

Population and Housing Census in Turkmenistan 2022

Frequently Asked Questions



What is a population census?

The United Nations defines a population and housing census as the total process of planning, collecting, compiling, evaluating, disseminating and analysing demographic, economic and social data at the smallest geographical level pertaining, at a specified time, to all persons in a country.

Put more simply, the population census is a count of the population at a specific point in time, giving figures for the population of the country as a whole, and for its velayats, etraps and each settlement, in accordance with the administrative-territorial structure of the country. In addition to the population size, a **complete census provides detailed information on the demographic characteristics of the population** (sex, age, marital status); **geographical characteristics** (place of birth, current place of residence, migration in a life time); **level of education**; **ethno-cultural characteristics** (nationality, knowledge of native and other languages); **economic characteristics** (sources of livelihood, employment, job search); **health status and living conditions of the population**.

All results are presented as aggregates at the level of small areas, ensuring the confidentiality of individual responses.

Why is a population census needed?

The population and housing census is the only source of comprehensive population statistics at the local level. Hence, it is necessary to carry out a population census at least once every 10 years, as per United Nations (UN) ECOSOC resolutions. This is indispensable in order to have up-to-date data on the size and characteristics of the population, which makes it possible to track changes in the composition of society. The results of each census represent an information base for the development of programmes for the socio-economic development of the country.

For example:

- *planning the construction of kindergartens, schools, hospitals, polyclinics is based on information about the age structure of the population;*
- *housing construction should take into account the family structure of the population: how many people live alone in the country, what is the average family size;*
- *information about the living conditions of the population shows which part of society needs to be supported.*

Indicators such as the level of education of the population, ethnic and linguistic composition, and family structure of the population can only be obtained from the results of the general population census: this is the unique nature of the census.

International significance of population censuses

Since 1947, the UN has adopted a special resolution every 10 years in which it calls on governments of countries to conduct at least one general population census during a certain time interval. These ten-year intervals are called rounds. In June 2015, the UN adopted another Resolution announcing the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and calling on countries to conduct population censuses between 2015 and 2024. In order that the results of national population censuses can be compared and assessed, the UN prepares a package of guidance documents for each round some pertaining to the global level and some to specific regions of the world.

To establish common evidence-based principles for conducting the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, the UN has prepared the following documents:

- *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. Third revised edition. United Nations, New York.*
- *Handbook on Census Management for Population and Housing Censuses. Second revised edition. United Nations, New York.*
- *Guidelines for the use of electronic data collection technologies in population and housing censuses. United Nations, New York.*
- *Handbook on Editing for Population and Housing Censuses, Second revised edition, United Nations, New York*
- *Handbook on Measuring International Migration through Censuses, United Nations, New York*
- *Technical Report on Measuring SDG Indicators through Population and Housing Censuses and Civil Registration Data, United Nations, New York*
- *Recommendations of the Conference of European Statisticians for the 2020 population and housing censuses. United Nations, Geneva.*
- *Guidelines for Quality Assessment of Administrative Data Sources for use in the population census. United Nations, Geneva.*

When preparing national population censuses, national statistical authorities are requested to comply with the internationally developed recommendations so that the results are as comparable as possible between countries.

Complete population and housing census of Turkmenistan in 2022

In accordance with the Decree of the President of Turkmenistan "On conducting a complete census of the population and housing stock of Turkmenistan in 2022" dated October 25, 2017 No. 410, the deadline for conducting the national population and housing census of Turkmenistan is December 17-27, 2022. The month in which the census will be conducted - December - has already been tested and is considered the most convenient for Turkmenistan, when the mobility of the population is minimal, the educational process is underway in educational organizations, and all agricultural work has been completed.

In December 2021, a pilot census was successfully conducted as a rehearsal for the upcoming Population Census.

How will the census be conducted?

In Turkmenistan, a complete census of the population and housing stock will be carried out by interviewing the population and filling out electronic census questionnaires. The interviews of the population will be carried out by specially trained census enumerators, and electronic census questionnaires will be filled in on tablets, specially produced in Turkmenistan. The 2022 census will be the first digital census in Turkmenistan.

Who conducts the census?

The population census is an organizationally complex task, preparation for which takes several years. The main responsibility for preparing and undertaking the census – including preparations, field data collection, data processing and dissemination of the results – is on the shoulders of the State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan, which also coordinates the activities of the national ministries and agencies engaged in the census. In addition, active support in the preparation and conduct of the census is provided by local authorities, working in close cooperation with the State Statistics Committee.

Media and census

The media play an important role in the success of this major population data event. The task of the media is to explain the goals and objectives of holding such a large-scale event, to create a positive informative background and to report continuously on the census activities. In the months remaining before the census, it is necessary to constantly cover the preparations, the importance of everyone's participation in the census, explain what questions will be in the census questionnaire, outline the fact that the census results will be presented in an anonymized format, grouped by administrative-territorial units and the country as a whole. The topic of "census" should be a constant focus of attention of journalists.



Assistance from international organizations

Significant assistance in the preparation of the complete population and housing census of Turkmenistan in 2022 is provided by international organizations, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Statistics Division, the UN Economic Commission for Europe, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and other UN agencies.

At the same time, in accordance with the mandate, **all coordinating work is carried out by UNFPA**. Guided by the UN Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, the UNFPA Office in Turkmenistan has been continuously assisting in the preparation of the national census in close cooperation with the Government of Turkmenistan for a long time. **The main areas of such assistance include** assistance in the development of census methodology and software for processing census materials, support in the training of temporary census staff, complying with international standards, participation in an information campaign and others.

A census is considered completed when its results are published to the public and distributed. In this regard, UNFPA will also assist the State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan in the dissemination and use of census results for analysis and development programmes.

The results of the census are necessary for the development of long-term and short-term programmes for the socio-economic development of Turkmenistan. Many of the indicators and sections on which information will be obtained are indicators and target groups for monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (for example, children, youth, elders, persons with disabilities, etc.). Around 107 SDG indicators require population data for their computation, of which 19 are entirely based on census data.

An important aspect of preparations for the complete population and housing census of Turkmenistan in 2022 is the work from April 25 to 29, 2022 within the framework of the UN high-level expert mission. **The purpose of the Mission is to get acquainted with the progress of preparations for the upcoming December 2022 census and develop recommendations that will improve certain aspects of the census and ensure that the processes and results of the census comply fully with international standards.**

The mission members are experts with extensive experience in practical and theoretical aspects of population censuses in different countries of the world, as well as the development of demographic and social statistics:

- **Mr. Srdjan Mrkic** - *Head of the Demographic Statistics Unit of the UN Statistical Division, Head of Mission;*
- **Mr. Andres Vikat** - *Head of the Social and Demographic Statistics Unit of the Statistics Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;*
- **Ms. Fiona Willis-Nunez** - *Statistician, Social and Demographic Statistics Unit, Statistics Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;*
- **Mr. Ronny Lindstrom** - *UNFPA Country Director for Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan;*
- **Mr. Eduard Jongstra** - *Regional Adviser for Population and Development, UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia;*
- **Ms. Irina Zbarskaya** - *an international consultant for UNFPA.*

