

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

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Item III (a) of the Provisional
Agenda

**STEERING GROUP ON MIGRATION STATISTICS
PROGRESS REPORT**

Prepared by the Steering Group

*This report presents a summary of the work carried out in 2018-2021 by the Steering Group on Migration Statistics, and a proposal to renew its mandate for the next five years. The updated terms of reference for the Steering Group are presented in the addendum to this document. **The Bureau review the progress report and approved the updated terms of reference of the Steering Group.***

I. BACKGROUND

1. In February 2018, the CES Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Steering Group on Migration Statistics for the period 2018-2021. The objective of the Steering Group was to provide direction to the CES work on migration statistics, advance methodological development and facilitate implementation of methodological guidance on migration statistics. The present note provides a summary of the work carried out by the Group since then, and a proposal to renew its mandate for the next five years. The updated terms of reference for the Steering Group for 2022-2027 are presented in Add.1.

II. WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE STEERING GROUP

A. Supervision and guidance of the work of the task forces

2. Since 2018, the Steering Group has guided the work of four task forces on the following topics:

- a) Data integration for measuring migration;
- b) Measuring labour mobility;
- c) Use of longitudinal data for migration statistics;
- d) Use of new data sources for measuring migration and cross-border mobility.

3. The Task Force on Data Integration finalized the “[Guidance on data integration for measuring migration](#)”, which was endorsed by the CES in June 2018 and [published in 2019](#). The guidance provides an overview of the ways that data integration is used to produce migration statistics, based on a survey of migration data providers in over 50 countries, and on 13 case studies. The publication also proposes principles of best practice for integrating data to measure migration.

4. The Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility prepared the publication “[Measuring international labour mobility](#)”, which was endorsed by the CES in June 2018 and [published in 2019](#). The publication provides an overview of approaches to measuring international labour mobility. Four case studies, from Israel, Italy, Mexico and Norway, provide more detail on labour mobility in specific national contexts. The publication also includes recommendations of best practices for measuring international labour mobility.

5. The Task Force on Use of Longitudinal Data for Migration Statistics prepared the “[Guidance on the use of longitudinal data for migration statistics](#)”, which was endorsed by the CES in 2020 and [published in 2021](#). The guidance aims to help countries measure what happens to migrants after they move, including whether and how their characteristics change after they arrive at their destination, and how they integrate into and impact on societies. The guidance consolidates the best available expertise on how to develop data sources and how to compile and disseminate key indicators and findings. The publication also contains examples of the creation and use of longitudinal data sets from 11 countries participating in CES.

6. The Task Force on the Use of New Data Sources for Measuring Migration and Cross-border Mobility was established in January 2020, with the objective to develop guidance for national statistical offices on the use of new data sources for this purpose. The report of the Task Force (document ECE/CES/BUR/2022/FEB/18, “Use of new data sources for measuring international migration”) and the [Database on Innovations in Migration Statistics – DIMiS](#) are presented to the CES Bureau at the current meeting under agenda item V(c).

B. Meetings of the Group of Experts on Migration Statistics

7. The Steering Group acted as an organizing committee of the annual meetings of the Group of Experts on Migration Statistics. In particular, the Steering Group established the provisional agenda for the meetings, contributed papers and presentations, and identified possible authors on selected topics.

8. In 2020 and 2021, as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the meetings were held online instead of in-person meetings. In this context, the Steering Group provided advice to the Secretariat on the best way to implement the new format considering the circumstances.

C. Response to the Covid-19 pandemic in official migration statistics

9. In the course of 2020, when it was clear that the Covid pandemic was having a significant impact on the operations of national statistical offices (NSOs), including data collection and statistical production, the UNECE Secretariat created a wiki site on [Covid-19 and official statistics](#). The objective of the wiki is to collect and share information from NSOs about their response to Covid-19, focusing on activities and practices that could be potentially useful for other countries.

10. The Steering Group advised on and provided information for the [page on the collection, processing and reporting of data on migration](#). The page includes information from 15 countries about the situation at NSOs, special measures taken with regard to data collection and reporting, and implications of the pandemic on the measurement of migration.

11. Before the 2020 and 2021 expert meetings, a survey was conducted among NSOs of UNECE countries on the measurement of migration and remittances in the pandemic. The survey included questions on adaptation of survey taking to the physical contact restrictions,

on response to possible special requests from government agencies, and on coverage by surveys of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. The main results of the surveys were presented at the meetings.

D. Capacity development

12. The Steering Group has been advising the Secretariat on capacity development activities. In connection with the annual expert meetings, UNECE organized back-to-back workshops on migration and remittances statistics with focus on countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, with financial support from the World Bank ECASTAT project.

13. The workshops provided an opportunity to review the work on the preparation and implementation of the [Harmonized survey module for migration and remittances](#). The harmonized module and a report on its use were presented at the 2018 workshop. At the 2021 workshop, a [modified version of the harmonized module](#) was presented, with changes addressing the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.

III. FUTURE WORK

14. To respond to the policy demand for better migration statistics, particularly in light of the pandemic and its consequences, continued action is needed at the international level, including methodological work, exchange of experience and capacity development. Guidance by experts from different national and international statistical organizations would ensure correspondence of these activities with the evolving needs and priorities of member countries in this area. The Steering Group on Migration Statistics is well placed to carry out this function and it is therefore proposed to renew its mandate. The updated terms of reference for the Steering Group for 2022-2027 are presented in document ECE/CES/BUR/2022/FEB/4/Add.1

15. During the occasion of the October 2021 meeting of the Group of Experts on Migration Statistics, participants gave feedback on areas of migration statistics in which they see a need for further international work. The areas indicated by most participants included emigration and undocumented migration. In addition, a need for improving timeliness and granularity of migration data has been identified. The Steering Group on Migration Statistics is considering developing concrete proposals for further work in these areas.

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