

High-level Seminar on Population Censuses and Migration Statistics in CIS Countries

Population census of the 2020 round: problems and perspectives in the CIS region

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1. Disputes over the lessons of the population census conducted in 2010 confirmed the continued high value of the census event, as the cornerstone on which the statistical system of each state is based.
2. Experts' consentient opinion is that the population census, as a form of statistical work, is at its critical stage, and the approach to the next round of census will be radically different. First of all, the changes will affect the countries, which conduct a census using traditional method associated with a direct appeal to the respondents. 2010 round can be regarded as a "census laboratory", since a lot of innovative approaches to the census have been demonstrated by some countries.
3. The necessity to change the approaches to the census is determined by challenges that can be grouped into four categories: financial challenges, social calls, informational controversy, technological difficulties.
4. Methodological and organizational principles of population census of the last two rounds in the CIS member states are close enough, that connected with a long history of collaboration and preserved common approaches to the organization of demographic statistics which had been formed in the Soviet Union. All countries of the CIS conducted the 2010 round of censuses, using a traditional method of population survey by interviewers. In some cases, countries used data from administrative sources.
5. Creation of new political, social and socio-economic conditions in the countries of the CIS in the 1990s made it necessary to legally consolidate general provision of the census organization. Now governed by the laws are: frequency of the census, list of collected information, the obligation for the population to provide information for the census (mandatory participation in the census is provided in all countries except Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation), the interaction of the agency responsible for the census with other state and regional services involved in the preparation for the census, data privacy as well as the census financial sources. In addition to the appropriate laws the governments adopts special decisions for dealing with specific census issues. At the national level there are established commissions for the operational control and troubleshooting during the census.
6. CIS countries enjoy relatively "cheap" census. The average cost of a registered person in the CIS, with a reference to currencies exchange rates of 2000 round is \$4.5 and it increased up to per round in 2010.
7. Currently, about 70 % of the population of the CIS has been registered. The CIS problem is a big time gap between national population censuses.
8. CIS statistical services heads have agreed on the importance of coordinated actions to be undertaken by national statistical services in preparation for the 2020round of population censuses. CIS Statistics Committee proposed a series of meetings of national experts for the purpose of identifying key areas of work that are of universal interest for all countries, as well as dividing this work into two phases.

The first stage – from 2013 to 2015. The activities of national experts in the first phase will form a concerted approach to conducting a census of population and housing in 2020 round in the CIS region by the time of the official announcement of the next round.

The second phase – from 2016 to 2020. This will focus on the development of organizational and methodological principles and approaches that have been identified by the countries as priority in the areas of coordination of national statistical offices' activities in the first phase .

9. At present, statistical services have identified the most important issues, the joint discussion of which is of practical interest for the national statistical activities and for the Commonwealth as a whole. They are: measuring the economic activity of the population and labor migration. These topics' priority order is connected with the need for maximally accurate measurement of national labor markets , obtaining comparable information to assess the overall labor market of the CIS, which becomes especially important in light of the recommendations given by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians , which will be dealt with these subjects.
