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## Commission on Population and Development

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### Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

## Programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2018: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report contains a review of progress made by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in implementing its programme of work in the field of population during 2018. It covers the activities of the Division on the analysis of global trends in fertility, mortality, migration, urbanization and population ageing; preparation of global population estimates and projections; the monitoring of population policies; the analysis of interrelations between population and sustainable development; the dissemination of population data and information; technical cooperation with and capacity development provided to Member States; and the support given to intergovernmental processes through the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents, the organization of expert group meetings and the monitoring of internationally agreed development goals.

The objective of the programme of work in the field of population is to strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and to integrate the population dimension into the international development agenda. The Commission on Population and Development acts as the governing body for the Population Division and thus provides guidance on the work programme as part of its annual session.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

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\* E/CN.9/2019/1.



## I. Introduction

1. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible for the implementation of the programme of work on population of the United Nations Secretariat. The programme of work is guided by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,<sup>1</sup> by the outcome of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly on key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action (resolution S-21/2, annex) and by the decision of the General Assembly to extend the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond the original 20-year time horizon in 2014 (see resolution 65/234). The outcomes of other relevant international conferences and summits, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (resolution 68/4), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), are also taken into account. In addition, the work of the Population Division is guided by the resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Population and Development, in particular its resolution 2004/1 on the work programme in the field of population (E/2004/25, chap. I, sect. B), and by other relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

2. As described in the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018–2019, the objective of the work programme on population is to strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and to integrate the population dimension into the international development agenda (see A/71/6/Rev.1, programme 7, subprogramme 5). The Commission on Population and Development provides intergovernmental guidance and oversight.

3. The expected accomplishments for the subprogramme on population, according to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 9), subprogramme 5), are as follows:

(a) Increased attention given to new and emerging population issues by the international community and increased knowledge and understanding of the interactions between population and development, including the gender dimensions of demographic phenomena;

(b) Effectively facilitate reviews by Member States and other stakeholders of progress made in the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and of relevant instruments of the United Nations development agenda, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

4. The Population Division collaborates closely with the agencies, funds and programmes and other bodies of the United Nations system in implementing its work programme and in supporting the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development. United Nations offices and missions, national Governments, academic researchers, media representatives and the public at large regularly consult with the Division to obtain timely and pertinent data, information and analyses on population patterns and trends and their connection with development issues. The importance of the work programme on population for the United Nations system as a whole has been widely recognized. For example, the Division's global

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

population projections and its estimates of numbers of international migrants were featured in the report of the Secretary-General of 2018 on the work of the Organization (A/73/1).

5. In 2018, the Population Division underwent internal restructuring. Organizational changes were made following an internal analysis of outputs and work streams. The changes were informed by consultations with all staff members and by the recommendations of an external management consultant, who conducted an evaluation of the Division's work programme for 2016–2017. The primary goal of the restructuring was to improve the quality and relevance of the Division's outputs and their utility to Member States, including for intergovernmental processes on population in the context of sustainable development. One specific objective was to improve the dissemination and accessibility of the Division's data, publications and services for the benefit of Member States, the United Nations system, academia, civil society and the media, while delivering all outputs of the work programme for the 2018–2019 biennium without interruption.

6. Following the restructuring, the Director, two branch chiefs and two units comprise the Division's front office. The Programme Management Unit prepares and monitors the programme plan and budget, reports on staff performance, oversees personnel matters and coordinates responses to internal and external requests. The Unit also coordinates the Division's participation in departmental or system-wide activities. The Publications, Outreach and Support Unit manages the Division's publications programme, develops and implements strategies for dissemination and outreach and supports the planning and coordination of intergovernmental processes, including for the Commission on Population and Development. The Unit also takes the lead or participates in selected substantive projects, supports the organization of expert group meetings and provides administrative support to all parts of the Division.

7. Most of the substantive work of the Division is now concentrated in four sections housed in two branches, as opposed to six sections in two branches previously. All sections organize expert group meetings in their areas of expertise, assist in the substantive servicing of intergovernmental meetings and participate in inter-agency coordination activities.

8. The Population Policies and Development Branch comprises the Fertility and Population Ageing Section and the Migration and Urbanization Section. The Fertility and Population Ageing Section prepares or contributes to the preparation of analytical reports and parliamentary documents on fertility, nuptiality, family planning, population ageing and intergenerational support. The Section also reviews and gathers information on government policies related to fertility, family planning and population ageing. The Migration and Urbanization Section monitors progress in meeting internationally agreed goals and objectives on migration and urbanization, analyses emerging trends in migration and urbanization and assesses their demographic and development impacts. The Section also reviews and compiles data on government policies related to migration and urbanization.

9. The Population Trends and Analysis Branch comprises the Demographic Analysis Section, the Population Estimates and Projections Section and the Demographic Methods and Data Systems Unit. The Demographic Analysis Section prepares estimates and develops and implements demographic methods for the analysis of fertility, mortality and migration, including for the estimation of infant, child and adult mortality using direct or indirect methods. The Population Estimates and Projections Section prepares population estimates and projections for all countries and areas of the world, depicting observed or anticipated trends in the global population from 1950 to 2100. The Section also prepares estimates and projections of urban, rural and city populations.

10. The Demographic Methods and Data Systems Unit builds and maintains the Division's information technology infrastructure, coordinating the technical development, implementation and maintenance of the Division's major databases, preparing data for various clients and data portals, including UNdata, and supporting the dissemination of data sets and other outputs of the Division.

11. The present report provides a summary of the activities and outputs of the Population Division during 2018, which included the provision of support to intergovernmental processes, the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents, the monitoring of internationally agreed development goals, the dissemination of population data and information and technical cooperation. A list of activities and outputs completed in 2018 is presented in the annex. Reference is also made in the report to work in progress in 2018 that is expected to result in one or more completed outputs in 2019.

## II. Fertility and family planning

12. The Population Division published a comprehensive data set on family planning indicators, *World Contraceptive Use 2018*,<sup>2</sup> which includes up-to-date, survey-based estimates of contraceptive prevalence and of unmet need for family planning among women of reproductive age (from 15 to 49 years) who are married or in a union.

13. The Division used the information compiled in *World Contraceptive Use 2018* to generate a comprehensive set of annual, model-based estimates and projections of family planning indicators for the period from 1970 to 2030, published as *Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2018*.<sup>3</sup> These two data products provide information relevant for the national, regional and global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1 (Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods) (see [E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1](#), annex IV).

14. In 2018, the Division published three technical papers on family planning. The first presents an analysis of trends in sexual activity by marital status and age and of the associations between these demographic characteristics and contraceptive use, using data from 220 demographic and health surveys and 62 multiple-indicator cluster surveys, with information for 94 countries in total.<sup>4</sup> The second paper provides a comprehensive inventory of nationally representative household surveys that can be used to estimate levels and trends of contraceptive use among women of reproductive age. It summarizes the sources of available data, populations covered in the surveys, resources provided and contraceptive methods examined. Facilitating access to such data supports the interpretation and analysis of family planning indicators and allows for well-documented comparisons of such indicators across data sources and countries and over time.<sup>5</sup> The third paper presents a method for producing annual estimates and projections of key family planning indicators for all countries and areas of the world based on observations of contraceptive use and unmet need for family planning from nationally representative surveys. The method presented in the paper provides results needed for the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1 (Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/contraception/wcu2018.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/contraception/wcu2018.shtml).

<sup>3</sup> [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/family-planning/cp\\_model.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/family-planning/cp_model.shtml).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/technical/TP2017-11.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/technical/TP2017-12.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/technical/TP2018-2.pdf>.

15. The Division began work on the estimation and analysis of patterns and trends in Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.2 (Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group). The findings will be presented in a *Population Facts* brief focusing on early adolescent fertility, which is currently under preparation. The brief will provide an overview of what is known about levels of fertility among girls aged 10–14 years and will also examine also determinants of early adolescent fertility.

16. The Division published the *World Fertility Report 2015*, accompanied by *World Fertility Highlights 2015*, which presents the key findings of the full report. The Population Division also prepared an advance draft of the *World Fertility Report 2017*, which will provide an overview of global levels and trends in adolescent fertility by development group and by geographic region. In addition, the Population Division prepared a first draft of the *World Fertility Report 2019*, which will present a detailed analysis of new data on early adolescent fertility in relation to Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.2.

### III. Health and mortality

17. The Population Division worked on *World Mortality Report 2017 Highlights* which presents selected results from the *2017 Revision of World Population Prospects* and provides a concise global overview of levels and trends in mortality for the period from 1970 to 2015 by development group and by geographic region. In addition, the Division worked on a *Population Facts* brief on maternal mortality, outlining the challenges to achieving Sustainable Development Goal target 3.1 (By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births). It will be demonstrated in the brief that the target is unlikely to be achieved for Africa without an unprecedented effort.

18. The Division published a technical paper on the historical development of civil registration data systems in Europe, from early initiatives at the parish level in fourteenth century France and Italy to the more recent development of national population registers in the Scandinavian countries.<sup>7</sup> The various contributions of complete and comprehensive civil registration data are presented through a review of contemporary examples. The importance is stressed of a long-term commitment by Governments to the development of well-functioning civil registration systems.

19. In addition, the Division advanced its work on two other technical papers: the first on evaluation of the completeness of death registration for developing countries using an intercensal cohort survival approach, and the second on using sibling survival data to estimate adult and maternal mortality, with a step-by-step guide on how to process public-use micro-datasets from household surveys (e.g., the Demographic and Health Surveys) to estimate adult mortality in general and maternal mortality in particular from information about the survival of adult siblings.

### IV. International migration

20. In 2018, the Population Division completed an annual update of the Global Migration Database, bringing together all available information on the numbers of international migrants (foreign-born or with foreign nationality) residing in a country or area, according to the national statistical office or other official source. The Division is using the updated Database to develop a new set of estimates of numbers, or the stock, of international migrants, classified by age group and sex and by

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/technical/TP2018-1.pdf>.

countries of origin and destination, for 232 countries or areas of the world since 1990. The estimates will constitute the *2019 Revision* of the *International Migrant Stock* data set.

21. The Division also worked on preparing a technical paper describing the relationship between international migration and population ageing. When released in 2019, the paper will include a detailed literature review and an analysis of the hypothetical impact of alternative future levels of migration on the projected age structure of the population in selected countries.

22. The Division contributed to the preparation of the 2019 edition of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) flagship *Report on the World Social Situation* by conducting the literature review and preparing an outline for a chapter on linkages between international migration and inequalities both within and between countries. The chapter will provide a concise summary of the evidence available on such linkages.

23. The Division organized the sixteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration in New York on 15 and 16 February 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to contribute to the preparation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by (a) taking stock of existing data and research on relevant topics, (b) highlighting gaps in the evidence base and (c) assessing priorities for future work on data, research and training to support implementation of the Global Compact, in particular objective 1 on collecting and utilizing data as a basis for evidence-based policies. The meeting also allowed participants to present and coordinate their activities on migration and to assess progress made in monitoring migration-related Goals and targets. The discussions and key conclusions are summarized in a report on the meeting.<sup>8</sup>

24. The Population Division contributed to two side events organized in conjunction with the sixteenth Coordination Meeting: a presentation and discussion of a book on the demography of forced migration and a training session on the “Compendium of agreed language on international migration”, accessible through the website of the Population Division.

25. The Division supported the work of the Global Migration Group and participated in several of its meetings, including a retreat that took place from 12 to 14 February 2018 in the New York area. The Global Migration Group was replaced in October 2018 by the United Nations Network on Migration. The Network is tasked with ensuring effective and coherent system-wide support to Member States for implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact. The Population Division contributed to drafting terms of reference and participated in a “framing meeting” held on 14 and 15 October 2018 in Geneva to launch the Network. DESA has been designated to serve on the Network’s Executive Committee.

26. With the Statistics Division, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Population Division helped to organize the International Forum on Migration Statistics, held in Paris on 15 and 16 January 2018. The Forum featured over 30 distinguished speakers and welcomed more than 500 participants.

27. Also with the Statistics Division, the Population Division organized a high-level panel on strengthening migration statistics, which took place on 5 March 2018 in the margins of the forty-eighth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission. Participants considered how national statistical systems could respond to demands for

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/16/documents/report\\_16thcm.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/16/documents/report_16thcm.pdf).

migration statistics to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

28. The Population Division moderated a session at the Asia-Pacific Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development, held in Kuala Lumpur from 8 to 10 May 2018. It also contributed a presentation on links between migration and development to an expert meeting organized by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, held on 23 October 2018 in Vienna.

29. The Division participated in several events organized by the Global Forum on Migration and Development. The Division gave a presentation at a Global Forum workshop on “Children and youth on the move” co-organized by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and held in Agadir, Morocco on 21 and 22 June 2018. It gave a presentation on “The Global Compact on Migration and the Global Forum on Migration and Development: potential synergies” at an expert meeting organized by the World Bank and held in Washington, D.C., on 8 November 2018. Lastly, from 5 to 7 December 2018, the Division facilitated a session at the eleventh summit meeting of the Global Forum in Marrakech, Morocco.

30. The Division also participated in a panel on regional implementation of the Global Compact organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union on 7 December 2018 in Rabat, at which it gave a presentation on “Regional challenges and implementation of the Global Compact on Migration”. The Division participated in the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, held on 10 and 11 December 2018 in Marrakech. With the Statistics Division, IOM and OECD, the Population Division organized a side event one day before the Marrakech conference, on “A global programme to improve the collection and use of migration data”.

31. The Division responded to numerous requests for briefing notes, talking points and statements on migration and related issues from senior officials of the United Nations. The Division provided those materials in a timely manner while maintaining a high standard of quality.

## V. Global population estimates and projections

32. The preparation of the official United Nations population estimates and projections for all countries and areas of the world is a key part of the work on population. Such data are used extensively within the United Nations system and by the general public and are distributed as part of widely used data repositories accessible via the Internet, including the World Development Indicators database of the World Bank; the main data portal of the United Nations, UNdata, maintained by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; and FAOSTAT, a statistical database maintained by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Several commercial database services also redistribute data from the Population Division, under agreements with the Department of Global Communications.

33. During 2018, the Population Division worked to prepare *World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision*, which is scheduled for release by June 2019. The *2019 Revision* will utilize the latest information available on population size, fertility, mortality and international migration and will offer estimates and projections of various population parameters for 237 countries or areas, geographic regions and other groupings of countries or areas. In 2018, the Division continued its work on revising and updating the software used to generate the data presented in *World Population Prospects*. Lastly, work continued on the development of a database

containing all available statistics relevant for the preparation of national population estimates and projections, including enhanced information about underlying data sources.

## VI. Population policies

34. In 2018, the Population Division published an infochart entitled *Policies on Population Ageing 2017*,<sup>9</sup> which highlights current policies on population ageing. The Division also published a *Population Facts* brief on sexual and reproductive health policies for adolescents.<sup>10</sup> Both publications were based primarily on data from the 2015 revision of the *World Population Policies Database*.

35. Drawing on data published in the 2015 revision of the *World Population Policies Database*, the Division released *World Population Policies 2015 Highlights*<sup>11</sup> and the full report, entitled *World Population Policies 2015*.<sup>12</sup> Those publications document changes in Government views and policies with respect to population size and growth, age structure, fertility, reproductive health and family planning, health and mortality, spatial distribution and internal migration and international migration within the context of demographic, social and economic change.

36. In 2018, the Division conducted the twelfth United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development.<sup>13</sup> The Inquiry, mandated by the General Assembly in 1962, is a long-standing survey used to gather information from Governments on selected population policies and programmes, for the purpose of monitoring progress toward the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. The twelfth Inquiry consists of multiple-choice questions organized in three thematic modules: module I on population ageing and urbanization; module II on fertility, family planning and reproductive health; and module III on international migration. Modules I and II were implemented with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Module II will provide critical information for the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.6.2 (Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education) for which UNFPA is the custodian agency and DESA is a partner agency. Module III, which will serve as the primary data source for the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.7.2 (Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people) (see para. 57), was implemented in collaboration with IOM and with support from OECD. DESA and IOM are the custodian agencies for indicator 10.7.2, and OECD is a partner agency.

37. During 2018, the Division made considerable progress in finalizing the Global Abortion Policies Database. The Database serves as an interactive, open-access repository of current abortion laws and policies that allows users to download data and supporting legal and policy documents for selected countries or regions of the

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/Infochart\\_ageing\\_policies\\_14Nov2018.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/Infochart_ageing_policies_14Nov2018.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts\\_2018-2.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts_2018-2.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2015/WPP2015\\_Highlights.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2015/WPP2015_Highlights.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2015/WPP2015\\_Report.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/WPP2015/WPP2015_Report.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> <https://esa.un.org/PopPolicy/Inquiry.aspx>.

world. The Division is also finalizing a wallchart and a report on global abortion policies.

38. The Division completed a draft technical paper on methods for measuring indicator 10.7.2. The paper presents a conceptual framework with six domains and the corresponding proxy measures being used for the global monitoring of progress on indicator 10.7.2. The paper also describes the methodology for data collection using the migration module of the United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development.

## VII. Urbanization and spatial distribution

39. In May 2018, the Population Division launched the *2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects*, containing the latest estimates of the urban and rural populations of 233 countries or areas from 1950 to 2018, with projected trends to 2050, as well as estimates of population size from 1950 to 2018, with projections to 2035, for nearly 1,900 urban settlements with 300,000 inhabitants or more in 2018. Outputs presenting the results of the *2018 Revision* include an interactive online database accessible through the Division's website,<sup>14</sup> a methodology report<sup>15</sup> providing an overview of the data and methods used in the latest revision, a data booklet with information on the world's cities of one million inhabitants or more in 2018,<sup>16</sup> and a *Population Facts* brief on the speed of urbanization around the world.<sup>17</sup>

40. In preparing the *2018 Revision*, particular attention was paid to the detailed documentation of data sources and definitions used at the country level, as well as for individual cities and urban agglomerations. The full metadata are accessible on the Population Division's website, which also provides useful figures and maps to illustrate the main results. The highlights and analytical report of the *2018 Revision* are scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2019.

41. The *2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects* confirmed that more people live in urban than in rural areas, with 55 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2018. In 1950, 30 per cent of the global population was urban, and it is expected that, by 2050, 68 per cent of the world's population will be living in urban areas. The rural population of the world has grown slowly since 1950 and is expected to reach its peak in just a few years; it is now close to 3.4 billion and is expected to rise slightly and then decline to around 3.1 billion in 2050.

42. Close to half of the world's urban dwellers reside in relatively small settlements with fewer than half a million inhabitants, while around one in eight live in the 33 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants. By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities, most of them in developing regions.

43. In addition to launching the latest edition of *World Urbanization Prospects*, in 2018 the Population Division issued a beta release of an interactive database that can be used to archive and display the geographic coordinates of city boundaries according to various definitions (for example, city proper, urban agglomeration, metropolitan area) and the size of the associated populations as enumerated in

<sup>14</sup> <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/index.htm>. Also includes datasets in Excel format, data sources, maps and country profiles.

<sup>15</sup> <https://population.un.org/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2018-Methodology.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/urbanization/the\\_worlds\\_cities\\_in\\_2018\\_data\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/urbanization/the_worlds_cities_in_2018_data_booklet.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts\\_2018-1.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts_2018-1.pdf).

national censuses.<sup>18</sup> In the selection of countries and censuses for the beta release, the following were taken into consideration: the availability of publicly accessible boundary files linking geographic information to relevant census data; the number of cities (in a given country) with 100,000 inhabitants or more; and regional diversity.

## VIII. Population ageing, household composition and living arrangements

44. In 2018 the Population Division updated the Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons,<sup>19</sup> which presents a compilation of indicators on the household composition and living arrangements of persons aged 60 or over, estimated using both tabulated data and household roster microdata from censuses and household surveys. Indicators describe the proportion of older persons living alone, with a spouse, with their children and in various configurations of intergenerational households. The estimates included in the 2018 update are based on 672 unique data sources from 147 countries or areas, representing approximately 97 per cent of persons aged 60 or over globally, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2016.

45. The Division also updated the Database on Household Size and Composition,<sup>20</sup> which presents a compilation of indicators on household size and composition around the world, estimated using both tabulated data and household roster microdata from censuses and household surveys. Indicators describe the distribution of households by size, household headship, the percentage of households with members in certain age groups, the prevalence of nuclear and extended family households and the prevalence of various intergenerational household configurations. The estimates included in the 2018 update are based on 745 unique data sources from 162 countries or areas, representing approximately 97 per cent of the world's population in 2018, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2016.

46. The Population Division prepared a report on *Household Size and Composition Around the World, 2018*, drawing on the database on household size and composition. In the report the methods used to generate the information in the database on household size and composition are described. In addition, the report contains a summary of the patterns and trends in household composition around the world, highlighting widespread declines in the average household size and an increasing prevalence of one-person households, among other key findings. The results show that, on average, small household sizes are observed in Europe and Northern America and large average household sizes are observed across much of Africa and the Middle East.

47. In 2018 the Population Division prepared a draft technical paper to review new measures of population ageing. The paper, to be released in 2019, will provide a comprehensive literature review and discuss the strengths and limitations of the new measures and potential applications for policy analysis.

48. The Population Division is co-organizing an international expert group meeting on the topic of "Measuring population ageing: bridging research and policy" in cooperation with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Bangkok on 25 and 26 February 2019.

<sup>18</sup> <https://population.un.org/cityboundaries/index.html>.

<sup>19</sup> <https://population.un.org/LivingArrangements/index.html>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://population.un.org/Household/index.html>.

## **IX. Support for intergovernmental processes**

### **A. Reports of the Secretary-General**

49. The Population Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on the theme of the fifty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development in 2018, “Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration” (E/CN.9/2018/2). The report contains a review of the latest trends in urbanization, internal migration and international migration and an assessment of the factors driving the growth of cities and the relationship between migration and economic development. The report provided an overview of current policies in those domains and identified critical gaps in data and evidence to inform policymaking.

50. The Division also prepared the report of the Secretary-General on world demographic trends (E/CN.9/2018/5) for the fifty-first session of the Commission, focusing on major demographic changes during recent decades, as well as projected changes for the coming decades. The topics covered in the report include population size and change, fertility and family planning, mortality, changing population age structures, urbanization and international migration.

51. The Population Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development (A/73/286) as an input to the agenda item of the Second Committee on globalization and interdependence during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. The report contains a summary of recent deliberations of the Assembly on international migration and development and information on levels and trends in migration globally and on the status of ratification of United Nations legal instruments related to migration and human mobility. It also discussed the relationship between migration and development and the contributions of intergovernmental bodies to addressing policy issues relevant to that relationship. The report also contains a summary of activities on migration and related topics by members of the Global Migration Group, information on progress in developing indicators to monitor the migration-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and discussed six key elements to be considered as part of a global programme to improve the collection and use of migration data. The report concludes with actionable recommendations. Following the release of the report, the Second Committee undertook informal consultations supported by the Division, leading to the adoption of resolution 73/241 on international migration and development.

### **B. Expert group meetings**

52. On 1 and 2 November 2018, the Population Division held an expert group meeting in preparation for the fifty-second session of the Commission on Population and Development. At the meeting, experts from around the world discussed current and future population trends and their implications for sustainable development. Issues covered included: (a) fertility, reproductive health and population change; (b) health, mortality and older persons; (c) urbanization, internal and international migration; (d) population-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (e) the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

53. The Division participated in an expert group meeting on “Preparation of the triennial review of the list of Least Developed Countries”, organized by the Secretariat of the Committee for Development Policy on 1 and 2 February 2018 in New York. The meeting reviewed the methodology, data and criteria used for the

identification of least developed countries. Countries meeting the thresholds for inclusion or for graduation were reviewed closely. Six countries eligible for graduation (Bhutan, Nepal, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and Kiribati) were discussed in consultation with representatives from each country. The impact of introducing maternal mortality as an indicator in the human assets index, in addition to under-five mortality, was briefly reviewed, and the Division provided additional information on mortality and population data in response to queries from Committee members.

### C. Monitoring of internationally agreed development goals

54. The Population Division<sup>21</sup> published a comprehensive collection of survey-based estimates of family planning indicators, *World Contraceptive Use 2018*,<sup>2</sup> as well as model-based estimates and projections of those indicators, *Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2018*.<sup>3</sup> The latter collection includes data for all countries and areas in a consistent format for individual years from 1970 to 2030. The data sets informed the report of the Secretary-General on global progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64), in particular with regard to target 3.7, on ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning. The comprehensive data set and model-based estimates and projections provide critical evidence regarding the degree to which the demand for family planning is being met and whether that demand is being satisfied by the use of modern methods of contraception (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1).

55. The publications of the Population Division on contraceptive use and family planning are widely used by organizations that work to improve sexual and reproductive health, including global initiatives such as Family Planning 2020. The Division expanded the collection of data inputs and the methods used for the model-based estimates and projections to obtain results that apply to all women of reproductive age, rather than being limited to women who are married or in a union. Since 2014, the further development of the Division's work on family planning indicators has been supported by extrabudgetary contributions from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Division completed the compilation of available data on the use of family planning, classified by the age and marital status of the women involved, in the data set *World Contraceptive Use by Marital Status and Age 2018*.<sup>22</sup> The Division prepared a technical paper on methods for generating model-based estimates and projections of family planning indicators pertaining to all women of reproductive age. As a result of that work, in 2019, for the first time, the global reporting of progress on target 3.7 will be based on estimates pertaining to all women of reproductive age and will no longer be restricted to women who are married or in a union.

56. As the custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years), the Population Division provided updates on the fertility rate for women aged 15–19, now available for 206

<sup>21</sup> The Division is the custodian agency for two indicators of Sustainable Development Goal target 3.7: indicator 3.7.1 and indicator 3.7.2 (no additional regular budgetary support provided). The main tasks of the custodian agency are twofold: first, to compile comparable international data series, calculate global and regional aggregates and provide them, together with the metadata, to the Statistics Division; second, to prepare the storyline for the annual progress report. Data are compiled and updated annually in the first quarter of the year and released during the second quarter.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/contraception/wcuma2018.shtml>.

countries or areas for the period from 2000 to 2017. For 184 of those countries or areas, there are at least two data points available.<sup>23</sup> In order to provide information also for the younger age group, the Population Division is reviewing available census, survey and administrative data that can be used to estimate the adolescent birth rate at ages 10–14 years.

57. In 2018, the Division continued its collaboration with IOM to develop a method for measuring Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.7.2 (Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies). In November 2018, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators approved the reclassification of indicator 10.7.2 from tier III to tier II and gave it a new name, “Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people”.

58. With IOM, the Population Division organized three online regional consultations on measuring indicator 10.7.2, as described in chapter XI.

59. During 2018, the Population Division contributed to the work of the Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, whose task is to monitor progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal target 3.2, on ending preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age by 2030. The Division provided inputs for updating the online database of mortality estimates maintained by UNICEF (<http://childmortality.org/>) and participated in two meetings of the Group that were held in New York in March and September. The Group reviewed methodological and data-related issues in estimating under-five and neonatal mortality, as well as mortality at ages 5 to 14 years, focusing on new data that had become available in 2018, and it reviewed the preliminary set of estimates for monitoring target 3.2 included in the country consultations conducted by the World Health Organization and used to inform the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018<sup>24</sup> and the 2018 report of the Group, *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality*.<sup>25</sup> The Division assisted in reviewing the final estimates and in preparing those reports.

60. The Population Division also participated in a meeting of the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-agency Group held in New York on 12 and 13 March 2018 to review the methodology for the monitoring of target 3.1. The Population Division provided support for the analysis of maternal mortality estimates derived from census data and for the processing of maternal mortality information from household surveys using standardized procedures. The Division also participated on 6 December 2018 in a meeting of the Group to review the methodology and new sources of data for the next set of maternal mortality estimates, scheduled for release in 2019, and to discuss plans for dissemination, country consultations and regional workshops.

61. On 18 and 19 September 2018, the Population Division participated in the first meeting organized by the Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation on the estimation of stillbirths. The meeting reviewed the different methods of estimation currently available and proposed the creation of a core technical stillbirth group.

62. To assess the use of Population Division data for the global monitoring of progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure that such data are fit for purpose, the Division conducted an informal survey in late 2017 by contacting the chief statisticians of 14 agencies serving as custodians of relevant Goal indicators. The responses indicated that, out of 159 indicators classified in tiers I and II (as at

<sup>23</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>.

<sup>24</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018/>.

<sup>25</sup> [http://childmortality.org/files\\_v22/download/UN%20IGME%20Child%20Mortality%20Report%202018.pdf](http://childmortality.org/files_v22/download/UN%20IGME%20Child%20Mortality%20Report%202018.pdf).

April 2018), the global monitoring of 62 indicators (39 per cent) used data from the Population Division in some manner. Of those, for 42 indicators the Division's data were used both for computing the indicator for individual countries or areas and for aggregation. For an additional 20 indicators, the Division's data were used solely for the purpose of computing aggregated values for regions and the world.

63. Throughout the year, the Division continued to participate in system-wide consultations and reviews of Sustainable Development Goal indicators under the auspices of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, including discussions on options for indicators that are not yet clearly defined. The Division also participated in the ongoing discussion on data flows – in particular, between national Governments and international agencies – and in discussions on best practices for sharing information and results in the context of national, regional and global monitoring of progress on the Goals.

## **X. Dissemination of population information and data**

64. Staff from the Population Division participated in meetings of population-related professional associations, which provide a platform for dissemination of the Division's work in academic circles. In 2018, staff of the Division gave presentations at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America, held in Denver, United States, from 26 to 28 April, and participated via video link in the national meeting of the Brazilian Association for Population Studies on 27 September. The Division also contributed presentations at other professional meetings, including the Volkswagen Foundation Symposium on urbanization and health and a conference on migration, environment and climate hosted by the Institut national d'études démographiques in France.

65. The Population Division organized a panel at the International Conference on Family Planning, held in Rwanda from 12 to 15 November 2018. The panel discussed the use of Bayesian statistical methods to monitor progress on expanding access to contraception and reducing unmet need for family planning at the global, regional, national and subnational levels. The panel also informed the family planning community about the Division's global datasets on key family planning indicators and their use for the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1.

66. The Director of the Population Division delivered the keynote address at the Eurostat Seminar on Population Projections and Demographic Trends, held on 13 November 2018 in Luxembourg. Participants included government statisticians, academic demographers, policymakers and other consumers of population projections, mostly from countries of Europe. The presentation described the work of the United Nations in that area, including the Division's recent addition of a probabilistic assessment of the uncertainty inherent in its projections of future trends, as a complement to the traditional practice of presenting alternative projections based on hypothetical scenarios or variant assumptions.

67. The Division maintains the *United Nations Global Migration Database*, a comprehensive collection of empirical data on the number and characteristics of international migrants worldwide. By the end of 2018, the database included over 5,700 data tables providing information for over 92 per cent of countries and areas worldwide. With more than 8,500 registered users located in over 150 countries, the database has become an indispensable resource for migration researchers.

68. To improve dissemination, all data sets and outputs from the latest revisions of *World Urbanization Prospects* and *World Population Prospects* were made available

online through a web-based interface allowing users to download results in various file formats through interactive queries. The website also contains key findings, analytical charts and country profiles, as well as information on the methods used for constructing the data set. According to information obtained from Google Analytics, the website had about 1.9 million page views in 2018, including more than 1.3 million unique page views for *World Population Prospects* and around 474,000 for *World Urbanization Prospects*. At the end of 2018, according to information from Google, *World Population Prospects* was referenced on 778,000 web pages, appeared in 180,000 book references and was cited in 42,700 articles, while *World Urbanization Prospects* appeared on 264,000 web pages and in 41,700 book references and 25,300 articles. The *2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects* was published for the first time under a creative commons CC-IGO licence.

69. During 2018, the Population Division continued to update and expand its website, which provides access to timely population information for use by government officials, academic researchers, the private sector and civil society. The website contains all the publications issued by the Division in recent years and a full collection of documents issued for and statements made in the Commission on Population and Development since 1994. Web traffic statistics indicate that, from April to December 2018, the Division's website was visited by an average of 80,500 unique users per month, generating some 2.7 million page views in that nine-month period.<sup>26</sup>

70. The Division ensured that all briefings for Member States that had been webcast were later made easily accessible through links on the Division's website. Also, with help from the Strategic Planning and Communication Services of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Population Division used Twitter and Facebook to publicize various events, including the fifty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development, during which Facebook interviews were conducted with the session's keynote speakers.

71. The Population Division received many requests for data and provided such information in a timely manner. In 2018, the Division continued to meet with delegations of Member States to discuss various population-related topics, including the Division's estimates and projections of global population, the work of the Commission on Population and Development, the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the work of the United Nations in the area of migration.

## **XI. Technical cooperation**

72. The Population Division conducted a technical mission on population estimates and projections at the Institut national de la statistique du Niger as part of a project supported by the Development Account entitled "Strengthening capacities of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa to effectively produce and use population estimates and projections in policymaking for sustainable development". The technical mission took place in Niamey from 23 to 27 April 2018.

73. The Population Division organized a regional meeting on evidence-based policymaking on ageing in Lilongwe on 27 and 28 June 2018. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Division for Inclusive Social Development. The purpose of the meeting was to present the survey methodology and preliminary findings of the Multiple Indicator Survey on Ageing, which was developed under the leadership of the Division for Inclusive Social Development with support from the

<sup>26</sup> An improved analytics process covering all pages of the Division's website was initiated on 1 April 2018. Data are not comparable to web traffic statistics in previous years' reports.

Population Division and funding from the ninth tranche of the Development Account and piloted in Malawi for use in sub-Saharan Africa. Participants included representatives of Governments, civil society and academia from selected African countries and other development partners in the region. Participants in the meeting also discussed means to bridge the evidence-policy gap and identified next steps for using demographic and social data collection and analysis to enhance policymaking on ageing.

74. The Population Division participated in teaching a course on Bayesian population projections held in conjunction with the eighth international congress of the Latin American Population Association in Puebla City, Mexico, from 21 to 23 October 2018. Participants were academics and official statisticians from the Latin American and Caribbean region. The training was funded by UNFPA and led by experts from the University of Washington. Many of the methods covered in the course were developed by the Population Division and its collaborators for use in generating the population projections of the United Nations.

75. With IOM, the Division organized three online regional consultations on the methodology for measuring Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.7.2 (Number of countries with migration policies to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people). Forty-four participants, including government representatives and experts from 21 countries, engaged in the three online consultations. The consultation for Africa was co-organized with the Economic Commission for Africa during the week of 28 February 2018. The consultation for Western Asia was co-organized with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia during the week of 28 February 2018, while the consultation for Europe and Northern America took place during the week of 19 March 2018.

76. The Population Division participated in a mission organized by the Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality in Baku, from 2 to 6 July 2018. The purpose of the mission was to discuss discrepancies in child mortality across data sources, and between the Government's official numbers and the Group's estimates, as well as to provide technical assistance for assessing the quality of child mortality data, including coverage and completeness of birth and death registration through the national registration system.

## Annex

### **Publications, expert group meetings and other materials prepared or events organized by the Population Division (1 January–31 December 2018)**

#### **Expert group meetings**

Sixteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration, New York, 15 and 16 February 2018

Expert group meeting on review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, New York, 1 and 2 November 2018

#### **Training workshops**

Technical assistance mission on the production of population estimates and projections, Institut national de la statistique du Niger, Niamey, 23–37 April 2018

Online consultation on measuring the Sustainable Development Goal indicator on countries with well-managed migration policies, Africa, week of 28 February 2018

Online consultation on measuring the Sustainable Development Goal indicator on countries with well-managed migration policies, Europe, week of 28 February 2018

Online consultation on measuring the Sustainable Development Goal indicator on countries with well-managed migration policies, Western Asia, week of 19 March 2018

Regional meeting on evidence-based policymaking on ageing, Lilongwe, 27 and 28 June 2018

#### **Reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents**

Report of the Secretary-General on sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration ([E/CN.9/2018/2](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on world demographic trends ([E/CN.9/2018/5](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2017: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs ([E/CN.9/2018/6](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development ([A/73/286](#))

#### **Research studies**

*World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision: Methodology* (ESA/P/WP.252)

*World Population Policies 2015: Highlights* (ST/ESA/SER.A/373)

*World Population Policies 2015* (ST/ESA/SER.A/374)

#### **Databases**

World Contraceptive Use by Marital Status and Age 2018

World Contraceptive Use 2018

Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2018

United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2018

United Nations Database on Household Size and Composition 2018

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, online edition

United Nations Global Migration Database

City Boundaries Database

**Wallcharts, infocharts and data booklets**

*The World's Cities in 2018* (data booklet, ST/ESA/SER.A/417)

*Policies on population ageing* (infochart)

**Technical papers series**

“Methods for estimating and projecting key family planning indicators among all women of reproductive age” (technical paper No. 2018/2)

“Historical development of civil registration systems: a European perspective” (technical paper No. 2018/1)

“Who collects what on the current use of contraception? A review of survey data available for the estimation of contraceptive prevalence” (technical paper No. 2017/12)

“Sexual activity by marital status and age: a comparative perspective” (technical paper No. 2017/11)

**Policy briefs**

“Population facts: the speed of urbanization around the world”, No. 2018/1

“Population facts: Sexual and reproductive health programmes and policies for adolescents”, No. 2018/2

“World Urbanization Prospects 2018: The 2018 Revision – key facts”

“Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration: ten key findings and recommendations”

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