

Enumeration instructions for the Danish census 1787

As we most graciously have thought it fit that – like in the year 1769 according to our command of 15th June the same year a general census was taken in our kingdoms and realms in order to get a thorough information about the situation of the population in all places for enlightenment and guidance on much useful information related to that – likewise will also now for the same purpose be organised a counting shortly in our kingdom on the first day in the following month of July.

Thus is hereby our gracious will and command that this census – that it can be as accurate and trustworthy as possible – must be taken in the following way:

1. It must everywhere, as well in the royal boroughs as in the rural districts in this kingdom, as the census of 1769 was scheduled, begin at a certain, appointed day, which will be the above-mentioned 1st July next, which is a Sunday, and if the census cannot be taken in one day, it shall be continued in the royal boroughs the following weekdays and in the rural districts the following Sundays, and it must during the taking of the census be adopted as an unchangeable rule, that the children born after the 1st July, but before the census taking has been completed, must be considered not born and consequently not counted, whereas the persons, that might die in this period from 1st July until the census has been completed in all places, are to be counted as living persons, so that from the total census the real state of the population in this kingdom on that above-mentioned day can be ascertained.
2. In the census must be counted everybody of whatever rank they are, both native and strangers alike, who on the above-mentioned day are staying in the kingdom, as well as those natives, who might be absent on journeys, but of whom we know, that they either have their usual residence here, or that they intend to return in order to establish themselves; likewise must this census include everybody, both military persons and civilians.
3. In the royal boroughs must the census taking be carried out under the municipal authorities' administration by the tax collectors, who will walk from house to house in order to note according to the instructions of the head of household, the persons staying in each house together with the information, that is required from each person, and, when more families are living in the same house, then separately record each family together with the persons belonging to the family, and for this census everybody in the royal boroughs must be counted - as well the clergy as civilians as military persons, who are encamped in a fortress which is not also a royal borough or in barracks will be counted together with their families as they are counted in their collegio, in the same as it is assumed they will be easiest to record. However, concerning the census taking in the rural districts, the vicars must like in the year 1769 each responsible for his parish and parish-of-ease do the same, in which the parish clerk and schoolmaster in every parish and parish-of-ease are bound to help them, and the census taking must be done so that the vicars – each in his parish – in advance from the pulpit, call the head of households to a meeting the following 1st July from so many towns and farms or houses, whose inhabitants he considers it possible to count on that day, in order to note the persons, who are staying in their farms or houses and for each person especially inform the additional information, that will hereafter be distributed; and the vicar must likewise after preceding announcement from the pulpit on each of the following Sundays continue the census taking until all of the inhabitants of the parish have been counted and

the vicars have compiled a list of them on which the farmers with their families are recorded separately and the cottagers with their families separately; and in a parish in which a manor/ home farm is situated, the manor owners or the persons, that they send on their behalf, be bound to supply extensive written information on all those resident on the manor.

4. As a rule to be used by the taking as well in the royal boroughs as in the rural districts, is that everyone in the census is regarded as belonging to the house, in which he sleeps, also that when a person who usually sleeps in one house is absent either solely for business purpose in the country or abroad with the intention of coming back; and as the census taking must take place for each farm and house individually, so that for each farm or house is listed all the persons present there, so must in the lists also be noted the full name of each person together with age, whereby should be noticed the current year and not the year turned, e.g. for new born children should be noticed 1 (and for the person in his 26. year be written 26 and not 25), that for each person is indicated what he is in the household, such as man, wife, a child, legitimate or illegitimate, from the first, second or whatever marriage, a relative and then how close, a servant and also journeyman and boy, tenants, lodgers, billeted etc. and for each person is explained whether the person is married for the first, second or for what time or not married or in widowhood for the first, second or whatever time; and the person's title, occupation, business, handicraft or living is noticed and in so far as they might be handicapped or live solely by alms.
5. That the enumeration lists may achieve the highest degree of clarity, for which purpose it is especially required, that they are appropriately designed in the same way and following the same rules, you are hereby given for distribution as well to the municipal authorities in the royal boroughs as to the vicars in the rural districts printed, completed questionnaires, that show how the persons who are counted must be stated and in which field the information required on them shall be stated. In addition to these completed questionnaires are added in order to facilitate the work some lined sheets of paper to be used for the completion of the lists, in which only the fields with their headings are printed.
6. When the lists like this according to the questionnaire have been composed and completed, they must in the royal boroughs be reviewed by the municipal authority or the recorder, who will correct or let correct the errors or flaws who are thereby discovered and thereafter sent them to you, Privy Counsellor Guldberg, in order for you to send to our exchequer along with the notices you might have found in the lists, but the vicars in the rural districts for their parishes and parishes-of-ease must send them to the rural deans so that they can review them to see if for any person some of the information that has been required, might be missing, and if this might be the case then again submit to the relevant party to complete the missing information, and when the rural deans hereafter each for his own district has collected the lists like prescribed, send them to you, bishop Hee, who, when nothing is to be remarked, likewise send them to Our exchequer; you must all most humbly act accordingly and inform all relevant persons to conform and encourage them to use all possible diligence and accuracy; moreover you will inform Us that you have received Our command. God speed you. Written at Our castle Christiansborg in our royal city of residence Copenhagen 11th May 1787.

Under Our royal hand and seal
Christian R.