

## Pilot Census of Population, Households and Dwellings for 2009 in the Republic of Serbia

1. The following Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia is planned for 2011 in order to provide, beside methodological, also temporal data comparability at the international level, as well as comparability with results of the previous censuses conducted in Serbia.

The legal basis for the Census conduction is a Law on Census of Population, Households and Dwellings for 2011. During 2008 we prepared a draft and explanation of the Law and we submitted it to the ministries, Republic Secretariat for Legislation and the Office for the EU accession, according to the Government's Rulebook, to express themselves about it (to 27 addresses in total). We got remarks from five ministries and the National Bank regarding the draft of the Law and the Council for Regulation Reform had a remark on the Law's explanation. We accepted the remarks and added them into the draft.

At the meeting of the Government of Serbia that was held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009, a suggestion of the Law on Census of Population, Households and Dwellings for 2011 was made and directed to the Assembly's procedure. We expect adoption of the Law before the end of June 2009.

2. In the Law on Census, in articles 21, 22, 23, and 24, total means indispensable for budgeting of the Census (Table 1) as well as dynamics of payment by years –for 2010 2011, 2012 and 2013 are defined. The total means are estimated to something more than 36 millions of euros, what, if divided with expected number of inhabitants, amounts to 4.5 euros per inhabitant.

Table 1. The cost structure of the Census for 2011

		%
I	Field preparations for the Census conduction	9.0
II	Organization and monitoring of the Census activities and preparation of the Census methodology	1.5
III	Acquisition of equipment for data entering and processing	6.9
IV	Printing and distribution of the Census material	3.2
V	Trainings of enumerators and other direct participants of the Census	17.9
VI	Enumeration (fieldwork)	50.7
VII	Quality control of the Census on a sample	0.5
VIII	Processing of the Census material and dissemination of the Census results	6.3
IX	Other costs	3.9

3. Preparations for the Census 2011 and the pilot Census 2009 officially started by holding a three-days Counseling titled "Towards the Census 2011". 57 expert works from the representatives of the international organizations (UNSD, UNHABITAT), representatives of the statistical offices of the neighboring countries and experts from the country were presented at the Counseling;

4. The Pilot Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia was conducted in the period from 1<sup>st</sup> until 15<sup>th</sup> April 2009. The Pilot Census was conducted in 36 municipalities and 40 settlements on the sample of 50 enumeration areas (what amounts to 0.1% of the total number of enumeration areas). The Census included 10.628 persons and 4.262 dwellings. The legal basis for the Pilot Census conduction is a Regulation on Statistical Surveys in 2009 (Official Journal of the Republic of Serbia no. 117/2008).

The most important activities on the preparations of the Pilot Census are:

- the managing structure has been formed (Bureau for the Pilot Census, manager of the project, team leader, project team and 7 working groups for specific organizational-methodological tasks);
- In the beginning, there were some plans to conduct the Pilot Census on the representative sample for 250 enumeration areas (hereinafter EA), what would include around 25.000 households and around 70 to 75 thousands of persons. But, the Law on the budget of the Republic of Serbia for 2009 did not approve means for the Pilot Census conduction to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. Having in mind necessity of the Pilot Census conduction and due to lack of financial means, we were forced to reduce the sample to only 50 EA, what amounted to 0.1% of the total number of EA, that reduced the originally planed coverage to around 4 thousand of households and dwellings and around 12 thousands of persons; criterion for selection of these 50 EA was to conduct the Pilot Census on minimum number and in that way to provide piloting of the prepared methodologically-organizational solutions; in order to bring down the costs of the enumeration to the minimum, in 14 regional departments we selected by 2 EA –one EA in the head office of the regional department, and the second in the nearest rural settlement; Novi Sad is an exception where 3 EA were selected as well as the City of Belgrade where in each of 17 municipalities one EA was selected.
- financial plan for the Pilot Census conduction has been prepared (Table 2.)

Table 2. The cost structure of the Pilot Population Census for 2009

	%
Managing, organization of the Pilot Census and making of methodological and organizational instruments	4.1
Printing and distribution of the Census forms and instructions	0.7
Revision of maps and description of statistical areas' borders and digitalization of enumeration areas	6.2
Preparation of classifications (occupations, industry, educational attainment ) for the needs of the Census	0.1
Trainings of enumerators, trainers and controllers (trainings at 4 points)	5.7
Enumeration (compensations to enumerators, trainers and controllers for the field work)	14.7
Manual preparation of the Census material (industry coding , filled in by Statistics)	1.4
Acquisition of software and hardware for optical recognition of the character	49.8
Making of applicative software	3.0
Entering of the Census material and coding (school and occupation)	8.0
Simulation of the quality control and coverage of the Census' units	1.3
Unpredicted costs (5%)	5.0

- cooperation with the Republic Geodetic Office as a key institution on making of maps and description of enumeration areas' borders; of 50 EA on which the Pilot Census was conducted, for 34 EA we had analogue maps and for 16 EA ortho-photo shots of EA. We certainly have to intensify cooperation with the Republic Geodetic Office during 2009 and especially in 2010 regarding making of digital maps and description of EA borders;
- a detailed activity plan has been made by which all phases of preparation, conduction, processing and analysis of the Pilot Census were defined;
- basic enumeration questionnaires have been defined (Individual form, Questionnaire for household and dwellings, Lists of persons and Controller). Characteristics have been defined according to international recommendations (UNECE/Eurostat), government institutions needs and other users of Census data, as well as suggestions, presented on the Counseling;
- the final contents of enumeration questionnaires has been adopted after the meeting with the authorized ministries, scientific institutions and representatives of the society's civil sector (NGO); we organized the meeting in cooperation with the team of the Vice-President of the Government for implementation of the strategy for poverty reduction (PRSP team) in the beginning of December 2008;
- taking into consideration that we planned to conduct the Pilot Census on the representative sample we planned to, for the first time since 1953, when the coverage control and census quality started, conduct this post-census action on sub-sample of 40 EA. But, taking into account the restrictive budget, the coverage and quality control was conducted in the field in the period from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April, but on 11 EA (around 850 dwellings and around 2000 persons).

By the post-census survey we also want to test:

- whether is it possible to identify family nuclei only on the basis of a relationships with a reference person; namely, up to now we were identifying families on the basis of a designation "name of the father, for married women and widows name of the husband". But, representatives from the governmental institutions and the NGO that deal with the gender equality had some remarks regarding the title of this topic and they insisted at the meetings this topic to be modified or even erased from enumeration questionnaires; if the quality control shows that it is possible to identify family nuclei only on the basis of answers on relationships between household members, then we would keep only this topic in the Census 2011;
- in the Pilot Census we were collecting data on place of birth and place of usual residence of the mother when a person was born; in the control we only included question on place of residence of mother in the time when a person was born; if the quality control shows that the question on place of birth didn't affect significantly the quality improvement of the answer on place of residence of mother in the time when a person was born, than we will exclude the question "Place of birth" from the Census 2011.

- question on national affiliation in the Pilot Census was designed as a combination of an auto-code and an open answer; this is an open answer in control; we want to test a hypothesis whether a question's design affects citizens' statements on national affiliation;

The basic reason for changing of the design of the question on national affiliation in relation to the previous censuses (an open answer) is connected to the application of a new way of the census data processing. Namely, for the Census 2011 the optical data entry is planned (scanning and optical recognition of the character). Taking into account the fact that in the Census 2002 more than 80% of population declared that they were of Serbian nationality, we decided to separate this modality, or with other words, not to be entered but to be designated. In this way not only the work of enumerators in the field would be accelerated, but also the processing and the quality of answers obtained, because in this way errors due to illegible handwriting would be omitted.

- One of the goals of the Pilot Census is testing of identification connectivity of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings and the total Census of Agriculture that was conducted in Serbia for the last time in 1960. Namely, the Census of Agriculture should be conducted latest seven months after the Census of Population, so, in the Pilot Census of Population, during the fieldwork; we identified households with agricultural holdings in order to enter them into the sample for conduction of the Pilot Census of Agriculture.

- In order to promote significance of the Census conduction, we prepared a text under title "Towards the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in 2011" for a publication Demographic review, on the basis of a consent, obtained from the Ministry for Human and Minorities rights. The Demographic review is being issued by the Center for Demographic Surveys in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and it is intended for deputies in the Republic Parliament, presidents of the local self-government, as well as editors of the leading media in Serbia.

5. Methodological and organizational instructions for the Pilot Census have been prepared. In relation to the Census 2002, the most important methodological modifications relate to introduction on question on persons with disability, then a question on consensual unions, as well as question on age of live births for women that were delivering babies. The question on disabled persons is significant taking into account the fact that there is no all-inclusive and adequate data base on these persons, as well as that the Government of Serbia adopted the Strategy on improvement of disabled persons' position where it is emphasized that the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia is obliged to collect data about them through its surveys. While making the methodological instructions we were guided by the WG attitudes, recommendations brought out at the meeting in Ohrid, as well as suggestions from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in which scope of work there is also the disabled persons' position, and certainly, suggestions from the NGO (Center for independent life of disabled persons, Association of Dystrophy of Serbia, ...) helped us a lot in our work. Then, we also spread set of migrational characteristics in the way that we separated internal from international migrations. For persons that ever reside abroad a data about country from which they have moved is collected, than the year of arrival and the main reason of moving. Making of instructions for population's economic characteristics had a special weight. We made a special effort to keep

comparability with the results from the previous censuses, but also to provide maximum comparability with the LFS.

Trainings were organized in a two-stages form, but first we had three-days training in Belgrade for republic (16) and municipal trainers (22), and after four days the republic and municipal trainers had three-days trainings for enumerators on three points, that is in: Belgrade, for the city of Belgrade; Novi Sad for the territory of Vojvodina and in Pokajnica for territory of Central Serbia and Kosovo and Metohia.

The material of the Pilot Census is in the phase of processing at the moment. But, on the basis of observations of direct participants in the Census (enumerators, republic and municipal trainers) we can say the following:

- it is extremely important not to conduct other surveys on population during the Census conduction; during the fieldwork of the Pilot Census the Ministry for Kosovo and Metohia started e.g. a census of internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohia, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia was conducting the LFS, etc. what lead to preoccupation of citizens in some EA, caused suspicion, confusion, etc. Also, because of the economic crisis, the Government of Serbia announced as a possible measurement for mitigation of budget deficit taxation of dwellings larger than 100m<sup>2</sup>; this announcement caused the citizens' reduced presenting of housing facilities' real size;
  - we already said that we tested the possibility of identificational connectivity of the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture in the Pilot Census; the criterion for identification of a household with a holding was that the household used 50 or more acres of agriculture land or was dealing with agricultural production for its needs and for the market's needs; but in the Pilot Census is noticeable that households in urban areas don't want to give data on agricultural funds, while in rural areas one can notice the tendency that households want to state smaller areas of land and to reduce the number of livestock;
  - in the group of economic characteristics (activity in a referent week) a problem occurred regarding entering of unemployed persons, that were not searching either first or new job (e.g. persons that neither worked nor searched the job, but were waiting to fill the certain age in order to submit the request for acquaintance of pension or persons that completed secondary education, they didn't enrolled to the faculty they wished to attend and they were making a brake during the following year until the next registration period.)
- 6. In the Pilot Census we used 4 basic and 11 auxiliary forms.**  
The basic forms are: - Lists of persons (Form SL)  
- Individual form (Form P-1)  
- Questionnaire for household and dwellings (Form P-2) and  
- Controller/Контролник (Form P-3).

Each EA has one Controller as a rule. The purpose of the Controller is to establish whether the census has been carried out at all addresses that had been included by the EA border, as well as to obtain data on total number of enumerated enumeration units in the short time period; The purpose of the Form SL is to enter members of a household, as well as temporarily present persons in the time of the Census conduction.

The Forms P-1 and P-2 are designed in order to be adapted for scanning and optical recognition of characters (OCR). It is planned to enter the material from the Pilot Census in two ways: (1) manual entry on the basis of experience from the Census 2002 and (2) by use of OCR. During the summer we will carry out the analysis of the material entered and on the basis of speed and above all the quality of the entered material we will decide in which way we will perform data entry in the Census 2011.

**7.** During making of the Law on Census, creating of Census questionnaires and making of methodology we had several meetings with the authorized governmental institutions. Obligations of ministries and other organizations that are involved in jobs and tasks regarding the preparations and realization of the Census, and according to the Draft of the Law on Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in 2011 were the subject of one special meeting. Also, during defining the questionnaires we were holding many meetings with other divisions in the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

**8.** In the following period we are expected to do analysis of all phases in preparations and realization of the Pilot Census. During the autumn we planned to hold an expert meeting where methodologists and IT experts would present their observations from the Pilot Census so that we could remove in time all noticed shortages for the Census 2011. After this meeting our activities will be oriented towards the program of census dissemination programme, making of rules for logical control, codex of codes, acquisition of equipment, etc.

**9.** Also, starting from the fact that representatives of the Roma people often deny stated number of the Roma people from the Census 2002 (108 thousands) in their statements, we started initiative for conduction of the Pilot Census for the Roma people in 2009, in order to educate certain number of the Roma people to organize and conduct census activities and to include them into the next census afterwards. The Pilot Census for the Roma people should be conducted next fall with financial support from the Swedish Agency for International Development (SIDA).

In order to provide support for this action, in cooperation with the Ministry for Human and Minorities rights, we held a meeting where we were discussing the treatment of the vulnerable groups in the Census (beside Roma people, we were also discussing about displaced persons, refugees, etc.) on which beside representatives from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the mentioned Ministry, representatives from UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA and IOM were also present.