

In 2011 the first e-census will be conducted in Estonia

During the 2011 Population and Housing Census, Statistics Estonia is planning to use e-census for the first time in the history of Estonian censuses. The census enables the residents of Estonia and those who are temporarily staying abroad to submit the data electronically. As previously, it is also possible to present the data to the enumerator during the face-to-face interview.

The 2011 Population and Housing Census (PHC 2011) organised by Statistics Estonia will be conducted by combined methods pursuant to the decision of the Census committee of the Government of the Republic of 9 September. "This means that first a web survey or e-census will be carried out and those who do not use this possibility will be interviewed by the enumerator at home," Priit Potisepp, the Director General of Statistics Estonia, said.

In the course of e-census being conducted for the first time, the people can fill in the questionnaire and forward the data to Statistics Estonia through a special web application. "It is symbolic that this kind of innovation is introduced in 2011 when 130 years will pass from the first joint Population Census conducted in the areas of Estonia and Livonia," Priit Potisepp said. As he remarked, the Population and Housing Census in 2011 will probably be conducted by this method for the last time, as for the year 2021 Estonia should be able to conduct the register based census as the Nordic countries do and which is significantly cheaper and faster. The PHC 2011 provides an essential input to enable the conduct of the register based census in 2021.

According to the plan the PHC 2011 will last six weeks; this period covers e-census as well as the enumerators' visits to dwellings. "In order to conduct the census this way, it is necessary to amend the present Population and Housing Census Act, which prescribes 10 days as the maximum census time," Potisepp said.

The main census taking place in 2011 will be preceded by the pilot census in ten regions of Estonia in October 2009, in the course of which the methodology and software worked out for the main census will be tested. A total of 10,000 persons and their dwellings will be enumerated during the pilot census. "The success of the pilot census serves as a basis for successful main census," Diana Beltadze, the PHC 2011 Project Manager, remarked. "While selecting the regions for the pilot census, different types of settlements should be represented: cities, rural settlements, districts of new dwellings and of private houses," she explained.

The exact time and Census moment of the 2011 main census will be specified by the Government of the Republic on the proposal of the Minister of Finance.

The aim of the PHC 2011 is to provide the public, research institutions, local governments, government agencies, enterprises and international organisations with quality information about the number, composition and location of the population, about migration, dwellings and living conditions, as well as to present basic data for the future official statistical surveys. "For example the census provides the data on local governments' level that cannot be obtained from other sources at the moment," Beltadze said.

In 2011 the Population and Housing Census will be conducted for the tenth time in the territory of Estonia. The previous censuses were conducted in 1881, 1897, 1922, 1934, 1959, 1970, 1979, 1989 and 2000. In 2010 and 2011 Population and Housing Censuses will be conducted in the majority of countries all over the world.

For further information:

Kristo Mäe
PR Project Manager
Information and Marketing Service
Statistics Estonia
Tel +372 625 9393
GSM +372 55 588 166