

Statistical Commission

Fifty-third session

1–4 March 2022

Item 3(f) of the provisional agenda

**Items for discussion and decision: civil registration, vital statistics  
and statelessness statistics**

Background document

Available in English only

**Terms of Reference (2020-2024)  
Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics**

**Third phase: Implementation of Refugee and IDP  
Recommendations and Development of the International  
Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics**

Prepared by Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics  
(EGRISS)

# Terms of Reference (2020-2024)<sup>1</sup>

## Expert Group

### on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics

### Third phase: Implementation of Refugee and IDP Recommendations and Development of the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics

#### I. BACKGROUND

At the 47<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016, Statistics Norway, Eurostat, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presented a joint report on international challenges associated with the production of statistics on refugees. The report acknowledged the urgent need to build better and more efficient systems for statistics on refugees and asylum seekers against a backdrop of a rapidly growing numbers of displaced persons. The report suggested the establishment of an international expert group to examine these issues and to develop a set of international recommendations for refugee statistics.

In 2016, the UN Statistical Commission endorsed the proposal to establish an international Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) mandated to develop a set of international recommendations on refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs) statistics.<sup>2</sup>

As part of the first phase of its work, the expert group submitted two documents to the UN Statistical Commission at its 49<sup>th</sup> session in 2018: The *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS)* and the *Technical Report on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons*. Both documents were endorsed at the same occasion.<sup>3</sup> Following this event, the second phase of EGRIS' work, has encompassed the development of the *International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS)* - endorsed at the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the UNSC in March 2020<sup>4</sup> - and a Compilers' Manual for the implementation of the recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics.

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<sup>1</sup> These TORs were initially endorsed by the 51<sup>st</sup> UNSC in March 2020. In October 2021 they were updated to incorporate work on statelessness statistics

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Commission Report on the forty-seventh session (8-11 March 2016), decision 47/111

<sup>3</sup> Statistical Commission Report on the forty-ninth session (6-9 March 2018), decision 49/115

<sup>4</sup> Statistical Commission Report on the fifty-first session (3-6 March 2020), decision 51/116

The endorsement of the IRIS by the UNSC and the publication of the Compilers' Manual introduced EGRIS' third mandate, which focuses on the implementation of both sets of recommendations - on refugee and IDP statistics. This work is ongoing through the strengthening of national statistical capacity, providing technical support and monitoring the application of the international statistical recommendations on refugees and IDPs. These activities will enable the identification of best practices, knowledge dissemination, peer-to-peer learning and exchange as well as refinement of areas of the recommendations that require further work and development.

Moreover, building on experience from EGRIS's earlier work, the Group's third phase will also work on the development of International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS), which it intends to submit to the UNSC at its 54<sup>th</sup> session in March 2023. This work builds on earlier technical work initiated at an expert meeting, co-convened by UNHCR and UNFPA in December 2019, on the topic, as well as encouragement from countries at the 51<sup>st</sup> UN Statistical Commission. The group has therefore updated its name to accommodate this development; it will from now on be referred to as the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS).

## **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE EXPERT GROUP**

The Expert Group has as its main objective to improve national and international refugee, internally displaced persons and statelessness statistics through the development of international recommendations on how to produce, compile and disseminate statistics on these populations. Following the official endorsement of the recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics and the publication of the Compilers' Manual, EGRISS will continue to:

- Enable improved quality and availability of statistics on refugees and IDPs by disseminating and promoting the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) and the International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS) along with the associated Compilers' Manual;
- Support the improvement and availability of statelessness statistics through the development of International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS) to be submitted to the UNSC in March 2023;
- Advocate for the importance of harmonized statistical frameworks on refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons in order to support better informed decision making and response - both among national and international actors. This includes the production of disaggregated and comparable data which allow better targeting of populations in need on national and global level;
- Strengthen capacity of national statistical systems, relevant regional institutions and international organizations/UN agencies and facilitate and coordinate technical support as needed to enable wider implementation of the Recommendations and the use of the Compilers' Manual;

- Encourage the use of all data sources including population censuses, sample surveys and administrative sources in order to gather more comprehensive data on refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons;
- Collaborate closely with and invite international and regional organizations to support Member States upon their request in the production of official statistics in accordance with the International Recommendations produced;
- Support monitoring, regularly evaluate and capture lessons learned from implementation processes in both refugee and IDP contexts in order to continuously refine the recommendations on refugees and IDP statistics, including the refinement of the statistical measurement of progress towards Durable Solutions as well as the Compilers' Manual (online collection of tools and guidance), and to enable capacity sharing across contexts;
- Facilitate and strengthen reporting on the Global Compact on Refugees and SDG progress related to forcibly displaced persons, including disaggregated data collection by forced displacement;
- Support coordination, collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders including national, regional and international entities to enhance knowledge dissemination, improve capacity and identify best practices;
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning and exchange of experiences supported by regional institutions and international organizations in order to accelerate implementation of the IRIS and the IRRS;
- Function as a pool of technical experts to be drawn upon for technical support and capacity building needs;
- Identify and initiate fundraising activities that will support national level capacity building activities.

### **III. EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES**

The main outputs and outcomes will be:

- Increased availability of official statistics on forcibly displaced persons. This also includes increased availability of SDG indicators disaggregated by forced displacement;
- Improved coordination of efforts among the Expert Group members (and beyond as relevant) to implement the Recommendations;
- Strengthened capacity among members of the group and more widely around official statistics on forcibly displaced persons at national, regional and global levels;
- Better informed policy and decision making in the area of forced displacement as a result of increased availability and use of data and statistics on these population groups;
- Updated Compilers' Manual with latest guidance based on experiences in implementing the Recommendations, including best practices and lessons learned;

- UNSC endorsed International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS) in 2023 and a Technical Report on the progress of their development in 2022.

#### **IV. WAY OF WORKING**

The Expert Group will:

- Organize meetings (in person and virtual) when needs are identified;
- Technical subgroups will be established on specific issues when necessary;
- Organize meetings on the margins of relevant international or regional statistical conferences;
- Facilitate participation from developing countries and countries in transition in relevant events;
- Engage and coordinate with national, regional and international partners in determining priorities going forward.

#### **V. COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT GROUP**

The Expert Group remains open and inclusive in its approach to membership (current membership includes 45 countries and 25 regional and international organisations). The group also welcomes the collaboration with new, relevant partners from the statistical community. The individual participants are nominated in their personal capacities as recognized experts. The daily coordination of EGRISS will be managed by a Secretariat in collaboration with its Steering Committee and identified partners. The Secretariat will report back to the Steering Committee and identified partners on progress. Mechanisms will be established to ensure accountability in the implementation.

#### **VI. TIME FRAME**

EGRISS will continue to work and report back to the Commission on progress made concerning the scope of these Terms of Reference. For this third phase, a continuation of the Expert Group until the end of 2024 is envisioned to ensure effective execution of the work.