

12. The Population and Housing Census in Poland in 2021

Janusz Dygaszewicz and Magdalena Janczur-Knappek, Poland

The years 2020-2021 for Statistics Poland and everyone involved in the work for the Population and Housing Census in 2021 are years of great challenges, especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a consequence of the pandemic we have twice amended the Population and Housing Census Act, in 2020 and 2021.

The first amendment concerned adapting the already established organization of the census and the mode of work to the conditions of a total reduction of face-to-face contacts. It was necessary to adapt the census systems to work remotely, and employees had to learn a new way of working. Knowing that Covid-19 would influence data collection we undertook the following steps, among others:

- training enumerators to work via Internet without direct meetings
- enabling enumerators to collect data in both via CAPI and CATI, making them 'universal enumerators'
- adapting mobile devices to work in both CAPI and CATI mode
- creating the 'Census on demand' - the respondent calls the hotline and during this call their information is recorded by the enumerator using the telephone interview method, CATI.

The second amendment involved extending the time during which the respondent can take the census by three extra months until September 30, 2021 (from April 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021).

Censuses in Poland are fully implemented using an interactive census form available electronically on Statistics Poland's website, without a paper form. When a person covered by the census cannot fulfil the obligation by self-enumeration via the Internet, data are collected using the following methods: CATI – computer assisted telephone interview conducted by the census enumerator, or CAPI – computer assisted personal interview conducted by the census enumerator using a mobile device equipped with software dedicated to the census.

Good practices in the Polish census include the steps listed above, as well as the provision of personal protective equipment for enumerators and for the respondent while directly collecting data; and enhanced communication and outreach activities about the census and its methods of data collection.

Throughout the entire period of the census, intensive promotion activities are taking place aimed at disseminating not only knowledge about the census, but also the obligation to participate in it, including, in particular, promoting the idea of self-enumeration and encouraging as many respondents as possible to participate in the census in this way.

Currently in Poland from April 1 2021 the Population and Housing Census is underway. The experience we gained during the agricultural census in 2020 gave us a solid basis for the census to run efficiently.