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**PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN POPULATION CENSUS
OF 2020/21 IN THE REGIONS OF RUSSIA
(THE CASES OF MARI EL, MORDOVIA, UDMURTIA)**

The article analyzes the public perception of the All-Russian Population Census (APC) 2020/2021 based on the materials of three subjects of the Volga Federal District — Mari El, Mordovia, Udmurtia. The study was based on surveys among university students in these republics conducted by the authors in 2021. The vast majority of respondents were aware about the APC, although their knowledge about it was rather limited (mainly the reference dates and the opportunity to personally fill out the census form via electronic public services). In general students were hardly aware of the change in the methodology for recording ethnicity in the census and the possibility to choose two ethnicities. The survey data highlighted the low interest of students from universities in Mari El, Mordovia, and Udmurtia in the census. The main reasons for it include a poorly organized information campaign, young people's skepticism and a low level of trust in the authorities, and the coronavirus pandemic. In this regard, it is recommended that the organizers of the APC prepare in advance information and explanatory materials for different age groups. In addition, to inform young people it is necessary to involve leaders and activists of youth public organizations (including ethno-cultural and religious ones), social networks and various online communities.

Keywords: *All-Russian population census (APC), survey, students, pandemic, identity, language, nationality.*

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