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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 2022: 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 2022. It covers the activities of the Division on the analysis of global trends in fertility, mortality, migration, urbanization and population ageing; the preparation of global population estimates and projections; the monitoring of population policies; the analysis of linkages 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 provided to intergovernmental processes.

The objective of the programme of work in the field of population in 2022 was to improve knowledge of global population trends, advance an evidence-based understanding of interaction between population change and sustainable development among policymakers and the public, and strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and integrate the population dimension into the international development agenda. The Commission on Population and Development oversees the work of the Population Division and provides guidance on the work programme as part of its annual session.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

* E/CN.9/2023/1.



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,¹ 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 Assembly to extend the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond the original 20-year time horizon in 2014 (resolution [65/234](#)). The outcomes of other relevant international conferences and summits are also taken into account, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution [70/1](#)) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (resolution [73/195](#)). In addition, the work of the 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-E/CN.9/2004/9](#), chap. I, sect. B), and by other relevant resolutions and decisions of the Assembly, including those related to international migration and development, and of the Economic and Social Council.

2. As described in the programme budget, the objective of the work programme on population in 2022 was to improve knowledge of global population trends, advance an evidence-based understanding of interaction between population change and sustainable development among policymakers and the public, and strengthen the international community's capacity to effectively address current and emerging population issues and integrate the population dimension into the international development agenda (see [A/76/6 \(Sect. 9\)](#), subprogramme 5, Population).

3. The 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.

4. The present report provides a summary of the activities and deliverables of the Division during 2022, 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 2022 is presented in the annex to the present report. Reference is also made in the report to work in progress in 2022 that is expected to result in one or more completed outputs in 2023. Where applicable, impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the Division's work are indicated. Responses to the pandemic in the Division's deliverables and activities are also noted.

II. Fertility and family planning

5. The Population Division continued its work on adolescent fertility with the publication of a technical paper on estimating the adolescent birth rate for those aged 10–14 years and 15–19 years for monitoring and reporting on Sustainable

¹ *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.

Development Goal indicator 3.7.2.² As the custodian agency for the indicator, the Division updated a global data set that includes information for 225 countries or areas on the birth rate of women aged 15–19 years for the period from 2000 to 2020. The Division also generated, for the first time, data on fertility in those aged 10–14 years for 215 countries or areas. The data for both age groups were included in the updated data set for indicator 3.7.2 submitted for publication in the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database.

6. The Division published a comprehensive data set on family planning indicators, *World Contraceptive Use 2022*, which includes survey-based estimates of contraceptive prevalence and of the unmet need for family planning among women of reproductive age (15–49 years).³ The data were disaggregated by age, marital status and contraceptive methods used and included information from 1,404 surveys for 196 countries or areas. The Division used the data compilation 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 2022*.⁴ The methods used for data compilation and for estimation and projection are presented in a methodology report.⁵ As the custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1 on the proportion of women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods, the Division used the two data products on family planning indicators to provide information relevant for the global monitoring of the indicator. The Division also provided inputs on the family planning component of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.8.1 on the coverage of essential health services.

7. The Division published the *World Family Planning 2022* report, subtitled “Meeting changing needs for family planning: contraceptive use by women’s age and method”.⁶ In the report it described trends in contraceptive use over the past three decades as well as global, regional and national trends for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1.

8. Staff of the Division gave presentations on family planning at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America, held in Atlanta, United States of America, and virtually from 6 to 9 April 2022 and at the International Conference on Family Planning, held in Pattaya, Thailand, from 14 to 17 November.

III. Health and mortality

9. The Population Division continued to support, in collaboration with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the World Health Organization (WHO), the Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment.⁷ A primary role of the Technical Advisory Group is to advise and support efforts by WHO and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to assist Member States in obtaining accurate estimates of numbers of deaths attributable to the direct and

² Stephen Kisambira and Karoline Schmid, “Selecting adolescent birth rates (10–14 and 15–19 years) for monitoring and reporting on Sustainable Development Goals”, UN DESA/POP/2022/TP/No.4, December 2022.

³ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/world-contraceptive-use.

⁴ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/family-planning-indicators.

⁵ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Contraceptive Use 2022: estimates and projections of family planning indicators 2022 – methodology report”, UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.5, April 2022.

⁶ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Family Planning 2022: meeting changing needs for family planning – contraceptive use by women’s age and method”, UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/No.4, December 2022.

⁷ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/TAG.

indirect impacts of the pandemic. The Technical Advisory Group comprises over 30 experts from the fields of epidemiology, demography, official statistics and other relevant areas, drawn from national statistical offices, ministries of health, academic institutions and elsewhere. Over the course of 2021 and 2022, the Technical Advisory Group proposed and refined a method for generating estimates of excess mortality on global, regional and national scales. Estimates of global excess mortality associated with the pandemic for the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021 were announced on 5 May 2022 at a virtual press conference convened at WHO headquarters in Geneva.⁸ An estimated 14.9 million excess deaths (within a plausible range from 13.3 million to 16.6 million) were directly or indirectly attributable to COVID-19 during that period. The estimates of excess deaths by age and sex subsequently informed the mortality estimates contained in the 2022 revision of the *World Population Prospects*.

10. Under the guidance of the Technical Advisory Group, in particular its working group on the use of surveys and censuses to fill data gaps, the Division collaborated with the Statistics Division and New York University Abu Dhabi in organizing an Expert Group Meeting on Innovative Methods to Measure the Impact of COVID-19 on Mortality through Surveys and Censuses, held at the New York University Abu Dhabi campus from 23 to 25 August 2022.⁹ Participants discussed a set of proposed recommendations and innovative approaches for censuses and surveys based on ongoing research and experiments for countries with incomplete or unreliable systems for civil registration and vital statistics. The meeting was attended by participants from national statistical offices, research institutions and regional and international organizations and by donors. The Population Division and the Statistics Division also collaborated in several virtual events under the auspices of the working group, including a side event on 7 February 2022 during the annual session of the Statistical Commission, entitled “Measuring the impact of COVID-19 on mortality: how can surveys and censuses help?”,¹⁰ and technical webinars on 13 April and 5 July 2022 on, respectively, the potential of high-frequency surveys¹¹ and innovative sampling strategies.¹²

11. The Division participated in monthly meetings of the task force on mortality and life tables of the Reference Group on Health Statistics, as well as in two technical meetings of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Reference Group on Estimates, Modelling and Projections, held virtually from 16 to 19 May and 11 to 13 October 2022.

12. Staff of the Division organized sessions or gave presentations at a research symposium on human mortality held in Paris on 16 and 17 June 2022 and at the Africa Mortality Symposium held in Freetown and virtually on 29 and 30 November 2022.

IV. International migration

13. In 2022, the Population Division worked on improving the management of empirical data, documentation and estimation procedures for the 2023 revision of the International Migrant Stock data set. The Division produces periodic estimates of the number of international migrants residing in all countries and areas, disaggregated by

⁸ See www.who.int/news/item/05-05-2022-14.9-million-excess-deaths-were-associated-with-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-2020-and-2021.

⁹ See <https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/EventDetails/united-nations-expert-group-meeting-innovative-methods-measu-246>.

¹⁰ See <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/side-events/07022022-M-Measuring-the-Impact-of-COVID-19-on-Mortality>.

¹¹ See <https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/EventDetails/measuring-impact-covid-19-mortality-potential-high-frequency-243>.

¹² See <https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/EventDetails/measuring-impact-covid-19-mortality-rethinking-sampling-str-245>.

sex, age and origin. The data are widely used to describe levels and trends in the number of international migrants at the national, regional and global levels.

14. As the focal point of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the United Nations Network on Migration, the Division participated in working-level meetings of the Executive Committee and the annual meeting of the Network, which was held in Geneva on 18 and 19 October 2022. It supported the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs in his participation in meetings of the Network Principals and contributed to joint statements and guidance notes prepared by the Network. The Division also contributed to the preparation of the second biennial report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (A/76/642), prepared under the auspices of the Network. The report provides an assessment of the activities of the United Nations system in support of the Global Compact and the functioning of the institutional arrangements to support its implementation and served to inform the deliberations of Member States during the first International Migration Review Forum, which was convened by the General Assembly from 17 to 20 May 2022.

15. The Population Division, jointly with the Statistics Division, led the planning and preparations for the third International Forum on Migration Statistics, held in Santiago from 24 to 26 January 2023. The Forum was co-organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Organization for Migration and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The biennial event highlights the increasing relevance of international migration in the context of sustainable development and supports the global monitoring of progress on migration issues in follow-up to both the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The 2023 Forum will mobilize expertise from a wide range of disciplines, including statistics, economics, demography, sociology, geospatial science and information technology, to improve the collection and analysis of migration data worldwide.

16. The Division worked to prepare a report on international migration and sustainable development to be released in early 2023, in which the linkages between international migration and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development will be examined. In the report the Division will describe trends in international migration at the global and regional levels and examine the relationship of international migration with development goals in the areas of poverty and inequality, health, education, gender equality and the empowerment of women, decent work, sustainable cities, climate change, responsible consumption and production, and sustainable agriculture, among others. It will also look at the governance of international migration in the context of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. A policy brief drawing on the contents of the forthcoming report was issued in 2022.¹³

V. Global population estimates and projections

17. On World Population Day (11 July), the Population Division issued the 2022 edition of the *World Population Prospects*,¹⁴ according to which the world's population was projected to reach 8 billion on 15 November 2022 and to grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.4 billion in 2100. These results refer to the medium projection, which assumes a decline in fertility in countries where

¹³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "Why safe, orderly and regular migration matters for sustainable development", Policy Brief No. 146, January 2023.

¹⁴ Available at www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/World-Population-Prospects-2022.

large families are still prevalent and a slight increase in fertility in several low-fertility countries.

18. For the first time, the 2022 revision presented all demographic indicators and population estimates by single years of age and for one-year intervals of time from 1950 to the present. Earlier revisions provided data referring to five-year age groups and five-year intervals of time. The estimates, which refer to 237 countries or areas comprising the total population of the world, were developed through country-specific analyses of historical demographic trends. The 2022 revision also incorporated several methodological enhancements¹⁵ and, within the limits of the available data, took into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all three components of population change (fertility, mortality and migration).

19. The process of upgrading the *World Population Prospects* has been incremental and relies on a new data information system developed over several years. The new system includes: (a) an inventory of available data (DataCatalog); (b) a repository of input data sources (DataArchive); (c) a database to store and update the information used in preparing estimates of population size and of the three components of population change (DemoData); (d) a structured set of metadata used for data analysis, statistical modelling and public documentation (ShortNotes); and (e) a dissemination platform giving access to all output and input data in tabular form and to tools for creating interactive visualizations (DataPortal).

20. The Division continued to compute probabilistic population projections for all countries and areas up to the year 2100. Given the long projection horizon, results at the country level are subject to a high degree of uncertainty. Therefore, the summary report and other outputs draw attention not only to the outcomes of the medium projection, but also to uncertainty intervals describing a range of plausible outcomes. In addition, the 2022 edition of the *World Population Prospects* includes 10 separate projection scenarios that demonstrate the sensitivity of the medium projection to changes in the underlying assumptions and can be used to explore the implications of alternative future scenarios of population change.¹⁶

21. Several outputs presenting results from the 2022 revision are available on the Division's website. A summary of the results contains highlights of key population trends based on the new estimates and projections.¹⁷ Detailed data for countries and areas, world regions and various other country groupings¹⁸ are available from the website in a variety of file formats, including Excel and ASCII, and through the new Data Portal dissemination platform.¹⁹ The new online portal provides tools for interactive data visualization and database queries and allows advanced users to access key results and underlying empirical data using a new application programming interface.

¹⁵ Enhancements included a more systematic and comprehensive compilation of country-level empirical data for each demographic component; probabilistic models for estimating total fertility, age-specific fertility rates, the sex ratio at birth and adult mortality; a new standardized protocol for evaluating and adjusting census population counts by age and sex; a new approach to account for "crisis" mortality impacts, such as those due to conflicts, natural disasters and epidemics, including the COVID-19 pandemic; a new model life table system to estimate mortality age patterns for countries affected by HIV and AIDS; the application of standardized methods for estimating levels and patterns of net international migration; and the upgrade of probabilistic projection models of fertility and mortality for annual time series.

¹⁶ See <https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/Probabilistic/900>.

¹⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects 2022: summary of results", UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/No.3, 2022.

¹⁸ See <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/SpecialAggregates>.

¹⁹ See <https://population.un.org/dataportal/home>.

22. Supporting materials, such as data sources and structured meta-information, are also available.²⁰ The site includes various graphs and thematic profiles illustrating the data,²¹ a policy brief with an analysis of the results,²² a methodology report²³ and a technical paper providing details of a new protocol for evaluating and adjusting census population counts by age and sex.²⁴

23. The Division collaborated with the Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on various tasks in the implementation of the new approach for deriving the population estimates and projections presented in the *World Population Prospects*.

24. The Division contributed to two expert group meetings on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the 2020 round of population and housing censuses. The first meeting, organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and held in the Philippines and virtually on 14 and 15 September, was focused on population projections for that country based on its 2020 census, which was conducted during the pandemic. Participants discussed recommendations for the evaluation and adjustment of population counts from the 2020 census and for the assumptions about fertility, mortality and international migration to be used in projecting the population forward. The second meeting, organized by the Statistics Division in New York from 12 to 14 December, was focused on the global impact of the pandemic on conducting population and housing censuses and on concerns about the quality of the resulting data.²⁵

25. Staff from the Division contributed expertise on demographic trends and methods of population estimation and projection on several occasions, including: (a) an online course on social security issues and the fiscal consequences of population ageing, held on 22 April and organized by the Fiscal Affairs Department of the International Monetary Fund and the Joint Vienna Institute on Social Insurance, Taxation and Employment, for the benefit of government policymakers and technical experts from countries in Central and Eastern Europe; (b) a technical workshop on nowcasting for international organizations, held on 25 and 26 May and organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System; (c) an online seminar on 12 September attended by more than 50 economists and statisticians of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; (d) a meeting of the Statistical Advisory Panel of the Human Development Report Office on 13 December; and (e) a meeting of the Eurostat Working Group on Population Projections, held virtually on 14 and 15 December.

VI. Urbanization and spatial distribution

26. In 2022, the Population Division participated in several technical meetings with the European Commission and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) on the implementation of the new degree of urbanization concept to measure urbanization in a more internationally comparable manner. Following

²⁰ See <https://population.un.org/wpp/DataSources>.

²¹ See <https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs>.

²² United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “A world of 8 billion”, Policy Brief No. 140, November 2022.

²³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Population Prospects 2022: methodology of the United Nations population estimates and projections”, UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.6, July 2022.

²⁴ Peter Johnson and others, “Method protocol for the evaluation of census population data by age and sex”, UN DESA/POP/2022/TP/No.5, December 2022.

²⁵ See <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2022/egm-covid19-census3>.

endorsement of the new measurement by the Statistical Commission in 2020, the Division has been formulating plans to incorporate the new statistical concept as a complement to national definitions of urban residence in future editions of the *World Urbanization Prospects*. In this context, the Division shared access to its empirical online database (DemoData), which includes census tabulations of populations disaggregated by national urban and rural classifications and by age and sex. In addition, to support countries in applying the new methodology, the Division provided technical inputs to the United Nations subregional workshop on the implementation of the degree of urbanization methodology in South-East Asia, organized by the Statistics Division in cooperation with the European Commission, Eurostat and UN-Habitat and held in Bangkok from 28 November to 2 December 2022.

VII. Population policies

27. The Population Division published “World Population Policies 2021: policies related to fertility”,²⁶ in which it provided a brief overview of global fertility levels and trends since the early 1960s and presented government policies on fertility as of 2019, drawing on data from the World Population Policies database. In the report it also presented five case studies from countries in different regions and included an assessment of the potential direct and indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on fertility and fertility-related policies. The report concluded with an exploration and discussion of related policy options.

VIII. Population ageing, household composition and living arrangements

28. In 2022, the Population Division collaborated with the Division for Inclusive Social Development and the Economic Analysis and Policy Division to prepare the *World Social Report 2023: Leaving No One Behind in an Ageing World*, a flagship report of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs published in January 2023. Two chapters prepared by the Population Division provide a global overview of population ageing, highlight the implications of the demographic shift towards older ages for sustainable development and review policy options for countries at various stages of the process. Relevant policies range from those intended to moderate or reverse fertility declines by providing financial incentives and improving work-life balance to those aimed at mitigating the fiscal impacts of population ageing, including for extreme cases in which low levels of fertility persist over several decades. The analysis features data produced by the Division, including from the *World Population Prospects* series and other data sets. The Division also co-led the work on a third chapter focusing on the increasing need for long-term care in ageing societies.

29. The Division updated two interactive databases to produce the Database on Household Size and Composition 2022²⁷ and the Database on Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2022.²⁸ The estimates in these collections are based on 982 unique data sources from 180 countries or areas, representing approximately 98 per cent of persons aged 60 years or over globally, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2020. The Division also published the new interactive Database on Older Persons in Collective Living Quarters 2022,²⁹ the first global data set to provide harmonized and comparable data on older persons aged 65 years or over residing in

²⁶ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/world-population-policies-2021-highlights.

²⁷ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/household-size-and-composition.

²⁸ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/living-arrangements-older-persons.

²⁹ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/living-arrangements-older-persons.

collective living quarters (also known as group quarters), drawing on 347 unique data sources from 135 countries or areas representing approximately 77 per cent of persons aged 65 years or over globally in about the year 2010, covering almost 60 years from 1960 to 2018. A technical paper that provides methodological details on the data set is currently under preparation. The Population Division is collaborating with the Statistics Division to enhance dissemination of the data sets through the Gender Hub and other data platforms.

30. The Division participated in activities of the Inter-Agency Group on Ageing, an informal network of entities of the United Nations system that coordinates their work on ageing and older persons, identifies areas of potential cooperation and works to improve the visibility of older persons and ageing issues within the United Nations system and to integrate ageing and older persons into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.³⁰ The focus of the Group's work is to support the implementation of General Assembly resolution 75/131 on the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030). The Division also continued to support the WHO Technical Advisory Group for Measurement, Monitoring and Evaluation of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing.

31. The Division made several presentations in the context of international meetings on population ageing, including a side event at the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, held in Bangkok on 30 June; a keynote address at the opening of the seventh Golden Age Expo and Summit, organized by the Golden Age Foundation in Hong Kong, China, on 29 and 30 July; the sixth Global Symposium on Low Fertility and Population Ageing, on the theme “Building demographic resilience”, organized by UNFPA and Statistics Korea in Seoul from 10 to 12 November; and a workshop entitled “Opportunities and challenges of the demographic transition and population ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean”, held at ECLAC on 5 December.

IX. Population and development

32. The Population Division launched a report entitled *Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development*³¹ during the Global Policy Dialogue on the Future of Population Growth, held virtually on 23 February 2022.³² In the report it explained how the ongoing rapid growth of the human population was a consequence of the demographic transition towards longer lives and smaller families that had been a universal feature of social and economic development worldwide, how the growth of the world's population was shaped by trends in fertility, mortality and international migration, which varied considerably across countries and regions and over time, and how population growth possessed a momentum that would affect future trends, making them relatively predictable and inflexible over the next few decades. In the report the Division also investigated the social and economic processes that interact in myriad ways with demographic change and population growth. The discussion was focused on several interrelated themes, including the challenge of leaving no one behind in the face of a growing global population, while examining linkages between population growth and key aspects of social and economic development, including poverty and inequality; hunger, food security and nutrition; health and well-being;

³⁰ For more information on the Inter-Agency Group on Ageing, see www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/iaga.html.

³¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development*, UN DESA/POP/2021/TR/No.2, 2021.

³² See www.facebook.com/joinundesavideos/3204253896470809.

education; gender equality and the empowerment of women; and sustained economic growth and decent work. Lastly, the Division focused in the report on the relationship between population growth and environmental sustainability, including the limited scope of population limitation as a mitigation strategy for climate change and the critical roles played by energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production, and sustainable food systems.

X. Support for intergovernmental processes

33. The Population Division supported the organization of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Population and Development, which was held in a hybrid format at United Nations Headquarters from 25 to 29 April 2022. The special theme of the session was “Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth”. At the request of the Chair, the Division convened meetings of the Bureau and informal meetings of Member States. The Division assisted the Bureau in organizing plenary meetings by inviting high-level officials for the opening, organizing interactive panel discussions and facilitating the participation of panellists. The Division also supported the co-facilitators during informal consultations on draft proposals, including a resolution on the special theme that was adopted by consensus.

34. In response to General Assembly resolution [72/305](#) and Economic and Social Council resolution [2016/25](#), the Division supported the Bureau in introducing innovations in the organization of the annual session. The innovations included more extensive consultations with Member States and other stakeholders, greater transparency through systematic information-sharing, increased engagement of civil society, enhanced participation of United Nations entities with relevant expertise and increased allocation of time for informal consultations. During the annual session, traditional formats and presentations were replaced by interactive panels and discussions.

35. In response to requests from Member States for events related to the theme of the annual session throughout the year, the Division organized an informal briefing on the theme of the fifty-sixth session on 27 October 2022. The briefing, which was attended by over 60 delegates, featured national experts from Namibia and Uruguay as well as experts from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNFPA and WHO. Opening remarks were made by the Chair of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and the Director of the Population Division. The objective of the briefing was to encourage an informal exchange of views among Member States, the Secretariat, international organizations and non-governmental organizations about the substantive preparations for the annual session.³³

36. On 15 July 2022, the Division organized, in collaboration with the United Nations Network on Migration, a side event on the contribution of the Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum to the 2030 Agenda, in the margins of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.³⁴ The webinar, which featured a multi-stakeholder panel with speakers from El Salvador, Luxembourg, Tunisia and Zambia, was moderated by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs.

³³ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undes_a_pd_2022_cpd56_briefing-cn.pdf.

³⁴ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/contribution-imrf-progress-declaration-2030-agenda.

A. Reports of the Secretary-General

37. The Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on the theme of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission, “Population and sustainable development, in particular, sustained and inclusive economic growth” (E/CN.9/2022/2). In the report it examined linkages between population and sustainable development, with an emphasis on the implications of population change for macroeconomic growth and fiscal sustainability, and for inequalities and social inclusion in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It investigated the relationships linking selected demographic patterns and trends to poverty and inequality and highlighted the unpaid contributions of women to housework and direct care. In addition, the Division reviewed evidence on the connections between population and environmental sustainability, including on the importance of population growth as a driver of climate change compared with other factors.

38. The Division also prepared the report of the Secretary-General on world demographic trends (E/CN.9/2022/5) as an input for the Commission’s annual session. The topics covered included recent trends and projected changes in population size, fertility, family planning, mortality, population age structures, urbanization and international migration. In the report the Division also assessed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on demographic trends within the limitations of available data.

39. The Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development for the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly (A/77/236). The report, prepared with inputs from members of the United Nations Network on Migration and of academic institutions, contained an analysis of recent global levels and trends in international migration as well as the contribution of migration to population change. The Division explored linkages between migration and the 2030 Agenda, including an overview of how migration was integrated into the voluntary national reviews presented during the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021 as well as of the progress made by the United Nations system in the monitoring of migration-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators. It discussed recent projects to improve migration data as well as the status of ratification of internationally binding legal instruments related to international migration. The report concluded with a summary of findings and a set of actionable recommendations for Member States, United Nations entities and the international community.

B. Expert group meetings

40. To inform the preparation of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission, the Division convened a virtual expert group meeting on population, education and sustainable development on 6 and 7 September 2022. The meeting included more than 20 invited experts from research institutions and United Nations system entities, including UNFPA, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the International Organization for Migration, as well as observers from Member States, civil society and the United Nations system. Participants discussed the latest evidence on trends in the global school-age population and in school enrolment and completion rates. They also examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational achievement and lifelong learning and the relationship between education and population trends, highlighting policy challenges and recommendations.³⁵

³⁵ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/cpd56-egm.

C. Support for the General Assembly

41. The Population Division worked closely with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the United Nations Network on Migration in preparing for the first International Migration Review Forum, which was convened by the Assembly from 17 to 20 May 2022. Together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Division organized a preparatory webinar in February 2022 on round table 4 of the Forum³⁶ and prepared the relevant background note.³⁷ On 17 May, together with the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank, the Division organized a side event entitled “Enhancing the contribution of migrants in the post-COVID-19 era”.³⁸ During the Forum, the Division supported the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, who delivered the keynote statement during round table 4 on 18 May.

42. The Division also supported the Permanent Representatives of Bangladesh and Luxembourg in their role as co-facilitators of the Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum. The Progress Report was adopted by consensus on the last day of the Forum and was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [76/266](#).

43. During the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Division serviced the intergovernmental negotiations in the Second Committee on a resolution on international migration and development.

D. Monitoring of internationally agreed development goals

44. During 2022, the Population Division contributed to the work of the Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, whose task is to monitor progress made towards the achievement of target 3.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on ending preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age. The Group is led by UNICEF and also includes WHO, the Population Division and the World Bank. The Division provided information to update a database maintained by UNICEF and collaborated in the preparation of a report entitled *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality*, which was published on 10 January 2023.

45. In addition, the Division continued to participate in the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group, which is responsible for monitoring progress towards the reduction in maternal mortality, as called for in target 3.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group is led by WHO, with the participation of UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank and the Division. The latter provides key input to the estimation process, including country-level estimates of the number of women of reproductive age, the total fertility rate and the number of live births. Owing to the impact of COVID-19, the release date of the next report on maternal mortality has been postponed to 2023.

46. Survey-based estimates of family planning indicators, published in *World Contraceptive Use 2022*, as well as model-based estimates and projections of such indicators, published in *Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2022*, informed the report of the Secretary-General on global progress in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2022,³⁹ in particular with

³⁶ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/imrf-round-table-4-consultation.

³⁷ See www.un.org/pga/76/wp-content/uploads/sites/101/2022/05/IMRF-Round-table-4-Programme-FINAL-FOR-CIRCULATION-1.pdf.

³⁸ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/IMRF-side-event.

³⁹ *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.22.I.2).

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 using modern methods of contraception (indicator 3.7.1).

47. As the custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.2, the Division provided updated estimates of the fertility rate for women aged 15–19 years, now available for 225 countries or areas for the period from 2000 to 2020.⁴⁰ It also provided, for the first time and covering 215 countries or areas, estimates of the adolescent birth rate for those aged 10–14 years. Both sets of estimates were included in the update submitted by the Division for inclusion in the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database.

48. The Division continued to work with WHO on the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.8.1, on the coverage of essential health services, and provided data on family planning that forms part of the service coverage index used to measure indicator 3.8.1. The Division contributed to a country training event for the Ministry of Health of Cambodia that was coordinated by the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific.

49. Throughout 2022, the Division continued to participate in system-wide consultations and reviews of 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.

XI. Dissemination of population information and data

50. The Population Division continued to strengthen its communications and outreach activities by launching major publications and publicizing intergovernmental events, in close collaboration with the Department of Global Communications and the Strategic Planning and Communications Service of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In line with the strategic communication framework of the Department, the Division further systematized its outreach activities by preparing key messages, media advisories, press releases and social media packages, including digital cards, infographics, tweets and Facebook posts.

51. During 2022, the Division finalized the migration of its website to a new Drupal platform. The new website (www.un.org/development/desa/pd) allows for easier access from mobile devices, reduces the need for posting content in multiple locations, facilitates content management by non-technical staff and is well integrated with the Department's visual ecosystem. It showcases the main activities and outputs of the Division in easily identifiable sections. The migration of content involved moving hundreds of publications, meeting records and data sets to the new website.

52. According to information obtained through Google Analytics, the websites maintained by the Division had nearly 3.7 million page views in 2022. Several Division publications, including one or more editions of the *World Population Prospects*, the *International Migration Report*, the *World Urbanization Prospects* and *World Cities*, continued to rank among the most accessed publications of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, according to download statistics collected by the Department. Outputs presenting the data and findings of the 2022 edition of the *World Population Prospects*, including reports, data files in Excel and ASCII formats, a new online database and interactive plots and maps, as well as other

⁴⁰ United Nations, Global SDG Indicators database, available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database>.

supporting materials,⁴¹ were widely consulted in 2022. “World Population Prospects 2022: summary of results” on its own accounted for 36 per cent of the annual downloads recorded by the Department.⁴²

53. Several agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system distribute data produced by the Division through their databases and websites. For example, the Division contributes to more than 80 of the 1,600 indicators in the World Development Indicators database of the World Bank, with a focus on population dynamics and population structures, fertility, contraception, mortality, migration and urbanization. These indicators were downloaded by up to 733,000 visitors in 2022.

54. The Division collaborated with the Office of the Under-Secretary-General in organizing webinars on “The future of population growth”, on 23 February, and on “Preparing for 8 billion people”, on 20 October.⁴³ It worked closely with UNFPA and the Department of Global Communications in organizing outreach activities in the context of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission. On World Population Day, the Division launched “World Population Prospects 2022: summary of results”, presenting the key findings of the 2022 revision of the United Nations estimates and projections of the global population. The report attracted by far the broadest media coverage within the Department, with over 4,600 articles globally referencing the release. On 15 November, the Division commemorated the day on which the world’s population was projected to have reached 8 billion people by issuing a press release, holding a press briefing and publishing a policy brief.⁴⁴ The Division also supported the organization of a Department of Economic and Social Affairs global policy dialogue fireside chat on building a sustainable world for 8 billion people, on 15 November, during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The Day of Eight Billion generated extensive media coverage of population issues, with the Division responding to dozens of requests for interviews and additional information from media outlets across the world. Press releases for all major events were issued jointly with UNFPA.

55. In order to reach a wider, non-expert audience, the Division prepared three policy briefs. In conjunction with the publication of the report entitled *Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development*, the Division prepared a policy brief entitled “Why population growth matters for sustainable development”.⁴⁵ On the occasion of the Day of Eight Billion, the Division published a policy brief entitled “A world of 8 billion”.⁴⁶ For International Migrants Day, on 18 December, the Division issued a policy brief on “Why safe, orderly and regular migration matters for sustainable development”.⁴⁷ It was noted in the latter brief, which drew on materials from a forthcoming report on international migration and sustainable development, that international migration could facilitate the achievement of many targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

56. Throughout the year, the Division received many requests for data and provided relevant information in a timely manner. In 2022, staff continued to meet with delegations of Member States to discuss various population-related topics, including

⁴¹ See <https://population.un.org/wpp>.

⁴² See <https://desapublications.un.org/most-downloaded-publications>.

⁴³ See www.un.org/en/desa/policy-dialogue.

⁴⁴ See www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/day-eight-billion.

⁴⁵ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “Why population growth matters for sustainable development”, Policy Brief No. 130, February 2022.

⁴⁶ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “A world of 8 billion”.

⁴⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “Why safe, orderly and regular migration matters for sustainable development”.

the Division's estimates and projections of the global population, the work of the Commission, the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda and the work of the United Nations in the area of international migration. It also prepared several briefing notes and statements for senior officials of the United Nations.

XII. Technical cooperation

57. At the request of national statistical offices of several countries, and with support from the UNFPA Technical Division and its regional and country offices, the Population Division held technical meetings with representatives of the Republic of Korea, in New York on 15 June 2022, Uganda, virtually on 2 August 2022, and the Philippines, virtually on 14 September and 16 November 2022, to explain the analytical methods used by the Division in preparing population estimates and projections, in particular the methods used to evaluate the quality census data used as the baseline reference for population projections.

58. At the request of the National Economic and Social Development Council of Thailand, the Population Division collaborated with the UNFPA country office to organize a capacity-building workshop in Pattaya from 7 to 11 November 2022 to train government staff on the production and use of probabilistic population projections.

59. At the request of the Ministry of Finance of Malaysia, the Division held a virtual capacity-building workshop from 7 to 11 March 2022 to provide training for government staff in the estimation and use of national accounts data disaggregated by age.

60. At the request of the Central Bank of Guatemala, the Division provided technical support for the estimation of national accounts data disaggregated by age for the country.

61. At the request of the UNFPA country office in Guatemala, the Division was invited to teach virtually at an event on National Transfer Accounts, held in Guatemala City on 23 February 2022 and attended by government officials and academic researchers. A staff member gave presentations on the use of national accounts data disaggregated by population group for policymaking, on international differences in the role of Governments and families in providing economic support to children and older persons, and on the use of national accounts data disaggregated by age for long-run forecasts of spending on education, health care and pensions.

62. In coordination with ECLAC, the Division organized two discussion workshops on demographic change, National Transfer Accounts and national inclusion accounts during the tenth congress of the Latin American Population Association, which took place in Valparaíso, Chile, from 6 to 9 December 2022. Government policymakers and researchers from 10 countries in the region identified past achievements and remaining challenges in the estimation of national accounts disaggregated by population group and in the application of such data for policymaking.

63. The Division, together with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, organized the fourth Beyond GDP sprint meeting of the United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians, which was held virtually on 21 April 2022 and attended by 120 participants from national statistics offices as well as regional and international organizations. Participants discussed the disaggregation of national accounts by sociodemographic group. In addition, the Division presented its work in this area at a series of webinars on the regional statistical priorities of national statistical offices, hosted by the United Nations regional commissions.

64. At the request of the Asia-Pacific regional office of UNFPA, staff members from the Division taught at a regional training workshop on using evidence from National Transfer Accounts for population and development policy advancement in the Asia-Pacific region, held in Bangkok from 10 to 13 October 2022. The workshop was attended by 64 participants from government offices of 11 countries in the region.

65. The *National Transfer Accounts Manual: Measuring and Analysing the Generational Economy*, which the Division released in 2013, was translated and published in Spanish, in collaboration with ECLAC, and in Russian, in collaboration with the UNFPA subregional office for Central Asia. It is an important tool for a better understanding, interpretation and analysis of the macroeconomic and distributional effects of demographic change. Its availability in Spanish and Russian broadens its potential application in facilitating a more complete evaluation and formulation of socioeconomic policies in pursuit of equitable and inclusive national growth and development.

66. As part of its contribution to the support provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to the resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams, the Division provided input and reviewed several common country assessment reports (or regional reports), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework proposals and other documents. It contributed to the ongoing development of the Department's vision and strategy towards advancing the sustainable development of small island developing States and to the development of the Department's approach to country-level support in the context of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system.

Annex

Publications, expert group meetings and other materials prepared or events organized by the Population Division (1 January–31 December 2022)

Expert group meetings

Expert group meeting on population, education and sustainable development, virtual meeting, New York, 6 and 7 September 2022

Capacity development workshops

Virtual training workshop on the estimation and application of National Transfer Accounts for Malaysia, 7–11 March 2022

National training workshop on probabilistic population projections, Pattaya, Thailand, 7–11 November 2022

Regional workshop on national inclusion accounts, Valparaíso, Chile, 8–9 December 2022

Reports of the Secretary-General and other parliamentary documents

Report of the Secretary-General on population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth ([E/CN.9/2022/2](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on world demographic trends ([E/CN.9/2022/5](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2021: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs ([E/CN.9/2022/6](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development ([A/77/236](#))

Publications

World Population Policies 2021: policies related to fertility
(UN DESA/POP/2021/TR/No.1)

Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development
(UN DESA/POP/2021/TR/No.2)

World Population Prospects 2022: summary of results
(UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/No.3)

World Family Planning 2022: meeting changing needs for family planning – contraceptive use by age and method (UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/No.4)

Databases and data sets

World Population Prospects 2022

World Contraceptive Use 2022

Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2022

Household Size and Composition

Household Living Arrangements of Older Persons

Older Persons in Collective Living Quarters

Technical papers

Selecting adolescent birth rates (10–14 and 15–19 years) for monitoring and reporting on Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA/POP/2022/TP/No.4)

Method protocol for the evaluation of census population data by age and sex (UN DESA/POP/2022/TP/No.5)

Other technical materials

Methodology report: World Contraceptive Use 2022 – estimates and projections of family planning indicators 2022 (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.5)

World Population Prospects 2022: methodology of the United Nations population estimates and projections (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.6)

Methodology report: United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2022 (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.7)

Methodology report: United Nations Database on Household Size and Composition 2022 (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.8)

Methodology Report: United Nations Database on Older Persons in Collective Living Quarters 2022 (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.9)

World Population Prospects 2022: data source (UN DESA/POP/2022/DC/No.9)

Руководство по национальным трансфертным счетам (Russian version of *National Transfer Accounts Manual*)

Manual de cuentas nacionales de transferencia (Spanish version of *National Transfer Accounts Manual*)

Policy briefs

Why population growth matters for sustainable development, Policy Brief No. 130

A world of 8 billion, Policy Brief No. 140

Why safe, orderly and regular migration matters for sustainable development, Policy Brief No. 146

Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development: ten key messages

World Population Policies 2021: policies related to fertility – ten key messages

World Population Prospects 2022: summary of results – ten key messages
