

POLITICAL DECLARATION

20 October – World Statistics Day

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On 20 October 2010, *World Statistics Day* will be celebrated for the first time in the entire world, under the general theme “*Celebrating the many achievements of official statistics*”. This confirms, once again, the importance the United Nations place on population censuses (round 2010), which are guided by the motto “Every one counts – Accurate and complete data are essential in the quest for improving people’s lives”.

The UN’s interest in this field is fully justified as the statistical studies and analyses and particularly the censuses supply information that no other type of survey can supply, providing a dynamic perspective of demographic and socio-economic phenomena, from the level of the smallest locality to that of the continent and the world.

As President of the Population and Development Commission, I wanted to make sure the Romanian Senate joined the national and foreign institutions that mark this new *World Day* and, in this respect, I asked that all my fellow senators be provided with a brief fact sheet. It was drawn up by the National Institute of Statistics – a veteran of world statistics that has already celebrated 151 years – in co-operation with the Romanian Office of the UN Population Fund.

However, I must confess that my attempt to make you acknowledge the importance of the work of statisticians and the contribution of official statistics to development, particularly in the context of world economic interdependence, does not stop here. This is merely the beginning.

Here is the reason.

Unlike in 1996 and 2002, when Romanian censuses were based on UN guidelines, in 2010 Romania is facing a challenge. Our country has to comply with the EU regulations concerning the organisation of this type of activity, which takes place every ten years, and, consequently, it is preparing to conduct, in October 2011, the first – let’s say “European” – Population and Housing Census.

According to the EU norms in this field, Member States have to provide the European Commission with final, validated and aggregated data at the beginning of 2014.

It must be said that the simultaneous conducting of censuses in all EU Member States will allow the making of comparative analyses on the population and the housing conditions, providing a solid basis for creating long-term development policies and programmes with a view to harmonising the levels of economic development, including the *Europe 2020 Strategy – a strategy for a growth that is intelligent, ecological and favourable to inclusion*.

To be more exact, the 2011 census has the following main statistical objectives:

- Obtaining quantitative and qualitative information on the number and territorial distribution of the population, the demographic and socio-economic structure, data on households and the dwelling stock, the population's living conditions and the buildings in which the dwellings are located;
- Readjusting and updating the Population Register and population and housing databases, determining the external migration flows and establishing a system for monitoring the migration phenomenon, including temporary migration;
- Acquiring deep knowledge on the human capital and labour force of Romanian society, their territorial distribution and the main activities of the national economy, the situation of households and the analysis of the dynamics of the various demographic phenomena and of their impact on some economic and social indicators.

How is Romania preparing itself?

By means of Government Ordinance No 36/2007, the necessary legal framework was adopted and the *Central Commission for the Population and Housing Census* was set up, a Commission that will co-ordinate, organise and conduct the census (initially scheduled to take place in March 2011 and subsequently postponed for October 2011).

Although, if we are optimistic, we can say that we have an entire year ahead of us to prepare all the things the census involves, we cannot ignore the size and complexity of this action.

Therefore it becomes necessary and urgent to adopt the **Draft Government Decision amending Government Decision No 1502 on the organisation and conducting of the Romanian Population and Housing Census in 2011**, a document which sets out the timetable of activities for the organisation and conducting of the census as well as the necessary financial resources.

Equally important and urgent is the actual allocation of money from the state budget in order to allow the preparation of the census to start, at central and local level.

Having said this and hoping that I merely anticipated your wish to stay connected to all the implications of such an important event in the lives of the people you represent, the Senate's Population and Development Subcommittee will continue to collaborate with the National Institute of Statistics, supporting actions aimed at informing the Members of Parliament of the objectives and the stage of preparations – budget, organisation, difficulties encountered – for the 2011 Romanian Population and Housing Census, so that the census meets the deadlines and is properly conducted.

Thank you!

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