

# International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics

by the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics  
(EGRIS)

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# Current environment

- Rapid increase of numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in recent years.
- Number of persons displaced by conflict, violence, persecution or human rights violations almost doubled from 1997 to 2016.
- Forced displacement has gained prominence on the international agenda.
- Migration statistics vs asylum and refugee statistics. Need for a reform of the definitional landscape.
- Capacity constraints and weak country ownership of the national statistical systems.
- Lack of collaboration between development and humanitarian actors in this area.
- Actors facing challenges with collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs.

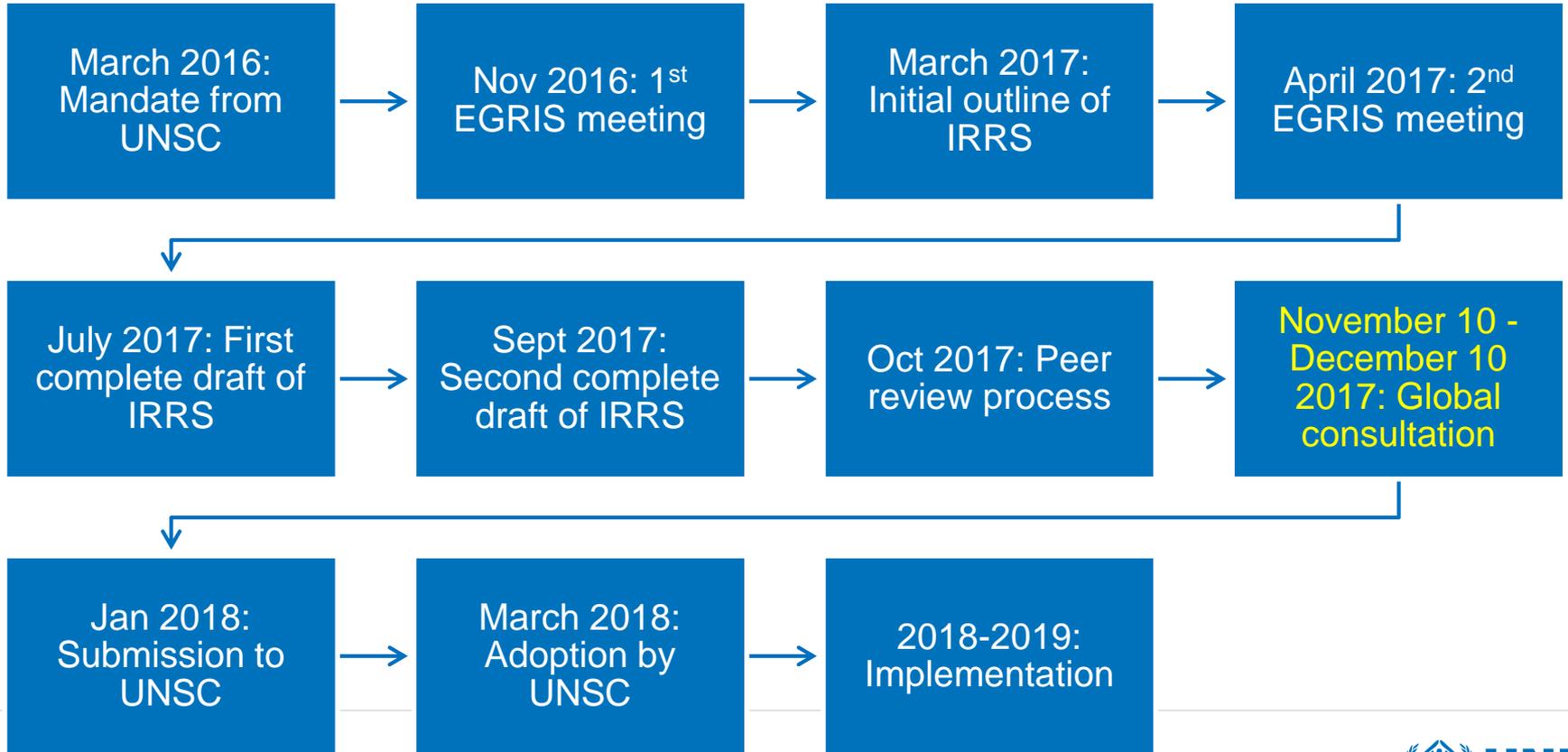
# Establishment of EGRIS (1)

- Report by Statistics Norway and UNHCR presented to UN Statistical Commission in 2015 outlining challenges with collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs.
- Asked by Commission to organize international conference on refugee statistics
- October 2015: conference held in Antalya
- Report of conference presented to Commission in 2016
- Proposal from TurkStat and Statistics Norway, with support from UNHCR, to set up Expert Group on Refugee Statistics

# Establishment of EGRIS (2)

- March 2016 the group was mandated by the UN Statistical Commission to develop:
  - **International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics**  
Reference guide for national and international work concerning statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers
  - **Technical Report on IDP Statistics**  
Report outlining a way forward for development of comparable international standards for statistics on IDPs
  - **Refugee Statistics Compilers' Manual (For consideration in March 2019 session)**  
Operational instructions on how to collect statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers
- Members: approx. **40 national statistical authorities and 15 regional/ international organizations**

# EGRIS/IRRS: timeline



# Why is this work important?

Robust statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs are:

- critical for informed decision-making, which ultimately impacts on the lives of vulnerable populations and sustainable development (SDG 10)
  - necessary to better understand the phenomenon of forced displacement, to analyse its impacts, to measure changes over time and to provide an adequate response
  - needed to increase accountability, support policy debate and strengthen evidence based advocacy
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- Considers refugees' distinctive needs for international protection and the international legal framework which clearly articulates and defines those persons in need of international protection.
  - Effort to bridge the gap between development and humanitarian sectors and build strong partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17).
  - Aim to build and strengthen national statistical systems and country ownership.

# Challenges in the production of refugee statistics today

- Lack of comparability between statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers produced by different countries, across displacement situations within countries and to host populations.
- Lack of international standards.
- Little understanding of concepts of flows and stocks of refugees and asylum-seekers
- Limited efficient and integrated information systems that can serve both administrative and official statistics needs.
- Gaps in official statistics, including a lack of socio-economic data on refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Extreme sensitivity of refugee and asylum-seeker data and the importance of confidentiality and data protection in refugee statistics.
- Significant variation across countries in terms of the size of forcibly displaced populations, the capacities of the national statistical and administrative systems, and national policy priorities.

# Draft recommendations (1)

1. Statistical definitions of refugees, (not a sub set of migrants) and related populations and relevant stock and flow measures
2. Development of concepts to describe:
  - the population in need of international protection,
  - persons with a refugee background, and
  - persons returning from abroad after seeking international protection
3. Definition of minimum set of classificatory variables, basic statistics and key indicators to be collected and reported on the different population.
4. Integration of survey and census data with administrative data and how record linkage may be carried out using both country administrative data and register data from UNHCR and UNRWA.

# Draft recommendations (2)

5. List of recommended indicators for measuring wellbeing and integration, linked with the CRRF and the SDG indicators.
6. Coordination across the system of national statistics spanning different statistical agencies is essential.
7. Improved coordination in the international system and establishment of an appropriate governance body to ensure the harmonization of concepts, definitions and reports on refugee statistics (Member States included in these deliberations).
8. Legal framework in place at the national level.
9. Engage ministers and senior politicians at the international and regional levels to elevate refugee statistics as a priority

# Way forward – to be presented by JIPS colleague Dag





Thank you!

**Link to the global consultation to be  
shared on 10 November  
Have your say!**