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Ethno-Cultural Self-Identification according to the Population Census of 2002

Dear Alexander Sergeyevich, dear colleagues,

Let me, on behalf of N.N. Miklukho-Maklai Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, thank you for the opportunity to speak at such a dignified scientific forum. The topic of the colloquium is ever timely and one of the world problems that are somehow or other connected with culture — the dialogue of cultures and civilizations.

For Russia, due to its history and the geopolitical position of the country, the issue of ethno-cultural self-identification is not just the subject of a learned discussion, but — starting from Alexander Nevsky — an issue of ever-lasting choice of the place and paradigm of further development.

The demonstration of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the huge country is almost exceptionally within the competence of a population census. The facts previously known to narrow-focused specialists become common property through the census and make a great educational and pedagogic impact on people.

It is also important to bear in mind the fact that for the effective state government in a country like Russia it is absolutely necessary to take into consideration the ethno-cultural reality.

The ethnic dimension of Russia

According to the All-Russian population census of 2002 the number of inhabitants of Russia is 145.2 million people. During the period from the 1989 Census to 2002 the population of the country decreased by 1.8 million people.

The census of 2002 clearly showed the groundlessness of talking about the

‘ethnocide’ that allegedly took place in the 1990s and about the dramatic changes in the ethnic structure of the population of Russia.* One has only to look at the table with the data on the 23 most numerous ethnicities which constitute 96 per cent of the whole population of the country.

* *Stepanov V.V.* The Ethnic portrait of Russia has not considerably changed [Etnicheskiy portret Rossiya sushchestbenno ne izmenilsya] // *Naseleniye Rossiya 2003–2004. Odinnadtsat'y-dvenadtsat'y yezhegodniy demograficheskiy doklad* (ed. A.G. Vishnevsky). — M.: Nauka, 2006.

*Table 1. The ethnic structure of the population of the Russian Federation
in 2002*

	2002		1989		2002 against 1989, per cent
	<i>Thousands of people</i>	<i>Per cent against total</i>	<i>Thousands of people</i>	<i>Per cent against total</i>	
Total population	145164.3	100.00	147021.9	100.00	98.74
Russians	115868.5	79.82	119865.9	81.54	96.67
Tatars	5558.0	3.83	5522.1	3.76	100.65
Ukrainians	2943.5	2.03	4362.9	2.97	67.47
Bashkir	1673.8	1.15	1345.3	0.92	124.42
Chuvash	1637.2	1.13	1773.6	1.21	92.31
Chechens	1361.0	0.94	899.0	0.61	151.39
Armenians	1130.2	0.78	532.4	0.36	212.28
Mordvin	844.5	0.58	1072.9	0.73	78.71
Byelorussians	814.7	0.56	1206.2	0.82	67.54
Avar	757.1*	0.52	544.0**	0.37	139.17
Kazakhs	655.1	0.45	635.9	0.43	103.02
Udmurt	636.9	0.44	714.8	0.49	89.10
Azerbaijanis	621.5	0.43	335.9	0.23	185.03
Mari	604.8	0.42	643.7	0.44	93.96
Germans	597.1	0.41	842.3	0.57	70.89
Kabardinians	520.1	0.36	386.1	0.26	134.71
Ossets	514.9	0.35	402.3	0.27	127.99
Dargin	510.2*	0.35	353.3**	0.24	144.41
Buryat	445.3	0.31	417.4	0.28	106.68
Yakut	444.0	0.31	380.2	0.26	116.78
Kumyk	422.5	0.29	277.2	0.19	152.42
Ingush	411.8	0.28	215.1	0.15	191.45
Lezghin	411.6	0.28	257.3	0.18	159.97
Others and non-specified	5780.0	3.98	4036.1	2.70	143.21

* For the Avar category the number given does not include the number of Andic-Tsezic groups and the Archi, and for the Dargin category the number does not include the Kajtagi and the Kubachi.

** In 1989 the Ando-Tsezes and the Archi are included in the Avar number; the Kajtagi and the Kubachi are included in the Dargin number.

With the decrease in the population the census of 2002 showed that there appeared to be much more ethnic groups than before. It was not due to

migration or other demographic processes – the principle of counting results had changed. In 1989 there were 128 ‘nationalities’ all over the USSR. Now there are much more ones only in Russia. The point is in the method.* When summing up the results of the census of 2002 there was made a grouping based upon 182 items, so there appeared over 60 allegedly new ethnic categories.

* See: *Sokolovsky S.V.* Instrumentalization of the theoretical knowledge in working out the results of the All-Russian Population Census of 2002 [Instrumentalizatsiya teoreticheskogo znaniya v razrabotke materialov Vserossiyskoy perepisi naseleniya 2002] // *Etnologiya obshchestvu. Prikladniye issledovaniya v etnologiyi* (ed. S.V. Cheshko). — M., Orgservis, 2006.

Table 2. New ethnic categories in the Census of 2002

	<i>Calculated in the Census</i>	
	<i>separately</i>	<i>separately and within other categories</i>
Adzhar		v
Ahvahi		v
Alutorians*		
Andians		v
Archi		v
Astrakhan Tatars		v
Bagulal		v
Bengali*		
Besermyans	v	
Bezhtin		v
Botlihians		v
Central Asian Arabs	v	
Central Asian Gipsies	v	
Central Asian Jews	v	
Chechens-Akkins		v
Chelkans	v	
Chemalalians		v
Chryashians		v
Chulyms	v	
Cossacks		v
Didoyans		v
Esids	v	
Estonians-Setu		v
Finno- Ingermanlandians		v
Ginuhians		v
Godoberin		v
Greks-Urums		v

Gunzibs		v
Hindu Indians	v	
Ingiloins		v
Kajtaks		v
Kamchadals	v	
Karatins		v
Kereks	v	
Khemshils	v	
Khvarshins		v
Komi-Izhems		v
Kubachinians		v
Kumandians	v	
Latgaleis		v
Lazi		v
Meadow-East Mari		v
Meskhethian Turks	v	
Mingrelians		v
Mongols**	v	
Montenegrins*	v	
Mordvin-Erzya		v
Mordvin-Moksha		v
Mountain Mari		v
Nagaibaks	v	
Ossets- Irons		v
Ossets-Digors		v
Pomors		v
Portuguese*	v	
Pushtu**	v	
Rushanians*	v	
Rusinians	v	
Saamis**	v	
Shapsugians	v	
Shugnans*	v	
Siberian Tatars		v

Soiotians	v	
Svans		v
Swedes*	v	
Tazians	v	
Telengits	v	
Teleut	v	
Tindals		v
Tophalars		v
Tuvinians-Todzhinians		v
Ugians		v
Ulta (Oroks)**	v	
Vods	v	

Despite the obvious demographic changes which took place in Russia since the last Soviet population census of 1989 the all-Russian Population Census of 2002 did not show any considerable ethnic transformations on the scale of the whole country.

According to the data of the census the percentage of the Russians in the country decreased insignificantly from 82% (1989) to 80%. The decrease is also characteristic of the Mari, the Udmurt, the Chuvash, the Mordvin, the Khakassians, the Komi and many others. On the contrary, some increased in number, for instance, the Avar, the Dargin, the Kumyk, the Yakut and the Buryat. However, it did not significantly change the ethnic map of Russia.

If we consider the regional variants we can see that significant ethnic changes took place during the intercensal interval in no more than 20 (one fifth) of all the subjects of the Russian Federation. The absolute leader is Chechnya. In this republic the situation radically changed: before, the population was multi-ethnic, now it is literally mono-ethnic. Chechnya is followed by Ingushetia where the ethno-cultural diversity also significantly decreased. Among other regions which partially changed their ethnic image are Tuva, Chukot and Koryak areas, Yakutia, Tyumen region, and some Caucasian ones — North Ossetia, Karachay-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria. In Dagestan the dynamics of the

ethnic structure turned out to be low, lower than the average in the country, though within this republic in districts dense with population the cultural patchwork became more intense. Minor changes took place in Moscow; even more insignificant changes can be traced in St. Petersburg.

In the aggregative variant in the country the picture is as follows: the greatest changes of the ethnic composition took place in the Russian part of the Caucasus, much less intensively the situation was changing in the Far East and in East Siberia. Minor changes occurred in West Siberia and the European North. Still less obvious the processes are in the Volga region and in the Urals. The changes are extremely little in the North-West of the country, in the capital Centre and in the Central Black Earth area. Almost no changes took place in the Volgo-Vyatsky region.

The census showed the groundlessness of the fears of the disastrous decrease of the percentage of the Russians.* Before the census some prognoses were published according to which the number of the Russians compared to the last Soviet census fell by 15–19 million people, almost by 15%. The real decrease involved a much smaller amount by 3.3%, and the percentage in the composition of the population fell by 1.7%. It was caused by the demographic ageing of the population the majority of which are city dwellers. These factors are also the reasons for having few children and high death rate. A secondary factor of the decrease is the migration outflow. On the whole, migration played and is continuing to play a positive role making for the decrease of the number. On the whole we can speak about the numerical stagnation of the Russians tending to decrease due to the demographic ageing. An additional source of renewal is assimilation for the Russian language and the ethnic identity – a process which is not new; it took place both one hundred and three hundred years ago.

* *Tishkov V.A., Stepanov V.V.* The ethnic structure of the population of Russia (the first results of the Population Census of 2002) [Etnicheskiy sostav naseleniya Rossii (perviy itogi perepisi 2002)] // Bulliten seti etnologicheskogo monitoringa i rannego preduprezhdeniya konfliktov. Privolzhskiy Federalniy okrug, 2003, No. 64.

As for the most numerous ethnic categories which amount to over a million of people the census found the following tendencies. There are categories whose numerical strength rose greatly. First of all there are the Armenians, the number of who doubled (212% in relation to the number in Russia in 1989). Earlier they amounted to 532 thousand people whereas now there are 1.1 million people. The reasons for the growth of their number are obvious — the intensive migration since the late 1980s from Armenia (the earthquake) and from Azerbaijan (the Karabakh conflict). The second reason is the positive demographic growth especially among the people born in the countryside.

The second place by the rate of the population increase is occupied by the Chechens. The data show a 50% increase (there were 899 thousand people, now there are 1.3 million people). The overstated by the census number of the Chechens was much discussed in mass media; scientific articles, too, are devoted to it.* The analysis of the demographic results shows that with the relatively high retained rate of the natural reproduction a significant population increase was to take place. The death rate due to the military operations is likely to have been smaller than it is assumed.

Among the numerous peoples the census showed the numerical growth of the Bashkir which can be accounted for not only by the demographic and migration processes but also by factors of political nature. The number of the Tatars almost did not change. There were 5.52 million people, there are 5.53 million. The processes of the demographic ageing are not the only reasons for the slowdown of the increase. Partly the problem is connected with the processes of assimilation, partly – with the inaccuracy of the account of the ethnic identity.

As for the outrunning growth in the number of the Bashkir as compared to the Tatars it is not a result of only 'the demographic games' of politicians of Bashkiria. If we compare the results of several censuses we see the following

* *Maksudov S.* The population of Chechnya: is the Census correct? [Naseleniye Chechni: prava li perepis?] //Naseleniye & Obshchestvo. Informatsionniy bulluten Tsentra demographiyi i ekologiyi cheloveka Instituta narodohozyaystvennogo prognozirovaniya RAN, No. 96, 2005.

picture: in 1989 the number of those who called themselves Tatars increased in relation to the number of 1979 by 110.3%, and the number of those who called themselves Bashkir rose only by 104.2%. If we do not take into consideration the phenomenon of the change of identity the results seem to be strange. It is common knowledge that there are more rural dwellers among the Bashkir, and the birth rate is higher. In the latest census there is a peculiar revenge: the Tatars' increase is scrap — only 0.6% whereas the Bashkir's one is noticeable — 24.4%. The real situation is somewhere in the middle.

The number of the Chuvash decreased insignificantly: there were 1.77 million people, there are 1.64 million. The processes of the demographic ageing take place, but the main factor is the change of ethnic identity. The second reason of the decrease of the number is also characteristic of the Ukrainians. It is known that in the first years after the collapse of the USSR a considerable number of the Ukrainians especially the ones from the Far East region moved to Ukraine. But very soon there became apparent a reverse migration aspiration from Ukraine to Russia especially in the second half of the 1990s. Up to the present day Ukraine is the main source of the Russian migration growth. Before the publication of the first results of the census mass media gave forecasts according to which the number of the Ukrainians was to rise greatly.* However, the census stated a dramatic and foretold by nobody decrease of the number of the Ukrainians — from 4.3 million people to 2.9 million, that is by almost a third. The influence of a factor of the change of identity in this fluctuation seems to be obvious.

Among other big ethnic categories amounting to less than a million but not less than 500 thousand people the increase is characteristic only of the Caucasian groups. The Azerbaijanis are the most noticeable group. The latest census counted 622 thousand compared to 336 thousand in 1989, i.e. there took place an 85-percent increase. In terms of the rate of growth the Azerbaijanis

* For instance, 'Noviye izvestiya' newspaper (05.09.2003) wrote about a 700-thousand increase in the number of the Ukrainians.

only a little lag behind the Armenians. The factors of the rapid increase in number are the same, mostly of migration nature. At that, the census demythologized the idea of the enormous rate of the migration of the Azerbaijanis to Russia.

The level of the population's command of the state language of the Russian Federation is high: 98%. It is much higher than in most major countries of the world with a multiethnic structure of the population, and can only be compared to the developed countries of Western and Eastern Europe.

The high level of knowledge of the Russian language by the population of the country is indicative of the cultural homogeneity of the Russian people and of the existence of a most important component of the national commonality and its consolidation in terms of the language communicative system. These data also state the high rate of the language Russification of non-Russian population of the country as a means of socio-cultural modernization and it takes place mostly by the free choice of citizens.

Among big peoples the share of those who do not speak Russian is the highest (from 10 to 17%) among a number of North Caucasian peoples (the Argins, the Dargins, the Chechens and the Ingush) and among the Yakuts. Among the peoples of the North Caucasus the Ossets have the largest number of people knowing Russian, but all the same their share is lower than that of East Slavic peoples (the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians), of Finno-Ugric peoples and of peoples settled in a dispersed way (the Germans, the Kazakhs, the Greeks and the Jews). These three last groups have almost completely turned to using the Russian language.

The most widespread language in the country is the Tatar (5.3 million people) and the Bashkir (1.4 million people). The spread of the Ukrainian language in Russia is quite logical; 1.8 million people declared the command of it during the census. According to the number of native speakers the Ukrainian language is followed by Chechen, Chuvash, Armenian, Avar and others.

The use of languages

Preservation and development of ethnic languages in Russia is the basis of our cultural diversity. The share of the newspapers and magazines in the languages of peoples of Russia which are supported by the state constitutes over 30% of the overall number of financed editions. 400 newspapers and magazines in 59 ethnic languages are published, TV broadcasts in 56 languages, and radio stations use 69 languages.

The interest in this issue has risen of late and, consequently, the number of people who want to learn ethnic languages has increased. Today Russian schools provide education in 38 ethnic languages. It allows meeting the population's basic needs for communication in their native language regardless of the place of living. The key importance is given not only to the amount of financing of the corresponding programs, but also to getting authentic information by the bodies of power to deal more effectively with the tasks of preservation and development of ethnic languages in all the territories of the Federation.

It is necessary to point out that in areas of compact settlement of ethnic minorities there is a tendency towards the increase of the number of national state schools where the native language is the language of teaching and a subject of studying. For instance, on the territory of Russia there are 47 Armenian, 85 Kazakh, 66 Azerbaijani, 19 Turkmen and other schools. In the republic of Tatarstan there are 56 Chuvash, 18 Udmurt and 9 Mari pre-school educational establishments. There are 140 Chuvash, Chuvash-Russian and Chuvash-Tatar schools where over 8,374 Chuvash children study their native language.

Schools of the republic of Bashkortostan teach in the Russian, Bashkir, Tatar, Chuvash, Mari and Udmurt languages. As separate subjects 6 more languages are studied: they are the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, German, Hebrew, Greek and Mordvin languages. In higher education institutions of the republic teachers of the above-mentioned languages get the training.

In 664 secondary schools of the North, Siberia and the Far East 103729

children study 23 languages of small indigenous peoples of the North as a separate subject; three languages are the languages of teaching.

The data of the ethnic map of Russia and of the command of languages will be specified during the forthcoming All-Russian Population Census of 2010.

Interethnic situation in Siberia and in the North of Russia (native peoples)

An important peculiarity of the North of Russia and of Siberia is the native population. The native peoples have constituted a part of its ecosystem for thousands of years. Consuming the local resources they often become the final unit of the movement of polluting substances both of local origin and the ones which are transported long distances. Culture and traditions of the native peoples are unique. Most of them continue to use natural resources in a traditional way preserving their cultural heritage and fighting for the right to retain their way of life.

Almost all the peoples inhabiting Russia as a whole live in Siberia and in the North of Russia. There are much fewer native peoples connected with this vast territory by their origin. Among them are the Karels, the Komi, the Buryat, the Yakut, the Tuvinians, the West Siberian Tatars, the Khakassians, the Altaic which amount from 70 thousand to almost half a million people, and also the so-called 'Small Indigenous Peoples of the North' (SIPN) whose numbers vary from several people to forty plus thousand people (according to the Russian law the number 'is not supposed' to exceed the upper threshold established on the level of 50 thousand people).

Of the native peoples only the Sami and part of the Samoyeds live in the North of European Russia (the Sami live on the Kola Peninsula), the rest live in Siberia. The Vogul settle in the Urals and behind the Urals, the Samoyeds, the Khanti, the Selkups, the Chulyms and the West Siberian Tatars settle in the north of West Siberia and in the basin of the river Ob. In the north of East Siberia there are the territories of the settlements of the Ketians (the Yenisei), the Ngasanyans, the Entsis, the Dolgans and the Samoyeds (Taimyr), further to

the east and to the south there live the Yukagir (the Kolyma), the Yakut (the Lena), the Evens (the shore of the Sea of Okhotsk), in the north-east there are settlements of the Chuvans, the Chukchi, the Koryak, the Kerek, the Eskimos (the Chukchi Peninsula), in Kamchatka there are the Itelmens, the Kamchadals, on the Commander Islands there live the Aleutians. In the Far East (the Trans-Amur Territory, the Maritime Territory and Sakhalin) there are settlements of the Nivhi, the Ulchi, the Nanai, the Oroch, the Oroks (ultra), the Negidaltians and the Udegheys. Numerous peoples live mostly in the southern part of Siberia: the West Siberian Tatars – in the south of West Siberia, the Altaic and the Khakassians settle in South Siberia, in the Altai and in the Sayans, further to the east there live the Tuvinians; the Yakut occupy the basin of the river Lena and advance close to the north; in the east of Southern Siberia there live the Buryat (Transbaikalia).

On the continental part of the Russian Arctic Zone ten small indigenous peoples of the North (SIPN) belonging to the Arctic peoples live. They are the Sami, the Entsis, the Samoyeds, the Nganasanys, the Dolgans, the Evens, the Evenk, the Chukchi, the Eskimos (upic) and the Yukagir. Besides, in the same Arctic Zone there live considerable groups of northern Khanti and of the Selkup which officially refer to the number of the SIPN, the Komi and the Yakut-reindeer breeders, and also separate groups of the Russians which in some cases came to the polar latitudes before the ancestors of the present non-Russian population; the Kanin Pomors, the Yenisei Selduks, Kolyma dwellers, Russian-Ustintsy and others whose lifestyle is similar to that of the small peoples of the North mentioned above. The biggest groups of the native population in the Arctic Zone live on the territory of six subjects of the Russian Federation: in the Murmansk (the Sami – 1,769 people according to the census of 2002 and the Komi – 2177) and the Arkhangelsk Regions (the Samoyeds – 8,326 and the Komi – 5,745; including the Samoyeds – 7,754 and the Komi – 4510 in the Nenets Autonomous District), in the Yamal-Nenets (the Samoyeds – 26,435, the Komi – 6,177, the Khanti – 8,760 and the Selkup – 1,797), in the Taimyr

(Dolgan-Samoyeds) (the Dolgans — 5,517, the Samoyeds — 3,054, the Nganasans — 766, the Entsis — 197) and in the Chukchi Autonomous Districts (the Chukchi — 12,622, the Eskimos — 1,534, the Evens — 1,407), also in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (the Dolgans — 1,272, the Evenks — 18,232, the Evens — 11,657, the Yukagir — 1,097).

The peoples of the North and Siberia with the complete bi- or multilingualism in a varying degree preserve their unique ethnic languages referring to the Uralo-Yukagir (the Finno-Ugric peoples and the Samodians), Altai (the Turks and the Manchu-Tungus peoples), Chukchi-Koryak, Esko-Aleut language families; some of the local languages are considered to be isolated languages which do not bear any direct resemblance to any known languages of the peoples of the world (the Ket and the Nivh languages). The language assimilation among the small indigenous peoples of the North is quite clearly expressed. Even among village dwellers from 20 to 70 per cent of representatives of some ethnic groups consider Russian to be their 'native tongue'. Cultural assimilation is not less obvious than linguistic assimilation.

Along with linguistic assimilation, cultural assimilation and genetic blending, which changes the anthropological look of the small indigenous peoples, are intensified by a high level of mixed marriages with the participation of the Russians, the Yakut and representatives of other ethnicities; the number of such mixed marriages amounts to a half and more of all the married couples among some of the small indigenous peoples of the North, or the birth of children after temporary alliances of women with representatives of other ethnicities.

The analysis of the results of the census showed that the thesis of the formation of the Russian common civil nation has the right to be transferred to the real political life. This is what soon happened after raising this issue in the Message from the President to the Federal Assembly, there appeared scientific works, conferences and symposiums took place, scientific journals were founded...

The two latest presidents have been clearly and logically speaking about our Russian nation as of a historic and modern phenomenon.

‘Russia was, is and certainly will be the biggest European nation,’ V.V. Putin declared in 2005, ‘the ideals of freedom, human rights, equity and democracy achieved through suffering and fighting by the European culture have been the determining value guidelines for our society for many centuries.’ ‘It was at the stage of its formation when the Russian nation as well as the State system began to establish itself as a poly-ethnic one and indeed it was formed on the basis of synthesis of eastern and western traditions’, President D.A. Medvedev emphasized in his Message of 2008.

The Russian identity as a dominating form of the collective self-consciousness is also pointed out in authoritative research of sociologists and ethnologists.*

At present statisticians and scientists are actively working preparing the regular census. What lessons taught by the census of 2002 should be accommodated in the future? Especially in the light of the terms and the content of the census as widely discussed in the society.

The necessity of conducting the population census[†]

The purpose of the census is worth mentioning; it is no secret that owing to the spread of new information technologies we can more and more often hear a statement that the census has lost its former role, and we can choose not to hold it. This question is currently even of greater importance today under the

* See the series of sociological examinations conducted by the Institute for Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences under the supervision of M.K. Gorshkov. The research is devoted to the issue of the Russian identity; see also the latest work completed by the experts of the Network on Ethnological Monitoring commissioned by the Ministry of Regions of Russia: *The Russian nation: formation and the ethno-cultural development*. Edited by V.A. Tishkov. M., 2008.

[†] Here and below based on V.A. Tishkov and V.V. Stepanov’s report at the All-Russian conference of statisticians (12 February 2009). Published in: *Bulluten seti etnologicheskogo monitoringa i rannego preduprezhdeniya konfliktov*, No. 85, 2009; *Stepanov V.V.* Possibilities of improving the ethnic statistics: the analysis of the programme of the All-Russian population census of 2010 [Vozmozhnosti sovershenstvovaniya etnicheskoi statistiki: analiz programmy Vserossiyskoy perepisi naseleniya 2010 goda] // *Etnos i sreda obitaniya. Sbornik etnoekologicheskikh issledovaniy k 85-letiyu V.I. Kozlova*. — Ed. by N.I. Grigulevich, N.A. Dubova, A.N. Yamskov. — M.: Stariy sad, 2009.

conditions of the financial crisis and economic recession.

In fact, the technical innovations cannot become an alternative to the census as they do not substitute the overall polling of the population. Getting the answers of the population whether they are answers given to a census taker directly or on the telephone, or with the help of the newest telecommunication means does not obviate the need for a dialogue during which almost every citizen of the country can inform of unique data about themselves. Such, for instance, are the personal data of the national identity of a person or the information about the languages a person can speak and uses in everyday life.

The experience of conducting the census of 2002 showed that despite the laborious gathering and processing information about ethnicities and languages the received data are one of the most needed census materials, and after six years the need for them did not become less. It is especially important to point out that these materials are made use of today for correcting the laws at the federal and regional levels, for working out and informational support of federal national projects and federal special-purpose programmes.

Considering that the Russian statistics has lost (or almost has lost) other sources of information about the ethnic composition of the population recently the census of today has turned into a single source of knowledge in this issue which is important for this country. No other research, be it sociological, ethnographic or any other connected with sample surveys of the population on bounded territories, can compete with the data on ethnicities and languages as received by an overall census.

The experience of the Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences accumulated for many decades indicates that the data of censuses are unique. Therefore, no matter what some judgements of scientists and representatives of government structures may be on the questions about ethnicities allegedly making the procedure of the census too complicated (and even illegal), it is necessary to become aware of the fact that these data along with the basic demographic information are the most important results of

the census of the whole country.

During a census survey it is difficult to achieve high accuracy of the register especially when it comes to ethnicities which are small in number. But it does not reduce the significance of the census. It is important to become aware of the fact that its data are a most important guideline for studying the national composition of the population of the Russian Federation.

On the necessity of registering double national identity

The opinion that in other countries during a census the statistics does not register the ethnicity and the language of the population is not quite correct. The corresponding kinds of registration are in effect in many countries, however different concepts and methods are used while registering. The most widespread approach in the world is registration of the ethnic composition of a country's population; in a number of cases inhabitants are given the right to declare their complex ethnic or racial origin.

Unfortunately the published results of the All-Russian Census of 2002 do not give us an opportunity to estimate the number of respondents with a double national identity. However, using the data of census of 1989 we can judge that their share is approximately 7–15 per cent.

It is necessary to improve the programme of the next All-Russian census. One of such steps should become allowing a person answering questions of the census to declare a complex national identity (for instance, for descendants of a mixed marriage).

At the stage of preparing the trial population census put in effect in 2008 the Federal Service of State Statistics was planning to use the method of a more detailed registration of the population's answers to the question about national identity. The essence of the new approach was that the people questioned were allowed to give an ambiguous answer if they determined their national identity as a double or a more complex one. According to ethnographic and sociological data such situations are typical of nationally-mixed families (especially in big

cities) and for the population of some regions.

Results and lessons of the All-Russian Census of 2002

The dual nature of ethnic self-consciousness was not taken into consideration during the census of 2002. And thus according to the results of that census the number of the Ukrainians in Russia 'declined' considerably. At that, a previous (Soviet) census said that 76% of the Ukrainians in Russia lived in mixed families. The same point can be made about the Byelorussians, the Mordvin, the Komi, the Jews, the Germans and many others whose number also 'declined'.

If a person's national identity is not unambiguous then, consequently, the registration of a single answer instead of a multiple one leads to errors. And then the results of a census appear to be less reliable than they could have been. We will remind: in the census of 2002 the results referring to some Dagestan ethnicities proved to be absolutely incorrect.

If the census could have registered a double national identity we could have avoided many conflict situations. For instance, the political relations in Bashkiria could have been much less heated; it was there where a great number of complaints about violation of the constitutional rights of the Bashkir Tatars who were not registered by the state census followed. After the census of 2002 Tatars in Bashkiria even made an attempt to hold a census themselves. There are some widely known scandalous examples with the Chryashians in Tatarstan, etc. If the census had been able to register a double national identity there would not have been so many people who did not declare their ethnicity in Russia — almost 1.5 million people.

Certainly, the number of people who really regard themselves as belonging to two ethnicities is relatively small in the country as a whole. But they also should have an opportunity to exercise their constitutional right for self-determination. They were deprived of this right during the census of 2002.

It is also important to mention the issue of the compulsory participation in the census. The experience of the previous census of 2002 showed that not all

the population agreed to take part in it. First of all, the people in question are those living in big cities, migrant workers and foreigners who arrived from countries outside the CIS. In connection with it the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics attempted to introduce additions to the Federal Law on the Census which would provide for compulsory participation of citizens in the census. Let us remind of the fact that the census of 2002 did without such an amendment.

There are different points of view concerning the 'obligation' but there is one that dominates. According to some discussions in the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics the governing body of this establishment and many experts on migration, demography, economics and sociology are for the population's compulsory participation in the census. At that it is taken as read that the required legislative regulation will automatically make it possible for the census to completely embrace all the people living in the country. But insisting on the obligation no-one somehow bases upon any research. And then again it is considered that foreign experience is a sufficient argument for the compulsory participation.

If we speak about countries of the West there, as a rule, participation in the census is compulsory and the compulsion for participation provides for imposing considerable fines on violators. But how effective are the requirements established by law? Examples of imposing fines for evading a census in western administrative practice are difficult to find. But at the same time, for instance, in Britain where fines for evasion are among the highest ones after the end of a census the statisticians began to sound an alarm: they say almost a million of the British remained unaccounted. It was explained by the fact that a considerable number of compatriots were abroad at the time of the census. In the USA the analysis of a census is always accompanied with studying the territory distribution of the data about those questioned who did not return census forms. Hard requirements are put in on the population of Turkey during a census; according to the requirements those subjects to the census must stay

at homes and are not supposed to be seen in the street; but those strict demands are also broken. Obeying the regulations of compulsory participation in a census seems dependent more on civil consciousness and on civil culture than on regulations of the law.

In this country, social commitment is regularly different in urban and in village communities, in big cities and small towns, in central regions and in peripheral ones. The differences become more obvious when considering the data about the activity of the population during elections to government bodies. According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation participation in an election is a civil right but not a duty. If we take into account the differences in election activity then we can easily suppose that in big cities the population's participation in a census cannot be complete because big city dwellers are more mobile in terms of the territory, greater individualism is more typical of them, and they are less influenced by government structures and less dependent on them. The intention of the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics to make the procedure of the census compulsory will not increase the rate of participation of big city dwellers in it, and the participation of village dwellers is quite complete even without it. But the obligation of participation can frighten off those who doubt and those who are inclined for protest behaviour because of social or everyday dissatisfaction. There is no doubt that the requirement for the compulsory participation in the census will also scare away foreigners, and first of all labour migrants.

It is important to realize that the control over the obligation of participation in a census is quite hampered in practice. The experience of the census of 2002 (though the census was not compulsory) showed that as well as during voting in elections the authorities try to use the administrative resource making the population participate by all means, often illegal ones. Such methods do not intensify the wish of those questioned to inform census takers of data about them and about people close to them. In Turkey, it is the police who are in charge of absence of people in the streets during the census. In Russian

conditions, law-enforcement bodies certainly are also capable of executing a similar external control but the absence of people in the streets will not help census takers penetrate into the habitation of respondents. Methods of strict control will not make citizens come to census stations themselves in order to go through the procedure of the census.

The question about the obligation of participation in a census is to a large extent crossed out by the development of legislative regulations about personal data in the Russian Federation. At that, we mean not only the recent Federal Law on Personal Information (2007) but the regulations of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. It says:

‘Everyone has the right for privacy, personal and family secret.’
(Article 23).

Filling in the census forms where there is the name and the surname of a respondent and the code of the registration district (which in fact is the address) is no doubt intrusion into privacy.

Certainly, we can claim that the information gathered will be kept in ‘aggregative form’. However, to generalize the information we have to process the primary sources (census schedules) and it takes time. It is known that it takes a year to accomplish the procedure and only after that the census forms are destroyed. It means that confidential information about almost every person living in the country is kept for quite a long period of time. And it contravenes the corresponding regulations of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

‘Gathering, keeping, using and spreading information about a person’s private life without their agreement are not allowed’.
(Article 24, clause 1).

It means that no matter what the amendments to the law of the census are any regulations about compulsory participation will be unconstitutional.

What will happen if during the next census the participation of the population in it is not determined by the law as compulsory? It is obvious that

as well as the census of 2002, it will be successfully conducted. The Russian Federal Service of State Statistics will no doubt express concerns that without the requirement of compulsory participation they cannot guarantee the completeness of gathering information. There is a reply to it: it should be argued that the completeness of gathering data depends on the letter of law but not on the level of preparation and the technical qualities of the census itself.

A considerable fault of the census of 2002 was that census takers did not visit all inhabitants though the inhabitants were ready to give answers to the questions of the census schedule. The more competent census takers and the better organized the census procedure, the higher the quality of the census results. Basing upon the experience of participation of employees of the Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the previous census it seems obvious that the involvement of the population in the census is directly dependent on how census takers and other executing officers interact with the inhabitants of the house, street or a block of houses they are in charge of. If this interaction was slack or there was no interaction at all the level of awareness of the inhabitants about the census turns out to be extremely low. It turned out that TV and newspaper advertisements and outdoor posters play an insignificant role in preparing the public opinion. It is the personal contact of the census 'team' with the population during the preliminary round that provides the necessary level of trust relations which lead to the completeness of gathering information and finally to the success of the whole event.

So, how intense is the potential wish of the population to take part in the census? Is police supervision on the Turkish pattern necessary? In March 2009 the Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences held research, the survey was all-Russian and the correct sampling embraced the inhabitants of city centres in all subjects of the Federation. We thought it necessary to inform the respondents that the law does not require their compulsory participation in the future census and then we asked if the

respondents would take part in that census. The question of the sociological questionnaire was put in the following way: 'According to the law it is your free choice to give answers in the census. You do not have to show any documents. Will you take part in the census?' The results were as follows: 'positive', i.e. they will participate — 92% of respondents, 'negative' — 3%, and 5% of the respondents were undecided. Let us remark that there was no preliminary discussion of the importance of the census. We should point out that the survey was held during an unfavourable period when the most important topic in the Russian society was the topic of the global economic crisis. As well as while preparing for the previous census the executives of the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics are especially concerned about a low rate of participation of inhabitants in big cities, first of all in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Indeed, the participation of the inhabitants of megalopolises in mass events tends to be relatively low. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the two capitals showed a considerable interest in the future census. In Moscow 86% claimed that they would take part and only 5% said they would not. In St. Petersburg 89% are 'for' and 4% are 'against'. Certainly, we should bear in mind that the real participation in the census can be lower than the intentions claimed, and still the results of the survey are quite eloquent of a high readiness of the population, it is even higher than in trouble-free western countries.

What has been said does not mean that the law should require compulsory participation in the census. This requirement should be addressed not to the population but to different government and municipal bodies whose inactivity often acts as a stumbling block. The experience of the census of 2002 showed that it was this kind of cooperation that was often lacking for effective work of census takers. It is common knowledge that in Moscow census takers spent a lot of time not asking questions but trying to get an opportunity to receive the telephone numbers of those who they were to visit with census schedules. A lot of time and efforts were spent on finding out the door codes to enter the front doors of Moscow blocks of flats. So, it is the participation of officials in the

census which should be made not voluntary but compulsory.

How many ethnic groups are there in Russia?

After the census of 2002 the notorious Soviet slogan about 100 nations and peoples gave place to a new cliché: they say that in Russia there live over 160 peoples and ethnic groups. This cliché has extensive use among the political figures and even in scientific circles. The phrase first appeared in the preliminary results which were revealed a few months after the end of the All-Russian Census. Only a year later when the results had been processed did it become known that the list included not '160+' but exactly 182 items. However by that time the phrase from the preliminary report had found way into mass media and even into some laws and, in fact, had gained certain social and political significance.

The final list published after the census, no matter who had worked it out and what idea had been put into it, *is not* actually a list of peoples or ethnic groups. People just answered the question about their ethnicity and, consequently, the list contains the sums of received answers and nothing more. And interpretation of the data received is the task of scientists, politicians and other 'users'.

We should separately mention a phased variant of registration of ethnicities. This was an innovation of the census of 2002. In Soviet censuses the phased way of registration of ethnic categories was almost never used. The phased nature of the list of ethnicities allows registering the forms of ethnic identity in a more varied way. And this is a great achievement of the census of 2002. On the other hand, the further fate of such a list is not clear. Whether its two-tier structure will be retained in all publications of the materials of the census or the so-called second tier will disappear from further statistic data depends on the attitude to the 'second tier' of executives, scientists and public figures. After the publication of the results of the census leaders of a number of social organizations (the Cossacks, for instance) aired discontent to the

authorities and the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics about the fact that their ethnicity was not registered adequately and they said that the statistic bodies violated constitutional regulations.

However, to make a consistent (satisfying science and society) final list of answers about the ethnicity appeared to be a difficult task. During the census there was made the first attempt to reflect not only the diversity of the population of Russia but to show the realities of cultural-integrative and assimilation processes. The example with Dagestan is typical.

According to the linguistic data, in Dagestan there have been in use 26 different languages and also about 100 dialects from the time immemorial; at least two of the dialects are so particular that they can even be called languages. Ethnography says that in this mountainous republic live about three dozens of ethnic groups. Some of the groups include several hundreds of thousands of people (the Avar, the Lezghin, the Dargin), others are very small in number, there are even groups existing only within one village. In the USSR starting from 1937 linguistic and ethnic diversity became to some extent unnecessary. Soviet censuses ignored diversity bringing 'to grass' a deliberately cut list of ethnicities. Even in the age of the decline of socialism when conducting quite a fair census the official list of the 'peoples of Dagestan' included less than a half of the really existing ethnic names; others, following the established practice, were registered under different names. For instance, different groups of the population, native speakers of 14 unique languages, were registered as the 'Avar' and thus the Avar population which was, as it is, the biggest group in Dagestan was presented to be even bigger by the statistics.

The new Russian census broke the 'tradition'. Now there is no impersonal category of 'the peoples of Dagestan' and along with the numerous Avar on the scroll of statistics there appeared the Andians, the Ahvahians, the Bagulal, the Bezhtin and many others. Alas, scientists, politicians, public figures are still arguing about the question who is hidden under these names — separate peoples or the same Avar. On the one hand there are put forward some

arguments that these groups have absolutely different languages. Others claim that these Dagestanis sometimes speak Avar better than their 'home' languages and under certain circumstances name themselves the Avar. One way or the other, let us give the debaters an opportunity to solve this problem. The census statistics look wiser in this case. 'The debatable' groups of Dagestanis are counted twice: once among the Avar and for the second time as ten plus separate ethnic names.

Avoiding a possible ethnic unrest in the questions of access to power the government of Dagestan demanded that the Russian State Statistics Committee present these groups of the Dagestanis in the final materials not only as separate categories, but add them to the overall number of the Avar as well. The working committee which was preparing the results of the census decided to meet these needs. It caused the reduction of names in the list of ethnicities of the first tier and increased the number of names of the second tier. Though due to it the overall number of ethnic categories did not decrease and the specification of the statistic data did not become worse, the public and some scientists treated it as 'arbitrary regulation of the real number of peoples in order to please politicians...' Due to similar reasons in the census of 2002 there are no statistically 'independent' categories of the 'Chryashians' and the 'Siberian Tatars'. They are indicated as subgroups of the Tatars. It also caused an outburst of social and political emotions.

In cases when there is no noticeable political pressure on the public, new ethnic categories 'appeared' painlessly. The point is, for instance, the Besermians amounting to 3.2 thousand people. The authorities of Udmurtia did not oppose their 'statistical independence'. The same factor also affected the Kumandians, the Telengit, the Teleut and others that were registered independently from the Altaic. The census separated the Shapsugs from the Adygh, the Rusinians from the Ukrainians and the Sojot from the Tuvinians.

Thus, the purpose and the task of the state national policy in the Russian Federation is preserving the Russian society in the diversity of cultures and

languages, creating conditions for further development of a multi-culture. The bases of true self-identification and free development of peoples in the Russian Federation consist in enlightening, educating and providing civil rights. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to develop and seriously improve the legal framework based upon the experience and responsibility of government bodies of all levels. The state national policy in the Russian Federation is formed according to widely-recognized principles and international laws and it creates new mechanisms to support the unity of ethno-cultural development.

The forthcoming All-Russian Population Census will help to specify and solve the problem, and that is why it is being looked forward to by government bodies, scientists and the public.