

Census Finds Uptick in Population

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The  **Moscow Times**

Russia's population may stand at 143 million, a 1 million-person uptick from 2002, according to preliminary results of last month's nationwide census, State Statistics Service head Alexander Surinov said Tuesday, Interfax reported.

The agency collected about 141 million forms, with only 300,000 coming from migrants who spent less than a year in Russia, Surinov told the Federation Council.

Census takers failed to contact about 2.6 million citizens, including 650,000 in Moscow, he said. One million refused to participate and about 10,000 residents of remote areas are still waiting to be reached by census takers, Surinov said.

Some people cited religious views as the reason for refusing to participate, while others called it a social protest. Some simply gave no explanation, he said.

All figures are preliminary, and the final results are expected to be announced in 18 months, Surinov said, adding that the cost of the project remains unclear because his service has not finished paying census takers.

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