



**International Forum
on Migration Statistics
IFMS 2023**

24-26 January • Santiago, Chile

Executive Summary



ORGANIZED BY:



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



OECD

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES



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The third edition of the International Forum on Migration Statistics (IFMS) was held in Santiago, Chile, in January 2023. The event gathered around 640 producers and users of statistics on international migration from 113 countries, who joined the three-day Forum either in person or virtually.

IFMS 2023 THEMES



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Key themes explored during the Forum



Strengthening
migration data for the
follow-up and review
of global agreements



Strengthening data on
migrants in vulnerable
situations



Impacts of the Covid-
19 pandemic and other
shocks on data on
migrants and
migration



New approaches,
methodologies and
innovations in
migration data

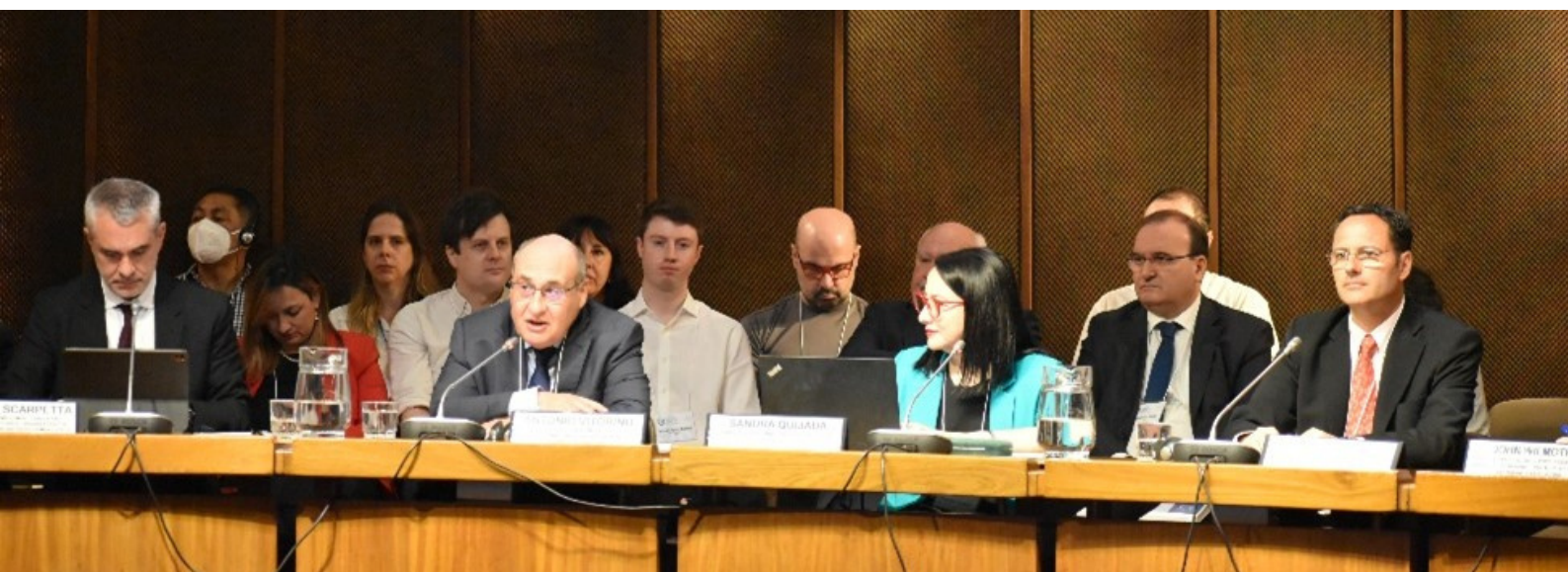


Strengthening
statistical capacities
and financing



Data communication,
visualization and
public opinion

Progress has been made in collecting, analysing, and disseminating data on international migration and on migrants' contributions and vulnerabilities, but persistent data gaps remain a challenge.



Participants welcomed the **progress made since the first IFMS held in Paris in 2018**. While global agreements, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, have strengthened initiatives to produce better data on migration and migrants, the third IFMS in 2023 showed that **many gaps remain**. It was noted that a lack of information on the **characteristics and lived experience of migrants**, including for migrants who are women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, irregular migrants, victims of trafficking and indigenous populations, limited the ability to design policies to address migrants' needs and protect their rights.

It was recognized that the **COVID-19 pandemic** posed many challenges for National Statistical Offices (NSOs), particularly by necessitating the postponement of population and housing censuses and gravely impacting other systems of data collection. Nonetheless, the pandemic also provided an opportunity for exploring **new tools and data sources**, improving data linkages and integration, strengthening or setting up **partnerships to close data gaps**, and producing **more thoroughly disaggregated data** to inform targeted policies and programmes.

The adoption of a **human rights approach** was highlighted as essential in the collection, compilation, production, analysis, use, and communication of data on migration and migrants. The significance of understanding demographic characteristics – in particular **age and sex** as key determinants of migration – was stressed in order to design effective operational and policy responses.

Discussions at the Forum highlighted the benefits of using **all types of available data** to produce international migration statistics, acknowledging their strengths and limitations. For instance, the combination of population census data with administrative data, or register-based censuses, have the potential to support policies that better identify relevant migrant populations.

It was emphasized that **strong collaboration** across countries and **data sharing** within National Statistical Systems (NSS) is vital to establish integrated migration data systems based on harmonized concepts and processes.

Moving forward towards more robust, reliable, timely, and internationally comparable data and statistics on migration and migrants



Discussions at the Forum called on NSOs to continue leveraging **traditional data sources** and ensuring that **upcoming censuses** collect data on migration and migrants, in line with international statistical recommendations. At the same time, the third IFMS drew attention to **innovative** pilot projects that already show results -for example, the use of big data and other non-traditional data sources to measure migration flows and other indicators, and new and replicable techniques for estimating and forecasting internal and cross-border mobility and displacement, and estimating the number of deaths among migrants in transit.

NSOs and their partners were encouraged to adopt the **UN revised conceptual framework** and statistical definitions concerning international migration and mobility, as well as the statistical framework on human trafficking and the recommendations for statistics on internally displaced persons (IDPs) and statelessness.

At the **national level**, adopting strong **legal frameworks**, formulating **national strategies** for the development of migration data and statistics, and the establishment of working groups on migration data were mentioned as key elements for a sustained improvement in the availability and quality of migration data. **Investment** in data systems and corresponding human resources are required to produce quality migration data that address policy needs in a sustainable manner.

Disseminating data widely was singled out as a powerful tool to counter xenophobic narratives and inform the public about migrants' contributions to countries of origin and destination alike.



Key messages about advances in migration statistics

Progress has been made in collecting, analysing, and disseminating data on international migration and on migrants' contributions and vulnerabilities, but persistent data gaps remain a challenge.

1

The pandemic provided an opportunity for **exploring new tools and data sources**, improving **data linkages and integration**, establishing or strengthening partnerships.

2

Collaboration across countries and **data sharing** within national statistical systems is recognized as vital to ensure well-integrated data systems based on harmonized concepts and processes.

3

The significance of understanding demographic characteristics - in particular **age and sex** - as key determinants of migration in order to design effective operational and policy responses.

4

A **human rights approach** is highlighted as essential during the collection, compilation, production, dissemination, analysis, use and communication of data on migration and migrants.

5

The benefits of using **all types of available data** to produce international statistics on migration and migrants are highlighted, acknowledging their various strengths and limitations.





Key actions to further improve migration data

Moving forward towards more robust, reliable, timely and internationally comparable data and statistics on migration and migrants

1

Continue leveraging **traditional data sources** for the production of international migration statistics while moving towards **register-based censuses**.

2

Further **innovate and experiment** with non-traditional data sources, including "big data", for measuring migration stocks and flows and other indicators.

3

Adopt **statistical standards** to support the production and harmonization of international migration statistics, in particular the UN revised conceptual framework and its statistical definitions of international migration and mobility.

4

Adopt strong **legal frameworks**, formulate **national strategies** for the development of data and statistics on migration and migrants, and to **invest** in data systems and human resources.

5

Disseminate data widely among general audiences, opinion leaders and policy makers to counter xenophobic narratives and inform about migrants' contributions to both origin and destination countries.

Thematic evolution of the IFMS

What is new since the first IFMS in 2018?

- ✓ The Forum's **brand** is recognized and well-established: its role is to strengthen collaboration for improved data on migration and migrants.
- ✓ The COVID-19 pandemic was a huge challenge but also an **opportunity to explore** new data tools and solutions that will continue to be useful.
- ✓ Innovations and use of non-traditional data sources by **government institutions** rather than researchers alone.
- ✓ More countries are moving towards **administrative registers** as a source for deriving population and migration statistics.
- ✓ More initiatives to collect relevant data on **specific groups**, including on refugees and undocumented migrants.
- ✓ New **statistical standards** since IFMS 2020: on international migration; on IDPs and statelessness; on human trafficking.
- ✓ Greater awareness of a **human rights** approach to data.





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