
Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Group of Experts on Migration Statistics

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Results of the 2020 census on migration

Round of population censuses 2020: migration of the population of the CIS countries¹

Note by the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS (CIS Statistical Committee)

Abstract

The Commonwealth of Independent States region is characterised by intensive migration movements between the member states. These movements are related both to change of place of permanent residence and temporary migration. Every year within the Commonwealth, about 8 million movements are made in connection with temporary labour migration, and about 700,000 people change their place of permanent residence.

Accounting for migration has been one of the most challenging issues throughout the Commonwealth's existence.

In 2016, the CIS Council of Heads of State decided to conduct national population censuses as close to 2020 as possible: from October 2019 to October 2020. Such convergence would allow, among other things, to assess the volumes and flows of interstate movements within the Commonwealth. For this purpose, the CIS Statistical Committee, together with statistical services, has developed a list of migration indicators for which it is important to obtain information from national censuses. However, the COVID-19 epidemic did not allow CIS countries to conduct censuses as close to 2020 as possible, and a number of countries had to postpone the censuses to later years. Currently, 212 million people have been censused, or more than 80 per cent of the total population of the CIS countries.

This report contains the main results of the 2020 round of population censuses of the CIS countries in terms of migration and citizenship...

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NOTE: The designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

1. For the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, general population censuses retain their importance as the main information resource on the population, which provides its socio-demographic, economic and ethno-cultural characteristics.
2. In support of the UN resolution announcing the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, the relevant decisions of the CIS Council of Heads of State (2016) and the CIS Council of Heads of Government (2017) were adopted, supporting the conduct of national censuses and calling on the Commonwealth countries to bring the dates of national censuses as close as possible. However, the COVID-19 epidemic did not allow CIS countries to conduct censuses as close to 2020 as possible, and a number of countries had to postpone the censuses to later years.
3. Currently, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have conducted national censuses and published their results¹. A total of 212 million people, or more than 80 per cent of the total population of the CIS countries, have been enumerated. Of these, 35 million, or 16 per cent of the census population, filled in the census forms on their own using the Internet, while for 84 per cent of the census population, information was collected by interview or obtained from administrative sources.
4. In Moldova, the census will take place from 8 April to 7 July 2024. In Uzbekistan, a pilot census was held in 4 regions of the country in 2021, covering more than 500,000 people, and the dates of the general census are currently being finalised.
5. The CIS Statistical Committee together with national statistical offices agreed on a list of questions for the harmonised measurement of *migration and labour force in the 2020 round*, their specific wording, methodology for obtaining them and tables for publishing the results. The proposals developed are in line with the Recommendations of the Conference of European Statisticians on the 2020 round of population and housing censuses.
6. The following indicators have been harmonised to measure CIS migration:
 - a. permanent residence (or place of habitual residence);
 - b. location at the time of the census;
 - c. country of birth (place of birth);
 - d. country of nationality (citizenship);
 - e. duration of residence in the current place of residence (year and month of arrival at the current place of residence);
 - f. former residence.
7. Key indicators have been selected to examine the aggregate labour force:
 - a. Labour force participation status;
 - b. status in employment;
 - c. main source of livelihood.

¹ The report contains data submitted by statistical services of the CIS member states to the CIS Statistical Committee within the framework of information exchange, and also used information posted on the websites of statistical services of the CIS countries.

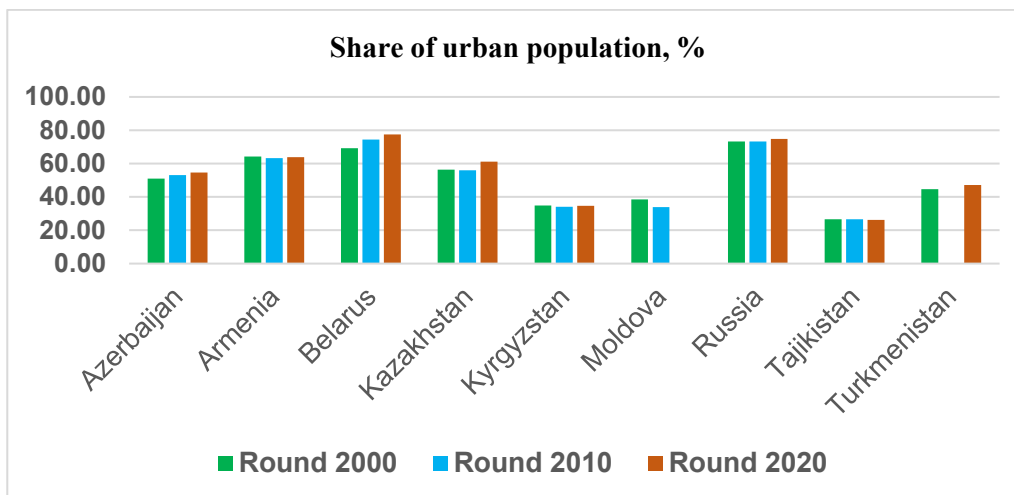
8. Migration is traditionally one of the main topics in the programmes of national censuses of CIS countries. In addition to general questions, the census questionnaires also include topics that provide extended, additional information on migration processes taking place in the country (Annex 1). All countries (except Turkmenistan) collect information on temporary absentees and temporary stayers. In the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Kazakhstan the topic on the intention of citizens to leave the country was studied: reasons and duration of departure; in the Republic of Moldova - intention to leave and duration of departure. In the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, questions were asked about registration at the place of permanent residence.
9. Trends in demographic development in terms of birth and death rates, dynamics of external and internal migration affect changes in the **size of the permanent population and its distribution** across the country.

Table 1

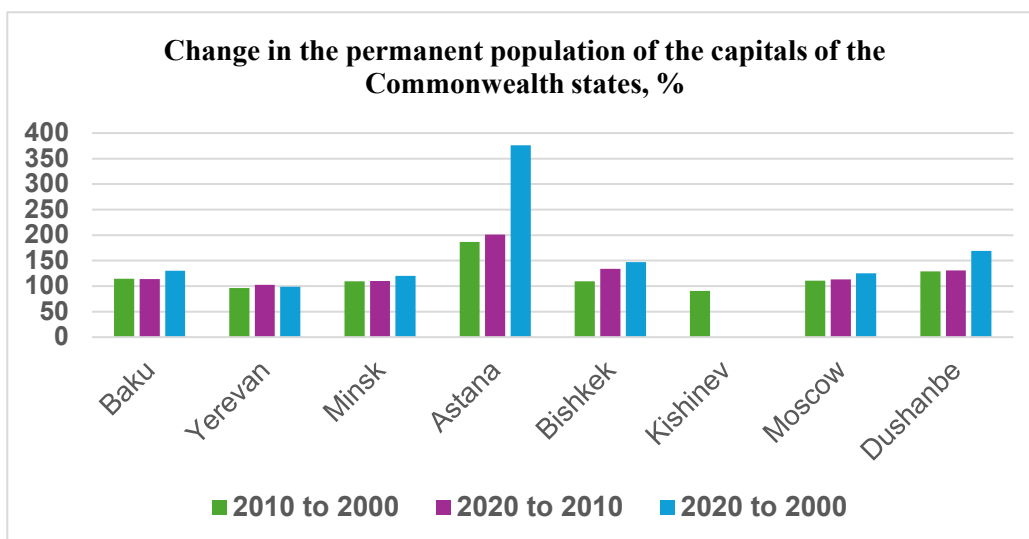
Number of permanent population in CIS countries
(according to population censuses)

	Number of permanent population, thousands of people			Population change, %		
	2000	2010	2020	2000/ 1989	2010/ 2000	2020/ 2010
Azerbaijan	7 953,4	8 922,4	9 951,4	113,3	112,2	111,5
Armenia	3 213,0	3 018,9	2 932,7	97,2	94,0	97,1
Belarus	10 045,2	9 503,8	9 413,4	98,9	94,6	99,0
Kazakhstan	14 981,3	16 009,6	19 186,0	92,4	106,9	119,8
Kyrgyzstan	4 822,9	5 362,8	6 936,2	113,3	111,2	129,3
Moldova	3 383,3	2 998,2		92,5	88,6	
Russia	145 166,7	145 141,0	147 182,1	98,7	100,0	101,4
Tajikistan	6 127,5	7 564,5	9 661,6	120,3	123,5	127,7
Turkmenistan	4 437,6	...	7 057,8	126,0

10. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan continue to have high population growth rates, while in Armenia, Belarus and Moldova (data from the two previous rounds) the population is declining. In Russia - the size of the resident population in all three recent censuses exceeded the current estimate at the time of the census. At the same time, the annual rate of change of the current estimate in the inter-census period showed a decline in the total population. This excess at the census is explained by immigration not counted in the intercensal period (see p.11).
11. The results of the censuses of all three recent rounds show that the **urbanisation process has stabilised** in most CIS countries. In Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, the share of urban population has maintained its values at the level of the previous rounds. In Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, the urban population has slightly increased in relative terms. This may be partly due to the ongoing administrative-territorial transformations - transfer of rural settlements to the category of urban settlements.



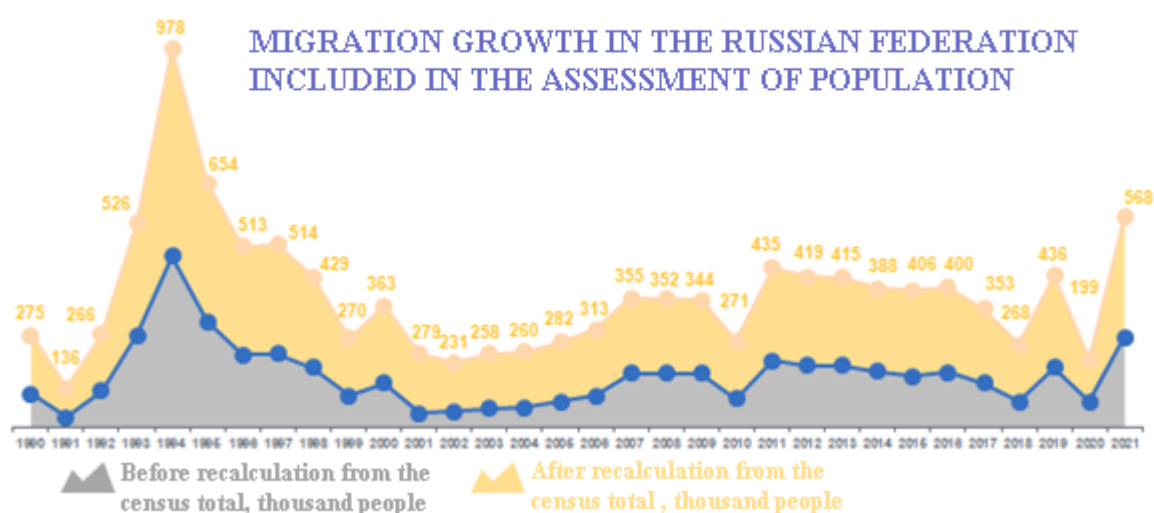
12. In recent decades, the population of the capitals of almost all CIS countries has grown. The migration vector directed towards the capital region is characteristic of both internal movements and external migration. This is due to diversified labour market offers and, consequently, a higher probability of employment, more developed infrastructure, greater choice of educational institutions, etc. Also, the growth of agglomerations can be associated with the inclusion of neighbouring settlements within the boundaries of the capital. At the same time, there is an increase in population not only in the capital city itself, but also in the neighbouring settlements. To a large extent, this is explained by the lower cost of housing compared to the capital.



13. Population totals obtained in censuses tend to deviate from current estimates. This is due to a number of reasons, in particular, to the peculiarities of the countries' accounting of demographic and migration events. And while in general the recording of natural population movement events has been historically well established in the CIS countries, the recording of migration has problems.

14. Discrepancies in the census population from the current estimate are attributed to the recording of migrants during the intercensal period. Retrospective recalculations, i.e., the distribution of the resulting difference over the years prior to the previous census year, become necessary. As a rule, recalculations are carried out with respect to the size and sex and age structure of the population. For example, all three recent censuses of the Russian Federation have shown an excess of census data over the current population estimate, and corresponding recalculations have been carried out in connection with the adjustment of annual migration volumes².

— Accounting for migration between census



16

15. General population censuses provide information on the **distribution of the resident population by citizenship**. The census results show that 98-99 per cent of the population of CIS countries are citizens of their country. The remaining 1-2 per cent of the resident population have citizenship of other countries, the majority being citizens of Commonwealth countries.
16. Information on stateless persons was obtained in all CIS countries. Their number in absolute terms is insignificant and almost everywhere tends to decrease compared to the results of the last census, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan (5.9 thousand people vs. 1.6 thousand people) and Tajikistan (2.8 thousand people vs. 1.3 thousand people).

² "Accounting of Migration Processes in All-Russian Population Censuses", paper by G.E. Sheverdova, Rosstat, Scientific Conference "Lomonosov Readings - 2024", Moscow State University, Moscow, 2024.

17. Russia is the main recipient country in the Commonwealth. Significant flows of people, both those changing their place of permanent residence and temporary labour migrants, are sent here. Below are the results of the latest All-Russian Population Census (GPN-2020) with regard to the distribution of foreign nationals by country of citizenship³.

**RESULTS OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN
POPULATION CENSUS - 2020**



18. **The duration of residence in the place of permanent residence** indicates the intensity of migration processes. According to the population census of the Republic of Belarus and the All-Russian population census, approximately only half of the population lives continuously from birth in the place of permanent residence. At the same time, about 80 per cent of the population who have not lived continuously since birth in their place of permanent residence are persons who have travelled within the country⁴, and about 20 per cent are persons who have come from abroad.
19. The population of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan is less inclined to change their place of permanent residence. In these countries from 70 to 90 per cent of the population live from birth in the place of permanent residence.

³ "Accounting of Migration Processes in All-Russian Population Censuses", paper by G.E. Sheverdova, Rosstat, Scientific Conference "Lomonosov Readings - 2024", Moscow State University, Moscow, 2024.

⁴ It should be borne in mind that the most recent movement is recorded. If the respondent came to the country from abroad and then changed places of permanent residence, the census captures only the last instance of in-country migration.

Table 2
Length of residence of the population in the place of permanent residence
(according to population censuses)

	The entire population	per cent		
		Living continuously in a place of permanent residence		
		from birth	not from birth	
		total	of which came from the territory of the country in question	
Azerbaijan				
2009	100	86,6	13,4	79,8
2019	100	89,4	10,6	83,6
Armenia				
2011	100	74,5	25,5	67,6
2022	100	79,0	21,0	76,8
Belarus				
2009	100	59,0	39,1	91,2
2019	100	52,9	45,9	78,5
Kazakhstan				
2009	100	62,7	37,3	39,8
2021	100	71,8	28,2	47,5
Kyrgyzstan				
2009	100	75,0	25,0	81,5
Russia				
2010	100	44,4	51,6	...
2021	100 ⁵	55,4	27,3	80,3
Tajikistan				
2010	100	...	7,9	92,6
2020	100	92,9	7,1	97,5

20. National census programmes are shaped to maintain continuity with previous censuses as well as to meet current information needs. The following are the results of the 2020 round of population censuses related to selected aspects of migration in the CIS countries.
21. The census programme of the **Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Moldova** included questions related to emigration intentions of the population both in terms of change of place of permanent residence and in connection with expected short-term departures from the country.
22. In the Republic of Belarus, the questions were formulated as follows:

Do you plan to leave the country
- If "Yes", for how long
The reason why you plan to leave the country

23. The results obtained are presented in Table 3.

⁵ Including persons who did not indicate a previous place of residence.

Table 3
Population aged 15-74 years planning to leave the Republic of Belarus for the reason of departure ⁶

	Total	person of them indicated the reason for departure					
		work	study	family circumstances	medical treatment	repatriation	change of housing conditions
Men and women	145 793	58 387	11 110	19 201	814	6 071	8 262
of them are planning to travel to:							
- less than 1 year	32 572	14 712	1 758	3 692	438	135	301
- period of more than 1 year	33 882	16 949	5 546	3 571	104	186	1 129
- permanent residence	79 339	26 726	3 806	11 938	272	5 750	6 832
Men	81 411	38 918	4 671	6 388	432	3 616	4 490
Women	64 382	19 469	6 439	12 813	382	2 455	3 772
Urban population	129 364	50 975	10 237	16 372	711	5 800	7 473
Rural population	16 429	7 412	873	2 829	103	271	789

24. Questions on **temporarily absent citizens** are included in the programmes of all CIS countries (except Turkmenistan). Such information is important for both sending countries (donors) and receiving countries (recipients), as this migration potential reflects the mobile part of the national labour force.
25. According to the population census of the **Republic of Azerbaijan**, 683 thousand people were absent from the country at the time of the census, more than 70 per cent of whom were rural residents. Of the total number of absentees, 360 thousand were men and 323 thousand were women⁷.
26. In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, the 2022 census collected detailed information on persons temporarily absent from the country. At the time of the census, 1,094,500 persons were temporarily absent from their place of permanent residence, of whom 88.1 per cent were absent due to work, 7.1 per cent due to family reasons, 3.8 per cent due to study and 1.0 per cent for other reasons⁸. Of the total number of temporarily absent persons, 80.0 per cent left the country and almost all of them went to CIS countries (Table 4).

⁶h <https://www.belstat.gov.by/upload/iblock/573/573cba293969c52e94b2a79aea51bbee.pdf>

⁷ Siyahyaalinma-2019, Cild A.pdf. Volume A of the Census of Azerbaijan 2019.

⁸h <https://stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/a5bb2b71-d819-4780-9067-81cb00f93663.pdf>

Table 4
Number of temporarily absent population for reasons of absence and place of stay

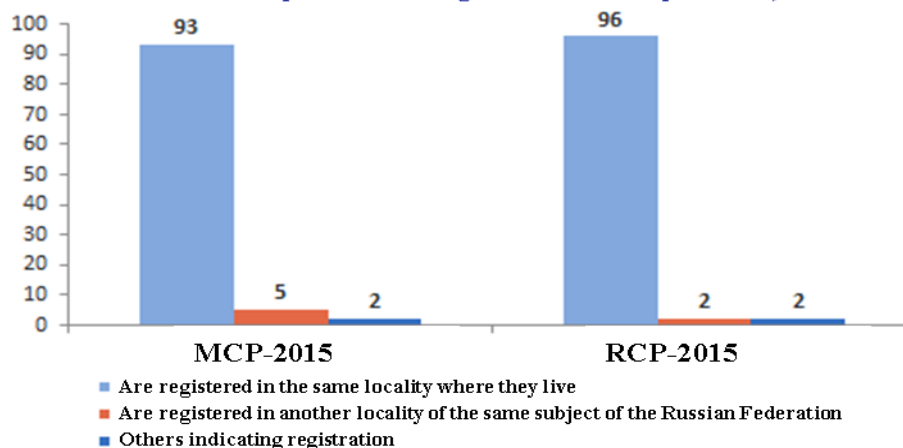
person

	The entire population	Including absences due to			
		labours	studies	family reasons	other
Kyrgyz Republic	1 094 514	964 630	41365	77 372	11 147
including those in					
outside the Kyrgyz Republic	876 863	857 605	2 548	14 821	1 909
in the CIS countries	872 874	855 156	1 777	14 177	1 764
Kazakhstan	2 158	1 221	107	740	90
Russia	870 304	853 849	1 619	13 227	1 609
Uzbekistan	291	42	29	169	51
other CIS countries	121	44	22	41	14
in non-CIS countries	4 009	2 449	771	644	145
within the Kyrgyz Republic	217 631	107 025	38 817	62 551	9 238

27. The programme of the **All-Russian Population Census** included questions on registration at the place of residence or at the place of stay in the premises where a person permanently resides⁹.

RESULTS OF ALL-RUSSIAN POPULATION CENSUS - 2020

Population of private households by place of stay and place of registration
(as % of those who indicated the presence of registration in the premises)



10

⁹ "Accounting of Migration Processes in All-Russian Population Censuses", paper by G.E. Sheverdova, Rosstat, Scientific Conference "Lomonosov Readings - 2024", Moscow State University, Moscow, 2024.

28. Questions related to registration indication were first tested in Russia during the 2015 microcensus (MPN-2015) to ensure the possibility of subsequent transition to a combined population census based on the population register. The results of the census confirmed that the absolute majority of the population has registration (propiska) in the same locality in which the census took place. The obtained results allow estimating the difference between the number of population actually living and registered in the settlements for comparison with the data of administrative sources
29. **The 2022 Turkmenistan** Population and Housing Census Programme included the question "Place of your propiska (permanent registration)" with the following answer options: Turkmenistan, other state.
30. The national statistical services of the CIS countries have generally finalised the processing and publication of the results of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses. At present, the CIS Statistical Committee, within the framework of the agreed interstate information exchange, posts information with the results of the population censuses of the countries on its website <https://new.cisstat.org/census>.

Annex 1

**Migration issues included in the programmes
population censuses of CIS member states**

	Round	Azer- Bajan	Ar- menia	Bela- Rus	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Moldova	Russia	Taji- kistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbek- mill ¹
Country of birth (place of birth)*	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
- in this country	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
-in another State (specify)	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Citizenship*	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
-of the country in question	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
- foreign country (specify)	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
- dual citizenship (specify)	2000						♦	♦		♦	
	2010		♦				♦	♦		♦	
	2020		♦				♦	♦	♦	♦	
Residence in the given locality (permanent place of residence)*	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Since when do you live in this community clause	2000		♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Place of previous residence	2000		♦	♦		♦	♦		♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦			♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
- whether the former place of residence was in the territory of	2000		♦	♦		♦	♦			♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦			♦	

	Round	Azer- Bajan	Ar- menia	Bela- Rus	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Moldova	Russia	Taji- kistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbek- mill ¹
this state	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
if not, then:											
-- an indication of the country of permanent residence from which one came to this State	2000		♦	♦		♦	♦		♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Have lived for 1 year and more in another country	2010			♦	♦		♦			♦	
	2020			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦
- from which country have taken up permanent residence	2010			♦	♦		♦		♦	♦	
	2020	♦		♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦
- year of arrival	2010			♦			♦			♦	
	2020			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦
Purpose of arrival in the country for permanent residence	2000		♦								
	2010	♦	♦	♦		♦				♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦			♦	
Temporary residence*	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦			♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦		♦	♦			♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦
Temporary absence*	2000	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦
- reason for absence	2000		♦	♦		♦	♦				
	2010	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦		♦		
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦
- duration of absence	2000	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦				
	2010	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦		♦		
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦
Returning to the historical homeland, to the former place of residence	2000										
	2010	♦	♦	♦	♦						
	2020	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦				♦	
Refugee or forced settler	2000	♦	♦		♦	♦			♦	♦	
	2010	♦	♦	♦							
	2020	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦				♦
Do you plan to leave the country	2020			♦	♦		♦				
- If "Yes", for how long	2020			♦	♦		♦				
The reason why you plan to leave the country	2020			♦	♦						
Your place of residence (permanent registration)	2020									♦	

	Round	Azer- Bajan	Ar- menia	Bela- Rus	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Moldova	Russia	Taji- kistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbek- mill ¹
Where are you registered at your place of residence?	2020							♦			

¹ 2021 Trial Census.