

13. All-Russia Population Census 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Galina Sheverdova, Russian Federation

Due to the pandemic, the All-Russia Population Census 2020, which was originally scheduled for the beginning of October 2020, moved to April 2021, and later to autumn 2021. In this context, statisticians rely particularly on such data collection method as completing census forms online.

During the forthcoming Census, the population of Russia will be able to complete census on their own at the Public Services Portal - a country's state-run internet resource where all agencies provide their services to the population in electronic form. An online census is a new enumeration process for Russia, with no intermediary - an enumerator - between the respondent and the electronic census form.

As a confirmation of their completion of the census, each participant of the online census will receive an individual digital and a QR code. Having submitted electronic census forms, users will have an opportunity to fill in a questionnaire providing feedback on the service quality.

Alongside the online census, enumerators will conduct face-to-face interviews. All enumerators will have tablet PCs with electronic census forms, and these forms will have the same questions as the online ones. Paper census forms will be used as a backup for collecting information.

To monitor census coverage, enumerators will check the QR codes confirming the participation in the census of those who completed the online census on their own.

The advantages and risks of this census process are as follows:

- An online census must ensure the coverage of hard-to-count populations
- There are stricter quality requirements as regards metadata explaining to the respondents the specific methodological aspects of the questions on census forms
- There is a higher risk of poor data quality due to respondents answering online "jokingly"
- A more complicated data processing technology to combine population data obtained online and from enumerators.