Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) was one of the republics of former Yugoslavia, which became an independent country following the war during 1993-95. Prior to the war Yugoslavia had a good statistical system comparable to that of many developed countries, and Bosnia-Herzegovina was no exception. There were censuses every ten years since 1921, and there existed a good administrative record system including registration of births, deaths, marriages and divorces, registration of establishments etc. In addition, there were surveys on fertility, health conditions, housing, household budgets etc on a fairly regular basis.

The war resulted in a collapse of the statistical system; besides the pre-war census and survey data became obsolete due to wartime mortality, migration abroad and internal displacement of population. Following the war different international agencies stepped in to fill-in the vacuum by undertaking collection of data on different aspects-UNHCR on refugees and internally displaced persons, ICRC registered missing persons based on reports of family members, UNICEF conducted the multi-indicator cluster survey, and WHO sponsored a survey on health situation.

Now the statistical system is getting reestablished with the setting up of the Agency for Statistics at the State level and two institutes of statistics at the entity levels. Taking a fresh population census is absolutely essential to obtain a correct picture of the population in the different parts of the country, however due to political and financial reasons this is not being considered. As an interim measure 25 municipalities were selected by PPS selection and house listing was carried out to serve as a master sample for household surveys. This master sample was utilized for conducting a Living Standards Measurement Survey in Oct-November 2001; this survey included 13 modules and covered all topics that are normally included in a population census. It is planned to carry out a Household Budget Survey in 2002 and a Labour Force Survey in 2003. Simultaneously efforts have been made to reestablish the civil registration system, and it is believed that the registration is 90-95 percent complete.