

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

Seventh Assessment Report

12-15 February 2013

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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 cen-

suses. 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 15-29.

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 or April 2013.

13. The present assessment is based on the information reported during mission 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. The report was prepared by the expert that performed the mission and was finalised by the Senior Census Expert.

14. 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 for their availability and collaboration, and to the staff of Council of Europe for the perfect organisation of the mission.

Executive Summary

15. The mission was conducted eight weeks after the recommendation made by the IMO that a postponement of the census of at least six months would allow the Statistical Institutions to finalise preparatory census activities in line with EU and international standards, and would give more time to solve some issues which could hamper the successful achievement of a population and housing census in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

16. The focus of the mission was to assess the situation on the progress of census preparation and implementation of the IMO recommendations in the new context of its postponement, with a focus on the achievement of the deadlines regarding cartographic preparation. Recommendations given in the last SC report were a guideline for the discussions, focusing on the problematic areas, and the annex 2 to the last SC report was taken as reference to measure the progress.

17. In general terms, considerable advancements were made by the three statistical institutions in the census preparations as recommended by the SC of IMO and as indicated in the annex 2 of the previous SC report, at least for the activities planned to be completed within the month of February 2013. However, some milestones have not been reached, and others only partly, mostly because some of the issues already pointed out in previous reports of the SC are still unsolved.

18. On the basis of the discussions held during the mission with the Statistical Institutions, the main findings are:

- a) A positive progress was made in decision-making aspects: the CoMs of BiH appointed recently the Minister of Communication and Transports, Mr Damir Hadzic for the overall coordination of the census operation. His role would be important for the support from the Government to the census operation;
- b) The internal organisation for communication among BHAS and entity statistical institutions is likely to improve due to a number of initiatives taken by BHAS. A Minister was appointed by the CoMs of BiH as Census Coordinator to support the coordination of the census operation at Government level. However, it is still unclear who should take decisions if there is no agreement between the three Statistical Institutions. An example is the disagreement on the formulation of some questions on census questionnaires and on some points of the overall plan of activities for census operations;
- c) A detailed plan of activities for the overall census operations until 2016 was prepared by the Agency for Statistics. For each activity the plan indicates the implementation period and the responsible institution. The plan is consistent with the IMO recommendations.

- d) A document on the Census Communication and Outreach Strategy was drafted by the EU technical assistance project (EUPHC) and agreed by the three statistical institutes, but no training of management and staff on communication was reported to be carried out in the last period;
- e) Some progress was done on the implementation of the BiH census law defining roles, duties and responsibilities of the three statistical institutions and improving instructions on how to conduct the enumeration of the BiH citizens working or residing abroad for more than 12 months (Articles 40-42 in the BiH Census Law). However, no progress was made on other issues: duties and responsibilities of the MCCs, common census database, selection of field staff, establishment of a register of spatial units at the Agency for statistics; no progress was made to harmonize the RS census law with the BiH census law;
- f) Following the decision on the postponement of the date to conduct the census, the Council of Ministers of BiH (CoMs BiH) adopted, in January 2013, the amendments to the Census Law "Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013" and send them into urgent parliamentary procedure. The Law was adopted by the BiH House of Representatives on 31/01/2013;
- g) The overall census budget was revised by BHAS and, after an agreement with the entity statistical Institutions, it is expected to be submitted to the Central Census Commission and to the CoMs BiH for its approval. Its adoption and a clear definition on the distribution and management of funds among the Statistical Institutions is a priority for the progress of census preparations;
- h) Census questionnaires P1 and P2 were revised and agreed between the Statistical Institutions, with the exception of questions 19 (Citizenship), 24 (Ethnicity/Nationality), 25 (Religion) and 26 (Mother tongue) of the census form P1; these versions of questionnaires do not include ID unique codes for addresses or buildings as recommended by the SC;
- i) Cartographic preparations will be concluded according to the plan only in FBiH and Brcko District. In RS, 30 per cent of the territory is still not covered by orthophotos. Therefore, census maps cannot be prepared in that part of the territory as in the rest of the country, making differences in the methodological approach;
- j) The number of Enumeration Areas (EAs) will be defined by the end of February 2013, but the expected total number seems too large in comparison to the 1991 census;
- k) A compiled version of instruction manuals for field operations is being prepared, in the light of the lessons learned from the 2012 pilot census;
- l) The preparation of data processing activities are in general well progressing but decisions should be taken soon on the access to individual data with personal information, and on the location of the servers for the replication of census data;
- m) A document on the dissemination of census data was drafted by EUPHC and agreed by the three statistical institutes.

19. In conclusion, the SC considers that the technical preparations are in general progressing, but with some delay. The delay seems mostly due to the difficulty to establish an efficient decision making mechanisms allowing the Agency for Statistics to implement and monitor census preparatory activities according to the plan of activities, in agreement with the entity Statistical Institutions.

20. In the next mission, the SC will assess the census materials produced until March 2013, and will monitor more in detail the progress made in technical preparations.