

Historical and Demographic Analysis of Population Census Procedures in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: The study of demographic processes in Uzbekistan heavily relies on data obtained from national population censuses. This article examines the significance of population censuses in New Uzbekistan, detailing their purpose, historical context, and current methodologies using the scientific principles of historical demography. The census is regarded as a national event in Uzbekistan, with public participation deemed essential for upholding democratic values.

Keywords: census, demographic data, periodicity, primary source, principles, volunteer enumerators, "critical census moment," "simultaneous," "consisting of pest," micro census, civil registration, roadmap, statistical agency, internet network, tablet and paper methods, individual, unified information.

Introduction.

Since gaining independence, Uzbekistan has not conducted a population census. However, in studying historical-demographic processes, population counting and census activities are crucial. This paper aims to elucidate the historical and modern stages of the national population census in New Uzbekistan, employing scientific methods from historical demography.

In many countries, population census regulation is enshrined in law. To enhance the scientific study of historical demographic processes, Uzbekistan plans to conduct a population census in 2025-2026. Presidential Decree No. 114, signed on March 4, 2024, outlines all census regulations, including the categories of citizens, households, enterprises, and institutions to be registered, the enumerators' responsibilities, and the specifics of the census questionnaires. The decree also details the recruitment process for census enumerators, their duties, and census protocols. This article discusses the methodology of the population census, provides information about the census period, and the allocated funds. Additionally, it highlights the stringent requirements for social workers involved in the census, demonstrating the expansion of scientific, methodological, and practical approaches to studying historical-demographic processes in Uzbekistan.

Following independence, no census has been carried out in Uzbekistan. Therefore, statistical agencies and regional, city, and district administrations must estimate population figures, including demographics like age, sex, nationality, birth, death, natural growth, and marriage age, to achieve accurate results. Population changes are monitored through two main methods: birth, death, arrival, and departure records.

Censuses are conducted comprehensively. During the census, data on household composition, birth dates, gender, social origin, nationality, mother tongue, social status, number of children,

and other demographic details are collected. Most countries conduct censuses every five or ten years.

Literature Review

The literature on population censuses includes notable contributions from geographers G.R. Asanov and M.A. Kadyrov, and economists K.Kh. Abdurakhmanov and Kh.X. Abdurakhmanov. Russian historians such as Valentina Borisovna Zhiromskaya and Vladimir Pavlovich Motrevich have also analyzed these topics. Ancient population counts in China, Egypt, Iran, and the Roman Empire served specific purposes like tax collection or military service eligibility, primarily counting men.

In Russia, from the 15th to the 18th centuries, economic and statistical ledgers known as "Pistsovye knigi" ("Tax books") recorded men liable for taxes, excluding nobles, priests, and certain other exempt classes.

The 1790 US census is considered the first modern census, aiming to collect comprehensive demographic information, although it took 18 months to complete. By the late 18th and early 19th centuries, many European countries had begun regular censuses, a practice that has spread globally to include North and South America, Asia (e.g., Japan, Turkey, India), and some African countries.

Currently, the United Nations monitors the global population and publishes annual demographic data. A population census is a comprehensive event where data about the population are collected, evaluated, analyzed, and subsequently published. During the census, demographic, economic, and social data are gathered through interviews with every citizen. The objective of the census is to collect data on population size, composition, location, and social status, which are crucial for the economic and social planning of each country. This comprehensive data collection occurs exclusively during the census period [8].

According to the research methodology, the last full population census in Uzbekistan was conducted in 1989. However, annual demographic data and population censuses should be closely interconnected. By knowing the number of births, deaths, immigrants, and emigrants in the intervening years, one can accurately estimate population changes. This study thus explores scientific knowledge at the intersection of historical demography and demographic history. The theoretical and methodological foundations of historical demography, as a scientific discipline, are informed by the works of Yu.A. Polyakov [9], V.Z. Drobijev [10], and D.K. Shelestov [11]. Modern historians and demographers have largely been influenced by these prominent scientists, whose contributions to the development of historical demography and the training of demographers in the post-Soviet region are significant.

Currently, historical demography is studied as a scientific discipline that encompasses both demographic history and socio-historical processes. Demographic history, situated at the intersection of demography and history, serves as a branch of both fields, with demography taking precedence in determining subject and research methods. Historical demography studies processes and phenomena within a historical context, mirroring the broader demographic science.

The history of population censuses in Uzbekistan indicates that the first comprehensive census was conducted in 1897 by Tsarist Russia, excluding the Bukhara and Khiva Khanates. Subsequent censuses were conducted in 1920, 1926, 1939, 1959, 1970, 1979, and 1989 during the Soviet era. Notably, the 1926 census provided a detailed account of the current territory of Uzbekistan. In preparation for a new national census, this article employs historical demographic methods to examine the historical stages of official population censuses in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan's population has grown significantly over the past 33 years, increasing by 16 million to over 37 million. Approximately 1 million people are added annually, driven by a high birth rate. Projections suggest that the population will reach 40 million by 2030 and potentially 50

million by 2040 [12]. Given this growth, the study underscores the importance of the Law "On Population Census" [13], which mandates the formation of official statistical data on demographic, social, and economic issues for use at regional, national, and international levels, examined retrospectively.

By the end of the 18th century, new information about the global population began to be collected, primarily through general population censuses. These censuses aimed to meet scientific requirements for data collection on population size and structure. Early censuses, such as the one conducted in Belgium in 1846 under the leadership of Jacques Kettle (1796-1874) [14], laid the groundwork for subsequent censuses by establishing principles and methods for comprehensive data collection.

A critical principle of general population censuses is universality, ensuring coverage of the entire population of a country. Additionally, censuses are not limited to demographic data but include information about the composition of various social groups. Standardized questions across regions ensure consistent data collection, necessitating the creation of a unified program for national censuses.

The UN has developed international questionnaires, programs, and recommendations, enhancing the quality and comparability of demographic data globally. During a census, enumerators record demographic information, akin to capturing a snapshot of the population at a specific moment. The "significant moment of the census" usually coincides with periods of minimal population movement, such as mid-January, excluding weekends due to higher mobility.

The first population census in the United States in 1790, followed by censuses in Sweden and Finland (1800), and England, Denmark, and France (1801), set precedents for systematic population counting. Russia conducted its first general census on January 28 (February 9), 1897. This census, notable for its comprehensive program, used both self-enumeration and enumerator-assisted methods, resulting in detailed demographic data published in 89 volumes [16, - 33 c.].

In the former Soviet Union, eight general population censuses were conducted: in 1920, 1926, 1937, 1939, 1959, 1970, 1979, and 1989. The 1920 census was conducted within the borders of Soviet Russia before the establishment of the USSR.

The previous censuses did not comprehensively describe the entire population of the country, necessitating a new census in 1926. Due to their limited scope, primarily focusing on cities, the earlier census results seldom attracted specialist attention. This was primarily because they lacked information on the rural population, which constituted a significant portion of the USSR's population at the time, and because the All-Union Census of the USSR provided more comprehensive materials.

The 1926 general population census encompassed the entire country. The economic growth under the New Economic Policy (NEP) necessitated a new population census, which was conducted in December 1926. This census, the second comprehensive one since 1897, covered the entire country's population. It employed a survey method (with optional self-counting) and accounted for the actual number of people.

The census program included 14 items, covering sub-items such as gender, age, nationality, mother tongue, place of birth, length of residence at the census site, marital status, literacy, physical disabilities, mental health, professional status, and field of work. The census began on December 17, lasting two weeks in rural areas and one week in urban areas. The complete results, published in 56 volumes between 1928 and 1933, provided extensive information about the USSR population. According to the 1926 census, the total population was 147.028 million, later adjusted to 148.530 million [16, p. 37].

The subsequent All-Union Census was conducted in January 1937, a decade after the 1926 census. The January 6, 1937 census was unique in being a one-day census in the history of the USSR and modern Russia. Preliminary results indicated significant discrepancies from previous

population estimates. The leadership was informed that, according to the January 6, 1937 census, the total population was 162.003 million. However, the preliminary results were quickly dismissed as "verminous," and the officials responsible were repressed. Consequently, the primary census results were published only in 1990 [17].

The next All-Union Census occurred in January 1939. Data collection began on January 17, lasting seven days in urban areas and ten days in rural areas, followed by a ten-day verification period. The 1939 census recorded a population of 170.6 million, with 56.1 million urban residents (33%). Brief summaries were published in 1939-1940, but most of the data remain unpublished.

Post-World War II, all participating countries conducted population censuses, except the USSR, which conducted its next census in 1959. This delay was primarily to conceal the extensive wartime losses. Methodologically, the 1959 census was similar to previous ones, comprising 15 questions. The results were published in 16 volumes, with one volume covering the USSR and 15 for each republic. The 1959 census recorded a total population of 208.8 million, with 48% urban and 52% rural residents.

The subsequent Soviet census was conducted in 1970, maintaining organizational and methodological consistency with the 1939 and 1959 censuses. However, the 1970 census included 18 questions, providing more detailed information, particularly on migration. Questions addressed length of residence, previous residence, and migration reasons, highlighting migration patterns. For the first time, data from 25% of the population were collected to save time and resources. Technical innovations were used in data processing. The total population was 241.7 million, with 56% urban and 44% rural residents. The 1970 census results were published in seven volumes, with an additional 10 volumes labeled "For Official Use".

The 1979 All-Union Census introduced significant changes in data organization and processing. Unlike previous censuses, 12 out of 16 questions were recorded using symbols on forms readable by electronic devices. This census provided extensive data on population changes, widely used in scientific research. The total population was 262.4 million, with 62% urban and 38% rural residents. The results were published in one volume, with an additional 10 volumes marked "For Official Use."

Between the 1979 and 1989 censuses, a significant innovation occurred: the first All-Union sample socio-demographic survey, later referred to as the micro-census of the population of the USSR. Conducted on January 2, 1985, the micro-census covered 5% of the USSR population. While most questions mirrored those from the 1979 census, questions regarding mother tongue, occupation, and employment were omitted. Conversely, the range of questions about marriage and birth rates was significantly expanded. For the first time, married women under 45 were asked about the number of children they were expecting.

The last All-Union population census in the former USSR was conducted over eight days, from January 12 to January 19, 1989, by surveying citizens at their actual place of residence. As in previous censuses, specially trained census workers recorded responses on census forms. These workers were recruited from various enterprises, institutions, and organizations. Data were recorded based on respondents' statements without requiring document verification. A unique feature of the 1989 census was the inclusion of data on living conditions, development of housing cooperatives, and the level of housing construction across different socio-demographic groups. This provided comprehensive information on living conditions, housing cooperation, and housing provision and improvement.

The census program included 25 questions, with some new questions and modifications compared to previous censuses. New questions addressed place of birth, completion of vocational education, and living conditions. Full analysis of the census data was completed by the end of 1990. In 1989, the total population was 286.7 million, with 66% urban and 34% rural residents. The census results were published over several years in small volumes with minimal

analysis. Initially, five collections were released, containing brief information on population distribution, gender, age, marital and national composition, educational level, and family structure. Later, more detailed volumes were published. Additionally, five years after the 1989 census, a micro-census was conducted on February 14, 1994, but only within the All-Russian Federation.

The 1994 micro-census in the All-Russian Federation differed significantly from previous censuses. The number of questions increased to 41, with 36 pertaining to personal information and 5 to housing conditions. Alongside traditional census questions, new questions covered gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, mother tongue, educational attainment, and more. Notably, questions about the primary language used at home, in educational institutions, and at work were included for the first time. Additionally, questions about marital status now distinguished between registered and unregistered marriages. Among the fertility research questions, the number of children planned by women was added. Several questions addressed employment and unemployment.

During the Soviet era, census workers were allocated by enterprises as per party directives. For example, in preparation for the 2002 Russian census, about 670,000 independent workers were recruited from the unemployed population. Participants included students, the unemployed, social security workers, urban communal workers, and rural intellectuals. Both Russian citizens and foreign nationals in Russia were included in the census. The 2002 census program comprised 31 questions, excluding the address section, with 23 questions on population characteristics and 8 on housing conditions. Census forms were designed for computer data processing. For the first time, information on the number of unregistered (civil) marriages was collected.

However, the census data had limitations. The long intervals between censuses, averaging ten years, resulted in outdated data by the time results were available, preventing the inclusion of many pertinent questions. Due to financial constraints, more frequent censuses were not feasible. Thus, census results served primarily to supplement current population data [16, p. 44]. It is also noteworthy that censuses in Russia were planned multiple times before being conducted, first in 1999, then in 2001, and finally in 2002.

The 2002 census was conducted on October 9, with registration forms completed between October 9 and October 16, under the Federal Law "On Census of All Russia." Unlike previous censuses, which were funded solely by the federal budget, the 2002 census costs were distributed among budgets at all levels. This census required new approaches to population enumeration and personnel management. Subsequent censuses in the Russian Federation occurred in 2010 and 2020.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, many former Soviet republics also conducted censuses. The Republic of Kazakhstan conducted censuses in 1999, 2009, and 2021. Tajikistan conducted its censuses in 2000 and 2010, while Kyrgyzstan held censuses in 1999, 2009, and 2022.

In 2012, specific regions were selected for a sample population census, sometimes used to estimate the population. In certain countries, censuses are conducted in specific regions to summarize the social issues of the population. This selective approach provides a comprehensive and in-depth study of the population. Census data, including demographic composition, migration participation, labor resources, and various socioeconomic indicators, are crucial for planning and development, including the provision of food, consumer goods, education materials, and media services.

In Uzbekistan, scientific research on historical demographic processes has expanded significantly in the first three decades of the 21st century. Researchers like R.K. Yusupov, Sh. Rakhmatullaev, N.A. Babadzhanova, I. Ghulamov, and U. Khudoyarov have contributed to this field. Their work addresses current issues in historical demographic processes, socio-demographic development, and changes in national population structure.

The analysis of historical demographic processes underscores the importance of population censuses in strengthening society. This was highlighted in the annex to Presidential Decision No. 114, signed on March 4, 2024. The decision includes a roadmap for deepening reforms in official statistics, tasking the Statistical Agency under the President and responsible ministries with organizing the population census in 2025-2026.

According to this decision, the Statistics Agency, along with responsible ministries, will prepare for the population census throughout 2024. This preparation includes creating videos, banners, flyers, and booklets to explain the census to the public. Based on the results of previous tests and recommendations from international experts, census question forms will be improved. Earlier, the President of Uzbekistan's decree on February 5, 2019, approved the concept for conducting the population census in 2022. The Law "On Population Census" was adopted on March 16, 2020.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the census was postponed, with the Cabinet of Ministers deciding on November 11, 2020, to conduct the census between November 1 and November 25, 2023. The census aimed not only to determine population size but also to clarify criteria such as housing, employment, marital status, and well-being.

Given the world experience and the fact that this was Uzbekistan's first census, it was conducted in two stages in 2021. In the first stage, citizens registered voluntarily online from November 1-10. In the second stage, starting November 11, census workers conducted in-person registration. The census questionnaire included 53 questions. To ensure data privacy, secure buildings were established for statistics departments and archives in all regions of the Samarkand region, except Narpay and Jomboy districts. For instance, a trial census was conducted from November 1-25, 2021, in Khojaabad district of Andijan region, Upper Chirchik district of Tashkent region, Khiva city of Khorezm region, and Yashnabad district of Tashkent city.

The registration processes for the census were organized using three methods: Internet, tablet, and paper. The trial indicated that the tablet method was more convenient, faster, and cost-effective compared to the paper method. Preliminary estimates suggest that the cost of conducting the population census could average 3 US dollars per capita. These expenses will be covered by the state budget. Additionally, the practices of several countries, including the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Moldova, Great Britain, Lithuania, and Latvia, were examined during the drafting of the law.

The population census provides detailed information on the number, age, gender, religious and ethnic composition, marital status, education level, housing, economic activity, income sources, and disability status of Uzbekistan's population at a specific date. This information is used to calculate macroeconomic indicators per capita and to analyze migration patterns and labor resource distribution. The data also support regional development and the targeted implementation of women's and children's healthcare initiatives. Individual information is collected on a confidential basis, with anonymity guaranteed. The census tract is used solely to summarize the results. Based on the test results and the experiences of advanced countries, efforts are being made to transition away from paper methods to internet and tablet-based registration processes. The Statistics Agency is preparing for the main event to ensure it is conducted efficiently and with high quality.

Conclusion

Based on the above, the Statistics Agency should enhance the "Census" information system, drawing on international experience and experts' recommendations. It should also develop sample tables of census results and create an organizational plan for the population census. The population census is planned for 2025-2026, with results to be prepared and published in 2026-2027.

As highlighted, the last comprehensive population census in Uzbekistan was conducted in 1989. In the years of independence, a selective population census was conducted in certain regions in 2012. The upcoming census is crucial, marking the first national population census in independent Uzbekistan. This necessity arises from the need to update demographic data, which is vital for the country's historical and demographic development and future planning.

Based on the research goals and objectives, it is recommended to urgently conduct a national population census in Uzbekistan. This is particularly important given the context of independence, where such a comprehensive census has not yet been conducted. Although neighboring countries have held their censuses, Uzbekistan must now proceed with its own, despite any financial or social challenges. This scientifically essential event will play a significant role in the country's demographic development and will require study from an international scientific perspective in the future.

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