

## REGISTRATION OF THE POPULATION IN THE UZBEK SSR AND THE RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEPOPULATION MEASURE IN 1937

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## ИТОГИ УЧЕТА НАСЕЛЕНИЯ И МЕРОПРИЯТИЙ ПО ДЕПОПУЛЯЦИИ В УЗБЕКСКОЙ ССР В 1937 ГОДУ

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## O'ZBEKISTON SSRDA AHOLINI RO'YXATGA OLISH VA 1937-YILDA AHOLISIZLANTIRISH CHORASINI AMALGA OSHIRISH NATIJALARI

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the process of conducting a population census in the Uzbek SSR in 1937. It also sheds light on the underlying motives of the Soviet government representatives in charge of conducting the census, as well as the specific goals outlined.

**Key words:** population census, census regulations, population count, gender composition, population natural growth.

**Аннотация:** В статье обсуждается процесс проведения переписи населения в Узбекской ССР в 1937 году. Также освещаются коренные мотивы представителей советской власти, ответственных за проведение переписи, а также конкретные поставленные цели.

**Ключевые слова:** перепись населения, правила переписи, учет населения, гендерный состав, естественный прирост населения.

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada 1937-yilda respublika hududlarida o'tkazilgan aholini ro'yxatga olish jarayonida Markaziy statistika boshqarmasi tomonidan aholi statistikasi shakllantirilib, ushbu tadbirning yakuniy natijalari hududiy statistika manbalari asosida alohida tahlil qilingan. Bundan tashqari, keyingi yillarda respublikadagi ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy va siyosiy hayot mazkur ro'yxat natijalari asosida tartibga solinishi ko'zda tutilganligi haqida so'z boradi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** aholini ro'yxatga olish, aholini ro'yxatga olish qoidalari, aholi soni, jinsiy tarkibi, aholining tabiiy o'sishi.

**INTRODUCTION.** After the Turkestan region was annexed by the Russian Empire, the imperial administration, and later the Soviet government, conducted various “population registration campaigns” over the years to determine information such as the population size (by regions), ethnicity, religious beliefs, and daily lifestyle patterns. The initial campaign was held in 1897, followed by similar events, including one in

November 1917, where a census was conducted in all rural areas of the Russian Empire (including districts and villages in the Turkestan region). Population registration activities were also carried out in 1920 and 1926 in all of Russia and its allied republics.

During the 1937 population registration campaign in the Uzbek SSR, individuals who participated and those who were subjected to the

final outcomes of the campaign faced accusations of “negligence in their duties, failure to take the campaign seriously”, or were labeled as providing unreliable information. Many individuals were subsequently deported or faced other consequences due to the information gathered about them during this campaign.

Many of those who devised the plan for the events of 1937 and those responsible for registering the population, as well as the majority of analysts tasked with analyzing the gathered information, were either exiled or subjected to various forms of punishment due to the failure to provide positive outcomes from these processes. Moreover, statistical data compiled about the population wasn't genuinely acknowledged by the authorities, leading to the concealment of even more information under the labels of “confidential” and “ultra-confidential” for nearly half a century.

**RESEARCH METHODS AND LITERATURE ANALYSIS.** Objective-historical, historical-comparative, and logical approaches were used as the main methodological approaches in writing the article.

**RESEARCH RESULTS.** Nearly ten years after the population registration campaign of 1926, a new registration initiative was designated to be carried out in 1937. Considering the social-economic policies pursued during those years by the central government, the registration process was adjusted with a focus on comparing the population growth between the years 1926 and 1937. The objective was to update the information held by the government about the population and to establish the basis for subsequent economic “five-year plans[1]”.

The population registration campaign that took place on January 6, 1937, was designated to span a total of six days for the completion of the social-political process. However, in reality, there wasn't enough time allotted to register all the inhabitants of the republic within the specified timeframe. The primary reason cited for this was the inefficiency of the personnel tasked with conducting the registration and the failure to establish adequate conditions and terms for the process. To ensure the successful implementation of this initiative, various authorities were granted additional powers. Residents who opposed the registration were warned about the consequences of non-compliance with the laws specified in the constitution. This situation echoes

similar registration processes conducted in previous years[2].

To prepare for the population registration activities scheduled for January 1937, registration lists were compiled for all territories of the republic, including even the sparsely populated border areas and rural settlements, by November 26, 1936. These lists included the names of villages, the order numbers of houses, and the registrations of all types of state-related structures and buildings. Furthermore, throughout the course of this process, the primary aim was to compile comprehensive lists of all residents. In general, the statistical data regarding the population obtained through this registration process was utilized by central authorities over the years for administrative purposes in all regions[3].

The population census of urban and rural areas did not follow the same timeframe as in previous years; it was not predetermined. During the designated period, all personnel involved in the census worked tirelessly to complete the task. Additionally, while conducting the census, 14 supplementary questions were added, with some questions even incorporating additional sub-questions[4].

When the questions included in the census plan for 1937 were compared and analyzed in relation to those used in previous years' census plans, it was revealed that the only distinct addition in the 1937 census plan was the inclusion of a separate question asking about one's religion. This was identified based on documents that shed light on the process. In the population census conducted in 1920 and 1926, there were no separate questions related to religion included in the census plan. “Your religious?” is an example of a question with a qualitative component (within the question itself) that was included. In later years, apart from the question about religion, additional questions such as “Do you believe in religion or not?” were also provided to census takers for clarification regarding responses[5].

Based on the information provided, it is possible to infer that the inclusion of the separate question “Are you religious?” in the census questionnaire also drew attention to the issues faced by local residents who strongly adhered to their faith in various regions, as evidenced by similar events in previous years. By including this question in the 1937 census, it facilitated the identification of the

extent to which the attitudes of local residents towards religion had changed between 1926 and 1937[6].

In addition, it was revealed through archival documents that those who were knowledgeable about the complete writing of their names in the 1937 census were also included in the list of suspects for execution. It was confirmed that in a meeting held on December 27, 1936, during a session led by I. Nikich, the head of the Census Bureau of the Central Statistical Directorate, instructions were given regarding such actions to be taken by census takers and supervisors[7].

According to the final results of the 1937 population census, it was found that the population of the Uzbek SSR had significantly decreased, suggesting a considerable discrepancy compared to expectations, considering the massive mobilization efforts. Representatives from the central authorities identified numerous issues and shortcomings rather than genuine results from the census. According to the information found in the archived documents kept under a confidential seal, it was revealed that a significant portion of leaders and many officials involved in the direct execution of this task were silenced, while some were deprived of their citizenship rights and exiled due to Stalin's harsh policies during those years. Additionally, it was discovered that some had been arrested and sent away. One thing worth mentioning as important information is that in 1937, as part of the measures to be included in the register, more than 1 million accountants and supervisors-instructors were recruited by the USSR and fraternal republics. In our opinion, under the number cited, not only accountants and supervisors-instructors were enlisted, but also various personnel from different organizations who should provide assistance to this work to some extent (various organization leaders,

representatives of internal affairs departments, village council workers, and others) have been included.

**CONCLUSIONS.** Overall, the population registration campaign of 1937, despite the harsh consequences of the Stalinist purges observed in the USSR and allied republics, needed to be portrayed as successful to the world, affirming the advancement of socialism, the prosperity of the country, the natural growth of the population, the eradication of illiteracy, and the positive outcomes of the policies against religious opposition. However, the reported figures contradicted this narrative. Nevertheless, to suppress any dissenting views, a number of accountants and officials who refused to manipulate the data were arrested, exiled, or even subjected to fabricated charges, while underground sources were eliminated. To rectify the perceived shortcomings promptly, another population registration campaign was conducted in 1939.

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