

International obligations

Following the recommendations which the UN produced in cooperation with the European Union, censuses of population and housing should be conducted every 10 years, at the turn of decades, in years ending with "1". On 9 July 2008, the European Parliament and the Council passed Resolution No. 763/2008 in censuses of population and housing. The Resolution sets out specific reference periods for the implementation of censuses, the scope of information collected in surveys, and the forms and scope of generated information which particular countries should transfer to the Statistical Office of the European Commission – EUROSTAT. The Regulation stipulates that there will be uniform, recommended, basic definitions and one, binding on the next census, reference period – the year 2011. This date has been confirmed by Poland in the Government's standpoint announced on 13 March 2007.

However, in accordance with a draft regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the analysis of the structure of farms, and researching the methods of agricultural production, an agricultural census should have been carried out in 2010. The above suggests that the dates of censuses have been set by EU regulations and there is no possibility to conduct an agricultural census and a census of population and housing at the same time. The regulation passed concerning the census of population and housing allows for the free selection of the sources of data and the methods of conducting censuses, obliging all countries to guarantee the high quality and full comparability of the results of censuses. These results should be directed to EUROSTAT within a period of two years after the end of the census, i.e. by the end of 2013.

Possessing a database generated from censuses is of key importance for the European Commission due to the current use of this information for the needs of the Community social policy. A consequence of Poland's accession to European structures is the requirement to adopt the EU's policy directions, in particular the ones specified in the Lisbon Strategy and in the European Employment Strategy.

Recommendations for future censuses, prepared in cooperation by the UN and the European Union, were passed at the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2006. At present, they have the status of a binding document entitled "International recommendations for censuses of population and housing around 2011".