

Recommendations at a Glance:

The International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics

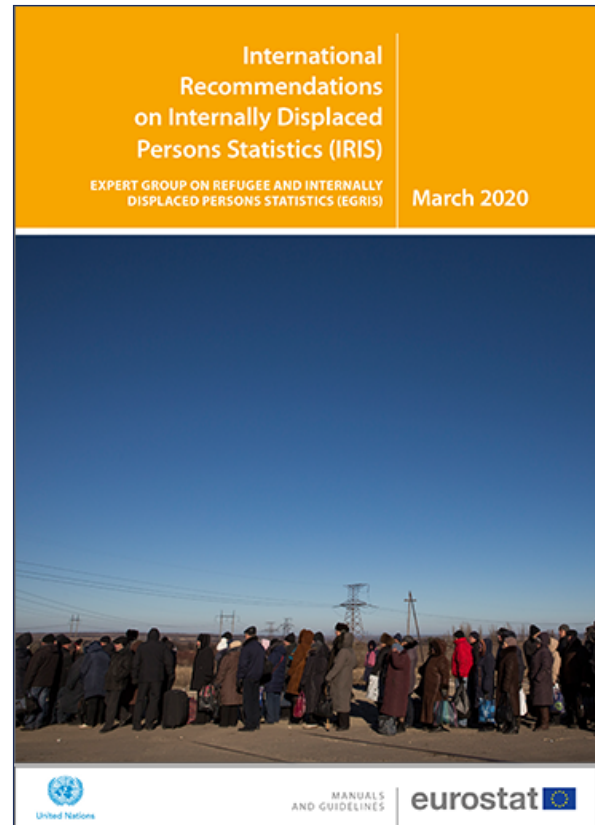
Introduction

International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Statistics (IRIS)

aim to support countries, regional and international organizations improve national statistics on IDPs. The IRIS was developed as part of the [Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics \(EGRISS\)](#), in collaboration with experts from national statistical systems, regional and international organizations.

Historically, there has been a lack of international guidance concerning the production of official IDP statistics, with many countries relying on operational data from humanitarian agencies. Rooted in the **UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** the **Inter-agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs**, the **IRIS** provide the world's first internationally agreed upon statistical framework and guidance to improve the production of IDP statistics. These Recommendations are geared towards national statistical systems and align to the Sustainable Development Agenda's commitment to leave no one behind.

This document provides an overview of the IRIS, focusing on its key elements, including the statistical framework, durable solutions and key displacement-related vulnerabilities, variables and tabulations, data sources, and coordination. Designed for senior management within national statistical offices (NSOs) and international organizations, this document aims to underscore the significance of these recommendations, highlight EGRISS' efforts to support their implementation, and encourage further utilization of the Recommendations.



WHAT DOES THE IRIS COVER?

The IRIS presents a comprehensive set of statistical recommendations organized through the following chapters:

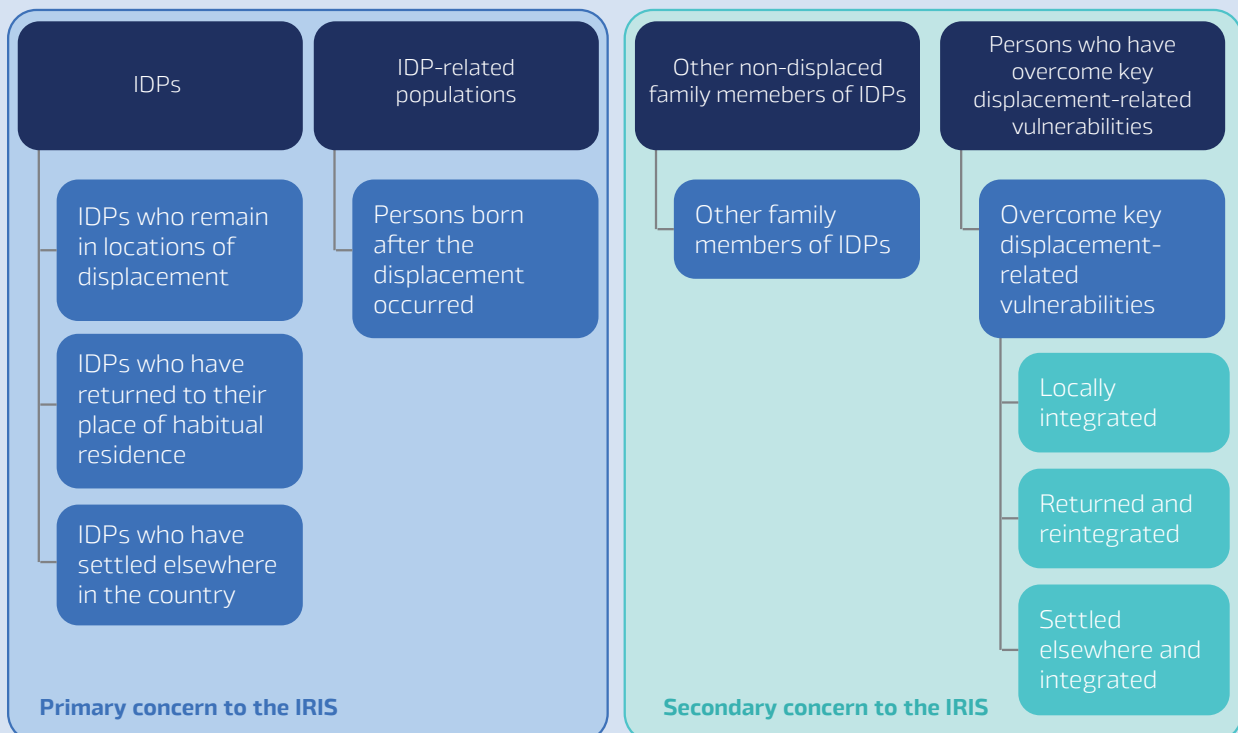
- Legal and policy frameworks
- Statistical framework
- Durable solutions and key displacement-related vulnerabilities
- Variables and tabulations
- Data sources
- Coordination of IDP statistics

Like the [International Recommendation on Refugee Statistics](#) (IRRS) and the [International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics](#) (IROSS), the IRIS are aligned to existing statistical guidance such as those concerning migration, refugees, population & housing census, and civil registration and vital statistics systems. They are also used to inform subsequent revisions of these currently in production.

The internal displacement statistical framework

The **UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** describes IDPs as “*persons or groups of persons who have been **forced or obliged to flee** or to leave their homes or **places of habitual residence**, in particular as a **result of in order to avoid** the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters, and who have **not crossed an internationally recognized state border**”.*

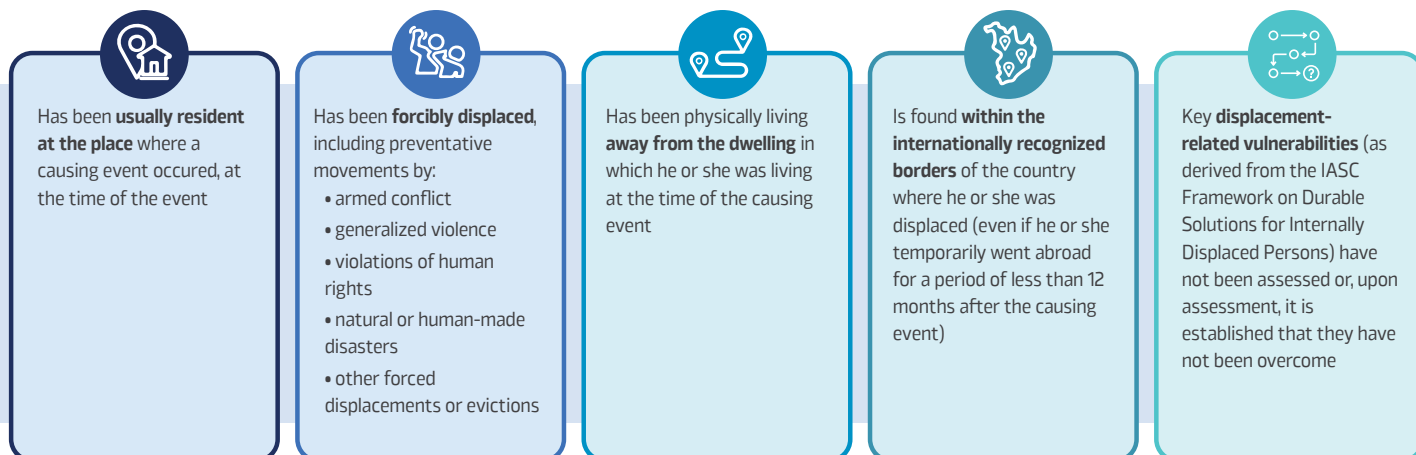
The Internal Displacement Statistical Framework



Based on the definition of IDPs presented in the **UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**, the IRIS present an internal displacement statistical framework visualized in the diagram above.

- **Total stock of IDPs** – this group is comprised of **three sub-stocks** which correspond to different location typologies.

A person must meet the following criteria to fall within the total stock of IDPs as presented in the framework:



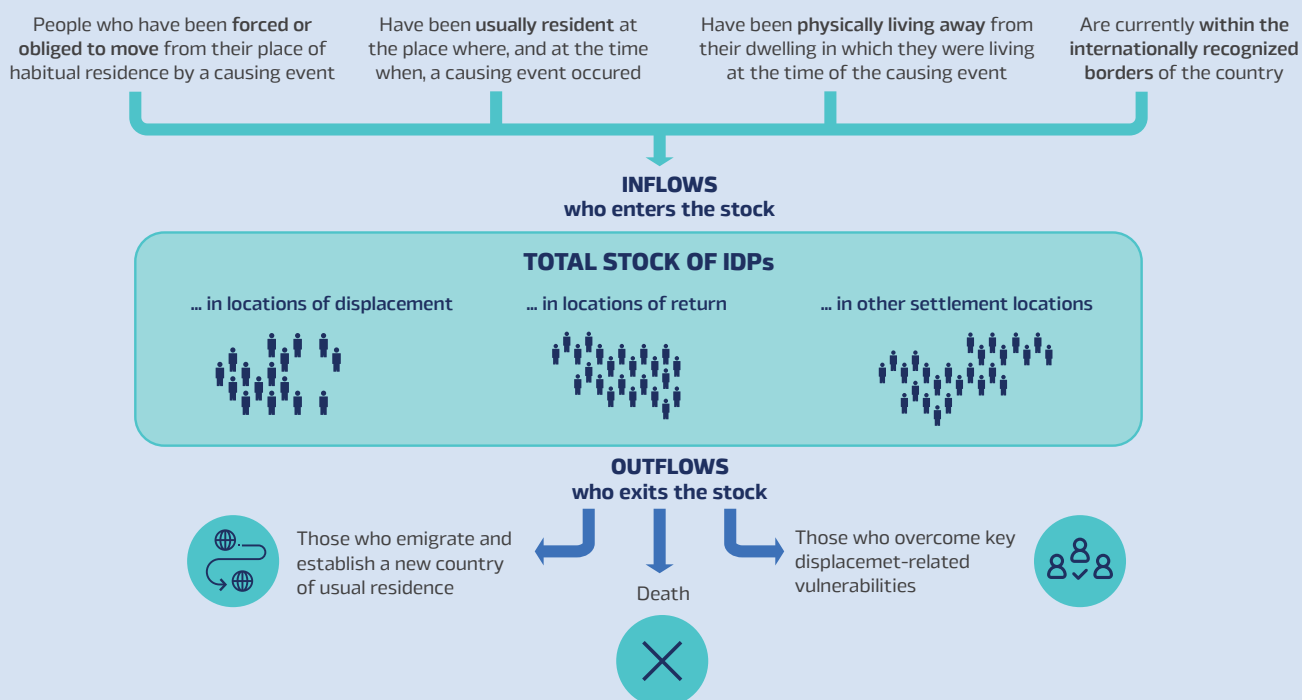
- **IDP-related populations** e.g., children of at least one IDP parent which should be counted as a separate but related statistical category.

Two further categories fall within the scope of the IRIS; however, because of their specific characteristics, they are **not the primary focus** of the framework.

- **Other non-displaced family members of IDPs** not directly affected by the causing event are also not included in the stock of IDPs.
- Those who have **overcome key displacement-related vulnerabilities** and are therefore no longer within the stock of IDPs. However, countries are encouraged to report on this group as a separate statistical category.

The below diagram summarizes all three location typologies, and the in/outflow criteria of the national IDP stock.

INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS OF THE STOCK OF IDPs










Durable solutions for IDPs

According to the IASC framework, displacement ends, or a durable solution is achieved when “**IDPs no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement**”. Durable solutions can be achieved through three routes – return and reintegration, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country. The IASC framework presents a set of 8 criteria that should be used to measure progress towards durable solutions for IDPs. These criteria are then broken down into sub-criteria in the IRIS.

The IRIS uses the IASC framework as a starting point to propose two durable solutions-related measures, namely: 1) to measure progress towards the achievement of durable solutions (referred to as the progress measure); and 2) to measure when IDPs have overcome key displacement-related vulnerabilities (referred to as the composite measure).

IASC DURABLE SOLUTIONS CRITERIA AND IDENTIFIED SUB-CRITERIA

Criteria	Sub-criteria
 1. Safety and security	1.1 Victims of violence 1.2 Freedom of movement 1.3 Protection mechanisms 1.4 Disaster reduction
 2. Adequate standard of living	2.1 Food security 2.2 Shelter and housing 2.3 Medical services 2.4 Education
 3. Access to livelihoods	3.1. Employment and livelihoods 3.2 Economic security
 4. Restoration of housing, land and property	4.1 Property restitution and compensation
 5. Access to documentation	5.1 Documentation
 6. Family reunification	6.1 Voluntary reunification 6.2 Reunification and tracing services
 7. Participation in public affairs	7.1 Public affairs 7.2 Right to vote 7.3 Right to engage in public service
 8. Access to effective remedies and justice	8.1 Remedies and justice

The **progress measure** aims to monitor the displacement situation over time and assess progress made towards durable solutions. The measure uses all of the 8 IASC criteria and the 18 sub-criteria presented above and proposes a comparative analysis of IDPs with the general/national population or a subset of the general population that lives in the same geographical area. It aims to provide evidence for decision-makers working on displacement-related policy development, implementation and resource allocation.

The **composite measure** is designed to determine when key displacement-related vulnerabilities have been overcome which should result in a reduction of **the national IDP stock**. It relies on a subset of the first five IASC criteria and associated 10 sub-criteria, benchmarked against the comparator population (general/national or host – as above). An assessment is made at the sub-criteria level with results combined for a score at the criteria level, and ultimately, an overall score. EGRISS is working to refine and complete this measure. It is important to note that the composite measure is not intended to be used as an assessment of “displacement status” for individuals or households.

Variables and tabulations

The IRIS presents key stock and flow statistics for categories within the internal displacement framework. The **stock of persons** with displacement-related protection needs and vulnerabilities refers to the total number of IDPs in a specified location, at a defined moment in time. The **inflow of IDPs** in a given period refers to individuals who become IDPs during that time, having not been IDPs before. The **outflow of IDPs** consists of those who have emigrated, died or overcome key displacement-related vulnerabilities.

The IRIS recommends a series of variables and tabulations that should be produced for the different categories of the internal displacement statistical framework. The recommended variables presented in the IRIS are intentionally basic to remain globally relevant, however, countries are encouraged to produce additional statistics based on their own data needs. Statistics related to the criteria and sub-criteria outlined in the progress measure (see above) are encouraged, alongside demographic and location-related data variables on the population. The IRIS underlines the opportunity to capitalize on SDG indicators and connects the content of the Recommendations to the 12 priority indicators identified to be relevant for disaggregation by forced displacement status.

Data sources

Both **traditional data sources** commonly used for producing official statistics, such as population and housing censuses, household surveys, and administrative registers, as well as **alternative data sources** like big data, are relevant for generating statistics on IDPs. Moreover, data integration efforts are crucial for combining the strengths of different data sources. However, each data source will require adjustments to ensure that IDPs are more accurately captured. The table below highlights the main adjustments needed per data source:

SUMMARY OF DATA SOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Using data source to collect data on IDPs	Recommendations to improve the use of data source to collect IDP data	
Population and Housing Census (IRIS – chapter 6; paras 196-219)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Censuses are a valuable source of data on displacement and allow for comparisons to be made between IDPs and the general population. • Censuses can be a good source of basic socioeconomic characteristic data on IDP populations. • Censuses can provide a complete sampling frame for IDP surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms should be modified to include specific identification questions to capture IDPs effectively, including questions on when the displacement happened and the location from/to where they were displaced.
Sample Household Surveys (IRIS – chapter 6; paras 220-244)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys allow for more detailed questions about IDP movements and characteristics. • Surveys can collect data on inflows and outflows of IDPs to the stock, as well as flows between the different sub-stocks of those with displacement-related protection needs and vulnerabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sampling methodology should be modified to ensure that IDPs living in camps, reception centers, dwellings, evacuation centers, informal sites, and with host families are included in the sampling frame. • A core set of questions for identifying IDPs in surveys should be used.
Administrative Data (IRIS – chapter 6; paras 245-264)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDP-specific registers can provide comprehensive data coverage of IDPs. These systems are often linked to beneficiaries accessing government services and support. • These registries can provide data on core demographic characteristics and may also provide information on education, health, housing, livelihoods and other variables. • IDP-specific registries should not be established for the sole purpose of producing statistics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General population registers could be designed or modified to include and identify IDPs. • Efforts should be made to increase the number of administrative databases where IDPs can be identified, either by including a specific variable or authorizing the linkage between different databases. • Data derived from IDP registries should be used for statistics in compliance with legislation related to privacy and data protection.
Alternative Data Sources (IRIS – chapter 6; paras 265-271)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative data sources can potentially provide a rich data source to validate or triangulate with other data sources. They can sometimes be used for inferring displacement and producing displacement metrics through indirect inference and proxy indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts need to be made to ensure that these data sources are inclusive of IDPs.
Operational Data (IRIS – chapter 6; paras 272-282)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In emergency contexts with high population mobility, a common source of IDP data is population tracking or protection monitoring systems managed by humanitarian agencies. These can be useful to inform the development of official statistics (e.g. help build sampling frames for surveys). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a suitable source of official statistics, the data needs to be endorsed following a quality assessment by the relevant statistical authorities.

Statistical coordination

The IRIS provide clear guidance on how to improve statistical coordination between national, regional, and international actors working on IDP statistics. Some of the key points presented in the Recommendations related to statistical coordination are presented below:

- **Legal foundation:** The national statistical system (NSS) should be mandated to produce IDP statistics under the relevant statistics legislation, regulations and quality standards.
- **Inclusion of IDP statistics in NSDS:** Producing high-quality official statistics requires effective coordination among national, subnational, and international actors. Integrating IDP statistics into the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) or similar plans can mainstream their production, enhancing quality and availability through resource allocation and capacity building.
- **Inclusion in national statistical systems:** IDP statistics should be included in existing national statistics coordination mechanisms or, IDP-specific coordination mechanisms might be established to improve the quality of IDP data to meet quality standards.
- **Partnerships:** During a conflict or following a major disaster, where the NSO or a member of the NSS is unable to produce statistics, humanitarian agencies may be better placed to coordinate, collect and/or disseminate data. A memorandum of understanding may need to be established between the NSO and humanitarian focal point to facilitate data sharing.
- **Operational data:** In collecting and processing any operational data intended for dissemination or publication, agencies should adhere to the recommendations provided in the IRIS and to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, particularly in relation to the openness of data collection and processing, and interoperability across time and geography.

Conclusion

This "Recommendations At A Glance" provides a short insight into the IRIS, why it is important and what it contains. It has also consolidated information on additional resources made available through EGRISS. The below next steps could be considered relevant for you and your institution:

- **Share and disseminate** the IRIS (and this document) within your institution and with relevant partners to inform discussions and planning of activities to strengthen national statistics on IDPs.
- **Assess existing data and data gaps on IDPs** in your national context and become familiar with relevant national legislation, policies and stakeholders to better understand the opportunities to address gaps and challenges.
- **Consult resources and networks** available at national, regional or international levels, including those provided by the EGRISS and good practice from other countries working to improve IDP statistics in their national contexts.

For more information on these products/initiatives or if you would like to request support to implement the Recommendations in your context, please feel free to reach out to the EGRISS Secretariat (egrisstats@unhcr.org).

WHAT IS EGRISS?

The **Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS)** was established by the UN Statistical Commission in 2016. Through its members - a growing collection of countries who work alongside international and regional organizations – the group has successfully developed International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS), IDP Statistics (IRIS) and Statelessness Statistics (IROSS), which were endorsed in 2018, 2020 and 2023 respectively.

Now working to promote and support the implementation of these Recommendations, EGRISS has made several resources available, including an E-learning course and a Compilers' Manual. The **E-learning course**, designed for NSO practitioners and others working with refugee, IDP, and statelessness statistics, offers interactive content, including videos and exercises, making the content of the IRRS, IRIS and IROSS more accessible. The course is free-of-charge and participants who complete it receive an official certificate. The **Compilers' Manual** supplements the IRRS and IRIS, providing hands-on guidance for practitioners organized through identified use cases (e.g. inclusion of refugees and IDPs in a national census). The Compilers' Manual will be regularly updated, with future revisions to also cover IROSS implementation.

In addition, EGRISS worked with the IAEG-SDG to identify **12 priority SDG indicators** that should be disaggregated by forced displacement status. These priority indicators are also relevant for both displacement and/or in situ statelessness contexts. Furthermore, the IROSS identifies four additional indicators pertinent to statelessness. Countries are encouraged, as part of their statistical inclusion efforts, to incorporate these indicators to enable visibility of refugees, IDPs and stateless person in the SDGs.

EGRISS monitors statistical projects related to refugees, IDPs, and statelessness within national statistical systems (NSSs) and/or the use of the international recommendations through the **Global Annual Inclusion (GAIN) Survey**. To complement the quantitative global overview, EGRISS' monitoring efforts also include the development of **case studies** that document experiences from countries and institutions using the International Recommendations.

