Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2022

Original: English

Statistical Commission
Fifty-fourth session
28 February–3 March 2023
Item 4 (e) of the provisional agenda*
Items for decision: refugee, internally displaced persons and statelessness statistics

Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2022/324 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics. The report provides information on the establishment of the Expert Group and the work undertaken by the Group to develop the international recommendations on statelessness statistics. More specifically, it includes an introduction to the Expert Group and its current mandate; a description of the background, development process, structure and content of those recommendations; and a short update of progress on other activities included in the Expert Group's programme of work. Key background documents are attached to the present report, including the international recommendations, which is presented to the Commission for decision.

The Statistical Commission is invited: (a) to welcome the continuation of the Expert Group's current mandate and the sharing of updates on achievements from its programme of work, particularly as it relates to efforts to support implementation of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* and the dissemination of outputs produced by members; (b) to endorse the international recommendations on statelessness statistics, which are submitted as a background document to the present report with implications for States Members of the United Nations; and (c) to support the implementation of the recommendations, including, if necessary, an update of the Group's current terms of reference.

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* E/CN.3/2023/1.

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I. Introduction

1.   In response to decision 46/104 of the Statistical Commission (see E/2015/24) in support of the proposal to organize an international conference on refugee statistics, the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat), Statistics Norway, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Eurostat and the Statistical Office of the European Free Trade Association organized the International Conference on Refugee Statistics, held in Antalya, Türkiye, in October 2015, to discuss challenges associated with the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons. During the conference, it was identified that a better understanding of the stocks and flows of refugees and asylum-seekers was needed, and participants agreed that, moving forward, refugee statistics should form an integral part of national statistical systems. At the forty-seventh session of the Commission, in March 2016, the outcomes of the conference were presented in a report by Statistics Norway, Turkstat, Eurostat and UNHCR (E/CN.3/2016/14). The suggestions made by the authors of the report included the establishment of a committee of experts on refugee statistics and the development of international recommendations on refugee statistics and a related compilers' manual.

2.   In 2016, in its decision 47/111 (see E/2016/24), the Statistical Commission endorsed the recommendation for the establishment of an expert group on refugee statistics, acknowledging the need to develop and improve standards concerning refugee statistics in national statistical systems through the development of international statistical recommendations. In addition, the Commission suggested that the expert group include internally displaced persons in its scope of work.

3.   On the basis of the decision of the Statistical Commission, a steering committee, consisting of Statistics Norway, Eurostat and UNHCR, was established to develop the terms of reference of the Expert Group, which were approved by the Bureau of the Commission in July 2016. In its initial terms of reference, the Expert Group was mandated to develop a set of recommendations on refugee statistics to serve as a reference guide for national and international statistics concerning refugees and asylum-seekers, a compilers' manual to provide operational guidance to practitioners on how to collect statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers and a technical report to outline a way forward for the development of internationally comparable statistics on internally displaced persons.

4.   In 2018, following a series of global and thematic meetings organized by the Expert Group to finalize the refugee statistical recommendations and the technical report, in its decision 49/115 (see E/2018/24), the Statistical Commission commended the work undertaken so far by the Expert Group and endorsed the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics*[1] and the *Technical Report on Statistics on Internally Displaced Persons*.[2] Moreover, the Commission supported the proposal to upgrade the Technical Report to a set of recommendations, expressed support for the development of a compilers' manual to provide hands-on guidance and a refined methodology in collecting statistics on forcibly displaced persons, and requested that both documents be submitted to the Commission at its fifty-first session, in 2020.

5.   In 2020, the Expert Group submitted the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* and the *Compilers' Manual on Displacement Statistics*[3] to the Statistical Commission. In its decision 51/116 (E/2020/24), the Commission endorsed the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced*

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[1] Available at https://egrisstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/International-Recommendations-on-Refugee-Statistics.pdf.

[2] Available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-GQ-18-003.

[3] Available at https://egrisstats.org/activities/compilers-manual.

Persons Statistics and welcomed the work being done on the *Compilers' Manual on Displacement Statistics*. The Commission also approved the revised terms of reference of the Expert Group,[4] which focused on the implementation of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics*, and agreed on the continuation of the Expert Group until 2025.

6.   Inspired by those achievements, stakeholders outside the Expert Group began to take a closer look at the need to develop and adopt common standards and definitions to improve the quality and quantity of statistics on stateless populations. In 2019, expert meetings, organized and jointly convened by UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), were held in Ankara and Bangkok to discuss the topic. Participants at the Bangkok meeting included experts from national statistical offices and line ministries, with 16 countries represented from Asia, Africa and Europe,[5] alongside staff from eight United Nations and international organizations. Participants agreed on the need for recommendations on statelessness statistics and work began on the development of methodological guidance on statelessness statistics.

7.   At its fifty-first session, the Statistical Commission was informed of that work through an intervention by Kenya, and, at its fifty-second session, the importance of improving statelessness data through the development of international statistical standards on statelessness was showcased in a side event. In November 2020, the work on statelessness statistics was incorporated into the programme of work of the Expert Group. Subsequently, in November 2021, the Bureau of the Statistical Commission formally updated the Group's terms of reference to include the development of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics and to adjust the name of the group to the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics.

8.   In 2022, during the fifty-third session of the Statistical Commission, the Expert Group subgroup on statelessness submitted the technical report of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics on statelessness statistics (E/CN.3/2022/10) for discussion. In its decision 53/109 (see E/2022/24), the Commission welcomed the report, commended the work undertaken so far and approved the overall structure of the draft international recommendations on statelessness statistics. In the same decision, it requested the Expert Group to further develop the recommendations by conducting the necessary consultations and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, in March 2023, and present the international recommendations on statelessness statistics in their entirety.

9.   As of November 2022, the Expert Group is comprised of 54 national statistical authorities and 34 regional and international organizations.[6] It also benefits from the guidance of the Expert Group Steering Committee members[7] and coordination support from a secretariat hosted by UNHCR. The Expert Group's collaborative working methodology ensures the inclusion of national perspectives in the curation

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[4] Available at https://egrisstats.org/about/terms-of-reference.

[5] Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

[6] The full list of members can be found at https://egrisstats.org/about/membership.

[7] The Expert Group Steering Committee is comprised of the following 12 members at the national, regional and international levels: the National Administrative Department of Statistics, Colombia; the Victims Unit, Colombia; the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office, Iraq; Statistics Norway; the African Union; Eurostat; the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre; the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service; UNHCR; the Statistics Division; the World Bank; and the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement.

of the Group's products and areas of work. Activities are thus undertaken by the broader membership, which is currently organized thematically around four technical subgroups:

(a) Promotion and dissemination: emphasis is placed on raising awareness of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* in order to further their implementation at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) Capacity development and technical support: the focus is on the implementation of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics*, with investment in capacity development and responses to support requests from countries;

(c) Methodology and guidance: work is centred on the development and improvement of available guidance, namely, the *Compilers' Manual on Displacement Statistics*, and investment in methodological research to address recurring challenges, with the aim of providing national statistical systems with practical guidance to further implementation of the recommendations;

(d) Statelessness statistics: efforts are made to develop the international recommendations on statelessness statistics.

10. Each subgroup is co-led by members of the Expert Group, who work collectively with subgroup members to develop an annual workplan and organize subgroup activities (see sect. III). Membership of the Expert Group is open to all national statistical offices and international organizations.

II. International recommendations on statelessness statistics

A. Background

11. Under the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, a stateless person is someone "who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law". Where a person lacks any nationality, he or she cannot enjoy the rights and protections offered to citizens, which limits access to health care, education, formal employment, participation in elections and travel. As a consequence of this precarious nationality status, stateless persons are often reluctant to engage in society and may fear persecution from national authorities. The person's lack of engagement with society has negative consequences not only for the stateless population in question, but also for society at large, as the person's exclusion may adversely affect efforts to improve economic and social development, thereby fuelling social tension and conflict.

12. The causes of statelessness are linked to the inability to prove, or the lack of proof for, a nationality status. As such, the causes are numerous and specific to contexts, since many interacting factors can result in a person becoming stateless. The causes of statelessness can manifest themselves in different ways, including through discriminatory laws on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, gender or language, which can exclude populations from the citizenry of a State. Issues concerning nationality laws, stemming either from gaps in law or conflicting laws between countries, can impact members of populations and prevent them from gaining access to their nationality. Moreover, State succession and border changes, if drafted in a restrictive manner, can leave people stateless or prevent populations from proving their nationality. In addition, loss or deprivation of nationality, if applied automatically without safeguards against statelessness, can result in people being left stateless. Lastly, administrative and financial barriers can prevent a person from

meeting the requirements to gain access to a nationality to which they are entitled. Although not exhaustive, the following paragraphs present the main contributory causes of statelessness that can, individually or in combination, cause statelessness.

13. Global estimates of the number of people impacted by statelessness are not accurate. As part of its mandate regarding statelessness, UNHCR is responsible for the collection and compilation of global statistics on stateless persons and persons with undetermined nationality status. It currently estimates that there are approximately 4.3 million stateless persons.[8] However, it is widely acknowledged that this figure grossly underestimates the number of stateless persons, because it relies on incomplete national data.[9] Global statistics on stateless populations are not harmonized, as the definitions, concepts and classifications employed to measure statelessness statistics reflect country-specific legislation, policies, contributory causes of statelessness and practices. The variations in the methodology, compilation and presentation at the national level further limit the comparability of statelessness statistics internationally. Furthermore, the lack of recognition of stateless persons and the subsequent underreporting of that group further contributes to the statelessness data gap. Consequently, nationally produced statistics differ tremendously in availability, quality and accuracy.

14. Data concerning stateless populations are often collected through administrative systems, which contain data on stateless persons because of their interactions with government authorities. The negative impact of statelessness on affected populations often culminates in their reluctance to declare themselves to government authorities, or even to identify themselves as stateless in anonymous data collection processes. That makes it challenging to include such populations in national data collection activities. It is anticipated that a large number of stateless or at-risk individuals remain statistically undetected because of the potential risk that they face in interacting with national authorities.

15. Those factors result in insufficient data on stateless populations and thereby prevent national authorities from accurately estimating the number of stateless persons and understanding their basic needs. The limited amount of data available prevents comparisons with other vulnerable populations, effective monitoring of adherence to international commitments and the development of the evidence-based policies that are necessary to improve the living conditions of stateless persons and others impacted by statelessness. This situation hampers the ability of national authorities and development partners to respond effectively through legal, political and operational channels. Robust evidence is also important for effectively communicating the number of impacted persons and highlighting potential solutions that could be used to resolve statelessness issues. Improving the state of knowledge on statelessness would illuminate their plight and foster the development of appropriate policy measures as a means of either resolving statelessness issues though the provision of citizenship, or preventing them.

16. Several international commitments, such as under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNHCR high-level segment on statelessness,[10] indicate the importance of internationally harmonized statistics on forcibly displaced and stateless persons. Those commitments in particular highlight the importance of

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[8] See UNHCR, *Global Trends 2021: Forced Displaced in 2021* (Copenhagen, June 2022). Available at: www.unhcr.org/62a9d1494/global-trends-report-2021. UNHCR includes both stateless persons and persons with undetermined nationality in its figures on statelessness.

[9] See UNHCR, "UNHCR statistical reporting on statelessness", UNHCR Statistics Technical Series, No. 2019/1. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/en-in/statistics/unhcrstats/5d9e182e7/unhcr-statistical-reporting-statelessness.html.

[10] See UNHCR, *UNHCR High-Level Segment on Statelessness: Results and Highlights* (May 2020). Available at www.refworld.org/docid/5ec3e91b4.html.

improved data for more accurately monitoring achievements of international commitments, ensuring that vulnerable populations are represented in national statistics systems and identifying durable solutions to statelessness at the national level.

17.   Although statelessness is considered in existing statistical recommendations, such as the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses[11] and the Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System,[12] it is not addressed comprehensively, as the recommendations mainly focus on a single data source, not on stateless populations. Existing recommendations also do not completely clarify the distinction between different stateless populations and how to appropriately capture data on each group. For example, the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses define stateless populations and provide guidance on how to capture data on stateless persons in a census but do not consider other sources or closely related population groups.

18.   Those factors highlight the fact that a complete set of statistical recommendations on statelessness is needed in order to ensure that data produced at the national level are coherent and consistent. Such recommendations would provide guidance on the production and dissemination of statistics on statelessness, in order to improve the quality of those statistics at the national level and strengthen consolidated data at the global level. The purpose of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics is also to enhance national responses to statelessness by providing stronger evidence in support of policies that identify solutions to improve the lives and well-being of stateless persons.

B.   Development of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics

19.   Since the formal inclusion of statelessness statistics in the mandate of the Expert Group in 2021, members of the subgroup on statelessness, consisting of 21 national statistical offices[13] and 13 regional and international organizations,[14] have worked collaboratively through online and in-person meetings to develop the international recommendations on statelessness statistics. By including various perspectives, recommendations have been developed that are applicable in numerous contexts and can be adjusted to reflect different national data collection priorities.

20.   The technical report of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics on statelessness statistics, which was submitted by the Expert Group subgroup on statelessness to the Statistical Commission for discussion at its fifty-third session, contained considerations of the current statelessness data gap and the factors contributing to the limited amount of data on stateless populations. It also included information on the development and structure

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[11] Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/ Principles_and_Recommendations/Population-and-Housing-Censuses/Series_M67rev3-E.pdf.

[12] Available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Principles_and_Recommendations/CRVS/M19Rev3-E.pdf.

[13] National statistical offices from the following States are members of the subgroup on statelessness: Cambodia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eswatini, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ukraine, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe and State of Palestine.

[14] The following regional and international organizations are members of the subgroup on statelessness: African Union, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Economic Commission for Africa, Eurostat, IOM, Statistics Division, UNFPA, UNHCR, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, World Bank and World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Centre.

of the existing recommendations, the key elements of the statelessness statistical framework at the point of submission and the challenges and possibilities associated with available data sources. In addition, the report represented an attempt to align recommendations with ongoing work at the regional and international levels to improve the inclusion of vulnerable populations in data collection activities and contained a description of the way forward to finalize the recommendations.

21. In its decision 53/109, the Statistical Commission welcomed the report of the Expert Group on statelessness statistics, commended the work undertaken so far, highlighted areas for improvement and provided guidance on how to finalize the recommendations, particularly in relation to the operationalization of the recommendations. The Commission requested the Expert Group to develop guidance on the integration of data from different sources and stressed the need to ensure that the recommended data sources enabled the measurement of the characteristics of stateless populations and to provide strong guidance on data quality, coordination and statistical capacity-building for harmonized reporting on statelessness statistics.

22. The Expert Group subgroup on statelessness discussed the guidance received from the Statistical Commission concerning the operationalization of the framework during an in-person meeting in June 2022 and agreed on how it should be addressed in the recommendations (see sect. C). The meeting fostered a collaborative environment and spurred on additional work to finalize the recommendations over the following months.[15] Those efforts involved contributions by specific members to different chapters or subsections, the arrangement of virtual group meetings to discuss key changes and the conduct of an internal review involving members of the subgroup on statelessness and the Steering Committee.

23. In October and November 2022, ahead of the formal submission of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics to the Statistical Commission, the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat collaborated with the Expert Group to facilitate a global consultation on the draft international recommendations. The purpose of the global consultation was to obtain the views of a wider group of stakeholders from around the world, including national statistical offices, civil society and regional and international bodies, concerning the coherence, scope, coverage and applicability of the recommendations. Following the global consultation, 38 feedback submissions were received, including from 31 countries, many of which had not been directly involved in the development of the recommendations, which demonstrated the value of the consultation process itself.[16] Overall, the feedback was positive. Participants

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[15] For a summary of the meeting, see Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, "EGRISS Statelessness Subgroup Meeting to finalize the international recommendations on statelessness statistics (IROSS): meeting report", July 2022. Available at: https://egrisstats.org/resource/iross-meeting-report.

[16] Feedback was received from the Statistical Committee of Armenia; the State Statistical Committee, Azerbaijan; the National Statistical Committee of Belarus; the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Statistics Canada; the National Institute of Statistics and Census of Costa Rica; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, Ecuador; the Federal Statistical Office, Germany; the Hungarian Central Statistical Office; the Central Statistics Office, Ireland; the Statistical Coordination Department, Israel; the Italian National Institute of Statistics; the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics; the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia; Statistics Lithuania; the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, Mexico; Statistics Netherlands; the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, Peru; Statistics Poland; Statistics Portugal; the Planning and Statistics Authority, Qatar; the Statistical Office of Serbia; the Singapore Department of Statistics; the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic; the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia; the National Statistics Institute, Spain; Statistics Sweden; the Swiss Federal Statistical Office; the State Statistics Service of Ukraine; the United States Census Bureau; the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam; civil society organizations; UNHCR; the Statistical Division; UNFPA and the World Bank.

welcomed the initiative to develop the recommendations and reflected on opportunities to improve data on statelessness at the national level. There were also specific suggestions on how to further strengthen the recommendations, with a particular focus on clarifications of the proposed statistical framework and the consolidation of the recommended variables and statistics. The Expert Group has worked on addressing the guidance received, in order to further increase the relevance of the recommendations in different national contexts and their added value to enhancing global statistics on statelessness.[17]

24.   The finalized draft of the recommendations, submitted at the fifty-fourth session of the Statistical Commission, benefited from the collaborative effort of Expert Group members and now reflects the feedback received during the global consultation. The international recommendations on statelessness statistics, which is included as a background paper to the present report, therefore reflects a concerted effort by a wide range of stakeholders to produce comprehensive, high-quality and coherent recommendations to improve national data on stateless populations and subsequently to improve international estimates on statelessness.

C.   Use of guidance received from the Statistical Commission to improve the international recommendations on statelessness statistics

25.   Guidance received from the Statistical Commission in response to the technical report of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics on statelessness statistics determined the approach used by the subgroup on statelessness to finalize the recommendations. In particular, the subgroup aimed to address the guidance received in paragraphs (c) to (e) of decision 53/109 of the Commission.

26.   The recommendations addressed the guidance by clearly outlining how the framework could be operationalized through the development of basic classificatory variables and guidance on their usage in different national contexts. Feedback from the Statistical Commission also informed the formulation of guidance on the use of each data source to produce statelessness statistics. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of a good administrative system as a tangible and, in many contexts, an already existing integral part of the national statistical system that could be further enhanced to improve the collection of statistics on stateless populations.

27.   In response to the need to increase the capabilities of different national statistical systems, the recommendations provide strong guidance on methods to enhance national coordination in order to ensure that relevant stakeholders are identified and included in the production of statelessness statistics. The capacity development aspect of the recommendations also builds on guidance on how coordination should be managed in the statistical production process and emphasizes the importance of including different stakeholders in capacity-building activities within a data ecosystem paradigm.

D.   Structure and content of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics

28.   The international recommendations on statelessness statistics are designed to improve national and international data on stateless populations through comprehensive recommendations on statelessness statistics. The recommendations

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[17] All the feedback received during the global consultation has been addressed and the responses documented. This information is available upon request.

provide operational guidance that enhance the harmonization of statelessness statistics through a consistent statistical framework and consistent definitions. This strengthens the evidence base used to inform policy and decision-making, facilitating the identification of durable solutions and the improvement of the lives and well-being of stateless persons.

29. The international recommendations on statelessness statistics follow a similar structure to the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* and are supposed to build on and complement both sets of international recommendations. Linkages between the international recommendations on statelessness statistics, the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* are identified throughout the document and are important because collectively they present a comprehensive approach on how to improve the quality of official statistics on refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons that are produced by national statistical systems. As a unit, the three sets of recommendations also provide a strong advocacy tool for improving the inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in national statistical systems as a way of fulfilling commitments, such as those under the 2030 Agenda.

30. The international recommendations on statelessness statistics are also aligned with other relevant statistical recommendations endorsed by the Statistical Commission, including the *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration*,[18] the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* and the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, in particular where different data sources are discussed. The international recommendations build on the recommendations previously endorsed by the Commission by offering a more comprehensive set of guidelines on how national statistical systems can produce better official statistics on statelessness. Alignment with those other instruments situates statelessness statistics within the wider body of statistical recommendations and increases the relevance of the recommendations in the production of statelessness data.

31. The international recommendations on statelessness statistics follows the following structure:

- Chapter 1 serves to introduce the challenges associated with collecting statelessness data and includes a brief discussion on the factors that contribute to the phenomenon of statelessness. There is further discussion on the statelessness data gap and the need for a complete set of international recommendations providing comprehensive guidance on how to collect data on stateless populations at the national, regional and international levels.

- Chapter 2 provides the legal framework and definition of stateless persons and a summary of the legal context within which the recommendations have been developed. It presents the legal definition of stateless persons and includes discussion on how the definitions vary in different contexts and the legal challenges concerning stateless populations. The chapter also outlines the causes contributing to statelessness and the impacts of statelessness on affected persons.

- Chapter 3 provides the statelessness statistical framework and serves to build on chapter 2 and to present statistical definitions of the various categories within the framework. It also includes a discussion on the statelessness statistical framework in relation to other international statistical frameworks, including

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[18] Available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesm/seriesm_58rev1e.pdf.

the statistical framework on migration, and a definition of the stock and flow of stateless populations.

- Chapter 4 provides statistics on statelessness that countries need to produce. It outlines the basic variables that are recommended for categorizing populations within the framework and producing stock and flow statistics on the relevant groups. The chapter also includes recommendations on statistics that are based on the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Sustainable Development Goals and that could be used to analyse the characteristics of stateless persons.

- Chapter 5 provides information on data sources and data integration, as well as recommendations on how different data sources, including censuses, surveys and other techniques, as well as administrative data and data produced by non-governmental actors, can be adapted to better capture statelessness statistics.

- Chapter 6 provides information on statistical coordination and the data ecosystem. It includes discussions on the importance of coordination at the national, regional and international levels to improve statelessness statistics. The chapter also includes recommendations on methods to build statelessness statistical capacity through activities targeted at national statistical officers and other stakeholders within the wider data ecosystem.

32. As implied in the above structure, each chapter of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics builds on the previous one, and taken together, they present comprehensive guidance on the topic. The legal framework informs the statistical framework, the statistical framework is complemented by classificatory variables and recommended statistics, and this is followed by technical recommendations on how the statistics may be produced using various data sources. The final chapter completes the picture by tackling the subject of statistical coordination at the national, regional and international levels. The complete set of recommendations are included as a background paper to the present report and are submitted to the Statistical Commission as an item for decision.

III. Updates on other achievements from the programme of work of the Expert Group

33. The Expert Group would like to take the opportunity to provide the Statistical Commission with updates on key achievements from its broader programme of work and to notify the Commission about future priorities.

A. Implementation of the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics and the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics

34. Following the endorsement of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* in 2018 and 2020, respectively, there has been significant momentum regarding the implementation of the recommendations. Since the endorsement of those *Recommendations* and the start of the period of the Expert Group's current terms of reference, 102 concrete examples of implementation have been identified at the country and institutional levels. Those include efforts to pursue the inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in national data collection activities and institutional

efforts to further that agenda.[19] The implementation examples demonstrate the progress made towards ensuring that no one is left behind and that the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved.

35.   The examples include a wide array of statistical systems, ranging from lower- to higher-income contexts, and demonstrate the ability of stakeholders to integrate the recommendations and the applicability of the guidance to both established and nascent statistical systems. The implementation examples include 9 countries that are adapting their census, 9 that are improving their usage of administrative data and 25 that are expanding the breadth of their surveys to further incorporate the recommendations into statistical systems through innovative solutions. The operationalization of the recommendations clearly demonstrates the importance of the guidance as it relates to statistical inclusion, as well as the extent to which it improves and increases the national statistical capacity for producing statistics on vulnerable groups.

B.   Highlights of activities of Expert Group subgroups

36.   The Expert Group has divided its programme of work into four areas of work: regional promotion and dissemination; capacity development; methodology and guidance; and statelessness statistics. Each area of work is coordinated through a dedicated technical subgroup that is led by, and includes a voluntary selection of, Expert Group members.[20] Work concerning the international recommendations on statelessness statistics is primarily done by the subgroup on statelessness, but the other technical subgroups are equally active.

37.   Activities by subgroup 1, which is jointly led by Eurostat, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the Economic Commission for Africa, focus on promoting and disseminating the recommendations. The activities are an important component of the Expert Group's efforts to engage with actors and raise awareness of the recommendations with a view to their further implementation. Significant outputs by subgroup 1 include the development of the Expert Group's website (https://egrisstats.org) and the official translations of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* into different languages (including Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish), in order to increase the accessibility of the recommendations. Expert Group members participate in and organize various events to increase awareness of the recommendations. The events provide an important platform for representatives of national statistical authorities to share experiences and good practices concerning the implementation of the recommendations in their national context. Activities have included side events at the Statistical Commission and regional statistical committees, sessions included in the programme of the United Nations World Data Forum, a dedicated conference on capacity development, contributions to regional and thematic expert group meetings (such as on migration

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[19] The 102 examples were identified using the monitoring system of the Expert Group's secretariat and include 53 examples from the period 2020–2021 (see Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, *EGRISS Annual Report 2020–2021: Improving Statistics on Forced Displacement and Statelessness during a Global Pandemic*, March 2022, available at https://egrisstats.org/wp-content/uploads/EGRISS_report_web.pdf). For more information on the implementation of the recommendations, see https://egrisstats.org/recommendations/examples-of-implementation.

[20] For a list of Expert Group members taking part in technical subgroups, see https://egrisstats.org/about/subgroups.

statistics) and participation in meetings of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.[21]

38.	Activities by subgroup 2, which is jointly led by the Institut National de la Statistique (the national statistical office of Côte d'Ivoire), the International Organization for Migration, the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service and UNHCR, have focused on capacity development and technical support. To support countries in their implementation of the recommendations, the subgroup has developed an e-learning course on the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* in collaboration with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. That introductory series is a core element of the Expert Group's capacity development efforts and is intended for introducing the content of those recommendations to practitioners working in national statistical systems and beyond. The course consists of five modules: "Why we should compile national statistics on refugee and internally displaced person populations"; "Refugee statistics: measuring stocks, flows and characteristics"; "Internally displaced persons statistics: measuring stocks, flows and characteristics"; "Data sources, analysis and dissemination"; and "statistical coordination". The series will be formally launched in early 2023 and made available through the learning management system of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.[22]

39.	In addition to online learning, Expert Group subgroup 2 members developed an approach to facilitate capacity-sharing through participatory workshops with regional intergovernmental bodies. The workshops involve assessments of capacity-building needs and analyses of readiness to implement the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* in different national contexts, while also providing a platform for peer-to-peer learning among countries. In the same vein, a series of webinars and workshops were held with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Central American Integration System on improving the quality and availability of statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons in line with the recommendations.[23] The seminars were intended for regional and national counterparts, including national statistical office representatives engaged in producing data on displacement and/or migration in those countries. The platforms facilitated peer-to-peer learning between participating countries and provided a space in which to develop a holistic understanding of implementation efforts and highlight challenges currently faced by national authorities and regional bodies. The workshops also allowed Expert Group members to identify concrete opportunities for how they could provide adequate and more sustainable support.

40.	The Expert Group aims to function as a technical hub of experts that can be called upon to provide technical support related to the implementation of the recommendations. In that context, the Group has received four formal requests for technical assistance, from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office and the Institute of Statistics of Djibouti.[24] The Group members involved in subgroup 2 respond to requests on behalf of the Group by providing practical guidance and hands-on

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[21] For more information on Expert Group events, see https://egrisstats.org/activities/events.

[22] For more information on e-learning, see https://egrisstats.org/activities/e-learning.

[23] Workshop series with IGAD and ECOWAS were organized in collaboration with the African Union Institute for Statistics and Statistics Sweden as part of wider collaboration, with a focus on the harmonization of migration statistics in Africa. For more information on the regional workshops, see https://egrisstats.org/activities/regional-workshops.

[24] For more information on the technical support provided by the Expert Group, see https://egrisstats.org/activities/technical-support.

technical support to requesting countries. Requests for technical support are open to all institutions of national statistical systems working with forced displacement data and methods or interested in strengthening their engagement in that regard.

41.   Activities by subgroup 3, which is jointly led by the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)[25] and the National Statistics Department of the Ministry of Planning of Somalia, focus on methodology and guidance development. A key part of those efforts is the revision and improvement of the Expert Group's *Compilers' Manual on Displacement Statistics*. An initial draft (a "living document") was shared with and welcomed by the Statistical Commission in March 2020. The ongoing revision process, led by subgroup 3, ensures that the practical guidance on the implementation of the recommendations to improve refugee and internally displaced persons statistics, in particular in lower-capacity national statistical systems, is more targeted. The revised *Compilers' Manual* is structured around use cases, whereby practical steps are elaborated to complement the international recommendations and guide practitioners on topics, such as how to include refugees and internally displaced persons in censuses and household surveys, and how to make better use of other data sources for official statistics. The revised publication is expected to be made available in 2023.

42.   The methodological work of subgroup 3 has also focused on specific, recurring challenges that countries and practitioners face. These include the development of standardized questions to more effectively identify population groups within the scope of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* that could be included in census forms and survey questionnaires. It also includes the further development of the statistical measure proposed in the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* to assess whether internally displaced persons have overcome key displacement-related vulnerabilities and can therefore exit the national stock of internally displaced persons. Methodological papers on both topics will soon be published and the results will be incorporated into the *Compilers' Manual* or contribute to future revisions of the recommendations, as necessary.

43.   In December 2022, the Expert Group members will gather in Addis Ababa at a meeting on the topic "Delivering on our mandate and looking to the future".[26] The purpose of the meeting is to take stock of progress and achievements regarding the Group's terms of reference for the period 2020–2024, at roughly the halfway point of that period. The meeting will provide a platform for countries to share experiences and lessons learned concerning the implementation of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics*, and to identify gaps and recurring challenges that are yet to be addressed. The meeting will be held at a critical moment, since the world is seeing forced displacement on an unprecedented scale. The aim is therefore to capitalize on this unique moment and identify how the Expert Group can strengthen its efforts to pursue sustainable improvements in official statistics on forced displacement and statelessness, with a view to successfully completing its current mandate by the end of 2024. At the meeting, participants will also draw on insights from members concerning questions about the continuation of the Expert Group

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[25] ESCWA held this role in 2020–2021 but stepped down as co-lead of subgroup 3 in early 2022.

[26] For more information on the meeting, see https://egrisstats.org/event/2022-meeting-of-the-expert-group-on-refugee-idp-and-statelessness-statistics-egriss-delivering-on-our-mandate-and-looking-to-the-future.

beyond 2024. A short read-out of the meeting's key takeaways is included as a background paper to the present report.

IV. The way forward for the international recommendations on statelessness statistics and activities of the Expert Group

44. Following the presentation of the international recommendations on statelessness statistics to the Statistical Commission, the Expert Group will continue to deliver on its mandate until the end of 2024, in accordance with its current terms of reference. The Group also commits to continue reporting to the Commission on its progress. Member States and organizations wishing to take part in the future work of the Expert Group are encouraged to join and participate.

45. Should the international recommendations on statelessness statistics be endorsed, the Expert Group will also explore integrating them, during the period 2023–2024, into other parts of its terms of reference in order to support their implementation in a similar way to the efforts made in respect of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics*.

46. Within the time frame of its current terms of reference and building on discussions that have already begun, the Expert Group will continue to engage in meaningful exchanges with its members concerning their interest in extending the Group's mandate beyond 2024.

V. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

47. The Statistical Commission is invited:

(a) **To welcome the continuation of the Expert Group's current mandate and the sharing of updates on achievements from its programme of work, particularly as it relates to efforts to support implementation of the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* and the *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics* and the dissemination of outputs produced by members;**

(b) **To endorse the international recommendations on statelessness statistics, which are submitted as a background document to the present report with implications for States Members of the United Nations;**

(c) **To support the implementation of the recommendations, including, if necessary, an update of the Group's current terms of reference.**

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