**TransMonEE**

**THE NETWORK MEETING OF NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICES**

Data on Children: Ethnicity, Nationality and Migration

Athens, Greece, 24-25 October 2017

# Report

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## Objectives of the Meeting

The primary purpose of the meeting was to enhance the capacity of national statistical systems to generate quality data on key indicators of children's well-being, in the spirit of the inclusive 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda. This year's meeting had a specific focus on data on refugee, migrant and ethnic minority children and adolescents towards the robust monitoring of equity gaps for children.

The meeting aimed to:
- Provide updates on SDG indicators and baselines for children and the SDG/Child Rights monitoring agenda in Europe and Central Asia and reinforce the importance of disaggregation and counting all children;
- Review the key trends in the data on refugee/migrant/minority children, and discuss equity gaps;
- Allow for sharing and discussion of the main findings of the review of data systems on ethnicity - based on the 2015 TransMonEE Country Analytical Reports and an analysis of MICS data;
- Share country-level promising/good practices and lessons learned in efforts to ensure data quality, ethical standards, and to establish stronger cooperation and use of data on ethnicity and migration, using the SDGs as an opportunity to strengthen data systems and child rights monitoring;
- Agree on future directions towards the continuous improvement of disaggregated data on children from vulnerable and marginalized groups to better inform inclusive policies of governments in the region, and to contribute to implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## 1. SDG monitoring in Greece

Mr. Athanasios Thanopoulos, President of the Hellenic Statistics Office, introduced the theme of the meeting referring to the current situation in Greece. He emphasized the importance of statistics for policy-making, and underlined the need to enhance the capacity of NSOs to generate quality data and meta-data to develop a common language.

## 2. SDGs – Leaving no child behind

Mr. Laurence Chandy, Director of Data, Research and Policy Division at UNICEF HQ, started his opening speech talking about the challenges and opportunities brought by the SDG agenda and the children on the move. In this context, UNICEF has an important role to play to support the welfare of migrant children and faces challenges when it comes to collect and proposes at the moment is the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). He concluded by emphasizing that the main aim of the TransMonEE meeting is to learn from the experiences of other countries.

## 3. SDG for Children – Monitoring in Europe and Central Asia

Ms. Lori Bell, Regional Adviser Monitoring and Evaluation, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, welcomed the participants and invited them to take the opportunity to exchange experiences in the coming two days. She highlighted the importance to collect disaggregated data within the context of the SDG agenda. As Governments have committed to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first, it is imperative to identify the most vulnerable children. After presenting examples of the data available in the region, she pointed that some data matches SDG indicator definitions but does not allow to measure dimensions of inequity, while other data allowing for nationally disaggregated estimates, has less potential for cross country comparisons. In this context, UNICEF is working to strengthen national capacities to collect and analyse data on children, and helping Governments to translate evidence into policies and actions that reach the furthest behind first. She presented the new TransMonEE logo and informed about the new website: http://transmonee.org.

## 4. SDGs: Baselines for Children and some new methodological work

The first panel started with the presentation of Ms. Byagul Annamuhammedova, Turkmenistan, explaining the new monitoring systems to collect data for SDG indicators in Turkmenistan. Sources include the administrative data from relevant sectoral ministries, MICS (and other household surveys) and censuses.

The second presentation from the panel was given by Mr. Svilen Kateliev, Bulgaria. As Early Child Development has been identified as a priority for Bulgaria, UNICEF and the National Statistics Institute have worked on a new ECD cognitive testing module which measures the overall development status of young children related to learning, psychosocial development and health. The data collected will enable Bulgaria to report on the SDG indicator related to Early Childhood Development.

Ms. Gulmira Karaulova, Kazakhstan, presented the cognitive testing of a new survey module on inclusive education, developed by UNICEF and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics. The aim is to develop, test and validate the set of questions on participation and school environment that may eventually be used in all countries (including high-income countries) to collect internationally

comparable, nationally representative, and statistically sound data to monitor and track progress towards achieving SDG targets.

Mr. Robert Beshanski-Pedersen, UNICEF Head Quarters, presented an update on the new MICS modules. The list of MICS indicators includes internationally agreed and defined indicators, as well as priority indicators for UNICEF or partners. Country adaptations of the indicators are a key part of the MICS customisation. In order to respond to the challenge of leaving no one behind, all MICS indicators are disaggregated, (where relevant), by wealth quintiles, sex, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics.

**Key Takeaways**:
- The use of different sources, including administrative data from relevant ministries, MICS (and other household surveys) and censuses is important and generally easily available;
- There are ongoing efforts in different countries to test new household survey modules to collect internationally comparable, nationally representative, and statistically sound data to monitor and track progress towards achieving SDG targets;
- MICS includes new tools and adaptations.


## 5. Overview of data on refugee and migrant children in the region.

Mr. Lucio Melandri, Senior Emergency Manager, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, gave an overview of migration patterns and fluxes, under a child rights view, and stressed the data challenges. Subsequently he shared UNICEF's recommendation to respond to those challenges. For example, UNICEF encourages all countries to: (i) improve the disaggregation of national migration and asylum statistics; (ii) start regular collection of data on children deprived of liberty for migration control purposes, children returned/deported and children unaccounted for; (3) strengthen data collection and improve the availability of additional data on migration integration by further strengthening the legal framework on social and population statistics; (4) start collecting education data on the time period between arrival of a child in a country and school enrolment.

**Key Takeaway:**
- Emphasis on the importance to strengthen data collection, data availability and use in order to monitor migrant children's situation.
- UNICEF has specific recommendations to improve available evidence to better respond to migration crisis and migrant children integration.


## 6. New global Recommendations on: Refugee Statistics & Improving Migration Data in the Context of the 2030 Agenda

This panel was composed of experts on refugee and migrant statistics and provided updates on the latest global recommendations on refugee and migrant statistics.

Ms. Keiko Osaki Tomita, United Nations Statistics Division, gave a presentation about the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Improving Migration Data in the Context of the 2030 Agenda. This meeting was held in June 2017 in New York and starred more than 50 experts from 14 countries, involving a wide range of stakeholders. The objective was to identify gaps in migration statistics; discuss how to improve the availability and quality of the data and to agree on global recommendations (link to recommendations).

Ms. Daunia Pavone, IOM, commented from the point of view of the practitioner. She presented the tools from IOM to answer the data challenges brought up by migration such as the updated Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). Some data are publicly available on their website but some, not, in order to protect children concerned.

Mr. Piotr Juchno, Eurostat presented the draft recommendations from the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) that will be submitted for approval in March 2018. He invited the participants to take part in the global consultations held by Eurostat in November this year ([link](#) to recommendations). Ms.Petra Nahmias, UNHCR, commented on the recommendations from the practitioner's perspective.

**Key Takeaways:**
- There is a need to improve the availability and quality of the data on migrant and refugee children;
- The United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Improving Migration Data produced a draft set of recommendations to overcome gaps in migration statistics;
- EGRIS produced a recommendations document to improve the availability of data on refugee and IDP statistics, towards more common practices.

## 7. Monitoring Children on the Move. The Specific Case of Greece

The Greek Government panel discussed their approach to adapt mechanisms and data systems to respond to the ongoing influx of refugees.

The panel started with a presentation by Mr. Dimitrios Mallios, Hellenic Police representative. He explained the process the Hellenic Police is following when minors, especially unaccompanied minors, are identified and how they work closely with NGOs and Social Services. He outlined what data is collected.

Mr. Christos Kanios, Asylum Service, noted the importance of reflecting the needs of children seeking international protection in the asylum statistics. The figures he presented showed the magnitude of the migrant and refugee influx which the Asylum Service has had to face.

Mr. Christos Hompas, National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA), presented the procedures they are following when unaccompanied minors who are seeking asylum are identified. EKKA treats every case as a child protection case. In partnership with UNICEF, EKKA maintains an online database with estimates that are increasingly being used by public institutions and other stakeholders.

Ms. Tita Kaisari Ernst, Greek Ministry of Education, presented plans for improved data and monitoring of refugee children in the formal education system. The Ministry of Education established a flexible emergency action plan for the education of refugee children. The main objective was to ensure the psychosocial support and the return to normality for these children, and to facilitate their (re)integration into the educational system either in Greece or in another country.

Mr. George Moschos, Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights, highlighted the importance of identifying concrete solutions based on the data on children as well as the need to work together. He advocated for improved coordination among public institutions to share and use available data to better respond to the refugee crisis, and realize the rights of the affected children.

**Key Takeaways:**
- It is to reflect the numbers and needs of children seeking international protection in asylum statistics;
- There is available data on unaccompanied minors who are seeking asylum, developed by EKKA, and made available via an online database;
- There is agreement to strengthen coordination among Greek public institutions and civil society, to improve data availability on refugee children and the overall response.

## 8. Data on Refugee Children in Turkey - Integrated Data towards Targeted Services

Mr. Merve Sule Kansiz, Turkish Ministry of Education, presented YOBIS, the Education Information Management System for Foreigners, developed by the Ministry of National Education and UNICEF in 2014. The system allows for monitoring Syrian refugee children's school attendance as well as other aspects of their education process, their health and the social-economic status of their family. This provides a good basis for qualitative and quantitative analyses of the education opportunities provided to Syrian children as well as to assess their unmet needs.

Mr. Yusuf Kesgin, Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Turkey, provided an overview of the National Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) programme, as part of Turkey's Integrated Social Assistance System (ISAS). This represents an e-government system that facilitates all steps related to the management of social assistance. Through the system, Syrian families under temporary protection or other refugees residing in Turkey, can benefit from cash transfers as long as their child attends school regularly. Children attending Temporary Education Centers, can also benefit from the CCTE scheme.

At the end of this panel, participants congratulated Turkey on their information management system and more specifically on the fact that it is extended to the non-Turkish population.

**Key Takeaways**:
- YOBIS data system allows monitoring of Syrian refugee children's school attendance as well as other aspects of their education process, their health and the social-economic status of their family. This provides a good basis for qualitative and quantitative analyses of the education opportunities provided to Syrian children, as well as to assess their unmet needs;
- Turkey has an E-government system that facilitates all steps related to the management of social assistance to refugees, in line with mechanisms available to the Turkish population.

## 9. Other County Experiences with Improving Data Collection and Analysis Concerning Children

This session focused on the importance of available data sources to understand the gaps in children's rights, both from household surveys such as MICS, and from administrative records. The session started with a presentation about children left behind in Kyrgyzstan and Moldova given by Ms. Gulnara Dzhailobaeva, Kyrgyzstan, and Ms. Liubia Stoianov, Moldova. They shared analysis of MICS survey data which examined the impact of out-migration of at least one parent on indicators of child well-being, showing that children with at least one migrant parent are affected negatively in a number of dimensions of well-being. However, an important analytical challenge, given that out-migration is a relatively rare event, is the issue of small numbers and fairly wide confidence intervals around the estimates produced.

Ms. Anja Teltschik, One UNICEF response team in Germany, gave a general view of the Refugee and Migrant Response in Germany. When the influx of refugee and migrants in Germany started in 2015,

the monitoring system became quickly overwhelmed and there proofed to be a lack of a coherent and consolidated data system. She presented the regulation and system changes being made to improve the system effectiveness vis-à-vis statistics on children.

**Key Takeaways:**
- Encourage participants to use the available data to better understand what are the gaps in child rights for migrant children;
- Monitoring systems even in sophisticated countries, have to be flexible and adapt to have a coherent and consolidated data system, for a good response to refugee children needs.

## 10. Lessons learned and good practices

During the last session of the day, participants were invited to have a group discussion, to identify three points they learned of or received inspiration about during the conference which could be implemented in their country. The main ideas that came out of the exercise where:

- The usefulness of conducting surveys on migrant and refugee children in camps and in the reception centres, to understand their rights deprivations and wellbeing;
- Intensifying field research to have an improved and refined picture of the situation;
- Unify methodologies within and between countries and agencies
- Work for coordination mechanisms to improve response to refugee crisis;
- Strengthen the role of NSOs in evidence generation and use, as well as in crisis response.

## Summary of the day and closing remarks

Mr. Laurence Chandy wrapped up the first day concluding that the SDG era provides numerous opportunities to strengthen disaggregated data collection, so governments can deliver on their commitment to leave no one behind. He reiterated that enormous challenges lay ahead such as in cross-sectoral coordination and to expand the interoperability of data systems; making data systems adequate for data on children as well as increasing the public availability of existing data. Mr. Chandy also noted the new opportunities appearing with data disaggregation use and online data management. He reaffirmed UNICEF's commitment to support Governments with disaggregated data collection to monitor the situation of children.

## Day 2: Ethnicity, nationality and migration

## 11. Data on Ethnicity and Children

Ms. Joanne Bosworth, Regional Adviser Social Policy, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, opened the day introducing the thematic focus of the day: Data on Ethnicity and Children. She reminded participants that, although children may not discriminate according to race, religion, or nationality, within societies that is too often the case, and as children grown up differences and inequalities related to these traits become visible. The transformative agenda of the SDGs is to leave no one behind, and to offer additional support to those who are at greatest risk of falling behind.

Within the ECA region, most societies are multicultural. We often have no reliable figures even on the number of children and adolescents from minority groups. However, we know that in many cases children from ethnic minorities are less able to access rights and basic services including health, education, social protection and justice. Children and adolescents from ethnic minority groups are

often affected by multiple, overlapping and intersecting deprivations of rights.  If we are to address these issues, we need good evidence on which to base policies and programmes to address barriers to access and discriminatory social norms, but in the case of data on ethnicity, this is frequently not the case. Ms. Bosworth highlighted that the aim of Day 2 discussions is to agree on ways to improve the collection and use of data to support inclusive policies for children from ethnic minorities in the region.

## 12. Summary of TransMonEE Country Analytical Reports on Ethnicity and Nationality

Ms. Cornelia Rauchberger, FRESNO Consulting, presented the synthesis report of  TransMonEE Country Analytical Reports on Ethnicity and Nationality which examines current data collection and disaggregation practices in Europe and Central Asia related to children, ethnicity and nationality. The report highlights as a starting point that a vast amount of data on children that could be disaggregated by ethnicity is available but is not being analyzed.

Legislative frameworks on data protection, anti-discrimination and child protection can provide the necessary preconditions for collecting ethnic data on children. NSOs in the region are not always fully aware of the legal framework that supports the collection of ethnic data on children.

The use of terms and proxies used to collect ethnic data on children is not uniform among the different statistical sources. Ms. Rauchberger proposed several draft recommendations, to be considered by the participants and discussed in the last work group session of the day. **The recommendations include: (i) reviewing safeguards to protect privacy of children and make sure data collection on ethnic/nationality background is used to fight anti-discrimination; (ii) including definitions on ethnicity in census guidelines; (iii) assessing how national data systems could operate together; (iv) including ethnicity data in the Transmonee database.** The whole report and all its recommendations had been distributed in advance to all participants.

## 13. Is Britain fairer? Monitoring equality and human rights progress for children

Mr. Greg Crouch, Equality and Human Rights Commission, United Kingdom, presented the new Measurement Framework that the Commission uses to monitor and report on equality and human rights issues. Data availability on children, by ethnic group, is good in relative terms in the UK, but there are still some gaps and some ethnic groups of children still face serious disadvantages in Great Britain.

## 14. Data on Ethnicity – MICS Roma Survey

Ms. Teuta Halimi, Monitoring Officer, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, presented a child rights equity gaps analysis on Roma children in the Western Balkans. To better monitor equity and inclusion for ethnic minorities, separate MICS surveys are conducted in the Roma Settlements in parallel to the national surveys. The MICS surveys implemented proved to be sensitive enough to measure disparities and brought a wealth of data about groups that are hard to reach. MICS is currently the only quality data source that can provide representative data on Roma children and families in the region. Ms. Halimi's presentation clearly demonstrated that, despite the progress made, in countries for which MICS data is available, ethnic minorities such as Roma children remain marginalized with less access to services.

Ms Dragana Djokovic Papic, Serbia NSO, presented how Serbia collects data on the Roma population through administrative data. In 2009, Serbia conducted a pilot census which was used to train  ethnic

Serbians with ethnic Roma on the conduct of a census in preparation for the main Population Census. The mobilization and training of Roma enumerators proved to be highly effective. Given that Roma consist of around 2% of the total population, that the ethnicity of a person is not recorded in majority of the administrative sources of data, and that the coverage of Roma population by sample-based surveys is very small, it is important to emphasize the importance of collecting data on ethnic minorities such as the Roma through rigorous population census.

## 15. Understanding Equity Gaps for Children from Ethnic Minorities in the Region

This panel began with the presentation "Counting the uncountable – Minorities: hard to count, easy to ignore", by Ms. Cristina Avram, NSO Romania. She highlighted the lack of a legal definitions for ethnicity/nationality/citizenship/mother tongue, as well as the lack of anti-discrimination legislation. Romania offers an online platform where minorities' organizations can register, and uses different sources for disaggregated data on ethnicity such as census and cross-statistical data e.g. from the education and child protection sector.

The panel continued with the presentation "Understanding the rights of children for ethnic minorities in the Republic of Tajikistan", by Mr. Nasriddinov Hukmiddin, NSO Tajikistan. An analysis of the situation of the population from ethnic groups in access to education, health care, social protection, etc. is being carried out through surveys by international and local non-governmental organizations or by research institutes. Some disaggregated data on ethnicity is being collected through administrative sources but the data is not combined in a single register.

Ms. Klaudija Kregar Orešković, NSO Croatia, gave a presentation about understanding equity gaps for Roma children in Croatia. She explained that the National Strategy for Roma Inclusion 2013-2020 sets as its general goal "to improve the status of the Roma minority in the Republic of Croatia by reducing the multi-dimensional socio-economic chasm between the Roma and the remaining population and by harmoniously, openly and transparently achieving the full inclusion of the Roma in all segments of society and the community". Still, baseline values are only available for a handful of indicators, and disaggregated data on age and gender are mostly missing. Croatia's pledged to improve strategic planning and to introduce longitudinal monitoring.

The main takeaways of the discussions that followed the panel discussions were: (i) the importance of data on ethnicity to fight inequalities and of direct interaction with people to encourage inclusion; (ii) the need to analyze the existing data more; and (iii) the self-identification as the best practice when it comes to data collection on ethnicity.

## 16. Lessons learned and good practices

At the end of this second day, participants discussed in group the recommendations from the synthesis report collecting data on ethnicity and nationality (FRESNO presentation). The main suggestions from the groups were the following:

- **questions about ethnicity should be added in census;**
- **information on returnees should be captures in ongoing surveys;**
- **increase awareness of the lessons learned related to disaggregated data collection, from the relevance to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination to build better monitoring systems to develop capacities to make more extensive use of available data (combining registers or simply analyzing existing data).**

Mr. Aposotlis Kasapis from the NSO of Greece concluded that both the 2030 Agenda as well as the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe are creating momentum to speak a common language and to adopt similar methodology to collect and analyze data on refugee and migrant children. He highlighted the need for improved vertical and horizontal coordination which was apparent in the presentations of all delegations. He also urged all participants to take the opportunity to share feedback on the draft recommendations on refugee statistics that were presented by Eurostat.

Ms. Lori Bell further stressed that an important theme that came out during this meeting is the desire to conduct further work on inclusion and the need to monitor (collect better data). She emphasized that there is more data available than we may initially think, and that we need to do more to analyze existing data, particularly available administrative data. She further shared a quote she recalled a quote from the previous year's TransMonEE meeting about data on child disability but that can be applicable to the case of ethnic minorities: "Nothing about us without us". She stressed that we should involve representatives from ethnic minority communities in data collection and beyond - for example including Roma in the analysis, interpretation and reporting as well.

Ms. Bell further shared that the revision of the TransMonEE database and partnership will be discussed in the coming weeks, but that this meeting was very useful is demonstrating new methods, guidelines, and standards.

Ms. Bell closed the meeting by thanking participations for their contributions to the meeting and she reminded colleagues that preparation for 2018 TransMonEE meeting have already started on the topic of Data on Children: Access to Justice for Children, and asked for volunteers to host next year's meeting. Looking ahead, it was proposed that the 2019 meeting topic be on data on children, age and gender – towards being better able to look at age and gender related equity gaps for children.