Revision and update of the 20th ICLS Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration

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Contents

- International standard-setting mechanism in labour statistics
  - International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)
  - ICLS Guidelines and resolutions
  - 20th ICLS Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration

- Revision and update of the 20th ICLS Guidelines on ILM statistics
  - Objectives, timelines, ILO Technical working group
  - Main revisions introduced
  - Revised conceptual framework and priority groups
International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)

- International standard-setting mechanism in labour statistics
- **Tripartite structure**: Governments (NSO & MoL), Workers, Employers
- Meets every 5 years since 1923, hosted by ILO
- ILO hosts and acts as technical secretariat
- Reviews and endorses **Resolutions and Guidelines**
- Regularly informs the UN Statistical Commission of its decisions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>20th ICLS</td>
<td>Guidelines concerning statistics of ILM Mandate to test Guidelines, continue methodological work, and report on progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>19th ICLS</td>
<td>Mandate to develop 1st set of statistical standards on ILM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>39th UNSC, Employment statistics programme review</td>
<td>“Short-term” international labour migration statistics identified as priority topic for development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Global Compact Migration (2018)  
Global Compact Refugees (2018)  
SDG 2030 Agenda (2015)
Main features of 20th ICLS Guidelines on ILM statistics (2018)

- Recognized policy relevance of ILM statistics
- Introduced 3 main components
  - Each component covered all persons who crossed international borders and had a labour attachment in destination country
  1. International migrant workers
     - (a) resident migrant worker
     - (b) non-resident migrant worker
  2. Return international migrant workers
     - (a) who changed country of residence
     - (b) who did not change country of residence
  3. For-work international migrants
     - (a) who changed country of residence
     - (b) who did not change country of residence
- Specified core indicators and priority data items
- Recommended complementary use of various data sources
- Mandated ILO to continue methodological work with TWG

- Took as starting point the 1998 UN Recommendations for international migration statistics. Now under revision
- Expanded scope to cover “short term” labour migration (i.e. frontier workers, seasonal migrant workers and others with short durations of stay abroad).
Different availability of main potential ILM data sources (% of countries)

- Population census and LFS most prevalent (over 90%)
- Specialized migration surveys least available (16.8%)
- Administrative sources available in less than 2/3 of countries
- Less than half of countries have 3 main types of sources (45.8%)

For more details see: 21st ICLS room document 16
Partial use of available sources for ILMS (% of countries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of register</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population register</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of foreign citizens</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of foreign workers</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of refugees and asylum seekers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of nationals abroad</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of nationals working abroad</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey-based sources:
Use for ILM statistics (%)

- 2020 Population Census: 94.2%
- Labour force surveys: 51.7%

Other administrative data sources:
Use for ILM statistics (%)

- Work permit data: 32.5%
- Border entry/exit records: 58.9%
Differences in priority groups (n of countries)

- Intl. migrant workers in the country
  - Top for high & middle income

- Nationals living & working abroad
  - Top for low income
  - 2nd priority for middle income

- Return international migrant workers
  - 3rd highest priority globally

- Temporary labour mobility
  - Top frontier workers entering country
  - 2nd seasonal & frontier workers going abroad
Revision and update of the 20\textsuperscript{th} ICLS Guidelines

- **Formalize framework for ILM statistics**
  - Introduce statistical definitions for key concepts: international labour mobility, labour attachment, etc

- **Improve consistency with frameworks in closely related domains**
  - International migration and mobility statistics (2021 UN Framework and 2023 Indicator set)
  - Refugee, asylum seeker and statelessness statistics (2018, 2023 UNSC)
  - Labour force and work statistics (19\textsuperscript{th} ICLS Resolution, 20\textsuperscript{th} ICLS Resolution)
  - Economic statistics (trade in services statistics)

- **Expand and introduce flexibility on priority groups to be measured, as per country context**
  - To reflect different ILM patterns as country of origin, transit and/or destination
  - To reflect different ILM patterns considering permanent and/or temporary nature of movements

- **Expand guidance to inform national programmes for ILM statistics**
  - Introduce guidance on the value of specific sources, and how to minimize measurement challenges
  - Introduce guidance on different periodicities for different priority groups, as per national context and statistical capacity
  - Introduce guidance on priority indicators, tabulation and essential disaggregation
Roadmap to finalize the revision of the Guidelines

- R&D, pilots, case studies, review national practice, intl coordination (2018-2023)
- Oct 2023: 21st ICLS
- June 2024: TWG ILMS Online meeting
- July 2024-March 2025: TWG ILMS consultation
- Publication revised Guidelines (June 2025)
ILO Technical Working Group on ILMS composition (2024)

**Stakeholder diversity**
- Governments
  - National statistics office (27)
  - Ministry of labour (8)
  - Ministry of migration (1)
  - Population agency (1)
  - Central bank (1)
- Employers' (2)
- Workers' (1)
- Regional and international organizations (4)

**Country regional diversity**
- Africa (8)
- Americas (6)
- Asia Pacific (8)
- Arab States (2)
- Europe and Central Asia (7)

**Thematic experience**
- Labour statistics only (36)
- International migration statistics only (21)
- Both (19)

**Experience with data sources**

*Survey based sources*
- Population census (46)
- Specialized migration surveys (29)
- Labour force surveys (56)
- Establishment surveys (38)

*Administrative based sources*
- Population registers (27)
- Visa and work permit records (15)
- Border records (14)
## Main revisions introduced in revised draft Guidelines (2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section of revised draft Guidelines</th>
<th>Type of revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Objectives</td>
<td>Expanded to promote integration with labour market statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Reference concepts and scope</td>
<td>Scope same as before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concepts formalized, aligned with relevant statistical standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Measures and priority groups</td>
<td>Operational definitions expanded (9 groups), aligned with relevant statistical standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Items of data collection or compilation</td>
<td>Reorganized to support priority setting (minimum, additional, …)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Core indicators and tabulations</td>
<td>Reorganized and expanded, to support priority setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Periodicity of data collection and reporting</td>
<td>New section, to support progressive development of national statistics programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Data sources</td>
<td>Expanded to highlight complementary value of each source type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Measurement issues</td>
<td>Expanded to complement data sources section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. International reporting</td>
<td>New section, to promote global data availability and sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. ILO work</td>
<td>Consolidated within single section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New concepts introduced to set the scope of ILMM statistics

- **International labour mobility**: All movements of persons that cross international borders and involve a labour attachment in the country of destination
  - **International labour migration**: All movements of persons across international borders that involve a labour attachment in the country of destination and result in a change in the country of residence
  - **International temporary labour mobility**: All movements of persons that cross international borders and involve a labour attachment in the country of destination but do not result in a change in the country of residence

Aligned with revised UN framework for international migration and mobility statistics (2021)

- **International mobility**: All movements that cross international borders
  - **International migration**: All movements resulting in a change in the country of residence
  - **International temporary mobility**: All movements that cross international borders that do not result in a change in the country of residence
Conceptual framework based on new concepts introduced

- Enables consistency with new UN conceptual framework for international migration and mobility statistics (2021)
- Maintains coherence with relevant reference populations for statistical purposes
  - Resident population
  - Temporary non-resident population
Labour attachment definition (new)

Labour attachment

Refer to **engagement, or intention to engage, in the production of goods or provision of services in exchange for remuneration** (i.e. employment) in the country of destination

- International workers may have a labour attachment in the country of destination as part of the:
  - **Resident labour force**
    - (Foreign born / foreign national) residents who are counted as employed or unemployed, **in line with 19th ICLS resolution**
  - **Non-resident labour force**
    - Non-residents, present, who engage or intend to engage in the production and/or provision of services, in exchange for remuneration, in the country

- International workers may have a…
  - work relationship as **independent worker or dependent worker**, **in line with 20th ICLS resolution (ICSE-18)**
  - With an economic unit resident in the country of origin, in the country of destination, or in a third country.
    - To include within scope cross-border service providers, regardless of location of employer economic unit, **in line with GATS, mode 4**
Revised 9 priority groups and measures (Annex I, paras. 9-11)

- Each defined separately from a country of measurement perspective
- Enables different prioritization, frequency of measurement by countries as per relevance and policy need
- Revised terminology and operational definitions, aligned with UN framework, as sub-set of parent category
- Overarching term proposed “International workers”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. International labour migration</th>
<th>B. International temporary labour mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STOCKS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1s. Immigrant (migrant) workers</td>
<td>B1s. Non-resident workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2s. Emigrant workers</td>
<td>B2s. Residents working abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3s. Returned international migrant workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLOWS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1f. Inflow of for-work migrants</td>
<td>B1f. Inflow of for-work non-residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2f. Outflow of for-work migrants</td>
<td>B2f. Outflow of for-work residents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Periodicity of reporting

- **Stock / flows for priority groups of international workers**
  - As per national relevance
  - Where data sources are in place
    - Immigrant workers: Annual
    - Emigrant workers: Every 3-5 years
    - Return international migrant workers: Every 3-5 years
  - Where data sources not in place
    - Immigrant workers: Every 3-5 years

- **Labour force statistics by international migrant status**
  - For countries with sizeable share of immigrants in population
    - Annual
    - For selected topics (e.g.)
      - Labour force participation rate
      - Employment to population ratio
      - Unemployment rate
      - Employed by status in employment
      - Employed by major occupation
      - Employed by major industry

- **Sectoral employment statistics**
  - Where immigrant workers concentrated in selected industries, in collective living quarters
    - Annual: Employment statistics
    - Every 3-5 years: Detailed on living conditions of migrant workers in collective living quarters
Main feedback from online meeting (June 2024)

- Alignment with related statistical standards
- Added flexibility on priority groups and measures
- Added flexibility on data collection and periodicity of reporting as per national relevance and statistical infrastructure
- Priority to stock measures
- Improve guidance on data collection and periodicity of reporting for benchmark stock measures versus compositional measures
- Improve data collection guidance for countries with small share of immigrant population
- Introduce guidance on combination of sources, estimation, modelling, calibration
Resources

- Labour migration at the 21st ICLS
  - Report I: General report (sections 2.2, 3.14, 4.3, and 5.2);
  - Room document 16: Review of country practices
  - Room document 17: Proposal for revised Guidelines

- ILOSTAT Statistics on international labour migration
  https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/labour-migration/

  https://ilostat.ilo.org/about/standards/icls/icls-documents/#icls20