

WHAT IS A NATIONAL CENSUS?

The last censuses carried out in Poland (the census of population and the agricultural census) took place in 2002. Both the census of population and housing, and the agricultural census, are obligatory surveys, conducted pursuant to Acts on censuses. At the same time, they are the largest statistical undertakings implemented not only in Poland, but globally. The implementation of such projects requires full mobilisation on the part of citizens and the State.

Censuses constitute important moments in the life of a nation, as this is when the State asks its citizens “how many of us are there?”, “who are we?” or “how do we live?”, as well as enquires about major information related to the functioning of society. According to international organisations, censuses belong to the greatest organisational undertakings which mobilise whole nations in times of peace. They should be governed by the idea of professional achievement, which is of significance to the way citizens perceive their State.

Pursuant to Art. 4 of Regulation (EC) No. 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9.07.2008 on censuses of population and housing, EU member States are obliged to collect statistical data.

The sources of data can be:

- a) traditional censuses;*
- b) censuses based on data from administrative registers;*
- c) a combination of traditional censuses and sample surveys;*
- d) a combination of censuses based on data from administrative registers and sample surveys;*
- e) a combination of censuses based on administrative registers and traditional censuses;*
- f) a combination of censuses based on data from administrative registers and sample surveys, as well as traditional censuses;*
- g) adequate surveys based on a rotating sample (“rolling” censuses).*