

**UN TASK FORCE ON
DATA INTEGRATION
FOR DISAGGREGATED STATISTICS ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Terms of Reference

(DRAFT AS OF 5 JUNE 2019)

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/70/1), adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015 includes several migration-related targets, addressing issues such as human trafficking, labour standards for migrant workers, health workforce development, student migration and the transfer costs of remittances. SDG target 10.7, the sole target dealing exclusively with migration, calls on countries to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility and to implement well-managed migration policies. Furthermore, the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind” requires disaggregating SDG indicators by migratory status, wherever relevant, in order to highlight potential vulnerabilities of migrants and assess the integration of migrants in the host society.

In the most recently adopted Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration(A/73/195), objective 1 is to collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies.

Sufficiently disaggregated data are not easy to produce, given the limitation of data collection tools. Population censuses are the best data source to produce data for subpopulation groups and for smaller geographical areas, but are only available once every 10 years for most countries. Administrative registers also provide information for all population and all areas that are covered by the registers but tend to collect less information. Sample surveys have the advantage of collecting detailed information about population, their community as well as the drivers and impact of migration. However those who use sample surveys to study international migration are confronted, with a major challenge, namely, the sample size requirement and the associated trade-off with respect to sampling errors.

One strategy increasingly used by countries to produce better migration statistics is through processes of data integration, either by combining micro-data across various data sources, or through macro-data integration, using multiple data sources to produce various estimates of international migration.

According to the recent UNECE Task Force on data integration (UNECE 2017), macro-data integration is an analytical exercise which compares/models results based on data which are aggregates (statistics) of individual-level records, while micro-data integration is the integration of data based on linkage/matching of individual records.

Objectives and Tasks

The objectives of this Task force would be two-fold, yet both objectives would advance methodologies that can produce data that are sufficiently disaggregated for the measurement of international migration.

The first sub-task force would examine practical applications of macro-data integration, that is methods to produce disaggregated estimates of international migration via the integration of migration statistics derived from multiple data sources. This form of data integration can take on many forms, such as using different data sources to produce different sub-components of international migration estimates (sometimes referred to as “compilation” of data source), adjusting migration estimates from one data source using estimates from other data sources (sometimes referred to as data “triangulation”), or combining different data sources to produce migration estimates at different levels of geography or by various characteristics of the population (for example using Bayesian modeling methods). More specifically, the task force will (a) produce technical materials that provide general guidance on methods to integrate data on the macro level to improve estimates of international migration, that help; and (b) produce technical materials on macro-data integration for migration statistics.

The second sub-task force would focus on the processes needed for successful micro-data integration, particularly for countries without access to population registers. For example, topics covered would include how to access data from different agencies, how to merge data without unique identifiers, one-time vs. systematic data integration, methods to validate integrated data and ensure quality control, and how integrated data could be compiled to follow the UN standards and definitions for international migrants. This work would not duplicate existing guidelines¹ on data integration, but would be complementary to the prior Task Force, producing information about procedures and general guidance to set up an integrated microdata system in a country.

While understanding the challenge of proposing a one-size-fits-all approach for all countries, general guidance will be provided, supplemented with case studies.

Task Force Membership and Main Duties

The Task Force would consist of two co-chairs, to guide work on each of the respective sub-task forces. Task Force members are asked to contribute actively to the work of the Task Force by providing materials on case studies and drafting some parts of the technical materials.

(would sub TF membership be separate, or would TF members be expected to contribute to both sub-TFs, or a combination of both?)

¹ <https://www.unece.org/statistics/publications/general/statistics/2019/guidance-on-data-integration-for-measuring-migration/guidance-on-data-integration-for-measuring-migration.html>