

ACIPS has organized a public discussion „Census 2013 in Bosnia and Herzegovina“ and promotion of the new issue of „New Perspectives“

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On June 25, 2012 **ACIPS** has organized a public discussion „Census 2013 in Bosnia and Herzegovina“. On that occasion the 19th issue of ACIPS's magazine "New perspectives" was promoted in which this topic is discussed from different aspects.

ACIPS believes that the census process should be transparent and inclusive, especially considering that it will be the first time since 1991 that the census will be conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the first time that our country will have concrete data on the number of its citizens, the population's level of education, its economic status and living conditions. The future development of the country directly depends on these parameters. During the discussion issues related to the content of the census questionnaires, technical aspects of the implementation of the census, funding, and options how to prevent potential disadvantages of this process were touched upon.

Zdenko Milinović, director of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, said that it is almost needless to emphasize the importance of the census for Bosnia and Herzegovina, since without the census there are no European integrations for Bosnia and Herzegovina or the possibility of using EU funds. Also, there is no further development or social policies for the country. As for potential drawbacks to the process of conducting the census, as well as the content of the questionnaire for persons, Mr. Milinović said that everything that will show as incorrect after the pilot census which will be held in September 2012, will be changed on time for the actual census in April 2013.

Mary-Ann Hennessey, head of the Council of Europe Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, presented the role of the Council of Europe as one of the members of the International Monitoring Operation of the census in Bosnia and Herzegovina and underlined the importance of organizing the census in a most transparent and inclusive manner. This Mission will regularly visit BiH until the census day, and on the day of the census it will monitor the enumerators. Ms. Mary-Ann Hennessey has also stressed the importance of the census for planning foreign and public investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Alen Tatić, representative of the Initiative for Freedom of Expression, expressed his concerns that the drafting and adoption of the Census Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina passed without consultation with the public and without the involvement of the civil society. Further, he expressed concerns about the wording of questions 23, 24 and 25 which relate to the etho/national, religious and linguistic declaration. He also stressed that the Initiative for Freedom of Expression is ready to carry out an advocacy and lobbying campaign in order to change the questionnaire.

Anes Makul, editor in chief of the "New Perspectives" and ACIPS's representative briefly presented the 19th issue of the magazine "New Perspectives" which is dedicated to the topic of census, analyzing it from the aspects of economics, human rights and politics.