Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Target 17.19: By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries

Indicator 17.19.2: Proportion of countries that (a) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (b) have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration

Institutional information

Organization(s):

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

Concepts and definitions

Definition:

This information only refers to 17.19.2 (b): Proportion of countries that have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration

According to the Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3 (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/M19Rev3en.pdf), a complete civil registration is defined as: “The registration in the civil registration system of every vital event that has occurred to the members of the population of a particular country (or area), within a specified period as a result of which every such event has a vital registration record and the system has attained 100 per cent coverage.”

In a given country or area, the level of completeness of birth registration can be different from the level of completeness of death registration.

There exist several methods for the evaluation of completeness of birth or death registration systems. An elaboration of these methods is available at Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3. The evaluation and monitoring of quality and completeness of birth and death registration systems are addressed in Part three, sub-Chapters: D. Quality assessment methods; E. Direct versus indirect assessment, and F. Choosing appropriate methods for assessing completeness and qualitative accuracy of registration and register-based vital statistics (para 579 to 622).

Indicator 17.19.2(b) has two parts; the first concerning the birth registration and the second concerning the death registration of each individual country or area.

Rationale:

The introduction of indicator 17.19.2 (b) as part of the SDG global framework reflects the recognition of the fundamental role of the civil registration system to the functioning of societies, and the legal and protective advantages that it offers to individuals. The essential purpose of civil registration system is to furnish legal documents of direct interest to individuals. Aside from the direct and overarching importance of civil registration to the public authorities, in that the information compiled using the registration method provides essential data for national and regional preparation and planning for medical and health-care programmes, the role played by civil registration in proving, establishing, implementing and realizing many of the human rights embodied in international declarations and conventions reflects one of its most important contributions to the normal functioning of societies.

Methodology

Computation method:

The two sub-indicators of the indicator 17.19.2(b) are expressed as proportions: at the global level, the proportion of countries that have achieved 100 per cent birth registration is measured as the number of countries that have achieved 100 per cent birth registration to the total number of countries. The computation is done in an analogous manner for the death registration part as well as for the regional measurements of both birth and death registration sub-indicators.

The latest compiled data for this indicator are part of the Statistical Annex to the 2017 SG's progress report, available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--Statistical-Annex.pdf (please refer to the last two pages). These data are compiled using the country-reported information on availability and completeness of birth and death registration data at the country level, to the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*, via the *Demographic Yearbook* Vital Statistics questionnaire and accompanying metadata. United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* collection and associated online compilations are published by the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Please refer to: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm

At the present time, the thresholds used for compiling the data for the indicator 17.19.2(b) are 90 per cent for birth registration and 75 per cent for death registration, due to the classification that has been used in the *Demographic Yearbook* metadata questionnaire on vital statistics. This classification has currently been modified to enable reporting according to the exact formulation of the indicator 17.19.2(b).

Treatment of missing values:

- ***At country level:***

No attempts are made to provide estimates of completeness of birth and death registration, when such information is not reported via the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* data collection.

- ***At regional and global levels:***

Not applicable

Regional aggregates:

The regional values of this indicator, presented at the Statistical Annex to the 2017 SG's progress report, available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--

Statistical-Annex.pdf (please refer to the last two pages), are compiled as follows:

17.19.2 (b.1) Number and proportion of countries with birth registration data that are at least 90 per cent complete: The number of countries or areas on each of the listed regions with birth registration data that are at least 90 per cent complete, and the proportion of such countries or areas to the total number of countries or areas in the respective region.

17.19.2 (b.2) Number and proportion of countries with death registration data that are at least 75 per cent complete: The number of countries or areas on each of the listed regions with death registration data that are at least 75 per cent complete, and the proportion of such countries or areas to the total number of countries or areas in the respective region.

Sources of discrepancies:

Not applicable since the information is derived from country reporting.

Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level:

Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3 , United Nations, New York, 2014 https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/M19Rev3en.pdf

Quality assurance:

Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, Part three, I, “Quality assurance and assessment of civil registration and register based vital statistics”

Follow up with National Statistical Offices as part of the annual United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* data collection, validation and processing.

Data sources

Collection process:

The national level of completeness of birth and death registration is provided by the National Statistical Offices of all countries and areas to the United Nations Statistics Division as part of the annual data collection for the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*. This information is usually reported as part of the metadata worksheets of the Vital Statistics questionnaire. The template of this questionnaire is available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dybquest.htm

Data availability

Description:

For the current availability please refer to the Statistical Annex to the 2017 SG’s progress report, available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--Statistical-Annex.pdf (please refer to the last two pages).

Disaggregation:

By their definition, the sub-indicators of the indicator 17.19.2(b) refer to the national levels of completeness of birth and death registration.

However, knowledge of the birth and death registration completeness at sub-national administrative areas, as well as by income, sex, age group, disability status, etc. is very important for monitoring and improving the functioning of birth and death registration systems.

Calendar

Data collection:

The first quarter of each year

Data release:

Annually

Data providers

National Statistical Offices of all countries and areas.

Data compilers

United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

References

Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, United Nations, New York, 2014 https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/M19Rev3en.pdf

United Nation *Demographic Yearbook*, United Nations, New York, (annual) https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2.htm

Statistical Annex to the 2017 SG's progress report, https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--Statistical-Annex.pdf