Session 3: Population concepts used in the Demographic Yearbook System: Improvement of population and vital statistics Metadata

UNSD collects and disseminates official demographic and social statistics from all countries and areas. Data are collected via the Demographic Yearbook questionnaires. The templates of these questionnaires are available at: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographicsocial/products/dyb/index.cshtml#questionnaires](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographicsocial/products/dyb/index.cshtml%22%20%5Cl%20%22questionnaires)

Two data collections are performed every year:

1) Population estimates, vital statistics and international migration flows by dispatching to National Statistical Offices the Annual Demographic Yearbook Questionnaires on Population estimates, Vital statistics and International travel and Migration Statistics, as well as the Population estimates metadata questionnaire. Vital statistic metadata questions are part of the vital statistics questionnaire.

2) Population and housing censuses data collection is performed by dispatching the several population census data questionnaires (on general characteristics of the census, economic, household, housing characteristics, etc) , as well as population census metadata questionnaire, which gathers metadata that describe the census data. These questionnaires are sent to a National Statistical Office, when a new Census is conducted.

The data that are provided by NSOs by completing the Demographic Yearbook questionnaires, are reviewed and uploaded in the UNSD Demographic Statistics database and subsequently disseminated through the UN Demographic Yearbook, in print and online, and through the UNdata portal in record format. Links are available below:

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/index.cshtml#overview>

<http://data.un.org/Explorer.aspx> and further going to Datamart “Demographic Statistics Database”

Population data published in Demographic Yearbook collection refer to more than 230 countries and areas; with long time series starting from 1948 (or earlier) until the present time. As census taking methodologies and methods to produce population estimates develop and evolve over time, there is a need to improve the representation of population data in the Demographic Yearbook Collection, in print and online.

The discussion will focus on: An accurate, consistent and concise reflection of the population concepts that describe the population data (namely: population metadata), which takes into account the wide variety of contemporary census taking methodological approaches, the different types of population counts and the ways of producing population estimates that are adopted by countries and areas worldwide.

A lot of this information is already collected with the Population Estimates Metadata Questionnaire, and Population Census Metadata Questionnaire, which are provided as background documents for this meeting. The discussion during this Session will also contribute to further improvements to these metadata questionnaires.

The discussion will also focus on content improvements that can be made to the Vital statistics metadata questionnaire. The three metadata questionnaires: 1) Population estimates metadata questionnaire, 2) Population Census metadata questionnaires, and 3) Vita Statistics metadata questionnaire are provided as background documents for this meeting, and are also available at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographicsocial/products/dyb/index.cshtml#questionnaires>

By bringing their national experiences, the presenters and other experts are kindly asked to contribute to the following questions:

**Question 1.** Given the wide variety of census taking methodological approaches[[1]](#footnote-1) which ones should be specifically recognized, for the purpose of Demographic Yearbook Collection, as qualifiers for population census data? Please refer to [Table 6](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/documents/DYB2018/table06.pdf) and [Table 7](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/documents/DYB2018/table07.pdf) of the Demographic Yearbook 2018, for the current coding scheme. Alternatively, you may look at: <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3a1> and <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3a22>

**Question 2.** Given the different types of population counts that are used[[2]](#footnote-2) which ones should be specifically recognized, for the purpose of Demographic Yearbook Collection, as qualifiers for population census and population estimates data? You may refer to the same tables or online data as in the previous question.

**Question 3.** What improvements should be made to the Population Census Metadata Questionnaire and Population Estimates Metadata Questionnaire[[3]](#footnote-3)?

**Question 4.** What improvements can be made to the Vital Statistic metadata questionnaire? Are there any other vital statistics topics for which metadata information should be requested?

1. Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 3, United Nations, Part one, Chapter IV. Census Methodology <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesM/Series_M67Rev3en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 3, United Nations, Part four, I.C. Population Count <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesM/Series_M67Rev3en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/index.cshtml#questionnaires> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)