

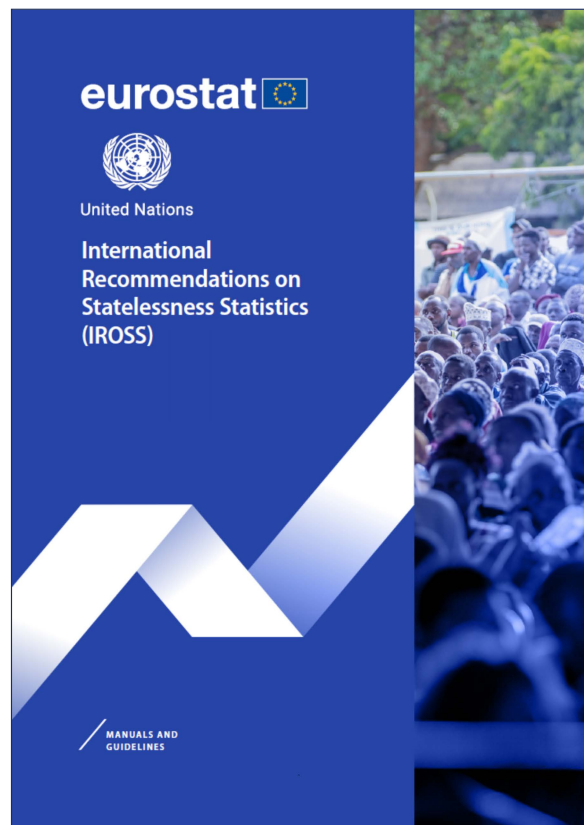
Recommendations at a Glance:

The International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics

Introduction

The [International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics \(IROSS\)](#) aim to help improve national statistics on stateless persons and related population groups. They were developed by affected countries, alongside regional and international experts, collaborating as part of the [Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics \(EGRISS\)](#) and were unanimously endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2023.

As the first globally recognized framework for statelessness statistics, these groundbreaking Recommendations, build on efforts of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness and the efforts of several countries to strengthen their national data production. Overtime, as they are implemented, they will contribute to **more reliable and increasingly comparable statistics on statelessness** that can inform policies and action at national, regional, and international levels thus contributing to global commitments to Leave No-one Behind as part of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.



This document provides an **overview of the IROSS**, summarizing its key elements. Designed for senior managers from National Statistical Offices, other Government institutions, as well as regional and international organizations, it underscores the significance of these Recommendations, encourages their utilization in practice, and introduces complementary EGRISS resources to further facilitate efforts to pursue statistical inclusion of stateless persons.

WHAT DOES THE IROSS COVER?

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

- Legal framework
- Variables, statistics & indicators
- Data sources
- Statistical framework
- Statistical coordination

Like the [International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics \(IRRS\)](#) and the [International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics \(IRIS\)](#), the IROSS are aligned to existing statistical guidance such as those concerning migration, population & housing census, and civil registration and vital statistics systems.

The statelessness statistical framework

According to the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954 Convention), a stateless person is defined as *"a person who is not considered a national by any State under the operation of its law"*. The statelessness statistical framework is based on this legal definition, with adaptations made for data collection processes, providing a clear and inclusive framework for all countries to use for statistical purposes. Whilst aiming to improve the **harmonization** of statelessness data, it recognizes the **differing causes of statelessness** across nations, and thereby allows for **contextualization** to different national realities.

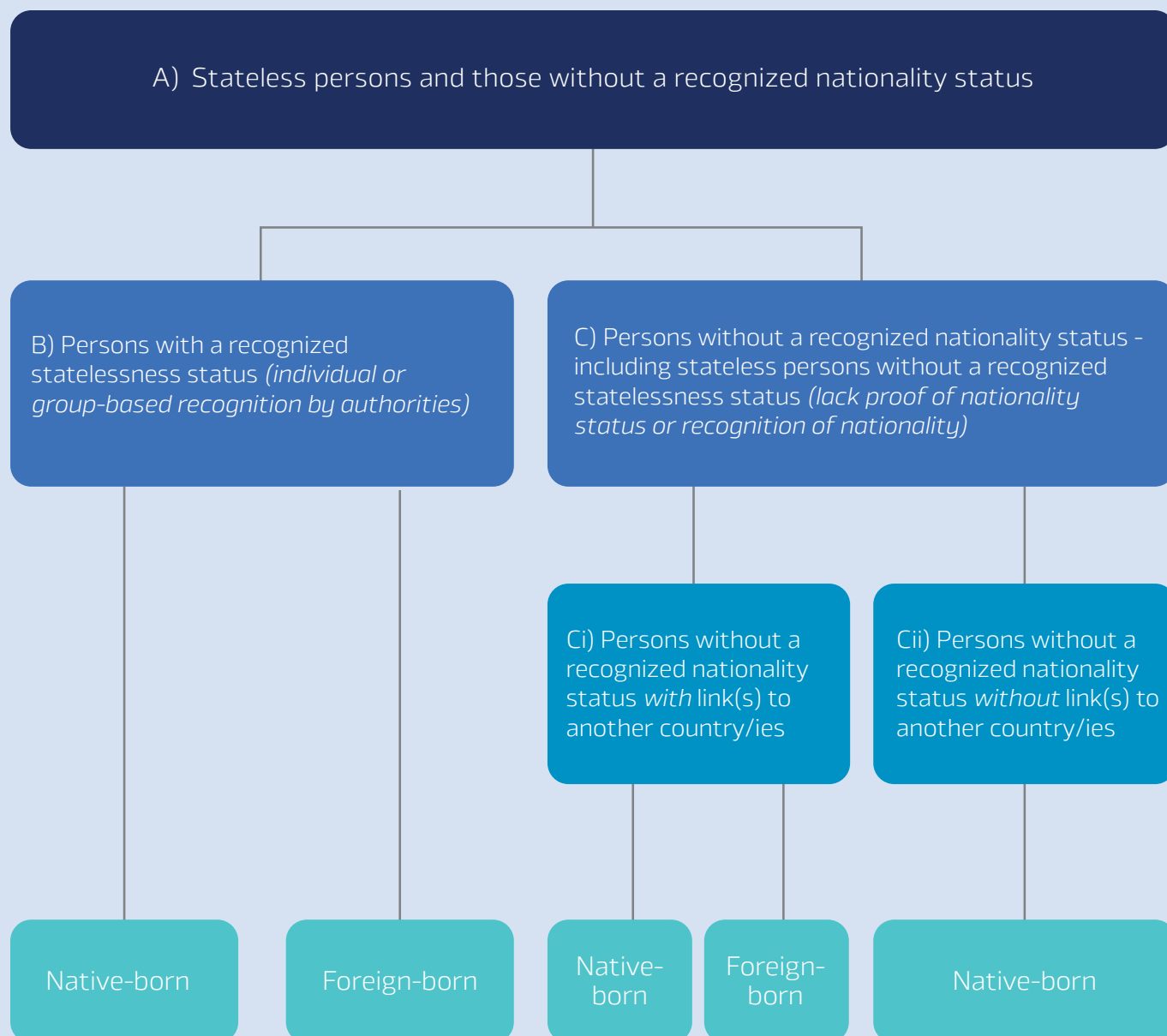
The statelessness statistical framework is comprised of two tiers:

- 1) The primary tier – comprises **population category A** or **"stateless persons and those without a recognized nationality status"**. Population category A is an aggregate category that combines the two main population categories of the framework. It is anticipated that most countries will be able to produce statistics on this group.
- 2) The secondary tier – comprises **population category B** or **"persons with a recognized statelessness status"** and **population category C** or **"persons without a recognized nationality status"**.

Population category B includes those without citizenship/nationality of any country who have been recognized as stateless by the authorities of the country of residence.

Population category C includes individuals whose nationality status is unclear or under dispute due to a lack of proof or recognition of any citizenship/nationality status. It also includes those who are stateless and who may self-identify as such but who have not been formally recognized as stateless. This category is then further sub-divided into **population category Ci and Cii – those with and without link(s) to another country/ies** which are either **real or perceived by the Government** in the country of residence.

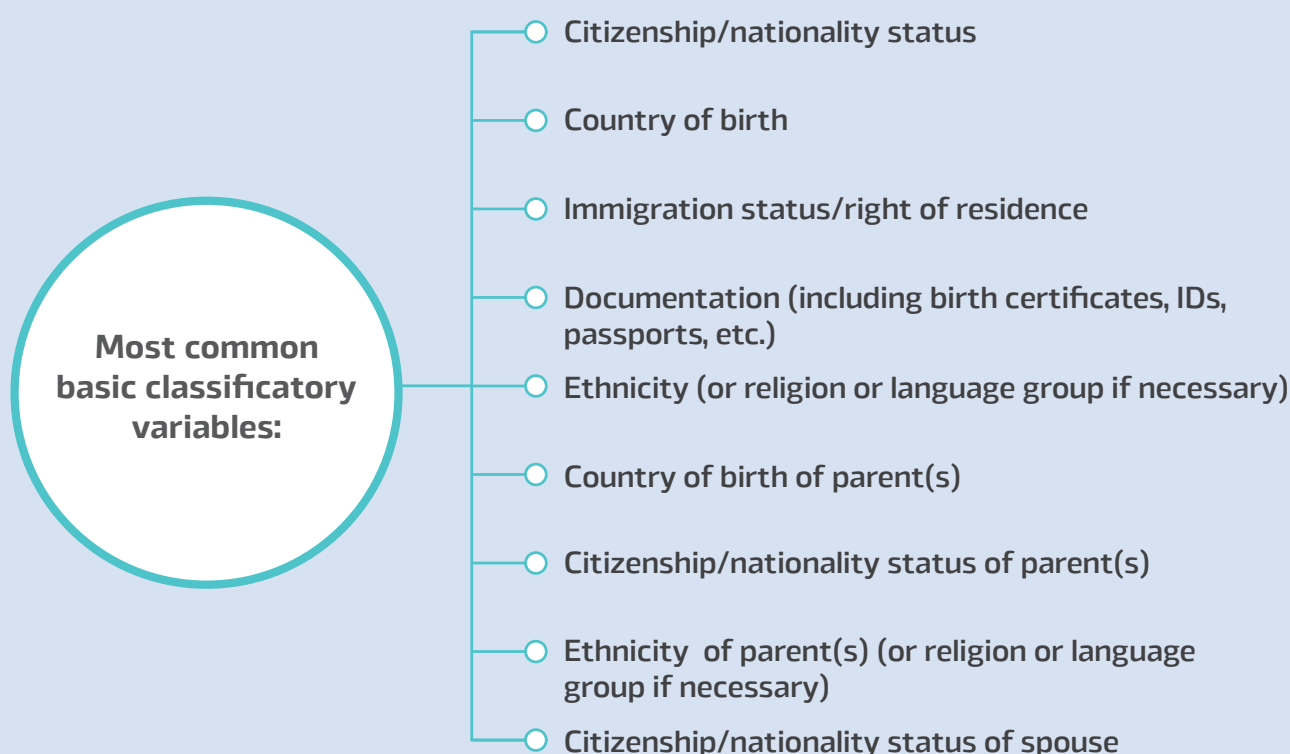
The Statelessness Statistical Framework



Variables, statistics & indicators

The IROSS presents a list of **stock and flow** statistics and tabulations on population categories within the statelessness statistical framework that countries are encouraged to collect statistics on. These statistics should be **disaggregated** by sex and age, and where feasible, by country of birth and ethnicity or other relevant variables. The specific statistics and tabulations to be produced will depend on the priorities of each country.

The IROSS provides **classificatory variables** to categorize people into relevant population categories in the statistical framework. The specific variables needed may differ by national context, determined by the locally relevant causes of statelessness. The below diagram presents the most basic classificatory variables that are required in most contexts to approximately classify people in the statelessness statistical framework. The IROSS provides a further list of classificatory variables that could be relevant in some specific national contexts to classify people within the framework. Countries are urged to seek guidance from national or international statelessness experts to select the most suitable variables.



Additionally, the framework includes variables to measure the **characteristics of stateless populations**. These variables are derived from the 1954 Convention and priority Sustainable Development Goal indicators recommended by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG) and UNHCR.

RECOMMENDED CHARACTERISTICS TO MEASURE



DEMOGRAPHIC AND MIGRATION



LIVING CONDITIONS



EDUCATION



LEGAL IDENTITY, FREEDOM OF
MOVEMENT AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE



ECONOMIC AND
PROPERTY RIGHTS



HEALTH

Data sources

Recommendations on the use of both **traditional** and **non-traditional data sources** are also found in the IROSS. These include population and housing censuses, sample surveys, and administrative data systems and registries. **Non-traditional** and **alternative data** sources such as 'big data', citizen-generated data, and qualitative sources are also considered. Data on stateless persons and those without a recognized nationality are often scarce, available only on subsets of the population of interest or collected infrequently. Data integration can serve as an effective technique to pull together data from diverse sources and assist in the provision of more frequent, timely, complete and disaggregated data and statistics on statelessness. The below table provides an overview of the main data sources that can be used and how they can be adjusted to strengthen their potential as data sources for statelessness statistics.

SUMMARY OF DATA SOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

	Using data source to collect data on stateless persons	Recommendations to improve the use of data source to collect statelessness data
Population and Housing Census (IROSS – chapter 5; section A)	• Censuses are suitable for estimating persons in population category A, as well as capturing socio-economic characteristics, depending on national context. • Census data are well-suited to estimate the stock of stateless populations.	• Include 2 core migration topics: country of birth and country of citizenship. • As responses to the 'country of citizenship' question, include: 1) stateless or no citizenship/nationality status, and 2) unknown citizenship/nationality status. • Include 'unknown' to the response options for 'country of birth'.
National Household & Statelessness-specific Surveys (IROSS – chapter 5; section B)	• Sample surveys can be used to validate and update the stocks of populations within the framework. They can also help to understand retroactive changes in the stock. • Sample surveys can be a rich data source on socio-economic and complex characteristics.	• A core set of questions, recommended for identifying statelessness in surveys, should be used. Like censuses, surveys should capture country of citizenship and country of birth. • An existing register of stateless person could serve as a sampling frame.
Administrative Data (IROSS – chapter 5; section C)	• Population registers that are inclusive of all people in a country can measure the stock of stateless populations. They can also be used to estimate in/out flows of stateless persons. • Where statelessness determination procedures are established, data from associated registers may be useful for statistics.	• If not already present, a nationality field could be added to the registry to enable the identification of stateless persons. The following response options should be added 'stateless or without a recognized nationality status' and 'unknown nationality/citizenship status'.
Citizen Generated Data (CGD) (IROSS – chapter 5; section D)	• CGD can be used to canvas the geographical spread of stateless populations prior to the initiation of a census or survey. It can help develop identification strategies and inform sampling frames of stateless populations.	• NSOs, collaborating with relevant non-government data producers and guided by the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics before (UNFPOS), should set context-specific standards for using CGD in official statistics. If standards are met, CGD may be considered as a supplementary data source for official statistics.

Statistical coordination

Building on the **central role of the NSO** in coordinating the National Statistical System (NSS), the IROSS provides recommendations for how statelessness statistics can be better incorporated into the NSS. Given the nature of the statelessness phenomenon and the added value of citizen-generated data, a **broader data ecosystem** approach is taken. The IROSS recommendations on statistical coordination are similar to those from IRRS and IRIS, and include:

- **Coordination role:** Where they exist, the NSS should clarify responsibilities for the production of refugee, IDP, and statelessness statistics. Countries may consider establishing a national coordinator to support coordination objectives and identification of synergies.
- **Inclusion in statistical strategies:** Forced displacement and statelessness statistics should be integrated into National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) or similar frameworks, when appropriate, enabling countries to mainstream these statistics into sectoral data systems.
- **Legal foundation:** Statistical laws should define the mandates of relevant statistical agencies that comprise the NSS, particularly in the case of statelessness where a variety of data producers are involved in the production of statelessness statistics.
- **Partnerships:** Given the complexities of statelessness, it is important to involve and seek guidance from legal/statelessness experts to ensure the appropriate identification and classification of relevant persons.
- **Data quality:** Minimum quality standards should be based on systematically applied definitions, international standards and robust methodologies, and relevant international standard such as the UNFPOS.

Regional statistical bodies – both inter-governmental and UN – play a key role in providing support and **strengthening statistical capacity** of national actors. Additionally, regional exchange and commitments can elevate the issue of statelessness, foster institutional commitments to address it, and lead to improvements in statelessness statistics at the national level.

Conclusion

This “Recommendations At A Glance” has given a short insight into the IROSS, 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 IROSS (and this document) within your institution and with relevant partners to inform discussions and planning of activities to strengthen national statistics on statelessness.
- **Assess existing data and data gaps on statelessness** 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 statelessness 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.

