



EGRISS Annual Report 2020-2021

Improving statistics
on forced displacement
and statelessness during
a global pandemic



UGANDA. *Congolese asylum-seekers wait for security and health screening in Zombo, near the border with Democratic Republic of Congo.*
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Acknowledgements

The inaugural **annual report of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Person and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS)** has been developed by the EGRISS Secretariat. Thanks go to the Secretariat staff, Natalia Krynsky Baal, Carolina Ferrari, and Ronan Pros Grinberg, for drafting the report, to the EGRISS Steering Committee for reviewing it and providing valuable insights, and to RecDesign for producing the final layout.

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March 2022

Foreword

Recent years have witnessed a tangible growth in global attention on forced displacement, accompanied by a clear recognition of the developmental aspects of the challenge it presents. This increased attention presents an important opportunity to leverage and strengthen available data, including official statistics, on refugees and IDPs to facilitate their inclusion in national policy and development planning processes.

This demand for better data has been felt across the globe, although the challenges and opportunities vary between different regions. It is experienced by stakeholders working in refugee, IDP and statelessness contexts alike, with an emphasis on improved quality, harmonization, and accessibility of data, as well as stronger national ownership pursued through inclusion in regular statistical production.

The statistical community knows well that significant advances in the production of official statistics, at national and global levels, take time, high levels of political will, adequate policy frameworks and long-term financing. This is especially the case when the vast majority of the statistical subject matter – in this case the world's forcibly displaced – are located in countries where statistical capacity is often weak, and the impact of conflict or disasters can still be felt.

The humanitarian community, and increasingly their development partners, are eager to see this systematic change happen due to the realization that solutions to displacement also require long term development action. With the current focus on the pursuit of durable solutions, supporting self-reliance of affected populations and reducing the impact on host countries and communities, strategies of inclusion in national systems and holistic programs that address vulnerabilities of the forcibly displaced and their hosts, have increased in relevance. Moreover, the need for improved *official* statistics to support these new objectives, has become better understood.

The Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) brings the statistical, humanitarian and development communities together. Its members work towards a common goal, under the mandate of the UN Statistical Commission, to improve official statistics on refugees, IDPs and stateless populations. Our organisations – *Eurostat, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and Colombia's National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE)* – are proud to work closely with other Steering Committee representatives and EGRISS members in this collective effort.

Building on the achievements of its first two mandates – through which the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) and IDP Statistics (IRIS) were developed and endorsed – the first years of EGRISS' third mandate are already proving to be a success. Despite the challenges presented by the global pandemic, the EGRISS has managed to demonstrate progress in several areas: capacity development, dissemination, and methodological advancement. In addition, recommendations on statelessness statistics are underway and tangible progress with regards to implementation of the IRRS and IRIS is clear. Moreover, the value of EGRISS' contribution is demonstrated by explicit recognition of the IRRS in the Global Compact on Refugees, and of the IRIS in recent UN General Assembly Resolutions and the report of the Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

For all of these reasons we are happy to share with you this Annual Report collecting the key achievements of the group between April 2020 and December 2021, and outlining priorities for the year ahead.



Raouf Mazou

Assistant High Commissioner
for Operations, UNHCR



Juan Daniel Oviedo

Director General,
DANE



Mariana Kotzeva

Director General,
Eurostat



NIGER. Refugees and displaced people work with host community on housing project in the Ouallam brickyard in northern Niger.
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Introduction

In the era of the Sustainable Development Goals, we have all become sensitized to the global commitment to 'Leave No One Behind' and have a broad understanding of the data implications to help put this into practice and enable countries to make the most vulnerable populations visible. Recent progress in forced displacement policy and practice has focused on repositioning cross-border and internal displacement crises so they are not narrowly seen as humanitarian crises for international response alone, but as complex challenges of national and international concern with humanitarian, developmental, peace building and human rights challenges at play. This important shift has significant data implications.

Central amongst the data-related challenges that need to be addressed to facilitate this new perspective are the following two inter-related issues: 1) the limited availability of quality data for developmental purposes, and 2) the lack of integration in national statistical systems, especially in contexts with relatively low statistical capacity.

The Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) was established in 2016 by the UN Statistical Commission. Since its establishment, the group's members – currently including 52 national statistical offices and 28 regional and international organizations - have been working collaboratively to address these two problems. The EGRISS' central goal is to improve the availability and quality of official statistics on forced displacement and statelessness. This is underpinned by a common recognition of the added value such data can have to help inform policy and decision making at national and international levels that can positively impact the lives of affected population groups.

This inaugural annual report of the EGRISS presents work carried out from the beginning of its third mandate in April 2020 until December 2021 – the same period where significant challenges were experienced due to the global Covid-19 pandemic¹. The report seeks to:

¹ The reporting period extends beyond a single year for this inaugural report, but hereafter reports will be produced annually. Due to covid-related delays, it was decided not to produce an annual report for 2020, but instead to merge the first two years.

- **Increase awareness of the existence and added value** of the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) and on IDP Statistics (IRIS)
- **Highlight the main achievements** of the EGRISS in the period covered and the fundamental steps taken by countries and institutions to translate the recommendations from paper into practice, and
- **Garner interest from new and existing partners** to initiate and reinforce engagement with the EGRISS in 2022 and beyond.

Following a brief overview of the history of the EGRISS, its governance, membership and working methods, the report summarizes the content of the two sets of international statistical recommendations. The report then summarizes the progress made in terms of their implementation at country and institutional level, highlighting some tangible examples. Subsequently, it showcases the main global and thematic achievements of the group. In closing, the report presents some of the key reflections from the perspective of the Secretariat and highlights the priorities of the Expert Group for 2022.



ECUADOR. Awá indigenous community and Afro-Ecuadorian community attend civil registration exercise in Alto Tambo, northern Ecuador.
© UNHCR/JAIME GIMÉNEZ | 2020

The Expert Group on Refugee, IDP & Statelessness Statistics

BACKGROUND

At the 47th session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) in March 2016, Statistics Norway, Eurostat, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presented a joint report on the international challenges associated with the production of statistics on refugees². The report highlighted the urgent need to build better and more efficient systems for statistics on refugees and asylum seekers and suggested the establishment of an international expert group to examine these issues and develop a set of international recommendations for refugee statistics.

The UN Statistical Commission endorsed the proposal and requested the group to take account of internal displacement also in the scope of its work³.

At the 49th session of the UN Statistical Commission in 2018, the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS)⁴ were endorsed. In addition, the group presented a Technical Report on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons⁵. Subsequently, the Commission extended the group's mandate⁶ to develop International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS)⁷ - endorsed at the 51st

² See <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-14-Refugee-statistics-E.pdf>

³ See original [terms of reference](#) for the Expert Group.

⁴ See [International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics](#)

⁵ See [Technical Report on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons](#).

⁶ See [terms of reference for the second phase of the EGRISS' work](#).

⁷ See [International Recommendations on IDP Statistics](#)

session in 2020 - and a Compilers' Manual to support implementation of the recommendations with practical guidance. In 2020, the Terms of Reference for the third mandate of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) were endorsed.

Figure 1. **The EGRISS' three mandates**



EGRISS THIRD MANDATE⁸

The current phase of the EGRISS' mandate focuses primarily on supporting the implementation of the recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics. This is being undertaken through:

- Promotion and dissemination activities to raise awareness of the recommendations
- Efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity and provide technical support, and
- Efforts to improve available guidance and refine methodological elements of the recommendations.

Importantly, the EGRISS is also taking steps to monitor implementation of the recommendations globally, collecting cases studies and learning from the experiences of countries and institutions.

The third phase also includes the development of the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS), which will be submitted to the UNSC's 54th session in 2023.

⁸ See [Terms of Reference for the EGRISS' third mandate - EGRISS \(egrisstats.org\)](https://egrisstats.org/terms-of-reference-for-the-egrisss-third-mandate)

EGRISS Terms of Reference 2020-2024

The Terms of Reference for the EGRISS' third mandate set out the main objectives and expected outcomes of the group from 2020-2024. Compared to the group's first two mandates (2016-2018 and 2018-2020), the scope of work has been significantly increased. It primarily focuses on supporting implementation of the IRRS and the IRIS, through dissemination and advocacy efforts, capacity development and technical support, monitoring and capturing lessons learned. Following a formal revision process in 2021, the TOR also aims to improve the quality and availability of statistics on statelessness.

By 2024, these efforts are expected to result in:

- Increased availability of official statistics on forced displacement and SDG indicators disaggregated by forced displacement;
- Improved coordination to implement the recommendations;
- Strengthened capacity on forced displacement official statistics at national, regional and global levels;
- Better informed policy as a result of increased availability and use of quality data;
- An updated Compilers' Manual;
- UNSC endorsed statistical recommendations on statelessness.

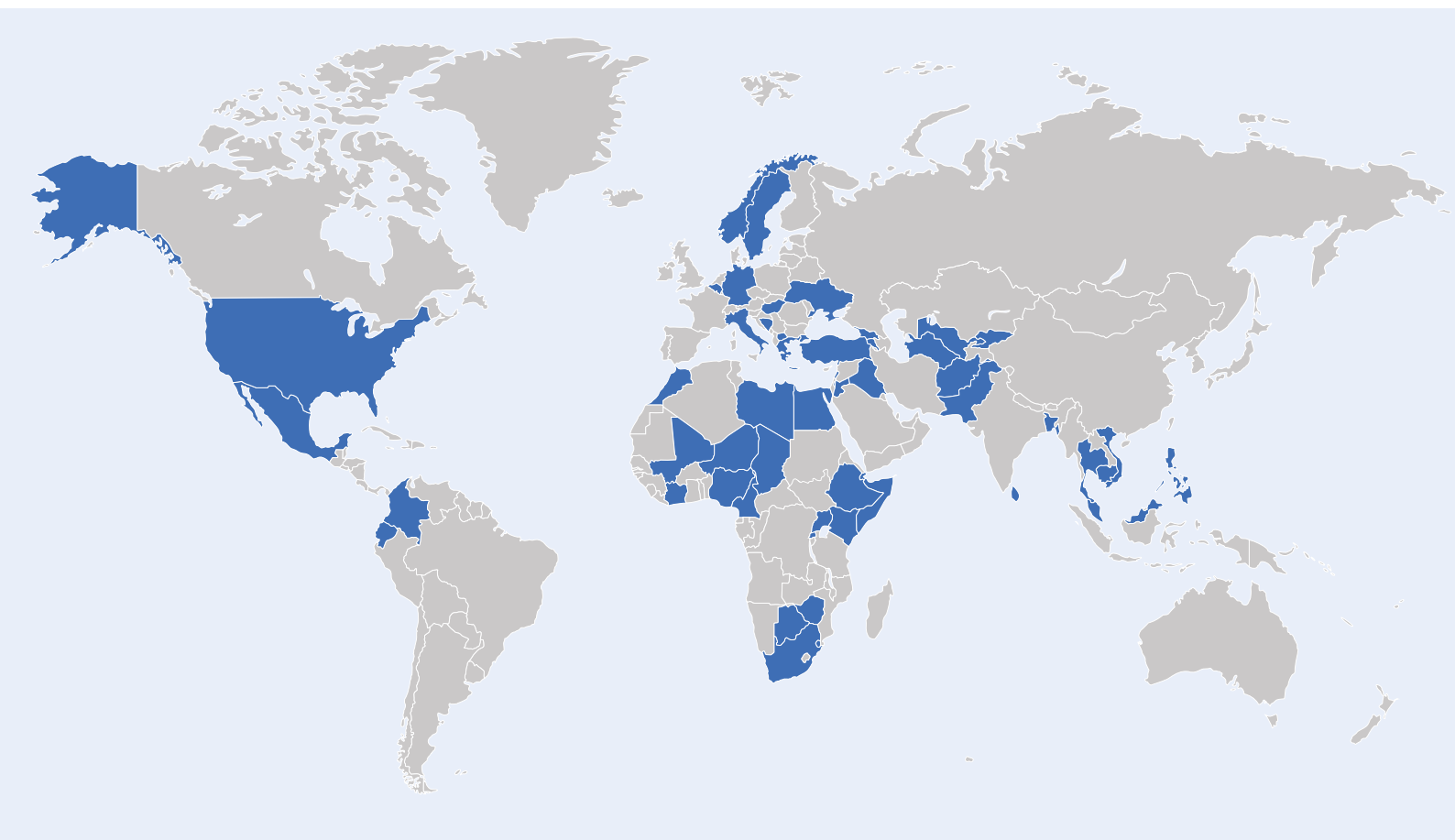
See [Terms of Reference 2020-2024 for the EGRISS](#)

WORKING METHODS

The EGRISS' achievements since 2016 are closely tied to its participatory working methodology. All activities and deliverables benefit from the varied inputs and perspectives of its membership resulting in products that are of higher quality, remain relevant to national partners and are collectively owned.

This participatory methodology has further empowered the EGRISS members to become advocates of the recommendations within their respective countries and institutions, thereby contributing to the growing momentum to implement the recommendations. The EGRISS will continue to engage its membership and pursue new partnerships with relevant national, regional, and international stakeholders to further its goals and identify priorities. Although more challenging due to COVID-19-related restrictions, this participatory methodology was maintained throughout 2020-2021.

Figure 2. **EGRISS country members**



10 Please contact the Secretariat at egrisstats@unhcr.org if you are interested to join.

The EGRISS' work is overseen by a **Steering Committee** which provides guidance to the group and collectively makes key strategic decisions. Between 2020 and 2021, the Steering Committee comprised 14 members from national, regional, and international levels, including:

- Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (Kurdistan Region of Iraq)
- National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) and Unit for the Attention and Integral Reparation to the Victims (Colombia)
- Statistics Norway (Norway)
- State Statistics Service (Ukraine)
- African Union
- Eurostat
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service (JIPS)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (UNESCWA)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
- World Bank
- World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement.

Activities are undertaken by the broader membership currently organized under four thematic subgroups:

- (1) Promotion & Dissemination
- (2) Capacity Development
- (3) Methodology and Guidance, and
- (4) Statelessness Statistics.

Each group includes volunteers from the EGRISS' broader membership who work together to implement and coordinate activities and provide platforms for information sharing and exchange.

The membership, subgroups and Steering Committee, all benefit from support and coordination of the EGRISS Secretariat, hosted by UNHCR.

International Recommendations on Refugee & IDP Statistics (IRRS & IRIS)

Effective policy at national and international levels is greatly facilitated by the availability of good quality data and analysis produced through official statistical systems.¹¹ In the era of the Sustainable Development Goals, this relationship has been reinforced with a particular focus on the world's most vulnerable groups.¹² Official statistics, produced and used by national authorities, are in turn enabled by the existence of standards and guidance shaped to enhance the quality, relevance and harmonization of data.

Until the publication of the International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics (IRRS and IRIS), existing principles and internationally endorsed statistical recommendations only addressed refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) peripherally. The lack of common standards led to the application of divergent definitions and mixed levels of quality in statistics on forced displacement. The IRRS and the IRIS have provided critical guidance for countries, regional and international organizations on how to collect, compile and disseminate official statistics on refugees and IDPs.

¹¹ See [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and [UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Internal Displacement](#).

¹² See: Transforming our world: [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Developed by the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS), each set of recommendations was elaborated collaboratively, including with contributions from affected countries and international experts. The IRRS and the IRIS were endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2018 and 2020, respectively.

The IRRS and the IRIS include:

- Standardized terminology and classifications for different population groups
- List of basic data tabulations and variables
- Assessment of relevant data sources and methods for collecting statistics on refugees and IDPs
- Identification of socioeconomic indicators for refugee integration and wellbeing and criteria for the measurement of durable solutions for IDPs
- Identification of 12 priority SDG indicators to be disaggregated by forced displacement¹³, and
- Recommendations on how to improve coordination at national, regional, and international level.

Figure 3. **International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics (IRRS & IRIS)**



¹³ The final list of 12 indicators are included in the IRIS, however the work builds upon analysis in the IRRS to measure the satisfaction of needs and integration of refugees (See IRRS, p. 89).



PHILIPPINES. Members of the Sama Bajau community undergo the process of birth registration at the Zamboanga City's Civil Registrar Office.

© UNHCR/MARTIN SAN DIEGO | 2021

Implementation of the IRRS and the IRIS

OVERVIEW

Since the international recommendations were endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2018 and 2020, significant momentum has grown facilitating their implementation. It is truly exciting to witness this transformation from paper into practice, and for the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) to support where needed.

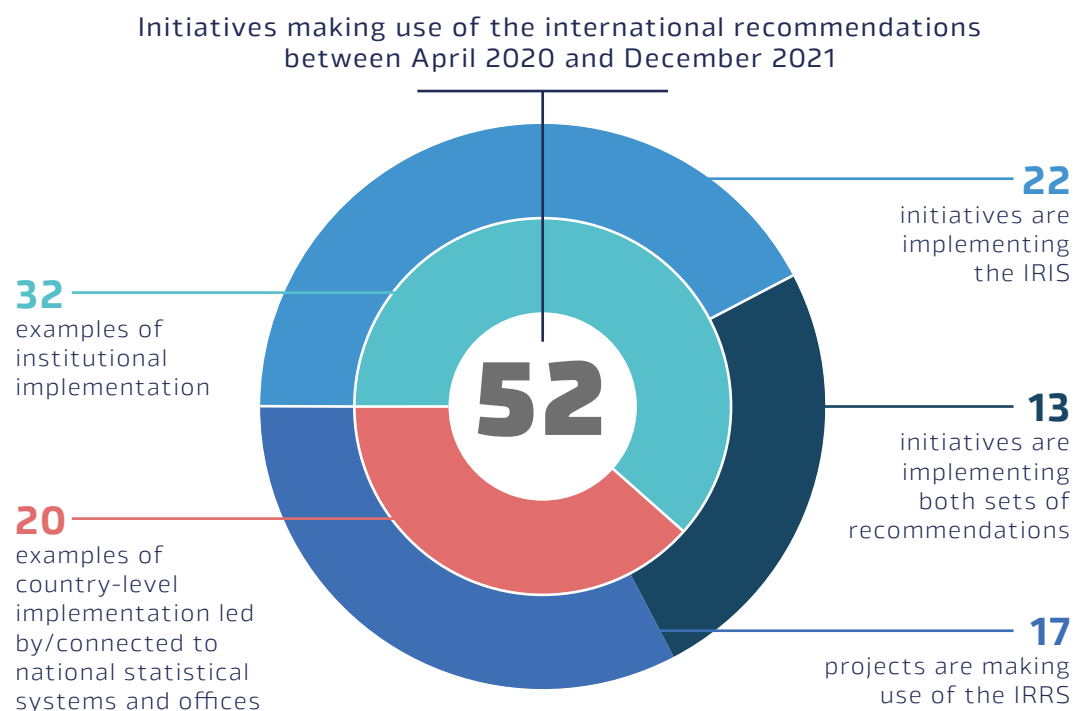
Implementation of the recommendations has taken two main forms: country-level implementation and institutional efforts to mainstream and/or internalize the recommendations. This section provides an overview of both from a quantitative perspective and selects a few examples to present more in-depth qualitative case studies in an effort to share good practice.

In total, 52 examples have been collected by the EGRISS Secretariat, including 20 country-level initiatives and 32 examples of institutional implementation. These include examples that have been completed or have progressed well during the period of this report: April 2020 – December 2021.

These examples were gathered primarily through a survey distributed to the EGRISS members in November-December 2021, and case studies were developed collaboratively with relevant countries and institutions. The total number of implementation examples could therefore be higher.

Looking forward, an additional 50 planned activities were also identified through the same survey. Many of these activities, now planned for 2022 and beyond, were delayed due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic in data collection. 24 of these 50 activities are country-level initiatives distributed across all regions, although more than 70% will be implemented in Africa.

Figure 4. **Quantitative overview of IRRS/IRIS implementation in 2020-2021**



Taken together, these examples demonstrate how the international recommendations can be put into practice, how they have inspired NSOs to strengthen their engagement in the production of refugee and IDP statistics, and how they are helping the international community to work progressively towards its common goal to include vulnerable populations into national statistical systems. Viewed alongside progress in policy and practice beyond national statistics¹⁴ – the implementation of the IRRS and the IRIS present concrete progress in our collective commitment through Agenda 2030 to ensure vulnerable groups are not left behind as we work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sharing the experience of countries and institutions and identifying lessons learnt is an important aspect of the EGRISS' third mandate and a result of significant investment from its members. It enables and encourages peer-to-peer learning and helps inform future priorities especially in the areas of methodological refinement, capacity development and the provision of technical support.

For all of these reasons the EGRISS Secretariat has been working to identify these examples and will continue to do so throughout its 2020-2024 mandate.

¹⁴ See [Global Compact on Refugees](#), [UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Internal Displacement](#), the [UN Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#) (Draft published in December 2021 for consultation) and [GP2.0 Compilation of National Practices](#).

COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION

Country-level implementation of the recommendations encompasses initiatives led by national statistical offices or other relevant national agencies. These examples demonstrate the relevance and usefulness of the recommendations in providing guidance on both technical and coordination matters.

20 examples were collected in total, each one either significantly progressed or completed during the period covered by this report. They include examples of:

- the inclusion of refugees or IDPs in population and housing censuses and national surveys
- displacement-specific household surveys
- improved use of data from administrative registers, and
- experimental use of alternative methods such as modelling.

The experiences of six countries have been further elaborated to demonstrate more concretely how the IRRS and/or the IRIS have been used in practice.

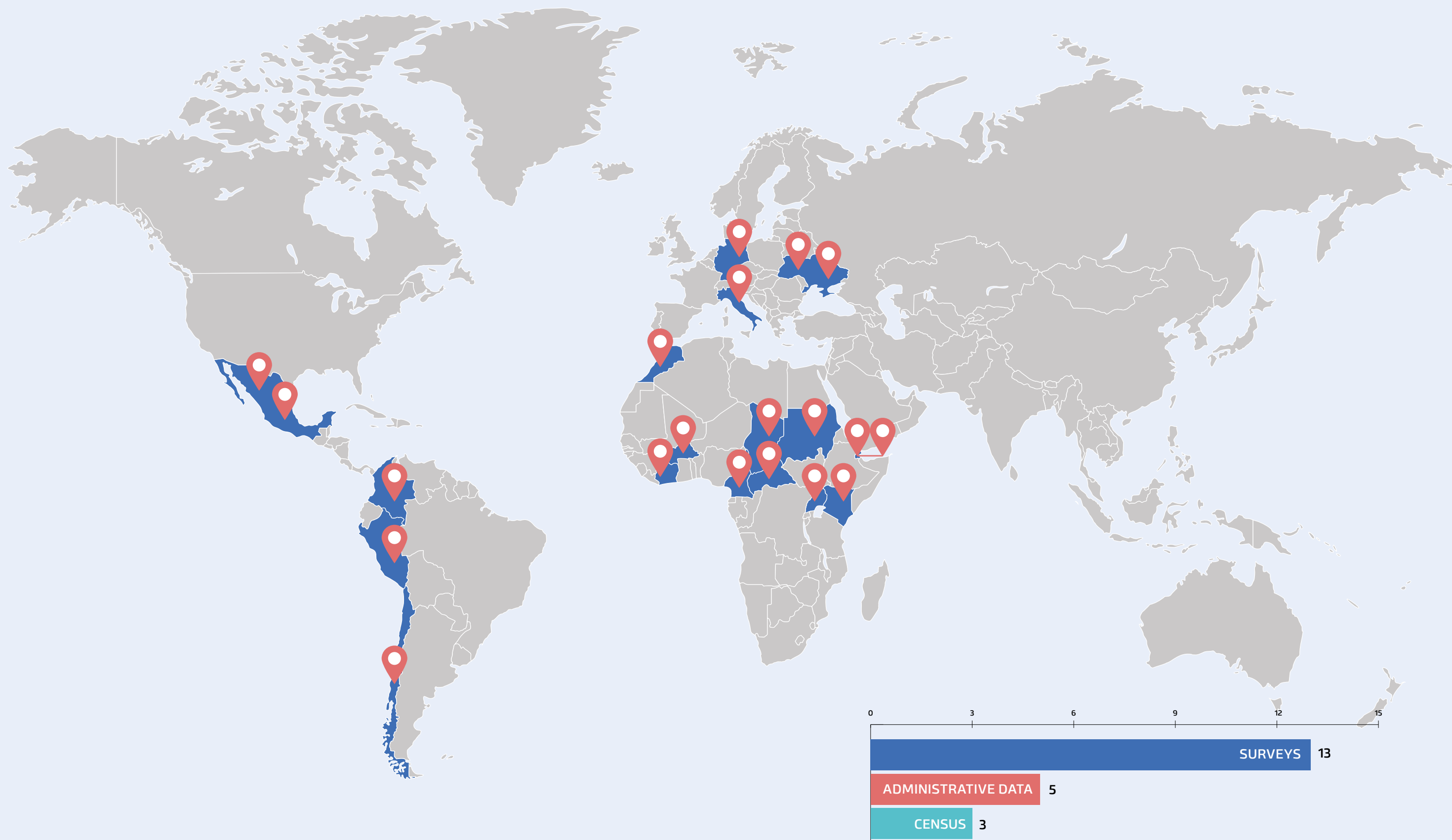
Examples that are still in a planning or conceptualization stage are not included in this count. Looking forward, of the 24 planned country-level activities shared with the Secretariat, the majority remain focused on survey instruments, however the number of national censuses planned to include refugees or IDPs is significantly higher than in 2020-2021 (11 compared to 3).

Provision of technical support to implement the recommendations

As part of its work to promote the implementation of the IRRS and IRIS, the EGRISS is available to provide technical support to requesting countries for specific initiatives. Requests for technical support are open to all institutions of national statistical systems (NSS) working in the area of forced displacement or interested to strengthen their engagement in this area.

Please contact the EGRISS Secretariat at egrisstats@unhcr.org if your institution intends to submit a request and/or is interested to learn more.

Figure 5. **Country implementation in 2020-2021 by location and main data source**

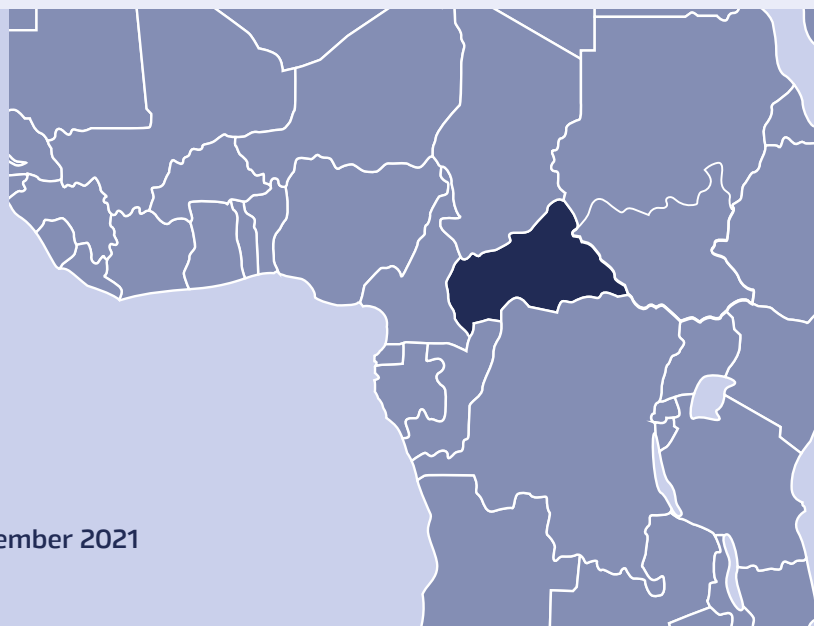


Central African Republic

2021 harmonized household living conditions survey



691,791 IDPs as of December 2021
(UNHCR, Government)



Background

The Central African Republic (CAR) has suffered from decades of strife and instability which has negatively impacted the country's development. The last major crisis, sparked in 2013, triggered a high number of displacements in its wake which further deteriorated in 2017 and 2018. As of December 2021, according to data from UNHCR and the government of CAR, an estimated 691,791 persons are internally displaced, representing nearly 15% of the national population¹⁵.

However, detailed data on this vulnerable population is lacking. To remedy this situation, the Central African Institute of Statistics, Economic and Social Studies (ICASEES), in collaboration with the World Bank and UNHCR, and with support from the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC), are working to ensure that the 2021 Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey delivers detailed and meaningful insights on IDPs.

2021 Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey (EHCVM)

The Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey (EHCVM) is a nationally representative survey that provides data on poverty and other socio-economic variables. Conducted in 2021, the survey aimed at reaching a total of 6,000 households nationally and an additional sample of 600 households in IDP sites.

With technical and financial support from the JDC¹⁶ and the World Bank, ICASEES strengthened the IDP components of the survey. Importantly, the sample size

¹⁵ See <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/car/location/399>

¹⁶ See <https://www.jointdatacenter.org/central-african-republic-car-idp-survey-as-part-of-the-2021-harmonized-household-living-conditions-survey/>

allocated to IDP camps was increased, and a dedicated module on internal displacement was added to the survey questionnaire.

Based on the data collected, an analytical report is currently being developed, which will help inform government policy interventions as well as partners' assistance related to this vulnerable segment of the population in CAR.

The use of the international recommendations

The development of the IDP module for the questionnaire of the EHCVM was directly informed by the International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS). The recommendations provided technical guidance on key variables and indicators to capture around the living conditions of IDPs, as well as on IDP identification.

Conclusion

This case study provides an important example of the inclusion of IDPs into existing national data collection processes. As highlighted in the IRIS, this facilitates high data quality and direct comparability between IDPs and other population groups, thus enabling targeted policies.

CAR's experience in implementing the international recommendations further represents a good example of coordination between national statistical offices and international organizations. Collaboration between the ICASEES, JDC, World Bank and UNHCR allowed the survey to deliver highly relevant and much-needed socio-economic data on IDPs in CAR, ensuring national ownership and capacity building in the process.

Germany

Making refugees visible in population statistics

1,856,785 Persons seeking protection as of december 2020

German Federal Statistical Office



Background

Between 2014 and June 2017, Germany admitted approximately 1.5 million asylum seekers¹⁷, making it the most important destination for asylum seekers in the European region during this period. The large number of arrivals in a comparatively short amount of time placed a huge strain on established systems and structures, including administrative processes, accommodation capacity at reception centers, registration, the asylum procedure, and administrative courts. Against this background, a demand for more reliable data on the situation arose from German policymakers and the general public.

Increased attention helped to reveal a major data gap: while data on asylum applications and decisions were available from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, there was a lack of clarity on the total number of refugees and people in refugee-like situations in the country – stock and flow data needed to be more clearly distinguished.

Clarifying the number of persons seeking humanitarian protection in Germany¹⁸

Faced with this situation, the German Federal Statistical Office explored ways to quantify the stock of refugees and people in refugee like situations. This resulted in the design of a new official statistic on people seeking humanitarian protection in Germany.

¹⁷ See [Federal Office for Migration and Refugees report](#) and [data from the German Federal Statistical Office \(Destatis\)](#)

¹⁸ See ["Measuring the stock of foreigners seeking humanitarian protection in Germany"](#)

"It was an important step to get basic demographic statistics, but it should not be the end. That is why we are exploring new ways to measure refugee integration, inspired by the IRRS".

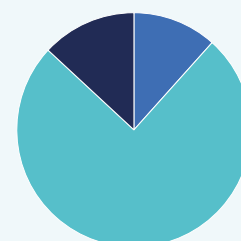
Mr. Jan Eberle

Assistant head of the section responsible for statistics on people seeking humanitarian protection, German Federal Statistical Office

The newly established statistic makes use of the administrative data from the Central Register of Foreigners (AZR). This register, managed by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees - the competent registration authority, contains information on all foreigners residing in Germany, as well as data on asylum procedures.

The Federal Statistical Office receives an annual extract from the Central Register to prepare and disseminate official statistics. Through the combination of information on residence permits and asylum-related decisions in the register, the Federal Statistical Office is able to determine the stock of refugees and people in refugee-like situations at a given point in time. Moreover, the data provides information on the basic demographics, citizenship, length of stay and legal protection status (including who qualifies as a refugee) of protection seekers in Germany. Furthermore, the statistic allows fine-grained regional disaggregation¹⁹ at the district-level.

Persons seeking protection by protection status as of December 2020



● Unsettled
● Recognised
● Refused

German Federal Statistical Office

The use of the international recommendations

In November 2017, when the draft of the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) was still undergoing final consultations, the Federal Statistical Office already published the new statistic on people seeking humanitarian protection.

Nonetheless, the IRRS statistical framework has been guiding the Federal Statistical Office, which was also involved in compiling the draft later endorsed

¹⁹ See [data by district](#)

by the Statistical Commission. In this context, the IRRS were of practical use for aligning definitions whenever possible and transparently laying out deviations when necessary. For example, in the case of the definition of protection seekers with a refused protection status, the definition used by Germany differs from the one provided in the IRRS. Importantly, such variations demonstrate how the recommendations can be contextualized to meet national requirements.

Thus, the IRRS have functioned as a reference point in Germany. This rendered it possible for the country to develop a comprehensive statistical framework tailored to its national context. The Federal Statistical Office has used the recommendations to determine the extent to which its approach to measuring the stock of persons seeking humanitarian protection corresponds to or deviates from the international standards.

In parallel, the recommendations have been an important advocacy tool, facilitating the Federal Statistical Office's initiative to incorporate statistics on protection seekers as an integral part of population statistics in Germany.

Conclusion

Statistics on refugees and people in refugee-like situations in Germany have been strengthened through the use of the international recommendations.

The process of incorporating refugees into population statistics heavily relies on the coordination mechanisms between Statistical Offices and the agencies responsible for producing the relevant administrative data. In Germany, the well-functioning collaboration between the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and the Federal Statistical Office is a key factor, with the former not only providing the essential data but also working with the statisticians on how to interpret the data for their use in population statistics.

These efforts have also generated momentum for new initiatives in the country. The Federal Statistical Office is currently exploring new methodologies to measure the integration of refugees into society using data integration techniques, inspired by the IRRS. Notably, measuring integration could help to inform targeted policies that improve the lives of refugees and refugee-like populations, and provide insights for other countries struggling with similar challenges.

Italy

Linking administrative records to analyze refugee mobility and duration of stay



13,467 Permits for asylum and international protection registered in 2020

Italian National Institute of Statistics

Background

According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), there has now been a progressive and significant reduction in the number of arrivals of people seeking protection following the peak of asylum requests that occurred during the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean.²⁰ Despite this downward trend, more than 500,000 people have sought asylum in Italy since 2014²¹. Contrary to earlier understanding, many of these people are not temporarily passing through the country but have remained (or are likely to remain) there for many years.

In this context, ISTAT, the Italian NSO, has been working together with the Ministry of Interior to improve statistics on refugees and related populations. Together, they aim to produce quality data for better informed national policy, starting with analytical work on their duration of stay and mobility within the country.

Linking administrative records to improve statistics

In order to produce and disseminate statistics on refugees, asylum seekers and related populations, ISTAT has elaborated a new database with information from different sources using record linking techniques. During this process, ISTAT has combined data from two different administrative registers that include information on relevant populations. One of these registers contains data collected by the Ministry of Interior on residence permits, including those granted on the basis of asylum, those granted to recognized refugees, and those granted for other humanitarian reasons. The second database is the national population register, including information on vital events such as births, deaths and marriage.

²⁰ See [ISTAT Report, 2021](#)

²¹ See <https://www.rescue.org/country/italy>

"To transform administrative data into official statistics, it is necessary to invest in the quality at the data collection stage. As data collectors often do not know how the data will be used subsequently, data quality of apparently non-essential fields can suffer."

Ms. Cinzia Conti

Senior Researcher, Italian National Institute of Statistics

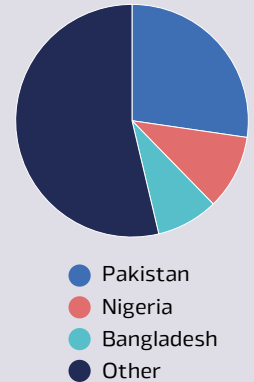
The Italian NSO then works to link relevant information from both registers in order to produce a new database that contains important information on asylum seekers, refugees and related populations.

This new database allows for analysis on key topics including ongoing work to study the internal mobility of refugees in Italy and their length of stay for those who arrived during the 2014 - 2016 crisis. This topic is relevant for both central and local governance as the entry point for many asylum seekers occurs in the south of the country, including on the country's various islands, following which they often move to the center and north of the country to seek better work and housing opportunities.

Data quality challenges associated with the original registers has limited the possibilities of ISTAT's analytical work. It is, for example, currently difficult to use data collected on the profession or education levels of the populations of concern.

Despite these challenges, the database designed by ISTAT presents a concrete opportunity to strengthen policy-relevant analysis on forcibly displaced populations. Both topics (the stability of refugees' presence in the country and their internal mobility patterns) will inform the development of a report that will contribute to understand the level of integration of refugees. The report is expected in 2022.

Asylum seekers
by country of origin



Italian National
Institute of Statistics

The use of the international recommendations

The design of the ISTAT initiative employed the definitions of refugees and related populations used by the European Regulation No 862/2007²², which are aligned to the Refugee Convention and therefore also with the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS).

In addition, the adoption of the international recommendations had a significant impact on ISTAT's work in this area. The IRRS' focus on variables and indicators to measure integration – including for recent arrivals – prompted a shift in understanding within ISTAT. The statistical institute started to work with the assumption that many refugees in Italy were not only temporary migrants but had come to the country to settle. Consequently, ISTAT started exploring opportunities to assess the level of integration of these vulnerable populations with guidance from the IRRS.

Conclusion

This case presents an interesting example of enhancing the use of existing administrative data for official statistics on forced displacement. The record linking technique used by ISTAT was made possible through effective coordination and data sharing between organizations and has contributed to deepening the cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior and ISTAT in practice.

Thematically, ISTAT's work constitutes an exciting example of country-level implementation of the recommendations given its policy-relevant focus on integration, although limited by data quality. With the available guidance from the IRRS and the shift in understanding about the intended length of stay of refugees and asylum seekers, ISTAT, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, is exploring new ways to enhance its analysis of the integration of these populations into society.

²² See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02007R0862-20210701>

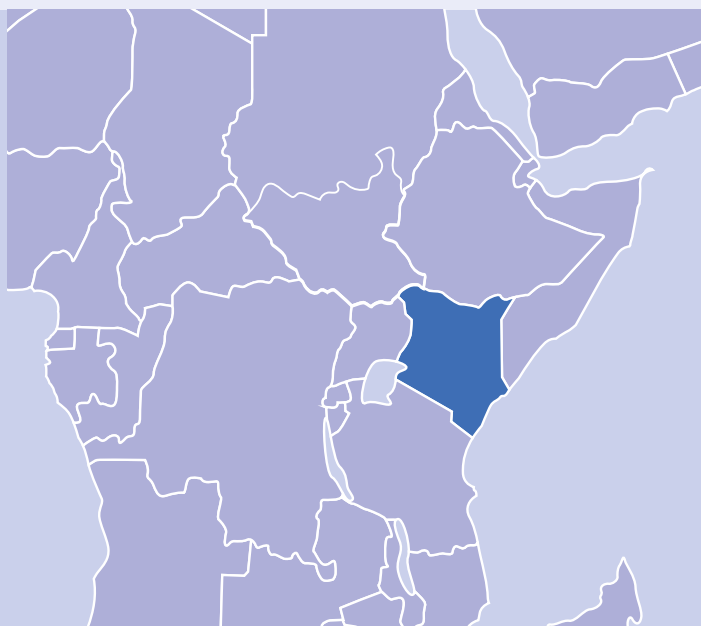
Kenya

Economic survey 2021



534,622 refugees and asylum seekers as of september 2021

Refugee Affairs Secretariat



Background

As of September 2021, Kenya ranks among the countries with one of the largest refugee populations in Africa by hosting over 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Somalia, South Sudan, DRC, and Ethiopia²³. Moreover, the convergence of drought and conflict in Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan presents a real possibility of an increase in the flow of refugees to Kenya.

Many refugees in Kenya have been displaced for decades. They reside primarily in the Dadaab camp in the southeast, Kakuma camp in the northwest, and in Nairobi. Given the magnitude and longevity of this crisis, reliable statistics are essential to inform national policy and response, as well as to understand how refugees' living conditions compare to the national population.

In recent years, Kenya has undertaken remarkable efforts to incorporate refugee populations into the national statistical system, under the leadership of the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). A module on refugees and stateless persons was included in the 2019 Population and Housing Census. More recently the inclusion of refugees in the Economic Survey accentuates Kenya's commitment to producing, coordinating and disseminating statistics on these vulnerable populations.

Economic Survey

The Economic Survey serves as a highly relevant example of inclusion of refugees in the national statistical system as it is produced regularly with the aim of informing the national budget allocation.

²³ See [Kenya Statistics Package](#)

"The IRRS have been an effective advocacy tool at the national level helping to include refugees as an integral part of national population statistics. They have also provided valuable technical and operational guidance in the area of data disaggregation and coordination."

Ms. Renice Akinyi Bunde

Specialist Governance, Peace and Security
Statistics, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

The Economic Survey is an annual publication prepared by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)²⁴ that provides socio-economic information covering a five-year period. Statistics presented in the report are produced in line with internationally agreed methods regarding the fundamental principles of producing official statistics²⁵.

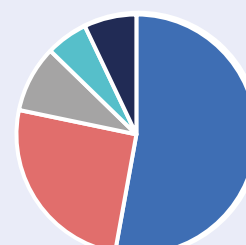
The report includes a set of modules that generates statistics on Kenya's economic performance, labor market situation, education, health services, and social inclusion, among others. Within the report, refugee statistics are included in the section entitled "Governance, Peace and Security" where the data is provided by the Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS) in collaboration with UNHCR. The Economic Survey 2021 includes statistics on the number of registered refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya by age and sex from 2016 to 2020.

The use of the international recommendations

The International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) and KNBS' participation in the EGRISS since the group's early days, have influenced this process in multiple ways.

Firstly, the existence of the EGRISS and the endorsement of the IRRS, have served as an important advocacy tool. The existence of international standards endorsed by the Statistical Commission has bolstered efforts towards recognizing refugee data as an integral part

Refugees and asylum seekers by country of origin as of September 2021



- Somalia
- South Sudan
- DR Congo
- Ethiopia
- Other

Refugee Affairs Secretariat

²⁴ See [Economic Survey 2021](#)

²⁵ See <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/gp/fundprinciples.aspx>

of population statistics at the national level. This has contributed to the KNBS endeavor to include this vulnerable population in the Economic Survey.

Secondly, the recommendations have also served as a guiding tool for data disaggregation. The Economic Survey provides data not only on the refugee stock over the five-year period, but further contains information on the age, sex, geographic location, and country of origin of the studied population. While the disaggregation of data was made possible by pre-existing statistics, the IRRS provided guidance to the disaggregation of available data and is informing ongoing discussions about opportunities to strengthen this in future iterations.

Lastly, the IRRS has facilitated more effective coordination among relevant agencies. The Refugee Affairs Secretariat is now included as a formal member of the established Technical Working Group that supports and guides the production of the annual Economic Survey. Improved coordination between RAS and KNBS will also impact other areas of official statistics production on refugees.

Conclusion

The case of Kenya represents good practice in the production of official statistics on refugees and implementation of the international recommendations. Both the census conducted in 2019 and the inclusion of refugees in the Economic Survey are key milestones in this regard.

The work carried out by Kenya presents an opportunity to reinforce peer-to-peer learning by gathering knowledge from the Kenyan experience and sharing this with other countries. Excitingly, Kenya's efforts do not stop here as the KNBS is thinking about conducting a National Survey on Migrants in 2022 which, if successful, will significantly deepen the available data on mobile populations for enhanced national decision-making.

Mexico

First efforts to produce official statistics on internally displaced persons



298,900 migrants, including international and internal, caused by violence or disasters between 2015 and 2020

National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI)

Background

In 2019, the Mexican government officially recognized the existence of internal displacement in the country and made a commitment to comprehensively address it.²⁶ This key milestone has prompted efforts to produce reliable data on IDPs to build a coherent national response. These efforts are significant as the number of IDPs in Mexico has been unclear, even though the phenomenon has been documented since 1972.

The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), in partnership with other national bodies, has started to explore how to incorporate internal displacement into the national statistical system. In 2020, some IDPs fleeing violence or disaster were identified in the national Population and Housing Census²⁷. More recently, INEGI, alongside central and local Government and civil society partners, has been working on a pilot survey to characterize the IDP population in Chihuahua State.

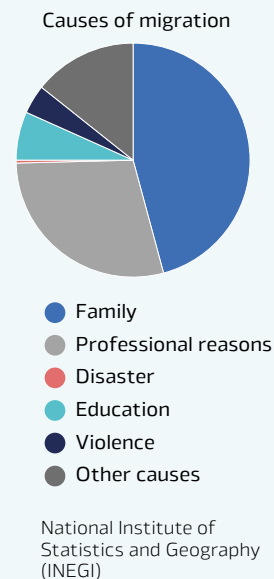
2020 Population and housing census

The Population and Housing Census was successfully conducted in March 2020. Its module on migration was adjusted to capture data not only on the population born abroad (immigrants), but also on internal migration. The questions enabled the identification of people who had changed municipality of residence since March 2015, and subsequently asked about the cause of migration including violence or

²⁶ See <https://cmdpdh.org/temas/desplazamiento/>

²⁷ Previously, CONAPO had analyzed the possibility of capturing internal displacement through other household surveys carried out by INEGI. See <https://www.gob.mx/conapo/articulos/presentacion-del-libro-la-violencia-como-causa-de-desplazamiento-interno-forzado-aproximaciones-a-su-analisis-en-mexico-196848?idiom=es>

disaster²⁸. Results showed that of the 6,888,490 migrants identified, 274,158 people had migrated due to violence or criminal insecurity (4%), while 24,742 did so due to natural disasters (0.4%)²⁹. However, as the question does not capture the displacement in the same municipality and as the cause of migration question only allowed for one answer, these results likely under-estimate the scale of displacement.



Profiling survey in the State of Chihuahua

In parallel, INEGI has been working to understand the characteristics of internally displaced persons in prioritized regions of the country. The statistical office is currently leading a profiling exercise in Chihuahua state, together with the Ministry of Interior, the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH), the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), the Executive Commission for Attention to Victims of the State of Chihuahua (CEAVE), the Secretary of the interior of Chihuahua state (SGG), local civil society organizations (Alianza Sierra Madre, Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres, Consultoría Técnica Comunitaria, Instituto de Geografía para la paz, Colegio de la Frontera Norte), and UNHCR, with technical and coordination support from the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS). As part of this exercise, INEGI implemented a survey which, although non-probabilistic, will produce sociodemographic data on IDPs to help understand their progress towards durable solutions.³⁰

The process has been conceptually and technically challenging due to the fact that Chihuahua State hosts a mix of populations and migration flows, including IDPs who are highly dispersed and often mobile. Despite such challenges, the decision to prioritize the State of Chihuahua was facilitated by a strong leadership and political will from the local government.

The survey will provide data to inform policy interventions for IDPs living in Chihuahua. Analysis will cover the dynamics and patterns of displacement, the socioeconomic situation of IDPs, their living conditions, protection mechanisms, specific needs and vulnerabilities, as well as their capacities and future preferences with respect to residence. Results are expected in May 2022. It also serves as a pilot survey to explore how best data on IDPs can be captured in other regions of the country.

The use of the international recommendations

The 2020 Population and Housing Census, although designed when the IRIS had not yet been approved, corresponds to some extent to the international standards thanks to INEGI's participation in the EGRISS. The census includes questions

²⁸ See <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/ccpv/2020/tableros/panorama/>

²⁹ See <http://en.www.inegi.org.mx/programas/ccpv/2020/#Tabulados>

³⁰ See [JIPS' Support in Mexico on Capacity Building for Improved Displacement Data \(Nov 2019\) and https://www.jips.org/news/respond-to-displacement-chihuahua-mexico/](https://www.jips.org/news/respond-to-displacement-chihuahua-mexico/)

"One of the lessons learned through the Chihuahua exercise is the importance of following international standards. The definitions and indicators suggested by the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics informed the design of the survey questionnaire."

Alejandra Ríos Cázares

Adjunct General Director of Development, Analysis and Indicator of Government, National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico

aimed at identifying the habitual place of residence of IDPs, the current/usual place of residence, as well as the cause of migration/displacement - all key topics recommended by the IRIS.

The IRIS was also integrated into the survey in Chihuahua, through definitions of the target population and place of usual residence. Importantly, the IRIS helped resolve discussions between partners in a context where the particularities of the international concept were not yet well delineated.

Moreover, the selection of variables and indicators were informed by the Interagency Durable Solutions Indicator Library; a tool recommended by the IRIS. This will allow results to determine whether displacement-related vulnerabilities have been overcome.

Conclusion

Further to their individual value, the two initiatives presented here, namely the national 2020 Population and Housing Census and the profiling survey in Chihuahua, have prompted discussions on how best to include IDPs in the national statistical system. While the Chihuahua experience has been instrumental in translating the international recommendations into the local context and familiarizing national partners with the recommendations, replicating this approach nationally may not be feasible due to the differing dynamics of displacement in different regions. Conversely, the national census constitutes a notable first step in producing data on internal displacement, but limited space in the questionnaires constrains the ability to measure it comprehensively.

Despite these challenges, both examples reflect Mexico's strong commitment to produce quality official statistics on IDPs. They also present important learning opportunities in a bid to strengthen the inclusion of IDPs in the national statistical system.

Morocco

Collecting demographic and socio-economic data on refugees through suveys



9,342 refugees as of March 2022.
UNHCR



Background

Once considered a country of emigration, Morocco has gradually become a country of transit and settlement. Due to its geographical location, the effects of its "African policy" and other laws, Morocco has emerged as a country of stay for an increasing number of migrants, mainly from sub-Saharan African countries.

Aware of the policy-relevance of collecting data on the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of migrants and refugees, the High Commission for Planning (HCP) conducted two migration surveys in 2018 and 2021 as part of the Household International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean countries (MED-HIMS) regional programme³¹. In addition, in the context of the global pandemic, the HCP in collaboration with UNHCR implemented a survey to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on refugees in 2020. Both examples demonstrate Morocco's commitment to producing policy-relevant official statistics on refugees and related populations.

The 2021 forced migration survey³²

The 2021 Forced Migration Survey is a nationally representative survey, covering many dimensions of forced migration, including migrants in an irregular administrative situation, regularized migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The survey employed a sample of 3000 migrants, including 2200 regular or irregular migrants and 800 refugees or asylum seekers.

³¹ See [MED-HIMS regional programme](#)

³² See [L'enquête sur la migration forcée](#)

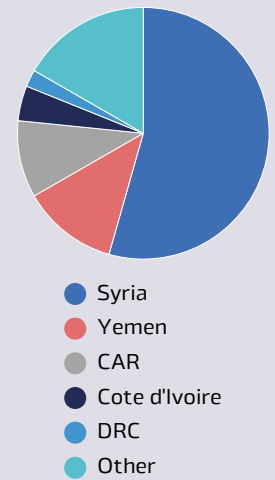
The 2021 survey was the second implementation phase of the MED-HIMS program in Morocco. It built upon the first phase from 2018 that focused on Moroccans residing abroad, return migrants and the emigration intentions of non-migrant Moroccans. The survey was also conducted in Egypt (2013), Jordan (2014) and Tunisia (2020-2021) with comparable data produced.

The 2021 survey reflected the new reality of migrants who settle in Morocco, and therefore focused on their socio-economic situation. It produced policy-relevant information, disaggregated by age and sex, on the situation of respondents and their access to labor markets, education and health care, as well as their administrative status and migration trajectories.

The study found that over half of refugees in Morocco (54.4%) are of Syrian origin. In terms of health care, the HCP found very low levels: only one in ten migrants (9.9%) have health insurance, with greater percentages found among men (11.3%) than women (7.8%) and slightly more among other migrants in irregular or regular administrative situation (10.7%) than refugees (7.7%).

As for economic variables, the survey found that the proportion of respondents who said they had received assistance from government authorities in Morocco was 18.3%. This proportion is 30.7% for refugees versus 13.7% for other migrants in irregular or regular administrative situations.

Refugees and asylum seekers by country of origin



High Commission
for Planning

COVID-19 impact survey³³

In June 2020, the HCP, in partnership with UNHCR, conducted a survey to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic, social and psychological situation of refugees in Morocco. The survey collected information on refugees' access to health services, education and the labor market. In addition, the initiative sought to compare the situation of refugees with that of the national population based on another survey conducted in collaboration with the World Bank.

The survey found that 9 out of 10 employed refugee household heads had stopped working during COVID-related lockdown. In other areas, 79.1% of refugee households reported that their children attended school virtually and almost all refugees (95.5%) felt that basic food items were available during lockdown.

To complement this study and deepen the analysis, a similar survey is planned for 2022, which will enable trends analysis.

³³ See [COVID-19 impact survey](#)

"In Morocco, there is a lot of administrative data on migrants and refugees available. The problem is that they are not harmonized and do not comply with all the fundamental principles of official statistics. We have agreed with all national departments and we are working with international organizations to build our capacity with the aim of improving these statistics, informed by international standards on refugee statistics."

Mr. Mohamed Mghari

Regional Director of Planning, High Commission of Planning, Morocco

The use of the international recommendations

Efforts aimed to include refugees in Morocco's national statistical system have integrated the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS). From a methodological perspective, the definitions of the target population used are aligned with the IRRS and the Refugee Convention. In addition, the recommendations have provided operational guidance to facilitate the development of the questionnaires and analysis of the data.

In addition, the IRRS' emphasis on the role of national statistical systems and national statistical offices to improve the quality of official statistics on refugees helped establish HCP's engagement on this important topic.

Conclusion

The surveys conducted in Morocco are interesting examples of the production of socio-economic statistics on refugees. They have helped to determine the level of integration of these vulnerable populations into Moroccan society, as the situation of refugees can be compared to that of the general population and thus provide a solid evidence base for policy design and implementation.

Beyond this survey work, the HCP launched in 2021 an activity to harmonize administrative statistics on international migration in general and labor migration in particular, in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and relevant national institutions. This activity aims to lay the groundwork for an Integrated and Harmonized Information System on International Migration in Morocco, including on refugees, through the improvement and harmonization of tools for collecting, producing and analysing data in accordance with international standards, with a particular focus on the recommendations of the various International Conferences on Labor Statistics (CIST) and international recommendations relating to statistics on refugees. This large-scale investment is in its early stages but has the potential to transform the breadth and depth of analysis possible on the situation of refugees and migrants in the country.



JORDAN. Syrian refugees walk in the Zaatari Camp, home to 78,398 Syrian refugees.
© UNHCR/YOUSEF ALHARIRI | 2021

INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to country-level efforts to implement the IRRS and the IRIS, regional and international organizations have also taken steps forward in this regard.

Growing recognition and increasing evidence of use of the recommendations by key institutions who actively work in support of governments in affected countries is encouraging as it plays a catalytic role towards improved quality and availability of official statistics on forced displacement. The more these stakeholders align their own data work within a common statistical framework, the more coherent the resulting data and analysis will become. In addition, the better coordination of these efforts becomes, the quicker we can all advance towards this common goal.

32 institutional examples were collected through the EGRISS membership survey. Each one was initiated and progressed well during the period covered by this report although many are ongoing. Institutional implementation examples refer to concrete initiatives led by regional or international organizations to make use of the refugee or IDP recommendations. These initiatives may take place at country or global level; they may be internal or inter-agency efforts.

They include examples where the IRRS and/or the IRIS have been:

- Integrated into institutional strategies
- Used to shape institutional training programmes or transformed into technical guidance documents, and
- Directly informed new data collection activities and analytical frameworks.

Figure 6. **Typologies of institutional implementation in 2020-2021**

STRATEGY



TRAINING AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDANCE



DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS



New migration statistical framework

Collaboration between the EGRISS and the UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics has been fruitful. Over the last couple of years, while the revised conceptual framework for statistics on international migration and mobility was developed, in-depth substantive discussions were held in regard to how refugees should be addressed. As a result, the 2018 International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics have been consciously incorporated, highlighting the interlinkages between forced displacement and international migration, always from a statistical and technical perspective.

See [Final Report on Conceptual frameworks and Concepts and Definitions on International Migration](#)



COLOMBIA. Children walk along a small road in Nueva Esperanza, where displaced families live in safety from armed conflict.
© UNHCR/RUBEN SALGADO ESCUDERO | 2017

STRATEGY

Several institutions have integrated the international recommendations on either refugee and/or IDP statistics into the institutional or thematic multi-year strategies. Others have concretized their commitment to working with and through the EGRISS, in order to help improve official statistics on forced displacement, within these same guiding documents. As strategies are intended to guide the work of institutions, these commitments are noteworthy. Some examples include:

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
IOM's Internal Displacement Data Strategy 2021-2025	<p>IOM's Internal Displacement Data Strategy provides a high-level course of action over the next five years for International Organization for Migration to enhance its internal displacement data operations. The <i>Internal Displacement Data Strategy (2021-2025)</i> reflects IOM's commitment to improving the global evidence base on mobility, migration, and displacement through strengthening the organization's capacity and leadership in internal displacement data.</p> <p>The IDDS' four strategic pillars (Assistance and Protection Data, Safeguards and Standards, Data Coordination, and Use and Accountability) speak to the IRIS recommendations on "quality in all processes and transparency in production" and promote the value of operational data in displacement contexts.</p>
JIPS Strategy 2021-23: From Data to Action for Solutions to Internal Displacement	<p>The JIPS Strategy reflects the commitment of the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service to the EGRISS.</p> <p>In particular under Goal 1 where JIPS aims to 'Enable nationally owned evidence on internal displacement' their engagement in the EGRISS Steering Committee and in subgroup 2 is specifically mentioned, alongside their involvement in several capacity development activities.</p>
JDC Strategy 2021-2023	<p>The JDC Strategy evidences the commitment of the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement to the EGRISS.</p> <p>Under Objective 1, the importance of investing in the development and implementation of statistical standards as well as national statistical capacity development is outlined. Here, the Center's commitment to support the EGRISS as a central platform for this work in both refugee and IDPs contexts is presented, in addition to support for the development of recommendations on statelessness.</p>
IDMC Strategy 2021-2030: From Evidence to Impact	<p>IDMC Strategy sets a roadmap for the work of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre over the next 10 years. Under Pillar 2 of the strategy, "Strengthen Capacity", IDMC expresses its commitment to work through its membership in the EGRISS.</p>

TRAINING AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDANCE

A second variation of institutional implementation concerns the use of the international recommendations to shape institutional training programmes or develop technical guidance documents. In these cases, regional and international institutions are helping to implement the IRRS and the IRIS by increasing awareness, knowledge, and capacity internally and externally around the two sets of recommendations. Examples include:

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Migration and Displacement Guidelines	The Migration and Displacement Guidelines, developed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) , provide guidance on the harmonization of concepts, definitions and methodologies linked to forced displacement. This technical document is informed by the International Recommendations on Refugee (IRRS) and IDP Statistics (IRIS).
Identifying Internally Displaced Persons in Surveys	<p>'Identifying Internally Displaced Persons in Surveys' is an analytical paper developed by the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service that reviews different approaches used to identify IDPs in profiling surveys and provides a set of recommendations for a more inclusive and accurate identification of IDPs in surveys. The paper is based on an extensive review of 24 questionnaires used between 2011 and 2019, and while developed by JIPS, it involved a collaborative process with external review by various EGRISS members.</p> <p>Chapter 4 of the paper specifically reflects on the set of questions recommended by the IRIS to identify IDPs in censuses, thus informing methodological refinement for improved practice moving forward.</p>
UNHCR Operational Data Management Learning Programme (ODMLP)	The Operational Data Management Learning Programme (ODMLP) is a data learning program developed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees . It is the organization's flagship learning program, available to UNHCR staff, designed to support UNHCR's capacity building activities by providing technical advice and training on data collection, management, and analysis. The training includes a dedicated module on official statistics and the IRRS and the IRIS.
UNFPA Strategy for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (2015-2024)	<p>The UNFPA Strategy for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses is an internal guidance tool developed by the United Nations Populations Fund to support countries undertaking their national census. Under the 'UNFPA Census Strategy' section, the guidance emphasizes the relevance of advocating for wider and innovative use of census data. In line with this, the strategy</p> <p>integrates the IRRS and the Technical Report on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons highlighting their importance to enhance the use of census data to generate estimates on refugees and displaced persons.</p>

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
UNHCR Statistical Quality Assurance Framework	UNHCR's forthcoming Statistical Quality Assurance Framework serves as the basis for assessing the quality and performance of the statistical products of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees . It provides a commonly accepted statistical framework for improving the quality of data produced by the UN Refugee Agency. The framework highlights the integration of international standards into UNHCR's statistical processes as a tool to improve its statistical outputs and encourages UNHCR's country operations to support the production of official statistics anchored in the EGRISS recommendations.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

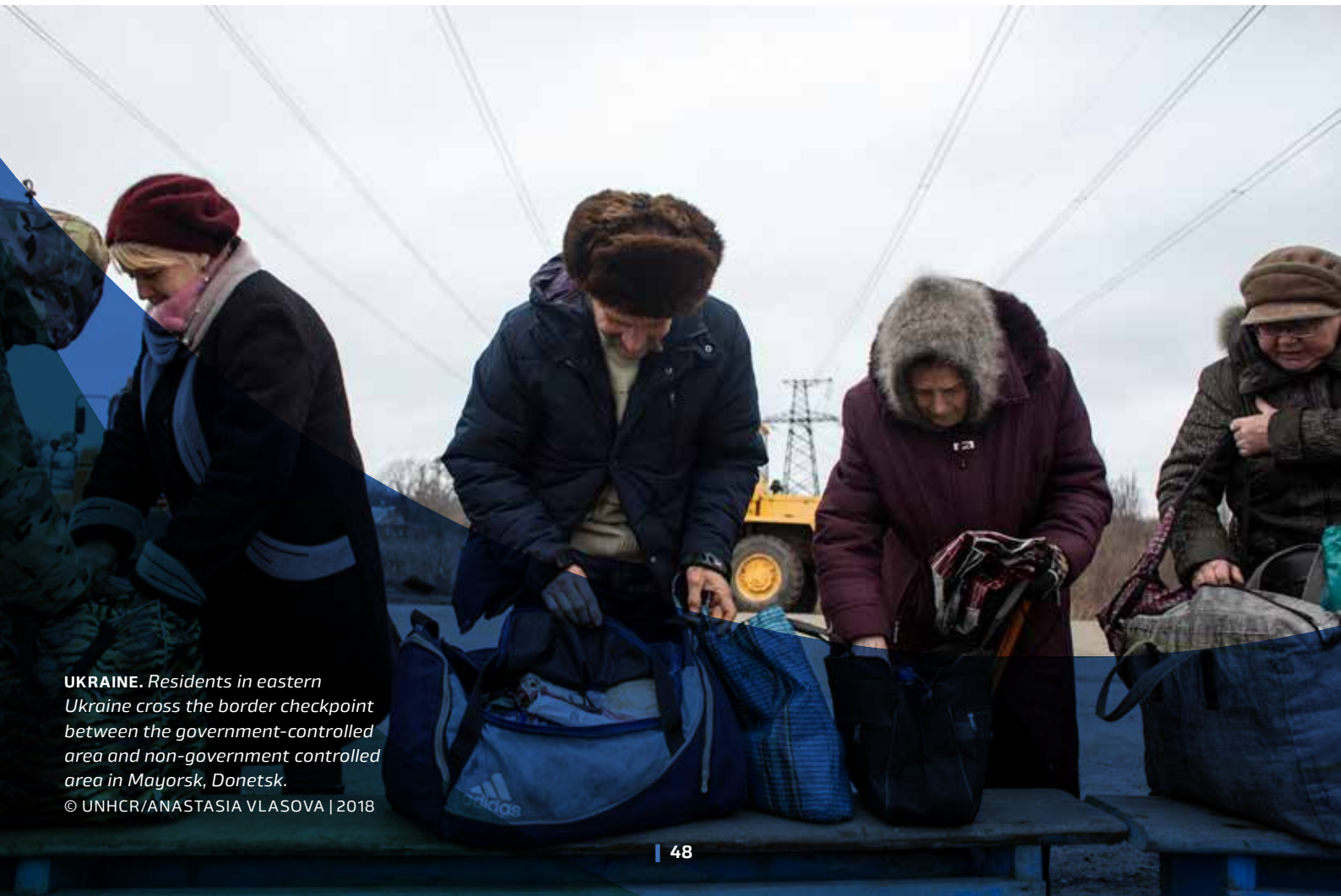
In this third area, institutional implementation refers to those instances in which the international recommendations have been used to directly inform new data collection activities and analytical frameworks. In some cases, this concerns global efforts and in others operational activities in specific countries and regions are considered. Examples include:

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Home again? Categorising obstacles to returnee integration in Iraq	This report, developed by IOM Iraq , examines the main obstacles to reintegration faced by returnee households in Iraq as of mid-2020. The analysis gathers existing indicators from secondary datasets to compile a composite view of 24 key obstacles for reintegration, with the aim of identifying which obstacles affect returnees more severely. The criteria used are based on the IRIS indicator framework. Reintegration is conceptually measured by the progress returnees make in overcoming key return-related obstacles faced in their places of origin, as defined by the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs and the international standards developed by the EGRISS.
High-frequency phone surveys	The World Bank's Poverty and Equity Global Practice and Living Standards Measurement Study program have been conducting high-frequency phone surveys (HFPS) to track responses to and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. With support from the JDC, booster samples have been added to include representative samples of forcibly displaced populations to complement the sample of nationals (hosts) in the HFPS conducted in Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Jordan, Iraq, and Burkina Faso. HFPS including forcibly displaced populations were also conducted by the World Bank and UNHCR in Uganda and Kenya. The IRRS and IRIS recommended indicators and variables have helped to inform the survey design in a number of these countries.

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Displacement Model	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC) Displacement Model is used by the organization to illustrate how different types of population flows influence the total number of people displaced in any given situation at a specific point in time. IDMC's global estimates of internal displacement are based upon this model. IDMC is currently in the process of revising its model (and subsequently its database) to further align with the IRIS; in particular to incorporate the IRIS' delineation of "sub-stocks" of IDPs in places of displacement, return and resettlement.
UNHCR Flagship Survey Programme	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees's Flagship Survey Programme is a multi-sectoral modular survey series that aims to measure and describe the living conditions of the refugee population, including economic characteristics, access to services, legal matters, socio-cultural issues, community participation, integration, and social cohesion. The programme benefits from the support from the JDC and its methodology is currently being developed in consultation with international partners and will be informed by country-level pilots during 2022. This initiative builds on several sets of international statistical standards, including integration of the IRRS recommended questions and indicators.
SDG16 Survey	The SDG16 Survey, jointly developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Development Programme, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, provides a tool that countries can use to measure progress on many of the survey-based indicators under SDG16. The survey has been piloted in eight countries across different regions and development contexts. An implementation manual is available which outlines the requirements for data collection and computation of the SDG16 indicators and provides guidance to conduct the survey. The implementation manual recommends following the IRRS and the IRIS in national contexts where forced displacement is an issue that requires deeper analysis. Furthermore, with support from UNHCR, the IRRS recommended questions have been integrated into the survey questionnaire in order to identify refugees.

EGRISS achievements

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic which started around the same time as the third mandate of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS), the achievements over the past 20 months have been numerous. They have been made possible thanks to the commitment of the EGRISS members, a successful working methodology and increasing recognition by various stakeholders on the value of collaborative action in the field of data. This section of the report summarizes the main global and thematic achievements of the group in the period of April 2020 - December 2021.



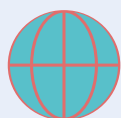
UKRAINE. Residents in eastern Ukraine cross the border checkpoint between the government-controlled area and non-government controlled area in Mayorsk, Donetsk.

© UNHCR/ANASTASIA VLASOVA | 2018

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

(1 april 2020 – 31 december 2021)

52



Country
members

28



Institutional
members

14



Steering
Committee
members

20



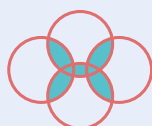
Countries
implementing the
recommendations

32



Regional
and international
institutions implementing
the recommendations

4



Active
workstreams

3



Official country
support requests

35



External publications
showcasing the
international
recommendations

10



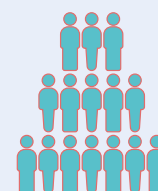
EGRISS sessions held
in regional and
international capacity
building events

16



EGRISS sessions
held in advocacy
events

108



Institutions
participating in
EGRISS organized
trainings in 2021

PROMOTION & DISSEMINATION

"Whenever change is sought, advocacy is concerned."³⁴ This phrase illustrates well the objective of the EGRISS's efforts in this area including the activities of subgroup 1, co-led by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Eurostat, and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), to promote and disseminate the International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics. Raising awareness of the applicability of the recommendations is critical to increasing experts' and policymakers' understanding of the importance of quality forced displacement statistics for policymaking and achieving international commitments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³⁵. It also helps to advance their implementation by making guidance available and promoting positive use cases.

Informed by an advocacy strategy, the EGRISS ensured that the recommendations were featured in relevant statistical fora and reached stakeholders from different levels since the start of its third mandate. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the recommendations and implementation work were presented during several virtual events organized at the national, regional, and international levels. The online JIPS-EGRISS Conference 2020 on 'Building Capacity for Improved Displacement Statistics' kicked off the EGRISS' third phase and highlighted strategic opportunities to improve statistics on refugees and IDPs. With close to 300 registered participants, the conference provided a dedicated space for national and international stakeholders to explore different aspects of capacity development linked to forced displacement statistics, including funding and coordination. The main points discussed, and the strategic opportunities identified during the event, are summarized in a report and the accompanying video³⁶; they have also helped to inform capacity development plans of the Expert Group.

In addition, key events such as the UN Statistical Commission and the UN World Data Forum provided a platform for the EGRISS to showcase country experiences and share insights on the implementation of the recommendations. In October 2021, Somalia and Ukraine shared their experiences and challenges in implementing the IRIS at the country level during a session co-organized by the EGRISS and the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center³⁷ on '*Making the most vulnerable visible: Data gaps and official statistics on forced displacement*' at the UN World Data Forum. The session contributed to the debate on making forcibly displaced people statistically visible and ensuring these populations are not left behind in policymaking.

The EGRISS participated as an organizer or presenter in 16 events between the beginning of its third mandate and the end of 2021. These events were crucial opportunities to promote and raise awareness on the relevance of the work nationally, regionally, and globally. The success of the EGRISS promotion and dissemination activities is also reflected in the number (35) and importance of publications that reference the recommendations and EGRISS' contribution. These

³⁴ Paris21, [Advocating for the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics](#), 2010.

³⁵ See [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

³⁶ See [JIPS-EGRISS Conference 2020 Report](#) and [JIPS-EGRISS Conference 2020 Recording](#)

³⁷ See [EGRIS-JDC session](#).

publications include UN General Assembly resolutions, policy papers, high-level thematic reports as well as academic articles published in relevant statistical and forced displacement journals. Key publications are highlighted below:

Figure 7. **Key external publications highlighting IRRS/IRIS and EGRISS' work**³⁸



38 Publications pictured include:

- [Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future, High Level Panel on Internal Displacement, HLP on internal displacement, 2021](#)
- [UN General Assembly Resolution A/C.3/76/L.26/Rev.1, 2021.](#)
- [Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report, UNHCR, 2021](#)
- [Missing from the story: The urgent need for better data to protect children on the move, IDAC, 2021](#)
- [World Migration Report 2022, IOM, 2021](#)
- [Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021, IDMC, 2021](#)
- [A Development Approach to Conflict-Induced Internal Displacement, The World Bank Group, 2021](#)
- [Improving official statistics on stateless people: Challenges, solutions, and the road ahead, Strode and Khanna, 2021](#)
- [Including refugees and IDPs in national data systems, Natalia Krynsky Baal, Forced Migration Review, 2021/](#)
- [Aligning humanitarian surveys with international statistical standards, Felix Schmieding, Forced Migration Review, 2021](#)
- [Internal Displacement and Responses at the Global Level: A Review of the Scholarship, David Cantor and Agnes Woolley, IDRP Working Paper, University of London, 2020](#)
- [Data disaggregation of SDG indicators by forced displacement, UNHCR & JIPS, 2020](#)
- [Using collaborative approaches to improve internal displacement data, Devora Levakova et al, Forced Migration Review, 2020](#)
- [The Question of Data in Internal Displacement Law-and-Policy-making, Martina Caterina & Andres Lizzano Rodriguez, Refugee Survey Quarterly, Oxford, 2020](#)

To see the complete list of publications, go to [Resources - EGRISS \(egrisstats.org\)](#)

All the above-mentioned efforts are brought together in the recently developed EGRISS website.³⁹ The platform includes all sets of recommendations; relevant materials and tools; and information on capacity development activities, implementation experiences, events, and publications. The website will contribute to strengthening the communication within the EGRISS and beyond with interested stakeholders from the statistical, humanitarian and development communities. In 2021, a new visual identity was developed as part of the EGRISS' communication efforts; members and partners are welcome to use the EGRISS logo to promote and disseminate the work.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity development efforts are central to the EGRISS' third mandate as they aim to support the implementation of the International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics. Capacity development activities are led by the EGRISS subgroup 2, under the co-leadership of the National Institute of Statistics of Cote d'Ivoire, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service (JIPS), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The group provides a platform for coordination, consultation, peer-to-peer exchange, and mapping of opportunities. Together, its members also work to develop training material, organize workshops, and provide direct technical support to requesting countries.

Significant achievements and partnerships in capacity development have been made since the start of the EGRISS' implementation phase. Several virtual workshops were organized together with relevant inter-governmental and statistical capacity development partners in Central America (with SICA) and East and the Horn of Africa (with IGAD, STATAFRIC and Statistics Sweden). Representatives from NSOs, line ministries, inter-governmental bodies, and regional and international organizations joined the workshops. These events raised awareness around the IRRS and the IRIS, outlined synergies between forced displacement and migration statistics, and highlighted several opportunities for implementing the recommendations in these regions, and strong interest from national partners to further collaborate with the EGRISS. In addition, these events were important opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and sharing experiences and best practices among countries implementing the recommendations. They also informed Subgroup 2's approach to capacity development and priorities moving forward. Based on the success of these events, similar workshops in other regions are planned for 2022.

³⁹ <https://egrisstats.org/>

Figure 8. **IGAD-STATAFRIC-Statistics Sweden-EGRISS Webinar on Refugee and IDP Statistics**



The recommendations were also presented in a series of training events, such as the *Online African School on Migrations Statistics* organized by the African Union Institute of Statistics (STATAFRIC), Statistics Sweden, and IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), and the *Regional Learning on Development Responses to Forced Displacement in the Great Lakes Region* organized by the World Bank. The EGRISS welcomes similar partnerships and looks forward to expanding its capacity development efforts to other regions.

In addition, the IRRS and IRIS have been incorporated into institutional training programmes. UNHCR, for example, is working to include a module on 'Official Statistics on Forced Displacement and the International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics' into its flagship data training, the *Operational Data Management Learning Programme* (ODMLP).

The EGRISS capacity development activities will soon be supported by a dedicated e-learning course on 'Official Statistics on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.' In partnership with the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (UN-SIAP), the EGRISS is developing a five-module e-learning programme to introduce the IRRS and the IRIS content to practitioners. This series will constitute a foundational step in a broader set of capacity development activities, aimed at national partners primarily.

The EGRISS also provides direct support to requesting countries (see box on page 21). During 2021, three formal requests for technical assistance were received from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (SSS), the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS) and the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (KRSO) to implement the IRIS. Significant progress was made in Ukraine with the creation of a working group including relevant national and international actors to discuss the applicability of the IRIS to the Ukrainian context in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. An analytical document was developed to support adapting the recommendations and developing a roadmap for their implementation in Ukraine.

EGRISS-STATAFRIC-STATISTICS SWEDEN PARTNERSHIP

Collaborating with relevant regional inter-governmental bodies is key to reaching relevant stakeholders; understanding regional trends in forced displacement statistics; identifying capacity development entry points; exploring opportunities for implementing the IRRS and the IRIS; and building strong partnerships. This is the case of the fruitful collaboration between the EGRISS, STATAFRIC and Statistics Sweden to support improving statistics on refugees and IDPs within different African regions. Building on growing momentum around migration and displacement statistics, the EGRISS, jointly with STATAFRIC, Statistics Sweden and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), organized a series of webinars on 'Official Statistics on Refugee and IDPs' in April and September 2021. The objectives of the webinars were to present available resources to strengthen the capacities of regional and national actors on the collection and management of data on forced displacement in the region, with a particular focus on the International Recommendations. Since then, and following country members' interest, the EGRISS, Statistics Sweden and STATAFRIC embarked in organizing similar events with other African regional economic commissions, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in January 2022.

The EGRISS is currently liaising with the SNBS to provide the support required for the implementation of the IRIS in Somalia. Despite strong engagement and interest from partners, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted technical support activities, delaying in-country capacity development efforts and progress towards implementation. Security considerations have posed additional challenges. The request for support from KRSO was received in late 2021 and support will be provided in 2022. Technical support efforts in all three contexts will continue in 2022 and the EGRISS expects more requests to be received.

As highlighted in the recent report of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement⁴⁰, the work under way through the EGRISS can offer an important platform for coordinating capacity development efforts for national statistical systems on forced displacement statistics. Engagement and support from relevant statistical partners will be essential to support these efforts moving forward.

METHODOLOGY AND GUIDANCE

With the objective of providing practical guidance to support the implementation of the IRRS and the IRIS, the EGRISS developed a Compilers' Manual (CM) that is available online. The Manual was welcomed by the UNSC in 2020, however, it noted that further technical work was needed to complete the product and increase its usability. In addition, there are a selection of methodological gaps in the recommendations themselves.

⁴⁰ [Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future, High Level Panel on Internal Displacement, HLP on internal displacement, 2021](#)

The refinement of the recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics and improvements to the Compilers' Manual represent a key area of the EGRISS' third mandate. More accessible and clear guidance will support the development of improved capacity development materials and contribute to the implementation of the recommendations. The EGRISS subgroup 3, under the co-leadership of the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC), and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), is working to fill existing guidance and methodological gaps in the recommendations and CM; expand the content of the manual; and review and refine its structure, editorial presentation and accessibility.

Important progress was made since the establishment of the subgroup. The group undertook a comprehensive review of the content and structure of the CM and presented a proposal for a revision of the publication to increase its usefulness for practitioners in national statistical systems. EGRISS will revise the CM to become a more accessible document in 2022.

Building on the need to strengthen the CM's content on specific topics, the subgroup is also working on additional material on prioritized topics. For example, guidance on sampling of refugees and IDPs in household surveys that builds on the Sampling Guide for Displacement Situations and Practical Examples⁴¹, developed by JIPS.

Furthermore, subgroup 3 has been working to fill important gaps in the recommendations and the CM that require more in-depth analyses and broader stakeholder dialogue. This includes work on the 'Composite measure for overcoming key displacement-related vulnerabilities' from the IRIS. This measure is based on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Framework⁴² and aims to determine, for the purpose of statistics, whether key displacement-related vulnerabilities have been overcome while providing a practical assessment of the overall situation of the IDP population and determining which part of the population should be taken out of the total stock.

During 2021, work on the composite measure has progressed well. Several methodological and implementation challenges were identified by the subgroup based on the content of the IRIS itself, and simulations have been undertaken using data from Colombia, Somalia, Nigeria, and Sudan on IDPs and host/national populations. The group aims to develop concrete recommendations for how the EGRISS can refine the measure and make it a fully workable statistical instrument.

A second methodological gap prioritized by the Subgroup concerns the standardization of questions and indicator specifications for surveys to complement the IRRS and the IRIS classifications and thematic recommendations on: (i) identification questions for refugees and refugee-related populations; and (ii) identification questions for IDPs and IDP-related populations. This workstream has also benefitted from an analytical paper produced by JIPS on 'Identifying

⁴¹ See [Sampling Guide for Displacement Situations & Practical Examples \(JIPS, June 2020\) - JIPS - Joint IDP Profiling Service](#)

⁴² See [IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons | IASC \(interagencystandingcommittee.org\)](#)

Internally Displaced Persons in Surveys', which provides a set of recommendations for a more inclusive and accurate identification of IDPs in surveys and suggests some improvements to the IRIS suggested census questions on the same topic. A discussion paper developed by the JDC, covering both IDP and refugee identification questions in surveys, has also been developed to help guide the groups work on this topic. Work in the Subgroup is ongoing and is expected to lead to improved guidance for NSSs in this area and new material for the revised Compilers' Manual.

STATELESSNESS STATISTICS

In December 2021, the EGRISS' TOR was formally revised through an inter-sessional decision to include the development of International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS). This effort builds upon work previously included informally in the EGRISS' workplan since 2020. If successful, the IROSS will provide the first statistical framework on statelessness and will be instrumental for enhancing the quality and comparability of national statistics on this particularly vulnerable population.

The EGRISS' work in the area builds upon the growing momentum to address statelessness, reflected in UNHCR's #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness⁴³, the High-Level Segment on Statelessness⁴⁴ and associated commitments from member states.

Despite the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic which led to some delays, much progress has been made. 19 countries and 9 regional and international organizations take part in this workstream and a first consolidated draft of the IROSS was made available for review within the group in March 2021. Although its further development will be a priority for 2022, the content of the recommendations is planned to be aligned to the IRRS and the IRIS and therefore are likely to include:

- Legal framework for statelessness
- Definition of statelessness for the purpose of statistical measurement
- List of basic data tabulations and indicators
- Assessment of data sources, methods and ways to improve them
- Analysis of the characteristics of stateless populations, and
- Steps to improve statistical coordination.

In anticipation of the submission of the IROSS to the UN Statistical Commission 54th session in 2023, the EGRISS produced a Report on Statelessness Statistics⁴⁵ that summarizes the group's progress in developing the international recommendations and presents key elements of the proposed statistical framework. The Report will be discussed during the 53rd session of the UN Statistical Commission and feedback will inform the further development of the

⁴³ See [#IBelong Campaign](#)

⁴⁴ See [High-Level Segment on Statelessness](#)

⁴⁵ See [Report of the EGRISS on statelessness statistics](#).

IROSS. Beyond contributions from the EGRISS members, the Report was peer-reviewed by experts in statelessness and statistics, which helped to strengthen the draft prior to its submission and raise awareness of the process amongst key stakeholders. A background paper summarizing country examples used to inform the process so far accompanies the Report.⁴⁶

High-level events were an important platform to build support for developing the IROSS. In February 2021, the EGRISS, in collaboration with UNHCR and UNFPA, organized a side-event at the UN Statistical Commission: ***‘Leaving no one behind: Improving Statistics on Statelessness’***.⁴⁷ The event informed the statistical community about the current scarcity and weaknesses of official statistics on statelessness and highlighted the importance of developing statistical standards.

To further raise awareness within the statistical community the EGRISS Secretariat worked together with UNHCR to author an article recently published in the Statistical Journal of the International Association for Official Statistics summarizing the progress made so far in developing the IROSS. The paper, “Improving official statistics on stateless people: challenges, solutions, and the road ahead”⁴⁸, aims to generate a discussion amongst experts on how best to measure vulnerable populations in national systems and what the best methodological solutions might be to address this important challenge in the context of the SDGs.⁴⁹

Figure 9. **Discussions on the conceptualization of stateless persons for statistical purposes**



Overall, the achievements of the EGRISS on statelessness statistics will be complemented by efforts in 2022 to ensure that international recommendations are finalized for submission to the 54th session of the UN Statistical Commission, including an in-person meeting of the group. Mirroring the successful working methodology adopted for the development of the IRRS and the IRIS, the group will continue to work closely with national statistical offices, regional and international institutions, and statistical experts to refine the recommendations with the ultimate goal of ensuring that no one is left behind.

⁴⁶ See [Country examples of data collection on statelessness statistics](#).

⁴⁷ See [Leaving no one behind: Improving Statistics on Statelessness](#).

⁴⁸ See [“Improving official statistics on stateless people: challenges, solutions, and the road ahead”](#).

⁴⁹ See <https://officialstatistics.com/news-blog/launch-10th-discussion>



CÔTE D'IVOIRE. *Françoise (in patterned dress) and Christelle (in red), talk to a school friend in Korhogo's main market. The two foundlings, both aged 17, are now citizens of Côte d'Ivoire, after a judicial breakthrough.*

© UNHCR/MARK HENLEY | 2019

Observations from the Secretariat: meaningful progress but a mountain to climb

Progress made by the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) since 2020 is, without doubt, significant and exciting. The increased awareness of the IRRS and the IRIS, and growing recognition of the contribution of the EGRISS overall, is quickly felt in a day-in-the-life of the Secretariat where invitations for collaboration and requests for contributions are often first received. Conversations with our members – dedicated staff of national statistical offices and proactive representatives of international organizations – are even more encouraging as the recommendations start to take on a life of their own.

As we reflect on the past 20 months a few achievements stand out from the perspective of the Secretariat:

- Following the extension of our mandate in March 2020, our **Steering Committee expanded** to include several new members, demonstrating the **growing interest in the group's work based** on its achievements in previous years. Now it is a 14-member strong body, including national, regional, and international organisations, with each one dedicated to furthering the common goal of improved official statistics on forced displacement and statelessness.
- **Over 100 concrete examples of implementation** of the IRRS and/or the IRIS have been identified. Although this includes planned, ongoing, and completed initiatives (and we all know that plans can change), a significant number of these are **country-led activities** which directly contribute to strengthening the availability and quality of official statistics on forced

displacement. Given the starting point of the EGRISS in 2016 was precisely to address the limited connection between data on forced displacement and national statistical systems, this shift is meaningful.

- The importance of **institutional examples of implementation** should also be recognized as these too, although less directly, cumulatively make a difference. The more international organizations utilize a common statistical framework, the more harmonized data will become and the better coordinated capacity development and country support can be.
- The **IRRS and the IRIS have become useful tools** for national and international partners in various ways. They are providing technical guidance on definitions, methods, and indicators (the 'harder' aspects of data production) and are also influencing coordination efforts and generating a deeper or different understanding of forced displacement within the statistical community (the 'softer' elements of the process). The positive impact of platforms, such as those provided by the EGRISS, that enable peer-to-peer sharing further underlines this.
- The **strong commitment and growing collective expertise of the EGRISS membership**, especially in those engaged in subgroup activities and efforts to implement the recommendations, is tangible. As the EGRISS community works together and learns together in this innovative area, the body of knowledge and experience continues to grow, making it critically important to invest in documentation and sharing of lessons learnt. EGRISS products and services, particularly those related to capacity development, methodology and guidance, are concretely benefitting from this engagement and growth.

Despite a global public health crisis starting almost in the same week as the EGRISS' third mandate, the achievements made to date are impressive; however, a number of key challenges have also been identified.

- First, the **COVID-19 pandemic itself presented significant challenges**. Many data collections were postponed, and many support missions and workshops cancelled or transformed into remote support and virtual events which necessarily lost the important aspect of in-person collaboration between professionals. More importantly, however, was the shift in political attention and associated data priorities of many partners which limited progress on several key areas of the EGRISS' work. Of course, the pandemic also presented opportunities especially through its heightened focus on the world's most vulnerable populations given everybody's susceptibility to the virus, but the impact on opportunities to collect new primary data significantly slowed down implementation of the recommendations in 2020-2021.
- Second, **implementation of the recommendations often requires system-wide action and capacity needs remain significant in many contexts**. Engagement with EGRISS members and discussions, in particular related to capacity development and technical support for implementation at country-level, have highlighted the need for system-wide action in many

contexts and challenges associated with national coordination. On the one hand, this validates the relevance of EGRISS' current mandate that brings different communities and expertise together to strengthen official statistics on forced displacement and statelessness. But on the other hand, it also implies the need for longer-term investments that currently exceed the group's capacity to deliver.

- Third, **coordination within and between different professional communities is resource intensive.** For the EGRISS' goals to be achieved, coordinated actions of the humanitarian, development and statistical communities at global, regional, and national level are required – and this is a tall order! Each community has a different way of working, different expectations, different definitions of success, a different pace of work, and so working in the nexus of all three to pursue common goals can be challenging.
- Fourth, **the available resources are limited.** The EGRISS is grateful to financial support from the European Commission (through the JDC) and UNHCR who are currently supporting the group and its Secretariat. However, the available funds are not sufficient to realise the potential impact of the group. In particular funding for mid-long-term technical deployments at country-level, capacity development activities, a stronger Secretariat and support for implementation in anticipation of the IROSS endorsement have been identified as gaps for 2022-2024.

Next steps: priorities for 2022

Looking forward to 2022, the core focus areas of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) include:

- **Finalize International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS)** and submit them to the UN Statistical Commission. This will benefit from guidance from the Statistical Commission, contributions from group members, and an in-person workshop planned for May 2022.
- **Improve coordination and implementation of capacity development efforts** aimed at strengthening the inclusion of refugees and IDPs in national statistical systems, including regional investments and country-level activities. These efforts should build upon and consolidate the platform provided by the EGRISS' subgroup 2 as an information sharing and coordination space. They will further benefit from the regional workshops already conducted/planned and the introductory e-learning modules currently under-development. They should be situated in a broader context where appropriate taking advantage of synergies with other areas of statistical capacity development, for example around international migration.
- **Enhance technical support in prioritized countries**, including expert deployments where necessary and feasible. This work will build upon formal requests received from countries, complement bilateral support activities on many EGRISS members, and should take into consideration different population groups within the scope of the IRRS and the IRIS.
- **Target advocacy and awareness raising activities** with the explicit ambition to advance implementation of the recommendations, share good practices and lessons learnt, and better articulate the use of statistics to

improve national policy and response. The new EGRISS website will be an important information sharing platform in this regard.

- **Improve monitoring of implementation of the recommendations** through the work of the EGRISS members and beyond, in order to keep track of progress, facilitate peer-to-peer learning and help inform plans of the group. This will also include the identification of opportunities for implementation of the recommendations, for example in planned Population and Housing Census activities as part of the remaining years of the 2020 Round.
- **Ensure methodological advancement** through the work of the EGRISS' subgroup 3 with a particular focus on the statistical measure to facilitate taking IDPs out of the national stock and publishing an updated and enhanced Compilers' Manual.

To achieve these, we will also need to invest in enabling factors, including:

- **Maintain a strong and engaged membership** of country representatives and international organizations who are at the center of all the EGRISS achievements, ensuring the relevance, quality and ownership over joint activities and subgroup deliverables. Increased accessibility of partners speaking different languages will be an important part of this effort.
- **Secure financial resources**, to complement existing resources from the European Commission (channeled through the WB-UNHCR Joint Data Center) and UNHCR, primarily to enable direct country support, capacity development priorities and more effective coordination. Funds to enhance the EGRISS Secretariat to effectively coordinate the group, support active workstreams and technically contribute to the group's priorities are also needed.
- **Strengthened partnerships** with new and existing counterparts, particularly within the statistical and developmental communities, to support achievements in prioritized areas, further capacity development and implementation of the recommendations will be key.

COVER PHOTO

AFGHANISTAN. *Ten-month-old Madina is carried by her mother as she queues with other displaced families in Kabul to receive cash assistance to help with winter needs.*
© UNHCR/ANDREW MCCONNELL | 2021

