preparation of paper publications, the SC strongly advises the three statistical institutions to disseminate the first set of final census data online.

34. The SC reiterates its recommendation that at the end of the data processing the images be destroyed and the personal data be removed from the Census database.

35. In conclusion, the SC considers that the data processing phase is progressing well and in accordance with the SC recommendations. However, the SC urges the Statistical Institutions to finalise a decision regarding the residence status and to undertake the editing phase in order to not delay the dissemination of the census results. The SC considers that the dissemination of a first set of final results should take place in April or May 2015, and in any case before summer 2015. In the coming months the SC will continue to closely monitor the census data processing to assess its compliance with international standards and best practices.