

United Nations Statistical Commission
Fifty-second session
1–3 and 5 March 2021
Item 3 (g) of the provisional agenda
Items for discussion and decision: migration statistics

Document E/CN.3/2021/11 – Report of the Secretary-General on migration statistics

Statement provided by:

Federal Statistical Office of Germany

Statement:

The work carried out by UNSD and the Expert Group is well received.

Germany supports the revised conceptual framework's general approach to endorse diversity in NSI's statistical concepts, while at the same time aiming to reconcile the different concepts into one comprehensive framework. In this vein, we support the recommendation to provide migration statistics disaggregated by both, country of birth and citizenship, since both perspective offer distinct insights.

Moreover, the clear-cut distinction between migration and international mobility is well received, as well as the emphasis on filling data gaps in this field. However, additional technical guidance may be needed on how to measure international mobility as suggested in the draft recommendations. For instance, daily commuting or short-term family visits will prove difficult to measure with traditional data sources, especially for countries within the Schengen Area.

In general, the harmonization of definitions between the UN-Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses and the proposed framework on international migration and mobility is welcome. However, both documents have an explicit focus on primary data sources such as household surveys and do not sufficiently reflect the specific requirements of statistical systems that increasingly use administrative data for their census and for the production of population and migration statistics. For instance, the revised conceptual framework lacks a definition of "registered population" as opposed to "present population" and "resident population". Therefore the framework should be refined to include specific aspects related to the use of registers, as some criteria of the proposed definition (intention to stay, 6-12 months criteria) are difficult to implement where administrative data are used.

With this exception, Germany endorses the proposed revised conceptual framework on international migration and mobility as a successful update of the 1998 UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and thanks all parties involved in its compilation.

Germany strongly encourages the Expert Group's initiative to provide technical guidance on data integration techniques in the context of migration statistics. Germany is currently working on experimental statistics about socio-economic integration of refugees based on integrating survey data and administrative data. First results are promising and may serve as an example for the Expert Group. Further guidance may be especially fruitful on how to enrich traditional data sources with new digital data sources in order to improve migration statistics.

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