

**UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Joint ECE-EUROSTAT Work Session on Population and Housing Censuses
(Ohrid, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 21-23 May 2003)

Session I – Supporting paper

**EXPERIENCES IN PREPARATIONS FOR THE POPULATION, HOUSEHOLDS AND
DWELLINGS CENSUS IN YEAR 2002**

Submitted by Serbia and Montenegro¹

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Republic Statistical Office, in cooperation with the Federal Statistical Office, institutions and organizations of Republic administration and units of local autonomy, organized and successfully carried out from the 1st to the 15th of April 2002 the Census of population, households and dwellings as the most detailed and complex statistical survey of the official statistical system.

2. The Census, according to the international recommendations, provided data about the size of the population, and the number of refugees and displaced persons, households, dwellings (including collective dwellings) and agricultural funds.

3. Taking into consideration the dramatic events and political upheaval in Serbia and its immediate surrounding area, and a period between censuses of eleven years (1991-2002), it is not necessary to emphasize the importance of the Census and the wide interest of the skilled and the general public in its results.

4. Massive forced migrations of population (refugees from former Yugoslavia and displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohia) as well as the departure of a large number of young and educated persons from the country, due to the unstable economic situation, have contributed to a very unclear picture of demographic reality in Serbia and emphasize the need for data from the Census. The political situation in the country and the lack of financial resources have resulted in the delay of the statistical survey, planned in 2001, for one year.

5. Census of population, households and dwellings has been carried out in the area of Central Serbia and Vojvodina, while the Census in Kosovo and Metohia is predicted when conditions are

¹ Paper prepared by Mirjana Popovic and Dragana Djokovic -Papic of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

more favourable or, in another words, after the end of the United Nations Mission for temporary administration (UNMIK).

6. A large number of participants (over 40 000) contributed to the effectiveness of this action. Of these, 38 000 are enumerators, 4 700 are community instructors and 250 are republic instructors.

7. Except for the compact coordination of participants, the Office has also printed and distributed Census forms, instructions and other Census material, organized and carried out training for Census participants (community instructors, enumerators), collected and controlled Census material, processed and issued first results of Census, carried out automatic data processing according to earlier established programs and deadlines, printed final results and performed other jobs connected to preparing, organizing and conducting the Census.

8. The first results of the Census, in accordance with established deadlines, were released in the middle of May 2002, on the basis of a program for entry of first results by PC computers, which the Republic Statistical Office had prepared and submitted to all community Census commissions. Census commissions, after completed terrain work, entered the chosen data. After obtaining the floppies from Census commissions, we were able to work on publications (report and bulletin) with the first Census results at the level of communities and settlements.

9. The Office published the final results of the Census (Report "Population by national and ethnic affiliation and by gender and age in the Republic of Serbia, by communities") at the end of 2002. This can be considered an extraordinary success in the publishing of the first results.

10. In the middle of April 2003, two books of final results of the Census were published: Book 1: National and Ethnic Affiliation (data by settlements) and Book 2: Age and Gender (data by settlements). Book 3 is also in preparation and will contain data about religious affiliation, native language and age-gender population structure by national and ethnic affiliation.

II. EXPERIENCES IN ORGANIZATION OF PREPARATIONS FOR CENSUS

11. Census commissions held an important role in the terrain conducting of this survey. The Office has, in cooperation with units of local autonomy (communities, towns and town Belgrade), participated in forming Census commissions in all communities and towns (163 Census commissions in total).

12. According to criteria clearly defined in advance, the Office has appointed members of Census commissions. Depending on number of population in the unit of local autonomy by Census 1991, the Census commission could consist of 5 to 8 members, of which:

- in units until 100.000 inhabitants - 6 members mostly;
- in units from 100.000 to 200.000 inhabitants - 7 members mostly;
- in units over 200.000 inhabitants - 8 members mostly.

13. Exceptionally, units of local autonomy with a large number of settlements that were far away from the community centre could have one more member of the Census commission.

14. It was necessary to appoint a president of the community assembly or a president of the executive committee of the community assembly, a secretary of the community assembly, and a director and expert of service for real estate registry in the composition of Census commission.

15. In contrast to the Census 1991, it was necessary that one statistician be a part of the quoted number of members of the Census commission proposed by the Office.

Direct participants in the Census were enumerators and community instructors

16. Every enumerator registered 350 to 400 units of Census, or approximately 250 inhabitants and 75 households and dwellings. In order to choose the appropriate number of enumerators, it was necessary to ensure one enumerator for every enumeration area. For registering of areas with more than 130 households, one more enumerator was appointed. Also, taking into consideration terrain conditions (population density and other circumstances), one enumerator could enumerate two Censuses areas (each with less than 50 households), bearing in mind that the total of 400 units was not exceeded, and that areas would be in the same neighbourhood or, at worst, not significantly distant from one another.

17. Enumerators were required to be above 18 years old, to have completed lowest secondary education, to have good social competence with inhabitants, as well as to be discreet regarding data collecting. Those candidates who were successful in the previous Census or in similar statistical actions were given preference, as were unemployed persons. Criteria for enumerator selection were good acquaintance with terrain where the Census would be carried out, or that the enumeration area allocated to the enumerator be located in the area of his/her residence. Enumerators should be trained to use outlines and descriptions of borders of the enumeration area allocated to them. They were also obliged, 3 days before beginning the Census, to go around their terrain with the community instructor where they were to enumerate and identify borders of areas in their scopes, and to learn how to avoid an incomplete or varied scope of Census units.

18. Community instructors were chosen from among persons with experience in work of community institutions and services (home service, service for real estate registry, administration of incomes, legal service, court, service for city planning and public services, etc.) Every community instructor was obliged to follow and supervise the work of 8 to 10 enumerators, as well as to perform precisely and efficiently the tasks entrusted to him/her by the Census commission. One of the tasks that was compulsory, and which resulted in the extraordinarily good coverage of Census units, was to visit the enumeration area after the completed training in order to identify borders of enumeration area in the terrain. If it was established that outlines and descriptions of enumeration area borders were unclear, then geodesist experts would be called in as members of the Census commission to clarify any doubts.

III. TRAINING

19. In order for Census participants to be well trained in the performance of direct tasks, special training is organized on different levels. First of all, in order to obtain a unique approach in interpretation and application of methodology and instructions for the Census, three days of training for republic instructors is organized. After that, three days of training for members of Census commissions and community instructors are organized by republic instructors and, in the next step, community instructors hold three days of training for enumerators.

IV. PREVIOUS ENUMERATION

20. Immediately before the official beginning of the Census on 1 April 2002, some Census forms for certain categories of the population were completed. The aim of this action was to obtain Census data in advance on persons who were not at the place of their permanent residence when the Census was performed, as well as to obtain more complete coverage of Census units and high quality data about their characteristics.

21. Enterprises, institutions and other legal entities completed and delivered Auxiliary forms (form PL) to employees (latest until the 20th of March 2002.) so that employees or members of their families could submit this form to the enumerator who, from the 1st until 15th of April 2002, performed enumeration in their household. The aim of this legal obligation of enterprises, institutions and other legal entities is to obtain high quality data about employees, i.e. personal

number, educational attainment, occupation, activity of enterprise, institution or other legal entity and sector where the person works.

22. Auxiliary personal questionnaires are also used (form P1/IN) when nationals working abroad, their families residing with them, were completing data and leaving them in their household (or local office, local community or Census commission in the community) during holidays back in the country. These questionnaires were of great help for enumerators in the regular Census for obtaining high quality answers to questions referring to those persons. Also, one part of the auxiliary personal questionnaire, P-1/IN, was mailed by citizens from abroad directly to the address of the community Census commission or to the address of the Federal Statistical Office which, through the Republic Statistical Office, submitted them to the community Census commissions.

23. Prior completion of Census forms was also conducted for persons working in diplomatic and consular missions of the country, Organization of United Nations, its organs and specialized agencies and other international organizations, our cultural-informational centres abroad, as well as for the members of households who reside abroad with the above-mentioned persons.

24. Prior completion of Census forms was conducted for employed persons in departments of enterprises, banks or financial organizations, insurance or reinsurance organizations, representative offices of Economic Council abroad (but only those who worked in the country of credentials DCM) and the members of households who resided abroad with the above-mentioned persons.

25. The extraordinary coverage and high level of quality of collected Census data have been achieved in this Census thanks to all-inclusive preparations, organizational as well as methodological, of expertly trained Census commissions that also consisted of one statistician, the successful training on all levels, the successful cooperation with Republic Geodetical Office in preparation of outlines and description of the borders of enumeration area, two-phased terrain visiting by instructors and enumerators, previously completed forms for some categories of population, as well as a promotion campaign conducted just in time by INTERNET, TV, local radio station and posters.