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

## *Third Assessment Report*

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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, Mr. 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.

9. The present assessment is based on the information reported during these meetings, and on some direct observations of the mission. As a consequence, the comments and recommendations presented below are based on the understanding of the experts, and may not reflect the real situation. This report was prepared by the Senior Census Expert taking into consideration the individual reports of the other expert as well as his own observations.

10. The experts wish to express their gratitude to the directors and staff of the Agency for Statistics, the Statistical Institutes of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska and of the Geodetic institutions for their availability and collaboration, and to the staff of Council of Europe for the perfect organisation of the mission.

## **Executive Summary**

11. Since the second mission, the SC considers that important progress have been made in the preparation of the pilot census. Some important recommendations were implemented, such as the improvement of cartography or the inclusion of open-ended question for ethnicity, religion and mother tongue. However, coordination and cooperation is still weak. The meeting held with the three directors confirmed that many disagreements still hamper smooth collaboration and strict decision making process. In addition to the duplication of efforts, this entails two major risks: to delay considerably the preparations of all materials due to endless discussions and to have different implementation and organisation of the census operations in the two entities. If the first one has direct consequences on the date a census can be implemented, the second affects directly the quality and the comparability of the census in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and consequently its conformity with international and European standards.

12. The preparation of the pilot census is on its way. Despite some delays, it should be possible to conduct a pilot census in October this year.

**13. In conclusion, the SC considers that a pilot census can be conducted in October, if strong decisions and actions are taken for the remaining preparations, but still expresses reservations about the preparation of the population and housing census to meet the date of April 2013. In particular, the way the statistical institutions will be able to take quick decisions from the analysis of the pilot census will be determining to meet the objective of April 2013.**