



International
Labour
Organization

► Mapping and assessing sources for statistics of international labour migration and temporary labour mobility

ILO Practical Guide





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Contents

	Page
List of tables	4
List of boxes	4
List of figures	6
List of illustrations	6
List of templates	6
► Foreword	8
► Acknowledgements	9
► Introduction	10
Objectives of the Guide	11
Structure of the Guide	12
How to use this guide	13
► Chapter 1: ILM data source assessments at a glance	14
Scope, objectives and expected outputs	14
Stages and steps	15
Assessment extensions	17
Recommendations and report preparation	18
Stakeholder consultation	19
Planning an ILM data source assessment	19
Evaluator Profile	19
Working methods and assessment tools	20
Basic Schedule	20
► Chapter 2: Reference statistical concepts and criteria	22
International statistical standards for ILM data	22
Reference concepts from population statistics	23
Resident and non-resident (temporary) population	23
Reference concepts from migration statistics	24
International mobility, migration and temporary mobility	24
International migrant	25
Stock and flow measures	27
Reference concepts from statistics on refugees, related populations and statelessness	28
Persons in need of international protection	28
Stateless persons and others with undetermined nationality	29
Reference concepts from labour force statistics	30
Employment and labour force status	30
Labour underutilization	31
Reference concepts for international labour mobility	34
International migrants with labour attachment	35
Returned migrants and emigrants with employment experience abroad	36

Residents employed abroad and non-residents employed in the country	37
Reference concepts for permit and authorizations to work statistics	38
Reference concepts from employment statistics	40
Minimum data collection items for ILM statistics	43
► Chapter 3: Specifying the data priorities	44
Step 1: Identifying policy priorities and trends	44
National level	44
Regional level	46
Global level	47
Step 2: Review existing ILM indicator frameworks and statistical plans	50
National level	51
Regional level	51
Global level	53
Step 3: Establishing an ILM indicator plan	58
► Chapter 4: Rapid mapping of sources and stakeholders	61
Step 1: Mapping data sources	61
Step 2: Mapping institutions (producers and users)	67
Step 3: Matrix of priority ILM indicators, data sources, and institutions	70
► Chapter 5: In-depth assessment by source	72
Step 1: Detailed documentation of identified ILM data sources	72
Section A: Source description and methodology	73
Section B: Core data items	75
Section C: Definitions, criteria, and classifications	77
Section D: Quality measures and dissemination	78
Step 2: Metadata source analysis	81
Step 3: Comparative data source analysis	86
► Chapter 6: ILM data assessment extensions	89
Comparability of key ILM indicators	89
Institutional capacities for ILM data production	93
Institutional environment and ILM data system coordination	96
► Chapter 7: Recommendations and report preparation	99
Step 1: Data source recommendations	99
Step 2: Preparation of the assessment report	103
Step 3: Final stakeholder validation	105
► Appendix	106
► Annex	138
► References	140

List of tables

► Table 1. Stages of the ILM data sources assessment cycle	15
► Table 2. Guiding questions by stage and step of the ILM data sources assessment cycle	16
► Table 3. Guiding questions for extensions of the ILM data assessment cycle	17
► Table 4. Main international statistical standards relevant for international labour migration	23
► Table 5. Data items to operationalize core concepts for international labour migration statistics	43
► Table 6a. Core indicators for international migration —UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations	54
► Table 6b. Indicators for international temporary mobility —UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations	55
► Table 7. Stock indicators for priority international migrant and mobile workers—21 st ICLS Guidelines	56
► Table 8. Core labour market indicators for international migrants —21 st ICLS Guidelines	57
► Table 9. Permit statistics for managed labour mobility	58
► Table 10. Summary of the value and quality considerations of the main different sources of ILM data	62
► Table 11. Institutional environment assessment dimensions	97
► Annex. Table I. Migration in the SDG Indicator Framework (UN, 2017)	138
► Annex. Table II: Selected GCM Indicators on labour migration	138

List of boxes

► Box 1. Definitions of country of usual residence, resident population, and non-resident population	24
► Box 2. Definitions of international mobility and its components	24
► Box 3. Definitions of immigrant, emigrant, and returned international migrants	25
► Box 4. Definitions of the criteria used to determine the international migration status of persons	26
► Box 5. Definitions of persons in need of international protection and displaced people in transit	28
► Box 6. Definitions of persons returned from abroad after seeking international protection	29
► Box 7. Definitions of persons with undetermined nationality, stateless persons and related categories	29
► Box 8. Definitions of labour force status, employed, unemployed and outside the labour force	30
► Box 9. Definitions of measures of labour underutilization	31
► Box 10. Scope of statistics on international labour mobility and its components	34
► Box 11. Definitions of population groups relevant for ILM statistics (country of destination perspective)	35
► Box 12. Definitions of population groups relevant for ILM statistics (country of origin perspective)	36
► Box 13. Definitions of population groups relevant for statistics on international temporary labour mobility	37
► Box 14. Definitions of a job and an establishment	40

► Box 15. International Standard Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18-A)	40
► Box 16. International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)	41
► Box 17. International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) revision 5	41
► Box 18. Example on national policy and legal frameworks governing labour migration in Tanzania (2023)	45
► Box 19. Example on international migration and mobility trends in the Dominican Republic (2023)	46
► Box 20. Examples of continental and regional economic blocks granting free mobility	47
► Box 21. Example on regional policy instruments relevant for ILM in Tanzania (2023)	47
► Box 22. Thematic areas of the ILO fundamental conventions applicable to migrant workers	48
► Box 23. Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015)	49
► Box 24. Global Compact, Objectives relevant to decent work and labour migration	49
► Box 25. Example on listing global instruments relevant for ILM in South Asia regional study (2023)	50
► Box 26. Example on national statistical plans (OSP) in Türkiye (2025)	51
► Box 27. Example on priority indicators at regional level, European Union (2020)	52
► Box 28. Example on priority permit statistics series at regional level, European Union	52
► Box 29. Example on listing data sources for ILM statistics in Egypt	67
► Box 30. Example of listing relevant data-producing institutions and data sources from Korea	70
► Box 31. UN National Quality Assurance Framework, Level D	82
► Box 32. Example on comparative assessment of data sources on population coverage from Colombia	87
► Box 33. Example on comparative assessment of data sources on data items from Colombia	88
► Box 34. Stock estimates for migrant populations by data source in the Republic of Korea (2018)	90
► Box 35. Reconciliation of data between the Population Census and the foreign register, Korea 2015	91
► Box 36. Reconciliation of data between the Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force and the Population Census, Korea 2018	92
► Box 37. Example of an assessment of institutional capacity for ILM statistics in Tunisia	95
► Box 38. Example on assessment of institutional environment in Tunisia (2020)	98
► Box 39. Example of recommendations for Colombia's Large Integrated Household Survey (2021)	100
► Box 40. Example of recommendations for Mauritania's Population Census (2020)	101
► Box 41. Example from Morocco's Data Mapping and Assessment Exercise (2020)	102
► Box 42. Example from a regional assessment of Arab States' ILM data (2020)	102
► Box 43. Example of table of contents from Uganda (2023)	104
► Box 44. Example of final stakeholder consultation from Morocco (2021)	105

List of figures

► Figure 1. Difference between international migration and international temporary mobility	25
► Figure 2. Difference in stock and flow measures in international migration and mobility statistics	27
► Figure 3. 19th ICLS labour force status classification and measures of labour underutilization	33
► Figure 4. Difference between statistics of international mobility and international labour mobility	34
► Figure 5. Flows and status changes relating to international labour migration	35
► Figure 6. Priority groups related to international labour migration and international temporary labour mobility	38
► Figure 7. Step-by-step process for conducting the metadata source analysis	83
► Figure 8. PARIS21. Capacity model for national statistical systems	94

List of illustrations

► Illustration 1. Activity schedule for ILM mapping and evaluation.....	21
► Illustration 2. Template I. ILM indicator plan —Country of destination perspective	59
► Illustration 3. Template I. ILM indicator plan —Country of origin perspective.....	60
► Illustration 4. Listing main stakeholders involved in the production and use of official ILM statistics	69
► Illustration 5. Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions —Returned migrants and emigrants	71
► Illustration 6. Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions —Temporary mobile workers.....	71
► Illustration 7. Source Metadata Template Section A —Specialised migration survey (excerpt)	74
► Illustration 8. Source Metadata Template Section B —Population Census (excerpt).....	76
► Illustration 9. Source Metadata Template Section C —Population Census (excerpt).....	77
► Illustration 10. Source Metadata Template Section C —Administrative Records (excerpt).....	78
► Illustration 11. Source Metadata Template Section D.1 —Specialized migration survey (excerpt).....	79
► Illustration 14. Recording the findings of the metadata source analysis	85
► Illustration 15. Indexing of ILM data sources, source types and producing institutions	87

List of templates

► Template I: National ILM indicator plan for ILM Statistics	106
► Template II: Matrix of priority indicators, data sources and responsible institutions	107
► Template III. Section A: Source description and methodology	108
► Template III. Section B. Data items and population coverage	110
► Template III. Section C : Definitions, criteria and classifications	112
► Template III. Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination	114

► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section A : Source description and methodology	115
► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section B. Data items	117
► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications	119
► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section D: Quality evaluation and dissemination of results	121
► Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section A : Source description and methodology.....	123
► Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section B : Data items.....	125
► Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications	127
► Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section D : Quality evaluation and dissemination	129
► Template V. Section A : Source description and methodology	123
► Template V. Section B : Data items	125
► Template V. Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications	127
► Template V. Section D: Quality evaluation and dissemination	129
► Template VI. Metadata source analysis	130
► Template VII. Section A: Indexing of ILM data sources, source types, and producing institutions	131
► Template VII. Section B: Cross-source coverage assessment of priority migrant groups	132
► Template VII. Section C: Cross-source coverage assessment of priority data items	134
► Template VII. Section D: Cross-source assessment on alignment with international statistical standards	136
► Template VII. Section E: Cross-source assessment of data reporting frequency and dissemination	137

► Foreword

Reliable statistics are the backbone of sound labour migration governance. Yet in many countries and regions, data on international labour migration and mobility remain limited and fragmented across institutions, impacting our ability to fully understand labour mobility dynamics, assess migrants' labour market outcomes, and design policies that are both effective and fair.

This Practical Guide responds to that challenge in a clear and practical way. It offers a structured approach to mapping and assessing the diverse sources that underpin international labour migration and mobility statistics. Rather than staying at a theoretical level, it focuses on what practitioners can actually do: identify priority data needs, take stock of existing sources, assess data quality and comparability, and pinpoint gaps—along with practical ways to address them.

Anchored in the mandate of the International Labour Organization to advance international standards and guidance in labour statistics, including those on international labour migration and mobility, the Guide draws on the latest recommendations endorsed by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians and the ILO's extensive experience in supporting countries to strengthen official labour statistics. It highlights an often-overlooked reality: no single data source can capture international labour mobility in full. Population censuses, surveys, and administrative records each provide only partial insights, but when combined, they offer a far more complete picture of migration trends, cross-border employment, and migrants' labour market outcomes.

A key strength of this Guide is its clear, step-by-step approach. It guides users from identifying policy priorities to conducting rapid mappings and more detailed assessments, while keeping stakeholder engagement at the centre throughout. In doing so, the Guide reminds us that data systems do not function in isolation—they are shaped by institutional mandates and the degree of coordination among data producers, and between producers and users. Bringing these actors together is essential to improving both the relevance and quality of labour migration and mobility statistics.

The Guide is also designed to be flexible. Countries differ widely in their migration profiles, institutional arrangements, and statistical capacities. Whether a country is primarily of origin, transit, destination—or a combination—the approach can be adapted to national contexts and priorities. This flexibility is key to ensuring the Guide is a practical tool, not just a technical reference.

At a time when international migration and cross-border mobility are reshaping labour markets and development pathways, the demand for reliable, timely, and comparable data continues to rise. Global frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Global Compact for Migration, and the Global Compact for Refugees make clear that better data are not a luxury but a necessity for effective governance. This publication supports countries and regional bodies in that effort. By strengthening labour migration data, it contributes to a broader goal: ensuring that policies affecting migrant workers are evidence-based, grounded in reality, and aligned with the principles of decent work.

We hope this Guide serves as a practical resource for statisticians, policymakers, and practitioners. More importantly, we hope it helps strengthen collaboration across institutions and supports more coherent, evidence-based decision-making in this critical area.



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The Guide was authored by Elisa M. Benes, Head, RMSSU and Idil Yildiz, Assistant Statistician, building on an initial draft prepared by David Glejberman, former ILO Regional Statistician for Latin America and the Caribbean. It draws extensively on the practical experience accumulated by ILO field specialists through national and regional assessments of data sources for international labour migration statistics across multiple regions —without which this publication would not have been possible.

The Guide was enriched by substantive inputs and technical contributions from Andonirina Rakotonarivo, Labour Statistician, ILO STATISTICS; Nadia Touihri, Regional Labour Statistician, ILO Regional Office for Africa; Yacouba Diallo, Senior Specialist in Labour Statistics, Decent Work Team, ILO Dakar; and Andrew Mukulu Lutakome, Statistician, ILO BRMM programme.

► Introduction

International migration, particularly labour migration, has become a priority in the development agenda of many countries and regions worldwide. Its potential benefits—such as driving economic growth, addressing labour demand shortages, generating employment opportunities for growing youth cohorts, enabling the integration of migrants and refugees, facilitating skills transfer and promoting investments in origin communities—are widely recognized. Despite this, the data needed to effectively monitor migration trends, assess migrants' access to and contributions to labour markets, evaluate their working conditions, track remittances and guide informed decision-making and planning remain limited and fragmented.

According to the United Nations, the number of international migrants worldwide reached 304 million in 2024. While this still represents a small share of the global population (3.7 per cent), the number of migrants has nearly doubled since 1990, highlighting the growing relevance of international migration in today's world¹. Although the factors driving international migration may be evolving, most migrants become active in the labour markets of destination countries, contributing to growth and development. Estimates by the International Labour Organization (ILO) indicate that in 2022, nearly two-thirds (65.6 per cent) of working-age international migrants were part of the global labour force. Compared with non-migrants, both migrant men and women have higher rates of participation in the labour markets of destination countries across most regions. By 2022, international migrants represented nearly 20 per cent of the labour force in high-income countries, where the majority of migrants are concentrated (68.4 per cent).²

Alongside international migration, people also cross borders for work without changing their country of residence. International temporary labour mobility describes these situations, where individuals remain residents of their home country but travel abroad for employment on a short-term or recurring basis. This includes, for example, daily cross-border commuting, seasonal work, and short-term trips to deliver paid services. Although temporary, these movements can have significant economic and social impacts and are especially important in border regions and among countries that share common economic markets. However, systematic data on these forms of cross-border employment remain limited, making their scale, characteristics, and contributions difficult to assess.

The growing importance of international migration and international temporary mobility to labour markets and development highlights the need for better data to inform planning. Both *the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*³ and the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)*⁴, recognize migration as a catalyst for equitable development, provided there are policies to protect migrants and ensure decent work. *The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*⁵ call for safe and orderly migration, with SDG 10 targeting reduced migration barriers and fair recruitment (target 10.7), and SDG 8 focusing on labour rights and safe working environments for all workers, including migrants (target 8.8). Likewise, the GCM, adopted in 2018, highlights as its first objective the need for better data collection to strengthen migration governance, while objective 6 underscores the commitment of governments to support policies that protect migrant workers, promote fair recruitment and ensure effective labour market integration.

*The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)*⁶, also adopted in 2018, further promotes socioeconomic inclusion as a long-term solution to enable refugees and other forcibly displaced groups to attain self-reliance and well-being.

¹ See [United Nations. International Migrant Stock 2024: Key facts and figures](#)

² See [ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers](#)

³ See [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

⁴ See [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)

⁵ See [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)

⁶ See [Global Compact on Refugees](#)

Achieving this goal requires robust data on the socioeconomic integration of refugees and other forcibly displaced groups, including their access to employment. Such data are essential for informing policies that address refugees' specific needs, improve their quality of life and ensure they contribute meaningfully to the development of their host countries.

As international migration and temporary mobility trends continue to evolve and global economic integration deepens, reliable and comparable data on its labour dimensions will become increasingly important. Quality data on international labour migration and temporary labour mobility, however, are notoriously difficult to produce. Countries, regional economic blocs, and other stakeholders will need to rely on efficient statistical systems capable of harnessing different data sources to meet the demand for frequent and comparable data relevant for planning and decision making. Internationally agreed recommendations, including the *UN Recommendations for International Migration and Temporary Mobility Statistics*⁷, the *EGRIS Recommendations on Refugee Statistics*⁸, and, more specifically, the 21st *ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work and authorizations to work*⁹, all underscore the importance of establishing integrated migration information systems based on the combined use of multiple data sources.

Combining administrative data sources, censuses and surveys offers significant value in producing statistics on international labour migration. Administrative data, such as records from immigration authorities, social security systems and labour ministries, can provide frequent information on managed migration flows, including trends in work permit and authorization holders and other migrant groups with legal rights to employment, in registered migrant employment, social security coverage, and so on. Population censuses can generate the benchmark data needed to determine the size and geographic distribution of different groups of international migrants, serve as a frame for the efficient design of surveys and, under certain conditions, enable the progressive linking of additional characteristics on migrants' employment derived from other sources. Surveys, on the other hand, can shed light on broader labour market trends, including labour force participation, underutilization and informal employment among migrants, and vis-à-vis non-migrants. By integrating these different data sources, a more complete picture of international labour migration and mobility can be developed, enabling better policy formulation, targeted interventions and improved monitoring of migrant workers' rights and contributions to the economy.

Objectives of the Guide

This Guide provides a step-by-step approach for conducting national and regional assessments of data sources related to international labour migration and temporary labour mobility (ILM) statistics. It is designed to assist countries, regional bodies and other stakeholders in evaluating the relevance, availability and comparability of the different sources of international ILM data, with the goal of informing strategies for their development and improvement.

Recognizing the diversity of migration and mobility patterns across countries and regions, the Guide adopts a flexible approach that allows for specifying the scope, objectives and expected outputs of the assessment considering different policy priorities and data needs. This flexibility ensures that the Guide can be applied from different perspectives as a country of origin, transit, destination or a country or region with mixed migration and mobility flows.

Drawing on the ILO's extensive experience in supporting such assessments, this Guide includes real-world examples, along with practical templates to help prioritize the data and indicators needed, identify relevant data sources and stakeholders and evaluate the coverage, quality and comparability of different sources, including

⁷ See [UN Recommendations for International Migration and Temporary Mobility Statistics](#)

⁸ See [EGRIS Recommendations on Refugee Statistics](#)

⁹ See [21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work and authorizations to work](#)

population censuses, sample surveys and various types of administrative records. It also provides guidance on how to determine how well these sources align with the latest international statistical standards, and on the types of recommendations that may be drawn to inform plans for their improvement.

The Guide emphasizes the importance of stakeholder engagement as part of the assessment cycle. By bringing together data producers and users, the Guide aims to promote a collaborative approach in the assessment process. As such, it can be readily integrated as an essential step in processes to establish or expand national and regional labour market information systems that incorporate labour migration and mobility as a topic. For this purpose, the Guide can be used in combination with the *ILO Practical Guide for the Implementation of an International Labour Migration and Labour Market Information System at the National Level*¹⁰. Additionally, it can support efforts to integrate priority ILM data in national or regional integrated migration information systems (IMIS).

Structure of the Guide

The Guide is organized in seven chapters.

Chapter 1 provides an **overview of the assessment cycle**, introducing its three main stages: (I) Specifying the data priorities; (II) conducting a rapid mapping; and (III) undertaking in-depth assessments by source. The main expected outputs of each stage are also described, and their relevance to inform next steps highlighted. The chapter provides practical guidance on planning an assessment, defining its scope and expected outputs, specifying a suitable time schedule, the evaluator profile, and some of the main tools and resources needed.

Chapter 2 introduces the most recent **international statistical standards relevant for ILM** and presents the main concepts, definitions, priority groups and essential data items needed to identify them and measure their essential labour market characteristics in different data sources. These concepts and data items serve as a reference during the mapping stage to identify existing and potential data sources, as well as gaps. They also serve as a basis for undertaking in-depth assessments to identify comparability issues and determine how well the different sources align with the international statistical standards.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the first stage of the assessment cycle: **Specifying the data priorities**. It emphasizes the importance of establishing the national or regional data priorities for ILM statistics based on a review of recent migration and temporary mobility trends and policy priorities. This information is then used to identify the main population groups of interest and the topics for which data is required, serving as a reference to compile a list of priority data, indicators and disaggregation variables—an ILM indicator plan—as the main output. Illustrations based on priority indicators highlighted by global and regional policy accords, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Compact on Migration, and relevant international statistical standards, are also provided.

Chapter 4 focuses on the second stage of the assessment cycle: **Conducting a rapid mapping**. Using real-world examples, the chapter highlights the importance of undertaking rapid mappings of data sources, including those already in use to produce ILM statistics, as well as other potential sources, and of relevant institutions, considering both producers and users. These rapid mappings are informed by the ILM indicator plan generated during the first stage of the assessment (chapter 3). The chapter ends with guidance on preparing a matrix of priority indicators, relevant data sources and responsible institutions, which serves to identify data already available, data gaps, untapped sources and the custodian agencies.

¹⁰ See: [ILO Practical Guide for the Implementation of an International Labour Migration and Labour Market Information System](#).

Chapter 5 provides step-by-step guidance to conduct an **in-depth assessment by source** for ILM statistics. Taking the UN National Quality Assurance Framework as a reference, the chapter outlines an approach to conduct a systematic metadata documentation and analysis of each of the ILM data sources identified during the rapid mapping. It considers six key dimensions of quality covering: relevance, accuracy and reliability, timelines and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, coherence and comparability, and metadata transparency. The analysis starts with an individual evaluation of each data source, followed by a comparative assessment across the different sources. Practical templates are used for illustration purposes throughout the chapter.

Chapter 6 provides relevant examples of **ILM data assessment extensions** that may be considered. These include an assessment of key estimates produced by different data sources, an evaluation of institutional capacities for ILM data production and an evaluation of the institutional environment and ILM data system coordination. These three areas can generate additional insights for a more comprehensive review of the country's capacity to generate quality ILM data, taking into consideration the established priority ILM indicator plan. Practical examples are provided to facilitate inclusion of these optional stages and their adaptation to the national context.

Chapter 7 ends the Guide with practical suggestions to formulate source-specific and general **recommendations** based on the findings of the assessment. It also provides step-by-step guidance on summarizing the main findings from the assessment and preparing a report. The chapter ends by highlighting the importance of undertaking stakeholder validation of the findings and recommendations as a way to ensure their suitability, promote ownership and facilitate dialogue on potential next steps for their implementation.

How to use this guide

To support users in navigating this material, the Guide uses different tools to present key content:

- **Tables** (in blue) summarize technical guidance, including agreed definitions, classifications, indicators, and international statistical standards.
- **Examples** (in red) are drawn from actual national and regional case studies. They illustrate how various countries or regions have implemented ILM data assessments, their uses, and the types of recommendations generated.
- **Figures** help visualize conceptual frameworks, relationships across statistical standards, and decision-making steps during the assessment.
- **Templates** (in grey) are designed to help users carry out the different steps of the assessment. They can be found in the **Appendix. Illustrations** on how to fill in these templates are included in the different chapters, showing how the tools can be applied in practice.

► Chapter 1: ILM data source assessments at a glance

For assessments of international labour migration and temporary labour mobility (ILM) data sources to be effective, they must be tailored to the specific national or regional context and policy data needs. It is crucial, from the outset, to define the scope and objectives of the assessment and establish the expected outputs.

Scope, objectives and expected outputs

A main objective when conducting assessments of ILM data sources is to determine whether the country or region has the necessary data and/or data sources to meet the demand for quality information on the labour aspects of international mobility—including migration and temporary mobility. This includes information on the number and characteristics of persons engaged through programmes for managed international labour migration and mobility, as well as the labour market participation and working conditions of different groups of international migrants, regardless of the reasons for their migration. It also includes information on temporary cross-border movements, including residents employed abroad and non-residents employed in the country compiling the statistics.

More detailed objectives may be specified depending on national and regional priorities, or the need to address emerging issues, particular data gaps, or data quality concerns. For example,

- If the main priority is to establish a profile of the number of working-age immigrants (also known as resident international migrants), their socio-demographic characteristics and geographic distribution, the assessment will focus on sources that can provide quality data on population totals (that is, stocks), such as population censuses and population registers.
- If the objectives include generating data to support the effective enforcement of regulations and policies ensuring equal rights to employment and decent work for migrants and non-migrants, then the assessment should cover sources such as labour force surveys, specialized migration surveys, establishment surveys and selected administrative records, for example, on social security and occupational injuries, which can support comparisons across a range of employment characteristics.
- If the focus is on evaluating the availability of data on emigrant populations, return migrants, frontier and seasonal workers, or other populations in temporary mobility and the nature of their work arrangements abroad, labour market reintegration, or employment outcomes upon return, then the assessment should examine a wider range of data sources including emigration registers, consular records, specialized migration surveys, work permit and authorization data, bilateral administrative data exchanges, and migration data shared by primary destination countries.

Likewise, the expected outputs of the assessment will depend on each country or region, the capacity and development of the statistical system with respect to ILM data, engagement of key stakeholders and open data policy. They may include:

- Establishing a list of priority indicators (i.e. ILM indicator plan), relevant stakeholders, and data sources.
- Conducting a diagnostic of the potentials and limitations of the data sources identified.
- Completing a metadata and quality assessment for each or some of the data sources identified.
- Conducting a comparative assessment of the concepts, definitions, classifications, reference periods, and other technical specifications, used by the different data sources.
- Comparing the estimates produced for different groups of international migrants derived from the different data sources.
- Assessing institutional capacities to generate quality statistics on ILM.
- Evaluating the institutional framework for establishing or maintaining a coordinated ILM data system

Stages and steps

Once the scope, objectives and expected outputs have been defined, the ILM data source assessment can be organized into four main stages, each covering different steps (see [Table 1](#)). The process is iterative, enabling movement back and forth between stages, skipping certain steps if adequate information is already available, or revisiting earlier stages based on findings from later ones. Useful guiding questions that can help focus each stage of the assessment are shown in [Table 2](#).

► **Table 1. Stages of the ILM data sources assessment cycle**

Step	STAGE I Specifying the data priorities	STAGE II Rapid mapping	STAGE III In-depth assessment by source	FINAL STAGE Recommendations
1	Identifying policy priorities and trends in international mobility	Mapping data sources (in use and potential)	Detailed documentation of identified data sources	Specifying data source recommendations
2	Reviewing existing ILM indicators frameworks and statistical plans	Mapping institutions (producers and users)	Metadata source analysis	Preparation of the assessment report
3	Listing priority groups, indicators, topics and disaggregation variables (i.e. ILM indicator plan)	Matrix of priority indicators, data sources and institutions	Comparative source analysis	Final stakeholder validation

The process begins with **Stage I (Specifying the data priorities)**, which focuses on identifying the national/regional policy priorities, relevant migrant groups and, on this basis, the priority data required. This stage includes a review of relevant policy instruments, legislations, action plans and published analyses on international migration, labour migration and/or employment trends in the country or region. Also relevant is a review of recommended indicators already specified in national statistics plans, as well as in regional or global accords and recommendations. This includes the indicator frameworks established in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Compact on Migration, Global Compact on Refugees, and relevant international statistical standards, particularly the UN Recommendations for International Migration and Mobility Statistics and the 21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work and authorizations to work. **The main output** of this stage should be an ILM indicator plan—that is, a list highlighting the groups of migrants identified as relevant in the national or regional context, and the indicators, topics and disaggregation variables required to meet the policy priorities.

After setting these priorities, **Stage II (Rapid mapping)** focuses on mapping the data sources and institutions compiling information to generate the priority data identified during Stage I, as well as the existing data already being published. Relevant data sources may include population censuses, specialized international migration surveys, household surveys, and various administrative records, such as population registers, visa and work permit records, border records, and others. The mapping of institutions should cover all those that manage these data sources, as well as key data user agencies and other relevant stakeholders. The **main outputs** of this stage are a list of relevant stakeholders and their roles, a list of existing and potential data sources to generate the identified priority indicators and topics, and a matrix showing the already published indicators, the data sources used, the responsible institutions, and the gaps.

► Table 2. Guiding questions by stage and step of the ILM data sources assessment cycle

Stage	Step		Guiding questions
I	1	Identifying policy priorities and trends in international migration and mobility	What are the international, regional and national policy priorities relating to international migration and mobility, employment and labour mobility in the country? Which groups of international migrants, migrant and mobile workers are most relevant in absolute numbers or in relation to the labour market?
	2	Reviewing existing ILM indicators frameworks and statistical plans	Which ILM statistics and indicators are already highlighted in national statistical plans? Which minimum indicators have been recommended for monitoring and follow-up of commitments made in regional and global accords?
	3	Listing priority groups, indicators, topics, and disaggregation variables	What are the priority indicators and topics relevant for each priority group and topic according to the national policy priorities, regional and global commitments?
II	1	Mapping data sources	Which sources are relevant to produce data on the different priority groups and topics identified? Are some of these data already in use for ILM? Are there other potential sources not being utilized for ILM?
	2	Mapping institutions	What institutions in the country are responsible for producing or managing sources relevant to ILM statistics? Who are the main users of these data?
	3	Matrix of indicators, data sources, and producer agencies	Which indicators on ILM are already being disseminated? From which data sources? By which agencies?
III	1	Detailed documentation of the identified data sources	What are the main methodological features of the data source that may impact its capacity to produce priority ILM data? Which relevant data items are included? How are results analysed and disseminated?
	2	Source metadata analysis	Do the sources identified support the production of the priority indicators, topics, and disaggregation requirements identified? Are there quality concerns?
	3	Comparative assessment of ILM data sources	Do the sources use common concepts, definitions, and classifications aligned with international recommendations?
(IV, V, VI)	Assessment extensions, if any		
FINAL STAGE	1	Specifying recommendations	Which improvements can be proposed to close data gaps, improve coverage, disaggregation, comparability, timeliness or other quality dimensions? Which general recommendations can be proposed to strengthen the overall production of ILM statistics in the country, to meet the priority data needs identified?
	2	Preparation of the assessment report	Has the assessment process been fully documented? What were the main findings of each stage? Are the recommendations listed and consistent with each other? Which stakeholders participated in the consultation process?
	3	Final stakeholder validation	Were the objectives set for the assessment achieved? Are the recommendations adequate and sufficient? Are stakeholders on board with the findings and recommendations of the assessment? Are final revisions needed?

This comprehensive mapping lays the groundwork for **Stage III (In-depth assessment by source)**, which centres on the detailed evaluation of all, or some, of the identified data sources. For this stage to be effective, it requires close collaboration with the responsible data source institutions, as detailed methodological information is required. The in-depth evaluation of each data source consists of determining its suitability for compiling and producing the priority indicators and disaggregation requirements identified in Stage I. Elements that may be considered in the in-depth assessment include different aspects of quality, alignment with relevant international statistical standards, and comparability across the different sources being assessed.

Assessment extensions

When feasible, it is important to extend the ILM data source assessment to include additional stages covering an evaluation of other critical aspects, such as the **comparability of key ILM estimates** derived using different sources, the **institutional capacities for ILM data production**, and the **institutional environment and ILM data system coordination** (See [Table 3](#)).

► **Table 3. Guiding questions for extensions of the ILM data assessment cycle**

Stage		Guiding questions
IV	Comparability of key ILM indicators	How comparable are the estimates generated by the different sources identified? Which source should be considered as primary to generate estimates of selected priority ILM indicators? Is there a need to combine different sources to arrive at a more robust estimate?
V	Institutional capacities for ILM data production	Do the institutions with relevant data sources have adequate resources and trained technical personnel to compile the necessary data and/or produce priority indicators following established data quality standards?
VI	ILM data system coordination	Does the legislation enable the establishment of inter-institutional agreements for data exchange? Are secure IT systems in place to enable data exchange among the responsible agencies?

Comparability of key ILM indicators

Once the quality of different available data sources has been evaluated, it is also important to examine the comparability of key estimates generated using different data sources. For example, the population census and a national household survey may both collect the necessary information to produce estimates of the number of employed international migrants. An assessment of the comparability of key ILM indicators would focus on evaluating whether the estimates derived using different sources are comparable and, if not, the reasons behind the inconsistency and the size of the gap. Such an assessment can help inform decisions regarding which source to consider as primary, whether there is a need to propose additional revisions, including to the estimation methodology, or whether and how to combine the different sources to arrive at a more robust estimate.

Institutional capacities for ILM data production

An institutional capacity assessment is devoted to evaluating existing institutional capacities to develop, sustain, or expand an information system to generate quality statistics on international labour migration. Institutional capacities refer to whether the organizations responsible for the data sources identified have the resources and technical personnel to carry out the processes that, starting from the design of the data collection or compiling instrument, allow obtaining the priority indicators. This can be particularly important for the design of specialized surveys targeting migrants as well as for enabling the use of various administrative data sources, such as border

records; residence and work permits; registers of foreign citizens, refugees and asylum seekers, and nationals resident abroad; tax records, social security records and others.

Institutional environment and ILM data system coordination

Since data on international labour migration and temporary labour mobility require the combined use of different sources, it is important that mechanisms be put in place to enable coordination. Integrated ILM data systems depend on the strength of the national statistical system in place, including the existence of strong institutional arrangements for regular data-sharing and coordination between national statistical offices and administrative data producers. An evaluation of the ILM data system coordination would assess the existence and effectiveness of such mechanisms, including the existence of legal and technical frameworks that facilitate the sharing, integration and protection of data across different institutions. ILM data systems may be embedded as a component of integrated migration and mobility data systems (IMIS); in such cases, it is important to assess the overall system to ensure its coherence.

Recommendations and report preparation

Overall, the mapping and assessment should help countries and regional bodies establish a priority ILM indicator plan that responds to user demands, identifies existing ILM data already available, data gaps or quality limitations, potential sources that may be harnessed, agencies responsible for those sources, and relevant stakeholders. It should also contribute to the development and/or establishment of new data sources that adequately target the priority migrant and mobile workers groups, when it is deemed that the existing sources are not sufficiently adequate for this purpose. More generally, the assessment should serve to formulate concrete source-specific recommendations for enhancing data collection, compilation, and/or dissemination, as well as more general recommendations aimed at strengthening the ILM data landscape, ensuring that the system supports robust and evidence-based policymaking.

Data source recommendations

Data source recommendations refer to specific actions proposed to address limitations identified in each source assessed, with a view to enhancing their use to generate the identified priority ILM indicators, as appropriate. For example, the assessment may indicate the need to make improvements, such as:

- Revising or expanding the sample of a household survey,
- Ensuring the analysis and publication of population census results on the economic characteristics of different groups of migrants,
- Integrating migration variables in the sampling frame for surveys,
- Revising a set of questions for the next population census,
- Modifying the registration procedure for foreign citizens,
- Including new data items in the application for work permits, or
- Harmonizing the classification used in a source to align with the relevant international standard classification.

General Recommendations

These recommendations pertain to the overall fit between the full set of data sources identified or assessed and the priority indicator plan established. Recommendations may address issues such as:

- The need to tap underutilized data sources,

- Promoting harmonization in the concepts, definitions, data items, or classifications used for common variables among different sources,
- Create new sources, optimize the periodicity of the different data sources,
- Establishing agreements between institutions for data exchange while safeguarding data confidentiality,
- Strengthening the capacity of institutions to compile, process, estimate, disseminate, or share data,
- Proposing coordination agreements to enable the sharing of data, or the establishment of an inter-agency committee, and so on.

Preparation of the Final Report

The final report of the assessment should contain a summary of the assessment plan, the institutions engaged in the process, and findings from each stage of the assessment. This should include special reference to the stages completed to identify policy priorities, priority ILM data needed, data sources and stakeholder institutions, the strengths and limitations of available and potential data sources, and the recommendations that can be made so that the country or regional body can plan next steps towards having reliable and timely ILM data to meet diverse user needs.

Stakeholder consultation

User-producer engagement throughout the assessment process is particularly important. Consultations with selected stakeholders from the start ensure that the ILM priority indicators, topics and disaggregation needs identified are aligned with national, regional, and international objectives. This is particularly important as it can serve to gain more nuanced insights into different policy needs, priority sub-groups of migrants, or emerging issues that may not be sufficiently reflected in the existing instruments or in published migration trends analyses.

Wider stakeholder consultation becomes critical in Stage II, during the mapping of data sources and institutions, as it can help identify untapped sources, raise awareness about the value of different sources to generate needed ILM data, and strengthen inter-agency cooperation. Likewise, the success of Stage III depends on access to detailed methodological information for each of the data sources identified. Such access may not be possible without close cooperation with the institutions responsible for the different data sources.

At the end of the process, stakeholder engagement is central to validating the recommendations formulated following the assessment. This contributes to a more in-depth reflection, which can serve to enrich the recommendations, and importantly, it can pave the way for their subsequent implementation.

Planning an ILM data source assessment

Conducting an ILM data source mapping and assessment can take time and resources. Careful planning is essential to ensure adequate resource allocation. The profile of the evaluator is particularly important, as is the time planned for stakeholder consultation and engagement at every stage of the process.

Evaluator Profile

The evaluator or evaluation team must meet certain requirements related to technical expertise and knowledge of the statistical system and data producer and user institutions of the country.

First, the evaluator or evaluator team should have substantive knowledge regarding the measurement of international migration, temporary mobility and of employment for statistical purposes. Experience with these

substantive areas is particularly important as the evaluator must be able to establish the data source requirements to measure different aspects of both international mobility and labour markets.

Likewise, the evaluator should have experience in the planning, execution and evaluation of statistical activities such as population censuses, sample surveys, and in the assessment of administrative records for statistical purposes. This is paramount to ensure the assessment considers good practices in the use of these sources to produce quality statistics.

Additionally, the evaluator should have knowledge of the national statistical system and the political-administrative organization of the country or region. This is important to understand the roles of the relevant data source producers and users, identify potential data sources and be able to discern their complementary value to generate priority ILM indicators.

Finally, it is important that the evaluator has knowledge of, or is familiar with, the latest relevant international statistical recommendations and their use as a reference to support comparability. This includes, in particular, the *UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility*, the *EGRIS Recommendations for Refugee Statistics*, and, more specifically, the *21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work and authorizations to work*, and other key ICLS standards covering labour topics, such as the *19th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization*.

Working methods and assessment tools

Conducting assessments of ILM data sources requires establishing a working method that is systematic and incremental, with tools that facilitate documentation, priority setting, comparisons across common dimensions aligned with international recommendations and agreed practice, and that serve to inform subsequent phases of the assessment and to consolidate main findings. This Guide provides simplified templates covering (see Appendix):

- **Template I:** National ILM indicator plan
- **Template II:** Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions
- **Template III:** Metadata documentation for population censuses
- **Template IV:** Metadata documentation for survey-based sources
- **Template V:** Metadata documentation for administrative data sources
- **Template VI:** Metadata source analysis
- **Template VII:** Comparative metadata analysis

Beyond establishing a set of assessment tools to guide the process, it is important to establish mechanisms for consultation with different stakeholders. Workshops can be used to help build common awareness and understanding of the assessment, inform on the progress achieved, and gather group feedback. Bilateral consultations, particularly during the in-depth assessment of sources, can be an important method to gain a deeper understanding of particular methodologies and practices, or to confirm specific findings.

Basic Schedule

As indicated at the start of this chapter, the scope of the assessment may vary depending on the national priorities, objectives and expected outputs. This will, in turn, impact the time required to complete the work. A basic schedule is shown below (See [Illustration 1](#)). An important consideration is the need to integrate stakeholder consultation mechanisms at each stage of the assessment cycle. Beyond this, the duration of the in-depth assessment of identified data sources may vary significantly depending on the level of engagement of the responsible producer agencies.

► **Illustration 1. Activity schedule for ILM mapping and evaluation**

ILM data mapping and assessment plan*													
Stage	Activity	Mo. 1		Mo. 2		Mo. 3		Mo. 4		Mo. 5		Mo. 6	
I	Identification of policy priorities and trends												
	Review of ILM indicator frameworks and statistical plans												
	Specification of the ILM indicator plan												
	Key stakeholder consultation												
II	Rapid mapping of data sources												
	Rapid mapping of institutions												
	Matrix of data, data sources and institutions												
	Wide stakeholder consultation												
III	In-depth documentation of main data sources*												
	Data source producer consultation*												
	Source metadata analysis												
	Comparative assessment												
FINAL	Specifying the recommendations												
	Preparation of the final report												
	Stakeholder report validation												
	*Duration will depend on the number of data sources to be assessed and the level of access to relevant methodological information.												

► Chapter 2: Reference statistical concepts and criteria

The assessment of ILM data sources requires specifying a benchmark or reference against which to determine how well the different sources meet the criteria to produce quality statistics on the priority needs identified. This benchmark or reference is provided by the family of international statistical standards, which are globally agreed recommendations on how to produce official statistics on different topics, including international migration and temporary mobility, labour, and labour migration and temporary labour mobility.

The international statistical standards provide agreed concepts, definitions, classifications, and other measurement guidance based on accumulated good practice. They are agreed through global intergovernmental processes that ensure wide consultation and endorsement by countries. The United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) is the main intergovernmental body at the global level responsible for coordinating statistical work and endorsing statistical standards on different social, demographic and economic topics. Labour statistics standards, however, are endorsed through the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), an independent tripartite body comprising representatives from governments, workers and employers, hosted by the ILO. The ILO, as a specialized UN agency, regularly informs the UNSC of the decisions taken by the ICLS and, as part of the international statistical system, ensures that labour statistics standards are coherent with the statistical standards covering other topics.

While allowing flexibility to take account of national and regional differences, the implementation of international statistical standards to produce official national statistics helps promote data comparability over time and across countries. It also supports harmonization of data derived from different sources, an important prerequisite for establishing integrated migration information systems (IMIS) and labour market information systems (LMIS). Additionally, alignment with international statistical standards supports coherence in the statistics covering related topics, for example, migration, population, labour and economic statistics, facilitating joint use and analysis.

International statistical standards for ILM data

In the case of ILM data, dedicated guidance is provided by the **21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work and authorizations to work**¹¹. These Guidelines were first endorsed by the 20th ICLS in 2018. Following the call for improved migration data by the Global Compact on Migration that same year, the ILO launched a revision of the Guidelines to be aligned with the updates taking place in closely related statistical standards. The revision was endorsed in 2023 by the 21st ICLS, which called on the ILO to publish revised Guidelines by 2025. The revised Guidelines build on the concepts, definitions, classifications and measurement guidance contained in the statistical standards covering closely related topics, particularly on population, international migration, refugees and related populations, statelessness, labour, trade in services and other topics (see [Table 4](#)).

¹¹ Hereafter referred as [21st ICLS Guidelines](#).

► **Table 4. Main international statistical standards relevant for international labour migration**

Population and international migration	Labour
• UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility (2025) • UN Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, revision 4 (2025) • EGRIS International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (2023) • EGRIS International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (2018)	• 21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work, and authorizations to work (2025) • 19th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization (2013, amended 2023) • 21st ICLS Resolution concerning statistics on the informal economy (2023) • 20th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics on work relationships (2018)

Reference concepts from population statistics

Resident and non-resident (temporary) population

To produce statistics on the total population and its characteristics, including migration status and employment, countries first need to define who is to be counted as part of the country's population. The international statistical standards recognize different types of population counts. Among these, the **usually resident population** is the most commonly used to produce annual statistics on the population of a country and to estimate annual population change. This concept is defined in the *UN Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, revision 4*^{12,13}, endorsed by the UNSC in 2025.

The concept of the **usually resident population** tries to capture the population residing in a country the majority of the time in a given year (see **Box 1**). For this, the international standards recommend using a criterion based on a minimum **duration of stay**. Countries have flexibility in how to interpret “majority of time in a given year” and can choose to apply a minimum threshold of either: six months plus one day, or twelve months or more.

The **non-resident (temporary) population** serves as a complement to capture all persons who, in a given year, were present in the country for less than the minimum duration of stay set to identify the resident population.

The statistical definitions of usually resident and non-resident population are not based on legal residence or legal rights to stay in a country. Usual residents may or may not have citizenship of the country, and they may also include applicants for asylum, refugees, undocumented persons or irregular migrants (UN, 2024). Similarly, non-residents may include citizens or native-born persons who were present in the country at the time of compiling the statistics (that is, visiting), but whose place of usual residence was in another country.

These population concepts are integrated into the statistical standards for international migration, labour and also in the revised 21st ICLS Guidelines.

¹² See [UN Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 4](#)

¹³ Hereafter referred as UN Census Recommendations

► **Box 1. Definitions of country of usual residence, resident population, and non-resident population**

- **Usually resident population** refers to all persons who either (a) have lived in a country for most of the last 12 months within a given year or have intentions to stay (or are granted permission to stay) for at least 6 months; or (b) have lived in a country for at least 12 months within a given year or have intentions to stay (or are granted permission to stay) for at least 12 months, excluding temporary absences for holidays or work assignments.
- **Temporary (non-resident) population** refers to all persons who stayed or intend to stay (or are granted permission to stay) in the country for less than the minimum duration required for residency in a particular year.
- **Country of usual residence** is defined using one of the following approaches:
 - The place where a person has lived continuously for most of the past 12 months (at least six months and one day), excluding temporary absences for holidays or work assignments, or where they intend to live for at least six months and one day, or
 - The place where a person has lived continuously for at least the past 12 months, excluding temporary absences for holidays or work assignments, or where they intend to live for at least 12 months.

Reference concepts from migration statistics

International mobility, migration and temporary mobility

The concept of international mobility was recently introduced in the international statistical standards as a reference to support the production of statistics on the movements of persons across international borders. It is defined by *the UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility*¹⁴¹⁵, endorsed by the UNSC in 2025. According to these Recommendations, international mobility comprises two components, international migration and international temporary mobility (see **Box 2**).

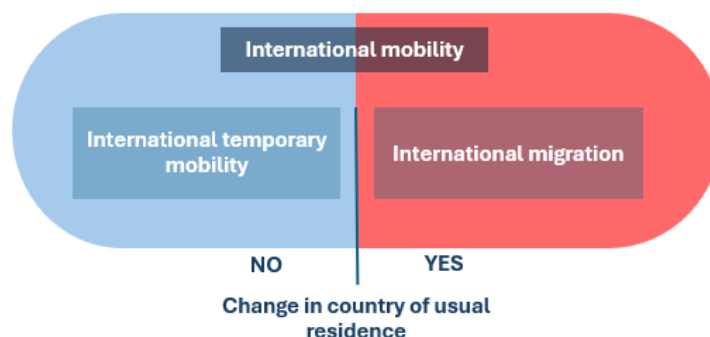
► **Box 2. Definitions of international mobility and its components**

- **International mobility** refers to all movements of persons across international borders.
 - **International migration** refers to all movements of persons across international borders resulting in a change in their country of usual residence.
 - **International temporary mobility** refers to all movements of persons across international borders that do not result in a change in their country of usual residence.

The main difference between international migration and international temporary mobility is whether or not the movement leads to a change in the country of usual residence of the person (see **Figure 1**).

¹⁴ See [Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility \(UNSD, 2025\)](#)

¹⁵ Hereafter referred as UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations

► **Figure 1. Difference between international migration and international temporary mobility**

The concept of **country of usual residence** is linked to the definition of usually resident population and refers to the country where a person spends or intends to spend the majority of time in a given year, based on the criterion of **duration of stay**. As noted, countries can choose to apply a threshold of either six months plus one day or at least twelve months. Thus, in a given year, a person's country of usual residence is determined by whether they stay (or intend to stay) in the country compiling the statistics for a period that meets or exceeds the minimum duration threshold set (see [Box 1](#)).

The distinction between **international migration** and **international temporary mobility** is important because it allows countries to produce separate statistics on these different types of population movements and to maintain coherence with other important statistics, particularly population statistics.

International migrant

Following the concept of international migration, the UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations define **international migrants** as persons who have changed their country of usual residence and established new residence in another country. Depending on the country perspective, these Recommendations distinguish three separate groups of international migrants: **Immigrants**, **emigrants** and **returned international migrants** (see [Box 3](#)).

► Box 3. Definitions of immigrant, emigrant, and returned international migrants

- **Immigrant population**¹⁶: All persons who reside in a country at a given point in time, who were either born in another country or who do not hold the country's citizenship.
- **Emigrant population**: All persons who were born in a given country or who hold its national citizenship, and who reside in another country at a given point in time.
- **Returned international migrants**: All persons (regardless of country of birth or citizenship status), who previously resided in the country (compiling the statistics), who had emigrated, and subsequently returned to live in the country, staying or intending to stay for the minimum duration required for residence.

Two main criteria are recommended to identify international migrants: **country of birth** and **country of citizenship**¹⁷. The UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations highlight the importance of using these two criteria to produce statistics of the usually resident population by **birthplace status**, based on the criterion of

¹⁶ Hereafter referred as resident international migrants

¹⁷ Also often referred to as country of nationality.

country of birth, and by **citizenship status**, based on the criterion of country of citizenship (see **Box 4**). This leads to two alternative classifications of a country's resident population (by country of birth and by citizenship status).

Additionally, the UN Recommendations further advise producing statistics of the usually resident population using a cross-classification of the two criteria, which helps to identify four different sub-populations. This cross-classification serves to produce statistics of a country's population by **international migration status**.

1. **Native-born, national citizens** resident in the country
2. **Native-born, foreign citizens** resident in the country
3. **Foreign-born, national citizens** resident in the country
4. **Foreign-born, foreign citizens** resident in the country

The criterion of country of birth helps identify the population that has crossed international borders and changed country of residence (categories 3 and 4 above), whereas the criterion of country of citizenship sheds light on the persons' legal rights in the country. While citizenship can be acquired at different stages of life, analyzing both citizenship status and country of birth together can offer a deeper insight into the process of international migration and migrant integration.

► **Box 4. Definitions of the criteria used to determine the international migration status of persons**

- **Country of birth:** Refers to the country where the mother of the individual resided at the time of the person's birth (and not the hospital/health facility in which the birth occurred).
- **Birthplace status:** Persons born in the country are classified as native-born, and those born elsewhere are classified as foreign-born.
- **Country of citizenship (also known as country of nationality):** Refers to the country or countries an individual is a citizen of and with which the individual enjoys a particular legal bond, acquired by birth, naturalization, marriage, or some other mechanism.
- **Citizenship status:** Persons who hold the citizenship of the country are classified as national citizens, and those who do not hold citizenship of the country are classified as foreign-citizens. The category of Foreign-citizens may be further split into foreign-citizens, stateless, and others with undetermined nationality.

These same criteria can also be applied to identify **residents of the country who are involved in international temporary mobility**. Using this approach, the following groups can be distinguished:

1. **Native-born, national citizens**, resident in the country, but temporarily absent
2. **Native-born, foreign-citizens**, resident in the country, but temporarily absent
3. **Foreign-born, national citizens**, resident in the country, but temporarily absent
4. **Foreign-born, foreign-citizens**, resident in the country, but temporarily absent

In addition, applying the above criteria to the **non-resident (that is, temporary) population in the country**, it is possible to identify the following groups:

1. **Native-born, national citizens**, non-resident (present) in the country
2. **Native-born, foreign-citizens**, non-resident (present) in the country
3. **Foreign-born, national citizens**, non-resident (present) in the country
4. **Foreign-born, foreign-citizens**, non-resident (present) in the country

Stock and flow measures

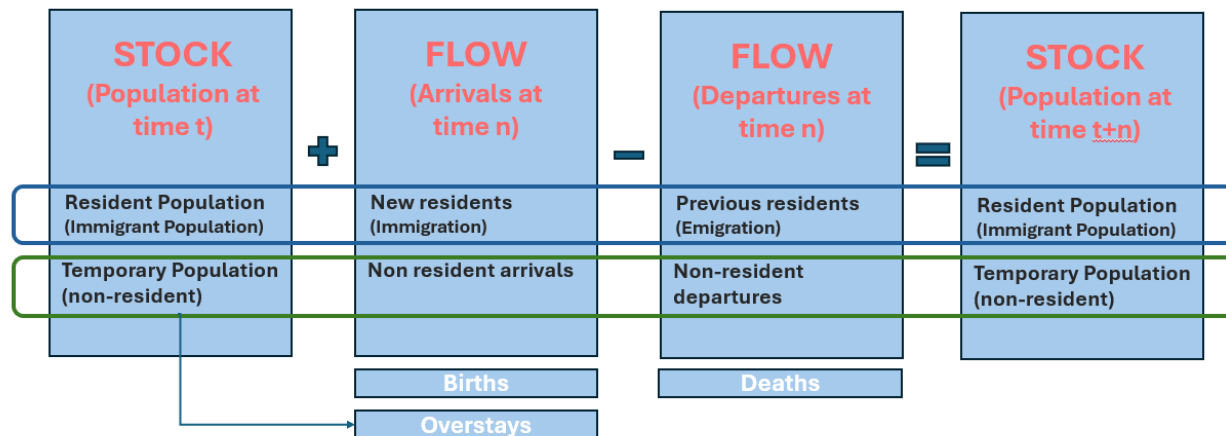
To support monitoring international migration and international temporary mobility, the UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations specify two different types of measures or statistics: stocks and flows. These two types of measures capture different aspects of international mobility.

- **Stocks** refer to the total number of persons of a particular category (for example, resident international migrant, returned migrant) counted in a country at a specific point in time, usually mid-year or end-year.
- **Flows** refer to the number of persons of a particular category entering or leaving a country (for example, native-born, foreign-born persons) over the course of a specific period, usually one calendar year.

Stocks are a static measure that offers a snapshot of the total number of persons of a particular category (for example, resident international migrants, returned international migrants, non-residents) in a country at a given point in time, regardless of when they arrived in the country. Flows, on the other hand, provide a more dynamic measure of the number of people entering or leaving a country over a specific period.

There is a **one-to-one correspondence between stock and flow measures**, meaning that the stock of a population at a given time (t) plus the migration and mobility flows over a period (n) determines the new stock at time (t+n). As shown in **Figure 2** below, adapted from the UN Migration Statistics Recommendations.

► **Figure 2. Difference in stock and flow measures in international migration and mobility statistics**



As illustrated, international migration flows (arrivals and departures) contribute to changes in the **resident population** of a country. It is one of the demographic components of annual population change, along with births and deaths. International temporary mobility flows contribute to changes in the **temporary (non-resident) population** of a country (for example, visitors for tourism, medical reasons, business travellers, seasonal migrant workers, and others with stays of short duration). Additionally, non-residents may also contribute to changes in the stock of the usually resident population, if they extend their stay in the country for a period longer than the minimum duration threshold to be counted as part of the usually resident population.

Reference concepts from statistics on refugees, related populations and statelessness

Persons in need of international protection

International migration and temporary mobility also include **persons in need of international protection** who cross international borders in search of protection. Due to the context of forced displacement, they are a challenging but important part of international migration and temporary mobility for which statistics are needed, including on their labour market access and integration. Specific guidance to develop statistics on these groups is provided by the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* (IRRS)¹⁸¹⁹, endorsed by the UNSC in 2018.

The IRRS recommendations provide definitions and measurement guidance for several populations of interest, including, **prospective asylum seekers, asylum seekers, persons with determined protection status, comprising refugees and those admitted for temporary protection**, and others in refugee-like situations (see [Box 5](#)).

Recognizing the high degree of uncertainty surrounding situations of forced displacement, the international standards indicate that refugees and refugee related populations should generally be counted as resident international migrants (that is, immigrants) for statistical purposes and added to the resident population of their country of asylum.

Two other groups outside of the scope of IRRS but identified for the purposes of this document are **asylum seekers in transit** and **forcibly displaced people in transit across international borders**. These groups are considered to be part of international temporary mobility, and as such, part of the non-resident (temporary) population of the country of transit if their stay is below the threshold established to be considered as a usual resident of the country.

► Box 5. Definitions of persons in need of international protection and displaced people in transit

- **Asylum seekers:** Persons who have filed an application for asylum in a country other than their own and whose claims have not yet been determined.
- **Prospective asylum seekers:** Persons with the intention of filing an application for asylum, but who have not yet done so for reasons that include being unable to file an application because of practical or administrative obstacles, including capacity constraints in the receiving country authorities.
- **Persons with determined protection status:** Persons who have had their protection status determined by their host country, where:
 - **Refugees:** Persons who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, are outside the country of their nationality and are unable or, owing to such fear, are unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.
 - **Admitted for complementary and subsidiary forms of protection:** Persons with one of a number of designations granted by host countries, including Subsidiary Protection in the European Union.
 - **Admitted for temporary protection:** Persons who are granted temporary legal status in the host country because their lives would be in danger if they were to return to their home countries.
- **Asylum seekers in transit:** Asylum seekers pending transfer to a third country.
- **Displaced people in transit across international borders:** Asylum seekers, refugees pending transfer to another country.

Considering a country-of-origin perspective, the IRRS recommendations also identify and provide guidance to produce statistics on persons returned from abroad after seeking international protection, including **repatriating refugees, repatriating asylum seekers**, and others (See [Box 6](#)).

¹⁸ See [Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics – International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics \(2018\)](#)

¹⁹ Hereafter referred as IRRS recommendations.

► **Box 6. Definitions of persons returned from abroad after seeking international protection**

- **Repatriating refugees:** Persons, (likely to be citizens), who have returned to their home country after having enjoyed asylum abroad. Both refugees returning under internationally assisted repatriation programmes and those returning spontaneously should be included in this category.
- **Repatriating asylum seekers:** Persons returning after having attempted to seek asylum abroad.

To identify and distinguish among the different categories of persons in need of international protection IRRS, and subsequent guidance, recommend the combined use of several data items, taking into consideration the national context and data source. Relevant data items include place of birth, citizenship status, previous experience of forced displacement, reason for migration, and international legal protection status, which support identification of different categories of **forced displacement status**.

Stateless persons and others with undetermined nationality

Another special group of interest when compiling statistics on international migration and mobility, and as a consequence on their labour market characteristics, are **stateless persons**. The UN *Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics* (IROSS)^{20,21}, endorsed by UNSC in 2023, provide definitions and recommendations to improve the identification of stateless populations and their inclusion in official statistics (see **Box 7**).

► **Box 7. Definitions of persons with undetermined nationality, stateless persons and related categories**

According to the UN International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS, 2023), a stateless person is someone “who is not considered a national by any state under the operation of its law”. For statistical purposes, IROSS recognizes two distinct groups:

- **Persons with a recognised stateless status** includes individuals currently without citizenship of any country, established through formal recognition by government authorities in their country of residence, on an individual or group basis.
- **Persons without a recognised citizenship status** includes individuals who lack proof or recognition of any citizenship status but who may possess an entitlement to citizenship, and if so, could be assisted to obtain proof of citizenship by the relevant authorities.

IROSS recommendations note that in most cases, stateless persons have been born in their country of residence but are stateless or without a recognized nationality status because they have faced difficulties obtaining proof of citizenship. Thus, IROSS recommends that stateless persons who have never crossed international borders be treated as part of the native-born resident population and not be classified as immigrants in their own country of birth. Only stateless persons and those with undetermined nationality status who have changed their country of residence during their lifetime should be considered as part of the stock of immigrants (also known as resident international migrants).

As a group which faces significant challenges in terms of legal recognition and rights, IROSS recommendations further emphasize the importance of ensuring that statistics can be disaggregated separately for stateless persons, where relevant, to determine their size and assess their situation, including in the labour market, vis-à-vis other population groups.

²⁰ See [International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics \(IROSS, 2023\)](#)

²¹ Hereafter referred as IROSS recommendations.

Reference concepts from labour force statistics

Employment and labour force status

To compile statistics on international labour migration and temporary labour mobility, it is essential to connect the core concepts, definitions and recommendations regarding statistics on international migration, temporary mobility and forced displacement with the labour statistics standards established by the ICLS. These standards provide concepts, definitions and other guidance to produce statistics on the labour market participation, employment characteristics and working conditions of the population. Among the various ICLS standards, the 19th *ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization*²² is particularly relevant, as it sets the core framework to establish the relationship of working age persons to the labour market, on which headline labour market indicators are based.

The 19th ICLS Resolution sets the guidance to categorize individuals based on their **labour force status**, distinguishing between those who are **employed**, **unemployed** and **outside the labour force** (see **Box 8**).

► Box 8. Definitions of labour force status, employed, unemployed and outside the labour force

- **Labour force status:** Classification of the working-age population in relation to the labour market. Persons may be classified in a short reference period according to their labour force status as being:
 - **Employed,**
 - **Unemployed, or**
 - **Outside of the labour force**
- **Working age population:** Population above the minimum age set for employment, taking into consideration the minimum age for employment and exceptions specified in national laws or regulations, or the age of completion of compulsory schooling. For international reporting purposes, the minimum age is set at 15 years and above.
- **Employed persons:** All those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. They comprise:
 - **employed persons “at work”**, that is, who worked in a job for at least one hour.
 - **employed persons “not at work”** due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements (such as shift work, flexitime, compensatory leave for overtime, and so on.).
- **Unemployed persons:** all those of working age who were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity, where:
 - **“not in employment”** is assessed with respect to the short reference period for the measurement of employment.
 - **“seek employment”** refers to any activity when carried out, during a specified recent period comprising the last four weeks or one month, for the purpose of finding a job or setting up a business or agricultural undertaking. This also includes searching for part-time, informal, temporary, seasonal or casual employment, within the national territory or abroad.
 - **“currently available”** refers to having the time to start employment, including on a part-time basis in the reference week (7 days) or the two weeks (15 days) after.
- **Persons outside the labour force:** all those neither employed nor unemployed in the short reference period.
- **Labour force:** Sum of employed plus unemployed persons.

²² See [19th ICLS resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization](#)

The labour force status classification is based on the activity principle, priority rule and 1-hour criterion, that together, serve to determine the relationship of working age persons vis-à-vis the labour market in a short reference period. Persons are classified into mutually exclusive categories according to what they did (activity principle), giving priority to employment over any other activity (priority rule), for at least 1-hour (1-hour criterion) in a short reference period (reference week or 7 days). When measured at frequent intervals or through a continuous survey, this approach serves to monitor changes in the labour force participation of the population over time, supporting current monitoring of the labour market.

Main headline indicators of the labour market produced based on the labour force status classification include the labour force participation rate, the employment to population ratio and the unemployment rate.

Figure 3 illustrates the classification of the working age population into persons in the labour force, distinguishing between the employed and unemployed and persons outside the labour force.

Labour underutilization

Recognizing that the unemployment rate is not sufficient to capture the different ways in which labour markets react to economic cycles across different contexts, the 19th ICLS resolution introduced the concept of **labour underutilization**, to refer to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population (see **Box 9**).

For the employed, this issue appears as **time-related underemployment**, when persons are employed in jobs with fewer hours than they are willing and available for, often due to involuntary part-time work or reduced working hours.

For those outside the labour force, insufficient access to employment opportunities is captured by the **potential labour force**, which groups two situations, **unavailable job seekers**, that is, persons actively looking for work but who cannot start immediately, for example, due to the need to secure child care support; and **available potential job seekers**, who want to work and are available but are not actively seeking work for different reasons, such as lack of jobs matching their skills, language barriers, a more general lack of job opportunities in their area, or discouragement.

The measures of labour underutilization, introduced by the 19th ICLS resolution, offer a more comprehensive approach to understand labour market inefficiencies, identifying barriers that prevent different population groups, including international migrants, from accessing employment (see **Figure 3**).

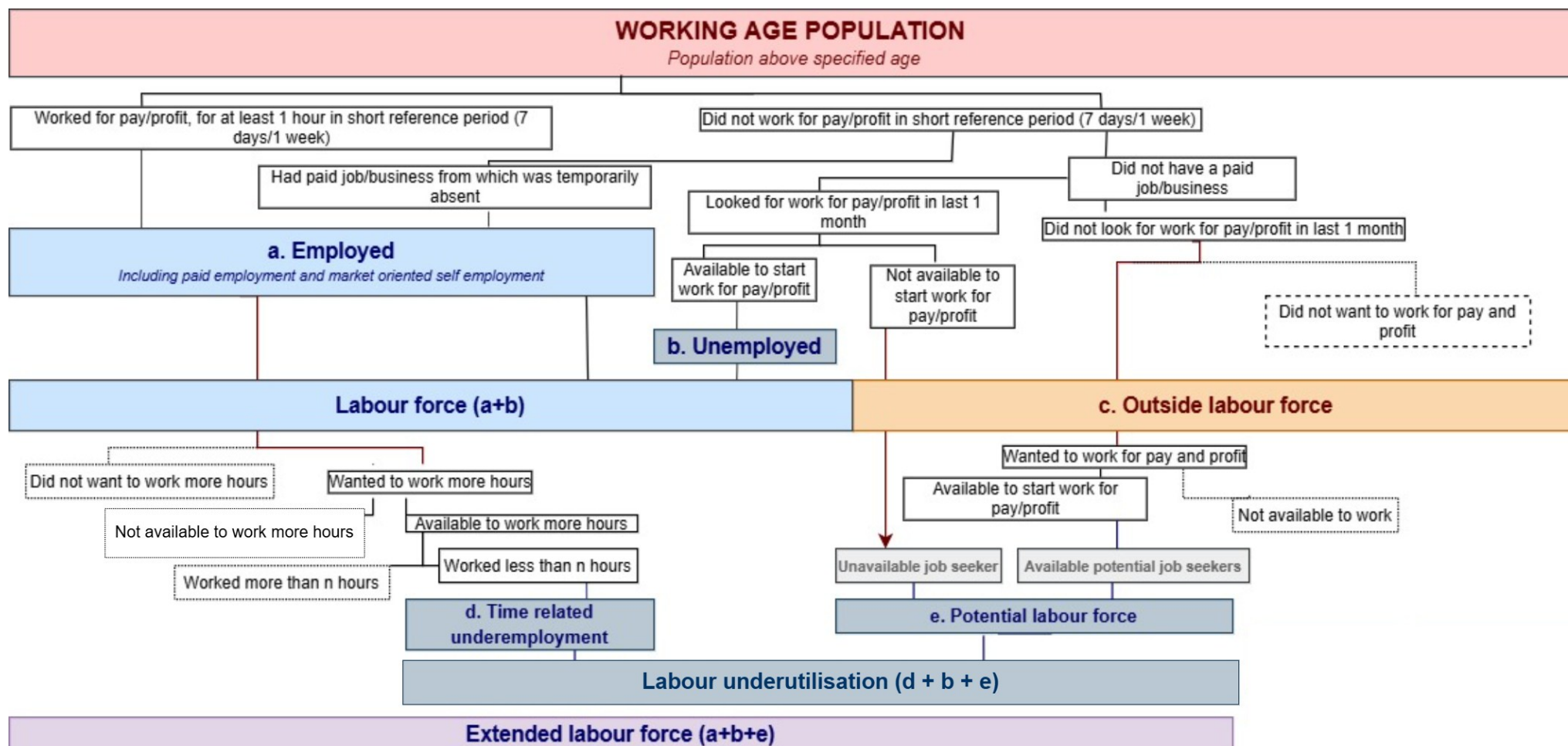
► Box 9. Definitions of measures of labour underutilization

- **Labour underutilization:** refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population.
- **Persons in time-related underemployment:** refers to employed persons working less hours than full time but willing and available to work more hours;
- **Unemployed persons:** refers to persons without employment who carried out activities to seek employment in a recent past period (that is, the previous 4 weeks, 30 days or month), and were available to start working within a short period of time (i.e. the reference week or within 2 weeks);
- **Potential labour force:** refers to all persons of working age who, during the short reference period, were unavailable job seekers or available potential job seekers.
 - **Unavailable job seekers:** All those not employed who carried out activities to seek employment, but were not currently available to start working
 - **Available potential job seekers:** All those not employed who did not carry out activities to “seek employment” but wanted to work and were currently available to start working.

The labour force status classification and the measures of labour underutilization are meant to be applied to the **usually resident population** of a country, regardless of sex, place of birth, citizenship or geographic location of their place of work. This means that labour force statistics should cover all usual residents in the country, including international migrants resident in the country (that is, immigrants), as well as usual residents who work outside the country (that is, cross-border workers, seasonal workers, other short-term migrant workers, international remote workers).

The 19th ICLS resolution further recommends complementing labour force statistics with statistics on the **employment characteristics of non-usual residents working in the national territory**. This is important to ensure coherence with economic statistics, especially to count all labour input into production by resident producer units; with statistics on trade in services particularly in the case of services traded by individuals through their presence in another country (for example, cross border service suppliers)—that is Mode 4 of the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS); and with international labour mobility statistics.

► Figure 3. 19th ICLS labour force status classification and measures of labour underutilization



Reference concepts for international labour mobility

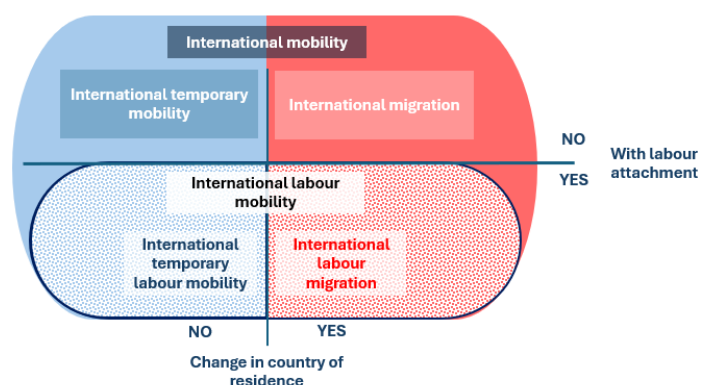
Building on the above concepts, the 21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work, and authorizations to work (2025)²³ set the scope for statistics of international labour mobility and its components, international labour migration and international temporary labour mobility (see **Box 10**).

► Box 10. Scope of statistics on international labour mobility and its components

- **International labour mobility:** covers statistics on the labour attachment of persons involved in international mobility.
 - **International labour migration:** cover statistics on the labour attachment of persons involved in international migration. That is, persons who cross international borders and change their country of residence, including those who migrate for work or employment purposes, and those who establish a labour attachment after migration.
 - **International temporary labour mobility:** covers statistics on the labour attachment of persons involved in international temporary mobility. That is, persons who cross international borders without changing their country of residence.

As shown in **Figure 4**, statistics on international labour mobility are a sub-set of statistics on international mobility. Similarly, statistics on international labour migration are a sub-set of statistics on international migration, while international temporary labour mobility are a subset of statistics on international temporary mobility.

► Figure 4. Difference between statistics of international mobility and international labour mobility



The concept of **labour attachment** is introduced to highlight the focus on the labour market dimensions of international mobility. As such,

- **International labour migration** covers statistics on the labour market characteristics of the different groups of international migrants.
- **International temporary labour mobility** covers statistics on the labour market characteristics of persons in international temporary mobility.

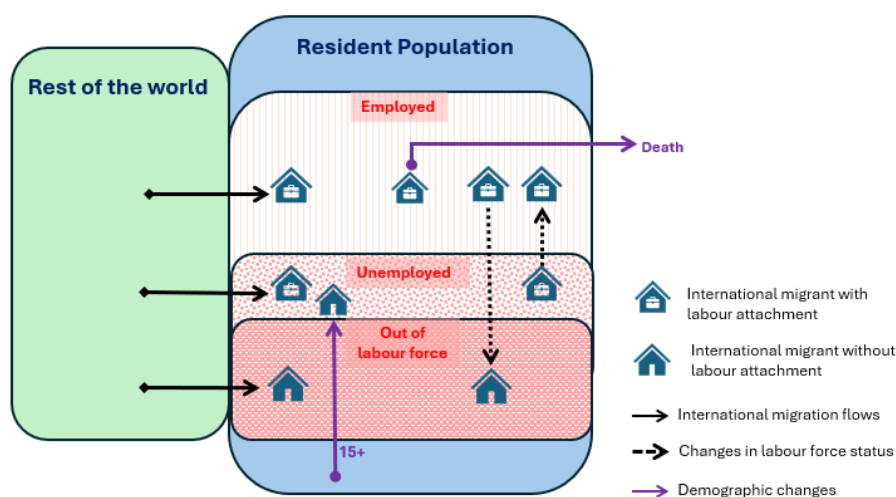
As with labour statistics, the main focus when compiling statistics on international labour mobility is on producing **stocks** of different groups of international migrants and temporary mobile populations (for example, resident

²³ See : [21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work, and authorizations to work \(2025\)](#)

international migrants in employment, residents employed abroad, non-residents employed in the country) and their socio-demographic and labour market characteristics. Trends over time can be monitored by comparing the change over time in the stock measures.

Statistics on **flows** relating to international labour mobility are much more complex than international migration and temporary mobility flows, and as a consequence, rather difficult to produce. As with international migration and temporary mobility flows, there is a need to consider movements of persons across borders over a given year. However, in addition, there is also a need to consider changes over time in the labour force status of international migrants already present in the destination country (for example, changes between employment, unemployment and outside the labour force), other demographic processes (that is, deaths, and ageing, particularly persons entering the working age population), as well as changes in the residence status of the non-resident population. This is illustrated in **Figure 5**, below.

► **Figure 5. Flows and status changes relating to international labour migration**



International migrants with labour attachment

Using a country of destination perspective, the focus of international labour migration statistics is on the labour market characteristics of resident international migrants (that is immigrants), including persons in need of international protection including refugees, asylum seekers, who are usually resident in the country compiling the statistics. Basic definitions of resident international migrants in the labour force and related groups are presented in **Box 11**.

► **Box 11. Definitions of population groups relevant for ILM statistics (country of destination perspective)**

- **Working-age international migrants (stock):** refers to all foreign-born persons (or foreign citizens) of working age (for example 15 and above) usually resident in the country at a given point in time.
- **Employed international migrants (stock):** refers to all foreign-born persons (or foreign citizens) of working age (for example 15 and above) usually resident in the country, who, during a short reference period, were counted as employed.
- **Unemployed international migrants (stock):** refers to all foreign-born persons (or foreign citizens) of working age (for example, 15 and above) usually resident in the country, who, during a short reference period, were counted as unemployed.

- **International migrants in the labour force (stock):** Sum of employed and unemployed international migrants.
- **International migrants in time-related underemployment (stock):** refers to all foreign-born persons (or foreign citizens) of working age (e.g. 15 and above) usually resident in the country, who, during a short reference period were counted as in time-related underemployment.
- **International migrants in the potential labour force (stock):** refers to all foreign-born persons (or foreign citizens) of working age (e.g. 15 and above) usually resident in the country, who, during a short reference period were counted as in the potential labour force.

More generally, statistics on international labour migration include labour statistics and indicators disaggregated by international migration status, or produced separately for different groups of international migrants, using the two recommended criteria, country of birth (birthplace status) and country of citizenship (citizenship status).

When the two core criteria are not available for cross-classification, or the groups are too small to produce cross-classifications, then the priority is to produce statistics on the labour market characteristics of the population by country of birth criterion (for example, foreign-born working age population, foreign-born employed population, foreign-born unemployed population, foreign-born labour force), as this criterion identifies the population that has crossed international borders at some point in their lifetime and become part of the resident population of the country compiling the statistics.

Returned migrants and emigrants with employment experience abroad

Using a country-of-origin perspective, the focus shifts to statistics on **returned international migrants** and **emigrants** with **employment experience abroad** (see [Box 12](#)).

► Box 12. Definitions of population groups relevant for ILM statistics (country of origin perspective)

- **Returned international migrants with previous employment experience abroad (stock):** refers to returned international migrants who had been previously employed while residing abroad.
- **Emigrants with employment experience abroad (stock):** refers to emigrants who were counted as employed in their country of residence at, or over, a specified period.

In this case, due to the challenges with capturing detailed information on jobs located outside the country, compiling the statistics, the focus is on some of the essential characteristics of their employment abroad, in particular, occupation and industry, and other selected characteristics. For returned migrants, there is additional interest in producing statistics on their skills and labour market situation after their return to the country, compiling the statistics. This information can inform plans on their return and reintegration.

For the case of emigrants, both the UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations and the 21st ICLS Guidelines acknowledge that, from a country-of-origin perspective, it may be impossible to generate comprehensive estimates on the stock of emigrants and those with employment experience abroad, even those departing within a specified recent period. Given this, for practical purposes, the statistics may focus on former household members who retain ties to a household remaining in the country, and/or on those emigrating through managed migration or labour migration programmes.

Residents employed abroad and non-residents employed in the country

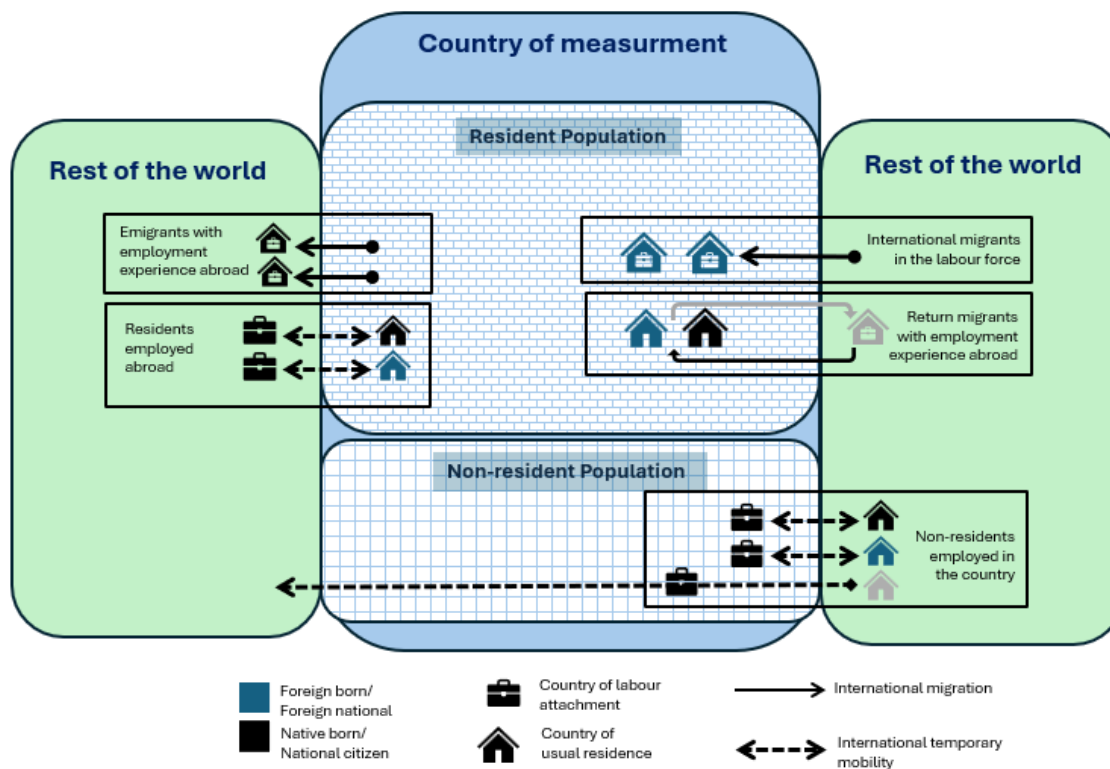
For statistics on international temporary labour mobility, the main focus is on characteristics of two main groups: **residents in employment abroad** and **non-residents in employment in the country** (see **Box 13**).

► Box 13. Definitions of population groups relevant for statistics on international temporary labour mobility

- **Residents in employment abroad (stock):** All persons of working age, regardless of place of birth or citizenship status who, at/during a specified period, were counted as part of the resident population of the country, who were temporarily absent, in employment and working in or from another country.
- **Non-residents in employment in the country (stock):** All persons of working age, regardless of place of birth or citizenship status, who at/during a specified reference period, were considered as part of the non-resident (temporary) population in the country, and who were in employment and working in or from the country.

The 21st ICLS Guidelines recognize several groups of workers engaged in international temporary labour mobility, including:

- **Frontier workers** —that is, persons in employment who reside in one country and regularly cross international borders to work in another country, typically returning to their country of residence on a daily or weekly basis.
- **Cross-border service providers** —that is, persons in employment who cross international borders to deliver services in another country on a temporary basis for which they receive remuneration. They include independent as well as dependent workers who enter their destination country solely for the purpose of fulfilling a specific service contract or assignment. Their stay abroad is limited to the duration of the service provision, after which they return to their country of residence.
- **Other special groups** depending on the country context and, particularly, their duration of stay abroad/in the country can include: seasonal workers, posted workers, project tied workers, specified employment workers, temporary agency workers, as well as seafarers, fishers and offshore installation workers employed by economic units under the jurisdiction of a country other than their country of birth or citizenship.

► **Figure 6. Priority groups related to international labour migration and international temporary labour mobility**

Reference concepts for permit and authorizations to work statistics

Statistics on stocks and the labour market characteristics of different groups of international migrants and mobile workers can be complemented with statistics on permits and authorizations to work to support monitoring managed international labour mobility and its contributions to employment. Permits and authorizations to work statistics refer to data derived from the issuance of residence, visa and other types of permits and authorizations to work.

They can be produced using a destination country perspective, based on work visas, permits, authorizations or work permit exemptions issued to foreign nationals by the relevant authorities of the country. They may also be produced from an origin country perspective, when administrative procedures are put in place for gaining clearance, registering nationals prior to departure for employment abroad, applying for exit visas, or obtaining work permits for foreign employment.

Permits and authorizations to work statistics do not provide a direct measure of the employment of international migrants in destination countries, as permit- or authorization-holders may not ultimately take up employment in the destination country or may altogether decide not to migrate, or to migrate elsewhere. Permits and authorizations to work statistics also may not cover all employed migrants, as some may be employed in informal jobs, while others may have the right to employment without the need to seek authorization. Nevertheless, permit statistics can be particularly valuable in shedding light on trends in managed international labour mobility and on the rights to employment granted to different migrant and temporary mobile populations.

Additionally, when integrated with other sources, such as tax or social security records, permits and authorizations to work data may be used to produce statistics on confirmed employment by permit type. This type of analysis can

help shed light on the impacts of migration policy on the employment of different groups of international migrants and temporary mobile populations. Longitudinal migrant databases that integrate permit statistics can also serve to shed light on long-term outcomes, including employment, of different migration regimes (Statistics Canada, 2024; UNECE, 2025).

Permits and authorizations to work statistics are an emerging field, with important variability across countries following differences in the migration regimes of countries and the administrative procedures established to manage international migration and mobility. For labour mobility statistics, the following statistical series are particularly important, disaggregated by type of permit, duration of validity, place of issuance and essential characteristics of the permit- or authorization holder, such as sex, age, country of birth, country of citizenship and country of usual residence:

- First time permits and authorizations issued during the year (flow)
- Status changes granted during the year (flow)
- All valid permits and authorizations at the end of the year (stock)

The type of permit or reason will depend on the national context and may include broad reasons such as employment, education and study, family formation and reunification, international protection status, and other reasons. To further contribute to statistics on international labour mobility it is important that permits and authorizations to work data support further disaggregation or analysis based on the type of employment rights they confer, including:

- Paid employment (with separate sub-categories as relevant in the country)
- Self-employment
- Job search within the country
- Cross-border provision of services for remuneration
- Other purposes that also confer the right to employment (including under certain conditions or restrictions),
- Other purposes that require proof of employment abroad and restrict the right to employment in the country,
- Other purposes which restrict the right to employment in the country.

Also important is the disaggregation by granted duration of stay. To monitor the contributions of different permits and authorizations to work to international temporary mobility and international migration, the disaggregation by granted duration of stay should enable a distinction between those with a granted duration of stay below and above the threshold to be counted as part of the resident population in the country (e.g. 12 months or more, or more than 6 months). Likewise, permit and authorizations to work data should support further analysis by the rights to residence they confer, distinguishing between temporary and permanent rights to residence in the country.

Reference concepts from employment statistics

The family of ICLS statistical standards also provide definitions and guidance to produce statistics on a wide range of employment characteristics important to monitor the structure of employment, the working conditions and employment experience of the population, including different groups of international migrants and temporary mobile workers.

This includes characteristics of the **jobs** that people perform and of the **establishments** in which people work (see **Box 14**).

Some of these essential concepts are presented below.

Status in employment refers to the type of explicit or implicit contract of employment that persons have in their job. The *International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) Manual*²⁴ provides two alternative classifications of status in employment: by the type of authority over the work and the economic unit for which the work is performed, and by the type of economic risk the worker may be exposed to. When organized by authority, ICSE-18-A distinguishes between **independent workers** and **dependent workers**. (see **Box 15**). When organized by economic risk, ICSE-18-R categorizes workers into those employed for profit and those employed for pay.

► Box 14. Definitions of a job and an establishment

► **Job** —refers to the set of tasks and duties performed by one person for a single economic unit. Job-related characteristics are generally collected in reference to the main job for employed persons (that is, job with the longest hours usually worked). They may also be collected in reference to a second job, or to a previous job, for example, in the case of returned international migrants with employment experience abroad.

- **Establishment** —refers to an enterprise, or part of an enterprise, which is engaged in one main kind of economic activity (e.g. agriculture, IT services) at, or from, one location or geographic area.

► Box 15. International Standard Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18-A)

- **Independent workers** own the economic unit for which they work and control its activities. They may work on their own or in partnership with other independent workers and may or may not provide work for others. This category includes employers and independent workers without employees.
- **Dependent workers** do not have full authority or control over the economic unit for which they work. This category includes dependent contractors, employees, and contributing family workers.

²⁴ See [International Classification of Status in Employment \(ICSE-18\) Manual](#)

Occupation refers to the type of work done in a job. The type of work done is considered in terms of the main tasks and duties performed in the job. The *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)*, Volume 1²⁵ serves as the current reference to categorize jobs into occupations whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity. ISCO-08 classifies occupations in a 4-level hierarchy. ISCO-08 10 Major groups are shown in **Box 16**. Producing statistics coded at the lowest level of the classification is important, particularly in the case of international migrants who are often concentrated in specific occupations like domestic workers or nurses.

► **Box 16. International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)**

1. Managers
2. Professionals
3. Technicians and Associate Professionals
4. Clerical Support Workers
5. Service and Sales Workers
6. Skilled Agricultural Forestry and Fishery Workers
7. Craft and related Trades Workers
8. Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers
9. Elementary Occupations
0. Armed Forces Occupations

Branch of economic activity (also known as industry) refers to the main kind of production or activity of the establishment or economic unit where the job of the person is located. The classification centres on what the establishment does, not what the person does when working for that establishment. The *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) revision 5*²⁶, provides the reference classification based on a four-level hierarchy. ISIC rev.5 22 Sections, the highest level of the classification, are shown in **Box 17** below.

► **Box 17. International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) revision 5**

A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	L Financial and insurance activities
B Mining and quarrying	M Real estate activities
C Manufacturing	N Professional, scientific and technical activities
D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	O Administrative and support service activities
E Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	P Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
F Construction	Q Education
G Wholesale and retail trade	R Human health and social work activities
H Transportation and storage	S Arts, sports and recreation
I Accommodation and food service activities	T Other service activities
J Publishing, broadcasting, and content production and distribution activities	U Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use
K Telecommunications, computer programming, consultancy, computing infrastructure, and other information service activities	V Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies

Geographic location of place of work refers to the precise location in which a person performs his/her job. This information is particularly important to monitor commuting patterns, including in the context of international temporary labour mobility, by comparing it with the place of usual residence. To this end, the international guidance recommends capturing the precise address and/or geographic coordinates of the place of work or, if this is not possible, the smallest possible administrative division. The recommended classification distinguishes between: (1.0) Same minor civil division as place of residence; (2.0) Other minor civil division within same major civil division as

²⁵ See [International Standard Classification of Occupations \(ISCO-08\), Volume 1](#)

²⁶ See [International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities \(ISIC\), Revision 5](#)

place of residence; (3.0) Other major civil division; (4.0) Another country (5.0); Other place of work; (5.1) Offshore installation; (5.2) No fixed place of work. Usual residents whose location of place of work is “Another country” serve to identify persons in international temporary labour mobility, in particular residents employed abroad (UNECE, 2025; UN, 2025).

Informal employment: Refers to any activity of persons to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit that is, in law or in practice, not covered by formal arrangements, such as commercial laws, procedures to report economic activities, income taxation, labour legislation and social security laws and regulations providing protection against economic and personal risks associated with carrying out the activities. The *21st ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of the informal economy (2023)*²⁷ provides the latest guidance to produce statistics on informal employment and informal sector employment. According to these standards, the following groups are considered to have an informal job:

- Independent workers (employers and independent workers without employees): who own and operate an unregistered enterprise.
- Dependent contractors: who are either not registered for tax purposes or are registered but lack effective access to formal arrangements, such as job-related social insurance.
- Employees: whose employer does not contribute to one or more nationally relevant statutory social insurance schemes which are job-specific (that is, dependent on holding the particular job and not universal). Other relevant criteria, depending on the national context, may include: lack of access to paid annual leave, lack of access to paid sick leave, or, in the case of refugees, absence of a work permit (EGRISS, 2024).
- Contributing family workers: who are not covered by formal arrangements, by default are considered to have an informal job. In countries with formal arrangements for contributing family workers, those whose jobs are unregistered, for whom contributions are not made to job-related statutory social insurance, or whose jobs are within an informal enterprise, are considered to hold informal jobs.

These same standards define the **informal sector** as comprising market-oriented economic units that are not formally recognized by government authorities as distinct market producers and, thus, not covered by formal arrangements. These economic units are collectively referred to as informal household unincorporated market enterprises. **Persons employed in the informal sector** include:

- independent workers who own and operate an informal household unincorporated market enterprise,
- dependent contractors who do not own and operate a formal economic unit and are not registered for tax,
- employees and contributing family workers employed in informal household unincorporated market enterprises.

The family of ICLS statistical standards provide agreed concepts, definitions and measurement guidance for many other important topics, including working time and working time arrangements, employment related income, occupational injuries and accidents, qualifications and skills mismatches, forced labour, child labour, and so on. When planning an assessment of ILM data sources, there may be a need to review the latest international statistical standards for these topics as relevant in the national or regional context.²⁸

²⁷ See [21st ICLS Resolution concerning statistics on informal economy](#)

²⁸ See <https://ilostat.ilo.org/about/standards/icls/icls-documents/>

Minimum data collection items for ILM statistics

Based on the concepts, definitions and measurement criteria described in the previous sections, a number of priority data items to generate priority ILM statistics can be identified (see [Table 5](#)). These data items are the minimum necessary to identify the different groups and sub-groups of international migrants and temporary mobile populations in different data sources and to produce statistics on their essential labour market and employment characteristics. When conducting assessments of data sources for ILM statistics, it is important to first establish whether the source being considered includes the necessary questions to capture these data items. Or alternatively, whether the source allows to identify selected groups or characteristics. For example, a register of asylum seekers may not identify all categories of international migrants in the country but nevertheless enable the identification of particular sub-groups. Similarly, a foreign worker register may identify international migrants formally employed, but not international migrants in informal jobs or who are unemployed.

Additional data items, for example, covering important aspects of decent work, fair recruitment and other working conditions, such as recruitment costs incurred, working time, occupational safety and health, are also important and should be considered when specifying the ILM data needed to inform national and/or regional policy priorities. This is discussed in the next chapter.

► **Table 5. Data items to operationalize core concepts for international labour migration statistics**

International migrants	Essential employment characteristics of international migrants
- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Country of usual residence - Year (or period) of arrival - Reason for arrival - Previous experience of forced displacement - Legal international protection status	- Labour force status - Labour underutilization - Occupation - Branch of economic activity - Status in employment - Formal/informal (sector) employment
Return international migrants	Employment experience of return international migrants
- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Country of usual residence - Ever lived abroad (or in a specified period) - Date (or period) of departure - Country of destination - Reason for departure - Date of return - Reason for return	- Ever employment abroad (or in a specified period) - Occupation of the main/last job abroad - Branch of economic activity of the main/last job abroad - Duration of employment experience abroad
Emigrants	Employment experience of emigrants abroad
- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Date (or period) of departure - Reason for departure - Country of usual residence	- Employment experience abroad - Occupation of the main/last job abroad - Branch of economic activity of the main/last job abroad
Residents employed abroad	Employment characteristics of residents employed abroad
- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Country of usual residence - Location (country) of place of work	- Occupation of the main/last job abroad - Branch of economic activity of the main/last job abroad
Non-residents employed in the country	Employment characteristics of non-residents employed in the country
- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Country of usual residence - Location (country) of place of work	- Occupation of the main/last job - Branch of economic activity (sector)

► Chapter 3: Specifying the data priorities

The assessment of ILM data sources begins with the specification of data priorities. This initial stage connects the assessment to the data needs of the country or region by considering existing policy priorities and the prevailing international migration and mobility context. At the end of Stage I, the main expected output is a list containing the indicators, topics and disaggregation variables identified as priority to help implement and monitor the policies and plans related to international labour mobility in the country or region. This list, or **ILM indicator plan**, will serve as the reference for identifying relevant data sources to be assessed in subsequent stages.

Specifying the data priorities based on the context ensures that the assessment is useful in generating recommendations to improve the availability of relevant ILM data in the country or region.

STAGE I Specifying the data priorities	
Step 1	Identifying policy priorities and trends in international (labour) mobility
Step 2	Reviewing existing ILM indicator frameworks and statistical plans
Step 3	Listing priority groups, indicators, topics and disaggregation variables (i.e. ILM indicator plan)

Step 1: Identifying policy priorities and trends

The first step to specify the ILM data priorities, in the case of national assessments, is to review the national policies with respect to labour migration and the main migration and mobility trends in and out of the country. The main goal in this step is to identify the priority migrant and mobile population groups and the topics for which ILM data are needed.

National level

Labour migration policy, in the broadest sense, refers to the range of institutional structures, including legislation, strategic documents, agreements, action plans, budgets, as well as practices such as implementation regulations and actual procedures, that countries use to regulate international labour mobility (ILO, 2022). It may take the form of a standalone labour migration policy document, a part of a broader migration or immigration policy or a component of employment policy.

Issues related to the labour aspects of international migration and temporary mobility may also be integrated into national development plans or policy instruments covering closely related areas, such as a national skills policy or a social security strategy. Regardless of the form that labour migration policy takes, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive review of relevant instruments and documents, as these will help identify the priority groups and topics for which data are needed.

For example, the *Report on the assessment of sources of data on international labour migration in Tanzania (2023)*²⁹ identified multiple acts, rules, and regulations covering immigration, employment, social security, labour relations, investment, export processing zones, the registration and identification of persons, as well as the National five-year development plan, as relevant to labour migration (see **Box 18**).

²⁹ See [Report on the assessment of sources of data on international labour migration Tanzania](#)

► **Box 18. Example on national policy and legal frameworks governing labour migration in Tanzania (2023)**

Policies and Legal Frameworks Governing Labour Migration in Tanzania
• The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977 • Non-Citizens (Employment Regulations) Act 2015 • Immigration Act (Revised Edition) 2016 • Immigration Amendment Act 2015 • Immigration (Amendment) Regulations 2016 • Employment and Labour Relations Act No.6 of 2004 • Labour Institution Act No.7 of 2004 • Employment and Labour Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act. 2015 • National Social Security Fund Act Cap 50 • National Employment Promotion Services Act.1999 • Employment and Labour Relations (Code of Good Practice) Rules G.N NO. 42 of 2007 • Employment and Labour Relations (General) Regulations 2017 • Labour Institutions (General) Regulations 2017 • Non-Citizens (Employment) Regulations, 2016 • The National Five-Year Development Plan 2021/22-2025/26 • National Employment Policy 2008 • Export Processing Zones (EPZ) Act No. 11, 2002 • Registration and Identification of Persons Act, No. 11 of 1986 • Registration and Identification of Persons Regulation, GN No. 271 of 2014 • The Investment Act, 1997 (Revised Edition 2015) • The Investment Regulations, GN No. 381 of 2002

Similarly, reviewing recent international migration and temporary mobility trends impacting the country is particularly important. This review will help determine whether the country is primarily a migrant sending or receiving country, or both; the main reasons for migration, such as employment, forced displacement, or other factors; and whether cross-border temporary mobility with neighbouring countries is also prevalent. Even if published data or analysis is limited, reports focusing on specific migrant and mobile groups—such as seasonal workers, frontier workers, refugees, or returned migrant workers—or specific sectors, like employment in tourism, construction, or domestic work, can help identify the priority groups and topics for which data are needed.

Additionally, international migration data available at regional or global levels can shed light on the size of the native-born population (or nationals) residing abroad (that is, emigrants) and their labour market characteristics. The main objective in assessing recent international migration and temporary mobility trends is to complement the review of labour migration policy, as emerging issues or changes in migration and mobility flows may not yet be reflected in national policy instruments.

For example, a recent ILM data assessment conducted for the Dominican Republic (ILO, 2023) used published data at national and global levels to identify some of the main migration trends impacting the country (see [Box 19](#)).

Based on the compiled data, the report described the migration context in the Dominican Republic as characterized by diverse flows, including emigration of nationals to reside abroad, particularly in the United States, immigration, and temporary labour mobility, with a predominant inflow of nationals from Haiti for employment, including in seasonal work, followed by nationals from Venezuela arriving in the context of forced displacement. As a result, the following groups were identified as a priority to consider in the assessment of ILM data sources:

- International migrants resident in the country
- Resident international migrants employed in the country
- Non-residents employed in the country
- Returned international migrants with employment experience abroad
- Emigrants with employment experience abroad

► **Box 19. Example on international migration and mobility trends in the Dominican Republic (2023)****Contextual Information on International Migration in the Dominican Republic**

The Dominican Republic has a long migration tradition, especially due to its shared border with the Republic of Haiti and its historical trend toward emigration. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and considering the overall composition of migration in the country, in 2020, 1,608,567 people were living outside the Dominican Republic, while 603,794 migrants were living within it, resulting in a net negative migration balance of 1,004,773 persons.

UNDESA estimates that the migrant population residing in the country represents 5.6 per cent of the total population, with a higher proportion of men (7.1 per cent of all men) compared to women (4.1 per cent of all women). The sex ratio of the immigrant population stands at 174 men per 100 women, up 6.7 percentage points since 1990 (when the ratio was 166 men per 100 women). Conversely, emigration is female-dominated, with 58.7 per cent of emigrants being women.

As for countries of origin, according to the 2017 National Immigrant Survey, 87.19 per cent of the migrant population was born in Haiti, followed by Venezuela (4.53 per cent), the United States (1.75 per cent), and Spain (1.33 per cent), accounting for 94.81 per cent of all immigrants. It is important to note that these statistics only reflect the resident population, as non-residents are excluded from the available sources.

In terms of the diaspora, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that as of May 2021, 69.7 per cent of Dominicans abroad resided in the United States, 18.9 per cent in Puerto Rico, 6.8 per cent in Spain, and 1 per cent in Chile, totalling 96.3 per cent. This panorama reflects the presence of mixed migration flows, especially given the poorly captured circular and border populations in official data sources.

In addition to reviewing national labour migration policies and trends, it's important to identify policy priorities set at sub-regional, regional and global levels. International mobility is inherently an international issue, requiring a coherent and coordinated approach among countries. Bilateral and multilateral labour migration agreements may exist that establish agreed terms for the governance of labour mobility among the parties. These agreements may define priority groups, such as seasonal workers or migrant health workers, and highlight issues like occupational safety, social protection or qualifications to be addressed by the parties. Migration and development agendas at the regional and global levels further establish policy priorities and commitments that need to be taken into consideration.

Regional level

Regional agreements and governance frameworks, such as the African Union's Protocol on Free Movement of Persons or the European Union's Schengen Agreement, set specific goals and strategies for managing migration. Analyzing these agreements helps identify regional priorities (see [Box 20](#)). Understanding their focus, whether on skilled labour mobility or the free movement of people, ensures that the ILM data sources assessment considers the data needed to inform and monitor their implementation. These can also shed light on the potential to tap different types of administrative data sources, for example, border records, work permits, authorization waivers, and others.

► **Box 20. Examples of continental and regional economic blocks granting free mobility**

Continental and regional economic blocks ³⁰
• European Union (EU) • African Union (AU) • Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) • Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) • Mercosur (Southern Common Market) • Caribbean Community (CARICOM) • Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Continuing with the example of the Republic of Tanzania, the national assessment of ILM data sources identified several regional and continental instruments, including treaties, protocols, regulations, action plans and other intergovernmental agreements, covering important commitments and plans relevant to international migration and labour mobility. The list of instruments identified is shown in **Box 21**.

► **Box 21. Example on regional policy instruments relevant for ILM in Tanzania (2023)**

Regional policy instruments relevant for international labour mobility
• Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, 30 November 1999 • Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Community Common Market, 2009 – entered into force 2010 • AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa 2006, EX.CL/276 (IX) adopted by the AU Executive Council at the 9th Ordinary Session of 25 – 29 June 2006, Banjul, The Gambia. • Resolution on the Establishment of a Strategic Framework for a Policy of Migration in Africa 2001, Cm/Dec. 34 (LXXIV) 2001. • Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment 2018 • Implementation Roadmap for the Draft Protocol to the treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment • Joint Labour Migration Programme – Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa, African Union Community, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa • The East African Community One Stop Border Posts Act 2016 • The East African Community One Stop Border Post Regulations 2017 • Regional Strategic Framework for e-immigration 2014/15 – 2019/20 • African Union Executive Council Thirty Second Ordinary Session 22 – 26 January 2018 – Report of the Third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 14 – 15 November 2017 • SADC Labour migration Action Plan (2020 - 2025)

Global level

At the global level, there are a number of instruments that provide the reference framework for the governance of international labour migration, ensuring a rights-based approach. Among these, particularly important are the family of ILO's conventions, recommendations, non-binding principles and guidelines; the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families which covers any "person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national" –that is it covers all persons involved in international labour migration and in international temporary labour mobility; as well as intergovernmental accords including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

³⁰ This list is not exhaustive but serves to illustrate examples from each region, highlighting the varied implementation of free mobility agreements.

Development, the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. A review and consideration of these global instruments can shed light on priority areas and issues requiring ILM data, which may or may not have already identified in the review of regional and national policy instruments. These instruments can also shed light on pressing and emerging issues and support the setting of data priorities.

ILO normative framework for the governance of labour migration

Two key ILO Conventions and Recommendations focus on labour migration governance and the protection of migrant workers: the Migration for Employment Convention (No. 97) and Recommendation (No. 86) from 1949, and the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143) and Recommendation (No. 151) from 1975. More generally, all international labour standards apply to migrant workers. Especially important are the Fundamental Conventions covering priority issues, as shown in **Box 22** (ILO, 2022)³¹.

► Box 22. Thematic areas of the ILO fundamental conventions applicable to migrant workers

- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining
 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour
 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), including Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930
 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Effective abolition of child labour
 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- Safe and healthy working environment
 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)
 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)

Additional relevant standards include those on minimum wage fixing, working hours, occupational safety and governance, along with specific provisions for migrant workers in conventions like the Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181), the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189), the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190), and others related to social protection and decent work.

Also relevant are the ILO non-binding principles and guidelines applicable to labour migration, including the *General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and Definition of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs*³², and the *Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market*³³.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015 by all United Nations Member States, recognizes the role of migration in achieving sustainable development and includes several targets directly related to migration. SDG target 8.8 focuses on protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrants, while SDG target 10.7 emphasizes the need to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration through well-managed policies. Additionally, SDG target 10.C addresses the need to reduce transaction costs for migrant remittances (see **Box 23**).

³¹ See [ILO 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and Its Follow-up](#)

³² See [General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruitment fees and related costs](#)

³³ See [Guiding principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market](#)

► **Box 23. Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015)**

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, especially women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Target 10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through planned and well-managed migration policies.

Target 10.C Reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) was introduced in 2018 to further support the migration-related commitments of the SDGs. The GCM is the first intergovernmental agreement that comprehensively addresses all aspects of international migration and mobility, aiming to enhance international cooperation and promote evidence-based migration policies. It comprises 23 objectives, each providing practical strategies to manage migration effectively, reduce vulnerabilities, and support the positive contribution of migrants to sustainable development. The GCM includes references to decent work and labour migration and mobility of workers across several objectives, in particular, the objectives shown in **Box 24**.

► **Box 24. Global Compact, Objectives relevant to decent work and labour migration**

1. Collect and use accurate and disaggregated data to inform evidence-based policies.
2. Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
5. Enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration
6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work.
10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration
16. Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion.
18. Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.
22. Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits.

Global Compact on Refugees

The Global Compact on Refugees, also adopted by UN Member States in 2018, emphasizes the need for international cooperation to improve the lives of refugees and support host countries. A key element of the Compact is promoting durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement to third countries. Access to decent work is recognized as a central pathway to reduce dependency on humanitarian aid, promote integration and help refugees become self-reliant. It encourages governments, private sector actors and civil society organizations to collaborate in creating policies and programmes that allow refugees to contribute economically, improve their skills and integrate into local communities.

To promote inclusive economic growth for both host communities and refugees, the GCR places special emphasis on the need to create economic opportunities, decent work, job creation, and entrepreneurship programmes. It also highlights the need for labour market analysis to identify gaps and opportunities for employment creation and income generation, skills mapping and recognition, vocational and language training, addressing ICT gaps, particularly in developing and least-developed countries and improving access to affordable financial services, including mobile and internet access, and facilitating remittance transfers.

Overall, reviewing key instruments at the global level helps align the ILM data sources assessment with globally agreed principles and commitments covering areas critical to promote regular, safe and orderly migration and decent work outcomes for international migrants.

Box 25 provides an example from South Asia, illustrating how the regional data assessment and mapping exercise, titled *International labour migration statistics in South Asia*³⁴, first lists the relevant international instruments before presenting an explanation of the national migration context. This example references not only global policy agendas but also global tripartite consultation mechanisms, including the International Labour Conference and the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).

► **Box 25. Example on listing global instruments relevant for ILM in South Asia regional study (2023)**

Listing of international instruments in South Asia (2018)
Support for improving labour migration statistics and evidence-based policy-making in South Asia and beyond <i>Recalling the 2030 Agenda, up-to-date, reliable and comparable labour migration data, disaggregated by age and sex, among others, are key for evidence-based policy-making, the evaluation of the impact of labour migration schemes, and the protection of migrant workers' rights. Harmonization of concepts and definitions of labour migration is essential, as is the collection of data on specific economic sectors in which migrant workers are predominant. These should be part of national and regional data collection plans.</i> International Labour Conference, 106th session (2017)a <i>Elaboration and implementation of comprehensive stakeholder defined, evidence based national migration policy frameworks addressing legal, economic, social, labour, and development dimensions with an explicit whole of government approach.</i> UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, Target 10.7b <i>[The ICLS recognizes] the need to promote the development of international standards, common methodologies and approaches on labour migration statistics</i> 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (2013)c <i>It has become essential/imperative to improve...data collection and data sharing on issues relating to migration trends and patterns, including return migration. To the extent possible, the data should be disaggregated according to gender, sector and skill levels, with a view to strengthening evidence-based policies.</i>

Step 2: Review existing ILM indicator frameworks and statistical plans

This step involves a review of the existing ILM indicator frameworks and statistical plans, towards specifying the data priorities for the assessment. This serves to complement the review of policy priorities and migration trends completed in Step 1. The review of existing ILM indicator frameworks and plans should take into consideration national statistical plans, which may already identify priority ILM data and indicators to respond to national user demands, as well as indicator frameworks established to facilitate follow-up to regional and global commitments, such as the *Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for*

³⁴ See [International labour migration statistics in South Asia: Establishing a subregional database and improving data collection for evidence-based policy-making](#)

*Sustainable development*³⁵³⁶ and the *Limited set of indicators to review progress related to GCM implementation*³⁷. It should also consider recommendations for priority indicators, tabulations and disaggregation provided by the international statistical standards, in particular, the UN Recommendations for statistics of international migration and temporary mobility, and the 21st ICLS Guidelines on statistics of international labour mobility, international remote work, and authorizations to work.

National level

One key element to consider at the national level is the existing national statistical plan. Many countries already have plans in place aimed at producing statistics on international migration and mobility, or international labour migration and labour mobility, in line with international statistical standards. For example, see **Box 26** drawn from the case study on *Promoting the Use of Administrative Data Sources for International Labour Migration Statistics in Türkiye (2025)*³⁸. Incorporating these existing plans into the data assessment and mapping process can help identify priority indicators already being produced or scheduled for production. It can also support setting priorities around the indicators to be considered and contribute, overall, to identifying gaps in the national statistical plan.

► Box 26. Example on national statistical plans (OSP) in Türkiye (2025)

Turkish Official Statistics Programme (OSP)

- **Fifth (2024-2027):** This period focuses on enhancing data quality and integrating advanced technologies into Türkiye's statistical systems. Key objectives include strengthening collaboration among government institutions, expanding the use of administrative records, improving data accessibility and ensuring timely, transparent, and reliable statistics. In these objectives, there is a strong focus on expanding partnerships with international organizations to align with global frameworks to meet the growing demand for more detailed sector-specific statistics, especially in topics related to international migration.

Regional level

Regional policy instruments and accords may also be accompanied by indicator frameworks or plans that promote a coherent monitoring approach among members of the regional grouping. For example, within the European Union, the Zaragoza declaration was adopted in 2010 by the European Ministerial Conference on *Migrant Integration Statistics*³⁹. This declaration acknowledged a number of policy areas relevant to migrant integration and established a set of common indicators (known as 'Zaragoza indicators') covering four priority areas (employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship) for monitoring the situation of migrants and the outcomes of integration policies. More recently, the Zaragoza indicators have been complemented with additional indicators to enable more detailed analysis following improvements in data availability and emerging policy priorities (see **Box 27**).

³⁵ Hereafter referred as SDG indicator framework

³⁶ See [Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2010 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

³⁷ See [Limited set of indicators to review progress related to GCM implementation](#)

³⁸ See [Case studies in international labour migration statistics: Promoting the use of administrative data sources for international labour migration statistics in Türkiye](#)

³⁹ See [Migrant integration statistics \(2020 edition\)](#)

► **Box 27. Example on priority indicators at regional level, European Union (2020)**

Zaragoza indicators disaggregated by citizenship status ⁴⁰	
• Employment ○ labour force participation rate* ○ employment to population ratio* ○ unemployment rate* ○ self-employment* ○ temporary employment ○ part-time employment ○ long-term unemployment • Education ○ highest educational attainment* ○ early leavers from education & training* ○ not in education, employment or training ○ participation in lifelong learning • Active citizenship ○ naturalization rate* ○ share of non-EU citizens with long-term residence*	• Social inclusion ○ median net income* ○ at risk of poverty or social exclusion* ○ at-risk-of-poverty rate* ○ in-work poverty risk ○ severe material deprivation rate ○ people living in households with very low work intensity ○ child poverty ○ property ownership* ○ overcrowding ○ housing cost overburden ○ self-perceived health status* ○ self-reported unmet need for medical care

*Original Zaragoza indicators.

Similarly, a set of priority statistics on permits and authorizations to work has been agreed upon through a European Commission regulation to monitor managed migration. Among other aspects of migration, these statistics support monitoring access to employment through different types of authorizations, in line with EU directives. The list of permits and authorizations to work statistics series by type, and its relation to employment is provided in **Box 28**.

► **Box 28. Example on priority permit statistics series at regional level, European Union**

European Union (EU) Permits and Authorizations to work Statistics	
1	EU Blue Card (Work residence permit for non-EU/EEA nationals who take up highly qualified employment)
2	Single Permit (combined procedure encompassing both residence and work permit for third-country nationals)
3	Seasonal Workers Authorizations (Seasonal worker authorisations for a period of no more than 90 days)
4	Intra-corporate transfers (Authorization granted to third country nationals as part of an intra-corporate transfer)
5	Students and researchers

⁴⁰ Citizenship statuses include: national citizens, citizens of EU Member States, and non-citizens.

Global level

SDG Indicator Framework

At the global level, the SDG 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was the first global accord to introduce specific migration indicators for countries to track progress in its implementation. The SDG Indicator Framework calls on Member States to disaggregate all indicators, where relevant, by international migration status, in addition to sex, age, and other cross-cutting characteristics. Additionally, it also specifies several indicators relevant to labour migration, under Goals 8 and 10 (see [Annex Table I](#)).

More recently, the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRIS) has issued further guidance highlighting the set of SDG indicators, including under Goal 8, that are recommended to be disaggregated additionally by forced displacement status⁴¹ (EGRIS, 2024).

GCM indicators

In the context of the Global Compact on Migration, a set of indicators has also been proposed by the United Nations Network on Migration to help Member States review progress in its implementation. The GCM indicators draw on established frameworks, including the SDG indicator framework, the Migration Governance Indicators and the UN Migration Statistics Recommendations. They include core and additional indicators covering key aspects of the GCM 23 objectives, as well as a set of background statistics considered foundational across all objectives. Priority labour migration indicators are highlighted as part of the background statistics and across multiple objectives of the GCM underscoring their usefulness for monitoring progress across multiple dimensions and objectives (see [Annex Table II](#)).

More generally, Objective 1 of the GCM emphasizes the need to collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies on migration. As part of this objective, Member States are committed to “strengthen the global evidence base on international migration by improving and investing in the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable and comparable data, disaggregated by sex, age, migration status and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.”

International statistical standards indicators

The international statistical standards reviewed in Chapter 2, in addition to establishing the reference concepts to compile ILM statistics, also include agreed priority indicators to help guide countries in building the evidence to inform migration and labour migration policy.

The **UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations** establish the minimum core indicators to produce stocks and flow statistics of international migration and international temporary mobility (see [Tables 6a](#) and [6b](#)). These indicators are necessary as a foundation to generate information on the size of the different groups of international migrants and temporary mobile populations.

These recommendations further identify priority disaggregation variables, including labour force status, which serves to shed light on the labour market participation of international migrants, and the reason for migration, which can aid in the identification of refugees and others migrating due to forced displacement reasons.

⁴¹ See [Capturing Priority SDG Indicators in Refugee, Internal Displacement and Statelessness Contexts](#)

► **Table 6a. Core indicators for international migration —UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations**

	Core indicators	Primary disaggregations	Secondary disaggregations
Stock	Number/proportion of _____ in the total resident population? <i>Foreign-born population</i> <i>Foreign citizens</i> <i>Foreign-born citizens</i> <i>Foreign born-foreign citizens</i> <i>Native-born (native) citizens</i>	Age Sex Country of birth Country of citizenship	<i>Duration of stay</i> <i>Educational attainment</i> <i>Labour force status</i> <i>Location of residence within the country</i> <i>Reason for migration</i> <i>Native-born/Foreign-born status of parents</i>
	Number of _____ who obtained citizenship over a given year <i>Native-born foreign citizens</i> <i>Foreign-born foreign citizens</i>	Age Sex Country of birth Country of citizenship	<i>Educational attainment,</i> <i>Labour force status</i> <i>Location of residence in the country,</i> <i>Duration of stay</i> <i>Legal grounds for obtaining citizenship</i>
Flow	Annual number of immigrants who are: <i>Foreign born</i> <i>Foreign citizen</i> <i>Foreign born citizen</i> <i>Native born foreign citizen</i> <i>Foreign born, foreign citizen</i> <i>Native born (native) citizen</i>	Age Sex Country of birth Country of citizenship	<i>Country of previous residence</i> <i>Educational attainment</i> <i>Reason for move</i> <i>Labour force status prior to move</i> <i>Location within country</i>
	Annual number of emigrants who are: <i>Foreign born</i> <i>Foreign citizen</i> <i>Foreign born citizen</i> <i>Native born foreign citizen</i> <i>Foreign born, foreign citizen</i> <i>Native born (native) citizen</i>	Age Sex Country of birth Country of citizenship	<i>Country of next residence</i> <i>Educational attainment</i> <i>Reason for move</i> <i>Labour force status</i> <i>Departure location within country</i>

► **Table 7b. Indicators for international temporary mobility —UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations**

Indicators		Primary disaggregations
Stock	Number of foreign citizens temporarily present in the country who are ____ <i>Cross-border workers⁴²</i> <i>Engaged in seasonal work</i> <i>Other types of employment</i> <i>Engaged in training or education</i> <i>Seeking health-related treatments</i> <i>Asylum seeker/refugees</i>	Age Sex Duration of stay
	Number of national citizens temporarily absent from the country who are ____ <i>Cross border workers</i> <i>Engaged in seasonal works</i>	Age Sex Duration of stay
Flow	Annual number of foreign citizens entering the country temporarily for ____ <i>Cross-border workers</i> <i>Engaged in seasonal work</i> <i>Other types of employment</i> <i>Engaged in training or education</i> <i>Seeking health-related treatments</i> <i>Asylum seeker/refugees</i>	Age Sex Duration of stay
	Annual number of residents ____ departing the country for temporary stays abroad <i>Foreign citizen</i> <i>Citizen population</i>	Age Sex Expected duration of stay Country of final destination

⁴² Also known as frontier workers.

The **21st ICLS Guidelines** build on, and complement, the UN International Migration Statistics Recommendations by providing more detailed guidance on priority indicators, tabulations and disaggregation variables to shed light on the labour aspects of international migration and temporary mobility, including the number of migrants and mobile populations engaged in the labour market, and from a country of origin perspective, the number of emigrants and returned migrant workers with employment experience abroad and their characteristics (see [Table 7](#)).

► **Table 8. Stock indicators for priority international migrant and mobile workers—21st ICLS Guidelines**

Themes		Core indicators
Stocks of (Totals and/or shares)	International migrants	• International migrants of working age, of which • In the labour force • Employed • Unemployed • In time related underemployment • In the potential labour force • Emigrants (<i>or former household members</i>) with employment experience abroad • By period of departure • Returned migrants with employment experience abroad • By period of return
	Temporary mobile populations	• Residents employed abroad, of which • Frontier workers • Seasonal migrant workers • Cross-border service providers • Others • Non-residents employed in the country, of which • Frontier workers • Seasonal migrant workers • Cross-border service providers • Others
Separately for and/or disaggregated by		
• Place of birth (native-born, foreign-born) • Citizenship status (national citizen, foreign citizen, and as relevant stateless) • Forced displacement status (as relevant: refugee, asylum seeker, temporary protection status, ...)		

Beyond the essential stock statistics, from a **country of destination perspective**, the 21st ICLS Guidelines recommend several core labour market indicators to support monitoring international migrants' access and participation in the labour force and their insertion in employment (see [Table 8](#)).

To support monitoring differences in the labour market participation among sub-groups of migrants and with the non-migrant population, the 21st ICLS Guidelines also highlight the importance of disaggregating the core labour market indicators by important socio-demographic and housing characteristics known to impact labour market outcomes.

► **Table 9. Core labour market indicators for international migrants —21st ICLS Guidelines**

International migrants of working age		Employed international migrants	
• Labour force participation rate • Employment to population ratio • Rate of time-related underemployment • Unemployment rate (LU1) • Underutilization rates (LU2, LU3, LU4)		• Status in employment (distribution by) • Occupation (distribution by) • Branch of economic activity (distribution by) • Share of employed in informal employment • Share of employed in informal sector employment • Mean monthly earnings	
Special topics			
• Recruitment cost borne by employee (migrants) as proportion of monthly income earned in destination country (SDG 10.7.1) • Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers (SDG 8.8.1).			
Separately for and/or disaggregated by			
Essential migration	• Place of birth (native-born, foreign-born) • Citizenship (native citizen, foreign citizen) • Forced displacement status (<i>as relevant</i>)		
Essential socio-demographic	• Sex • Age (at a minimum: 15-24, 25-55, 65+) • Level of educational attainment		
Additional	• Disability status • Type of living quarters		

From an **origin country perspective**, in the case of emigrants, the 21st ICLS Guidelines promote the sharing of statistics compiled by major destination countries which origin countries, covering core labour force characteristics of the resident population born in (or citizen of) the origin country, particularly labour force status and for those employed, status in employment, occupation and branch of economic activity, by essential socio-demographic characteristics, at a minimum sex and broad age-group.

For returned migrants with employment experience abroad, minimum recommended statistics include characteristics of the most recent job held abroad, including occupation, industry and status in employment, as well as duration of employment experience abroad, and their current labour force status in the country.

Other important topics to produce indicators on with respect to the different groups of international migrants include: social security coverage, recognition of qualifications and language proficiency of the destination country, recruitment costs, occupational injuries and accidents, and other aspects of decent work.

Additionally, the 21st ICLS Guidelines promote selected **statistics on permits or authorizations to work and permit- or authorization-holders** for monitoring managed international mobility and its contributions to employment. This includes data on permits and authorizations that grant the right to employment, covering work

permits, authorizations to work, work permit exceptions, as well as residence permits that grant (partial/full) rights to employment (see [Table 9](#)).

► **Table 10. Permit statistics for managed labour mobility**

Core indicators		
• 1st time permits issued (flows) • All valid permits at the end of the year (stocks) • Change in status (flow)		
Disaggregation variables		
Characteristics of the permit	By type of permit	• Reasons related to remunerated activities • Reasons related to education and study • Reasons related to family formation and reunification • Reasons related to international protection status • Other
	By duration of validity	• Below threshold for usual residence (e.g. < 12 months) • Above threshold for usual residence (e.g. ≥ 12 months) ○ Non-permanent (restrictions to stay apply) ○ Permanent (no restriction to stay apply)
	By place of issuance	• Outside the issuing country • Within the issuing country (status change / renewal within country)
	By type of rights to employment and residence	• Yes • Partial • No
Characteristics of the permit-holder		• Sex • Age • Country of birth / citizenship • Country of residence • Education level attained

Step 3 Establishing an ILM indicator plan

The last step in this first stage of the assessment is to prepare a consolidated list of priority indicators, topics and disaggregation variables. This list, or **ILM indicator plan**, should be guided by the policy priorities and migrant groups identified during Step 1, and by the various lists of recommended indicators identified during step 2.

It is important to emphasize that the objective is not to cover all migrant groups exhaustively, nor include all possible indicators. Instead, the focus should be on those most relevant to the national or regional migration context, to inform policy and meet existing national, regional, and global commitments. For example:

- Countries with high levels of immigration but little or no emigration may prioritize listing priority indicators for immigrant populations. Where refugees are an important component of international migrants in the country, the indicator plan should include disaggregation by forced displacement status and indicators covering topics relevant to monitoring their labour market access and conditions of employment.
- Countries involved in bilateral labour migration agreements that receive substantial inflows from a specific partner country may prioritize including indicators covering those groups of migrant workers, for example, by permit type, to monitor the impact of the agreements.
- Where migrants are concentrated in specific sectors—such as construction, domestic work or agriculture, priority indicators and tabulations should shed light on these groups in particular, their employment characteristics and working conditions.

By applying this structured, context-sensitive approach, Stage I of the assessment can help establish a well-defined and policy-relevant list of priority indicators, topics and disaggregation variables. This list will serve as a foundation for guiding the assessment of ILM data sources.

Template I provided in the appendix may be used to establish the ILM indicator plan, as illustrated in the examples below. **Illustration 2** shows a hypothetical example using a country of destination perspective.

► **Illustration 2. Template I. ILM indicator plan —Country of destination perspective**

National ILM indicator plan for international labour migration statistics			
National context (Step 1)	In this country, managed labour migration plays a central role in meeting workforce needs across a range of sectors, including agriculture, construction, healthcare, mining and information technology. Migrants enter under various residence permits and visa types, such as short-term seasonal permits, employer-sponsored work permits, and skilled migration programmes leading to longer-term or permanent residency. The country also has an important resettlement programme for refugees and asylum seekers. In recent years, there has been a growing demand for assessments of the impact of migration policy on employment and the working conditions of migrants and refugees in key sectors, including those with short-duration permits. To address these demands, authorities have launched a review of the available data sources and identified the following priority data needed.		
Priority groups (Step 2)	Indicators and priority topics (Step 3)	Cross cutting socio-demographic disaggregation variables (Step 3)	Frequency of publication (Step 3)
Resident international migrants (i.e. immigrants)	- Labour force status - Employment to population ratio - Labour force participation rate - Labour underutilization (LU1, LU2, LU3, LU4) - Occupational injuries (SDG indicator 8.8.1) - Type of permit, period of entry, duration - Language proficiency - Recognition of education qualifications - Accompanying family	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Forced displacement status - Sex, Age - Marital status - Education level attained - Type of living quarters	Annual
Employed resident international migrants	- Status in employment - Branch of economic activity - Occupation - Location of place of work - Contract characteristics - Mean monthly earnings - Migrant recruitment costs (SDG indicator 10.7.1) - Type of permit, period of entry, duration	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Forced displacement status - Sex, Age - Marital status - Education level attained - Type of living quarters	Annual
Non-residents employed in the country	- Branch of economic activity - Occupation - Location of place of work - Contract characteristics - Mean monthly earnings - Migrant recruitment costs (SDG indicator 10.7.1) - Country of residence - Type of permit, period of entry, duration	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Forced displacement status - Sex, Age - Marital status - Education level attained - Type of living quarters	
Permit-holders	- First-time permits - Change of status - Total valid permits at end of year by - Period of entry, duration - Type of permit	- Country of citizenship - Sex, Age, Education level attained	Every 3 months, Annual

Illustration 3 presents a different perspective considering a hypothetical example from a country of origin where the priority switches to indicators for emigrants and return migrants with employment experience abroad, and residents employed abroad.

► **Illustration 3. Template I. ILM indicator plan —Country of origin perspective**

National ILM indicator plan for international labour migration statistics			
National context (Step 1)	In this country, emigration of nationals for employment abroad has been an important trend since the 1980s. Nationals have departed through managed bilateral employment programmes as well as independently through family networks. More recently, as the first wave of emigrants reach retirement age and employment conditions improve in the country for the second generation, many are starting to return. Additionally, as the country has become a member of the regional economic bloc, residents, particularly in border regions, are also finding new work opportunities in neighbouring countries. To monitor these developments and inform policy, the country has identified the priority data needs below.		
Priority groups (Step 2)	Indicators and priority topics (Step 3)	Cross cutting socio-demographic disaggregation variables (Step 3)	Frequency of publication (Step 3)
Emigrants	- Households with former members who departed in the previous 5 years - Reason for departure - Date or period of departure - Current destination country - Emigrants with employment experience abroad - Occupation of job abroad - Industry of job abroad - Migrant recruitment costs (SDG indicator 10.7.1) - Language proficiency, recognition of educational qualifications - Social security coverage	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Sex - Age before departure - Education level attained before departure - Marital status before departure	Every 3-5 years
Returned international migrants	- Date or period of return - Date of period of last departure - Reason for last departure - Country of destination - Employment experience abroad - Occupation of job abroad - Industry of job abroad - Migrant recruitment costs (SDG indicator 10.7.1) - Country of highest education, field of education - Current labour force status - Occupation of current job - Industry of current job - Status in employment of current job - Social security coverage	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Sex, Age, Education level attained - Marital status	Every 3-5 years
Residents in employment abroad	- Location of place of work - Occupation of job abroad - Industry of job abroad - Type of permit, duration - International commuting pattern	- Country of birth - Country of citizenship - Sex, Age, Education level attained - Marital status	Every 3 months, Annual

► Chapter 4: Rapid mapping of sources and stakeholders

The second stage of the assessment involves mapping the data sources and institutions relevant for ILM statistics. This stage aims to better understand the ILM data environment within the country or region and to build a list of the sources and institutions that should form part of the assessment. For this, Step 1 focuses on a rapid mapping of existing and potential ILM data sources while Step 2 focuses a rapid mapping of user and producer institutions. Steps 1 and 2 are iterative, as identification of different sources, custodian and user institutions can lead to identification of new sources and possibly additional stakeholders. The primary output is a **matrix of the indicators** identified in Stage I, alongside the **relevant data sources and the institutions responsible** for the data source.

	STAGE II Rapid mapping
Step 1	Mapping data sources (in use and potential)
Step 2	Mapping institutions (producers and users)
Step 3	Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and institutions

Step 1: Mapping data sources

Generating quality ILM data requires the combined use of multiple data sources. No single source exists that can produce the range of information needed on the size of different groups of international migrants and temporary mobile populations, their skills, labour market characteristics and working conditions, on migration and mobility inflows and outflows, or on permits and authorizations to work. Both the UN recommendations and the 21st ICLS Guidelines recommend a data production strategy based on the combined use of different data sources.

Step 1 of the rapid mapping stage focuses on establishing a list of the priority data sources existing in the country or region that are relevant for ILM data. The ILM indicator plan established during Stage I should serve as a basis to guide the data source mapping. It is important to keep in mind that not all available data sources in the country may be relevant for ILM data. Also, not all relevant sources may already be in use to generate ILM statistics. Thus, it is important that the rapid mapping considers those sources already in use, as well as those that could potentially be used for ILM data.

The main types of sources recognized as relevant for ILM statistics include **population censuses**, selected major **household and individual surveys**, **establishment surveys** and a range of **administrative records**. Each of these source types varies in terms of population coverage, topic coverage and frequency. Consequently, these differences inform their potential value to generate different types of ILM data. **Table 10** provides a summary of the value and quality considerations of the main different sources for ILM data.

Population Censuses conducted (or census outputs produced using register data) in nearly every country provide comprehensive coverage of the entire resident population, whether living in private households or in collective living quarters, and in some cases of the population present in the country during the census reference period. The vast majority of countries gather the core data items required to identify international migrants, establish their labour force status and capture essential characteristics of those employed, including occupation, branch of economic activity and status in employment, making population censuses a main source to produce benchmark estimates of the stock of different groups of resident international migrants and their labour market characteristics. Depending on the periodicity of census outputs, benchmark estimates of the stock of different migrant populations, and of migrants in the labour force, may be available every 5 to 10 years, and in some countries with register-based censuses, on an annual basis. In the case of register-based censuses that can generate annual estimates, this can also be an important source of international migration inflows and outflows.

► **Table 11. Summary of the value and quality considerations of the main different sources of ILM data**

Data source		Potential uses for ILM statistics	Challenges and quality considerations
Population census	Population census	• Can be used to produce benchmark estimates at long intervals (every 5 or 10 years) of the stock of international migrants resident in the country, of returned international migrants and their labour force status, and of residents employed abroad during the census reference period. It can also generate estimates of former household members who have emigrated in a specified period and their essential characteristics. • Allows to produce statistics on the detailed geographic distribution of different groups of resident international migrants and their essential socio-demographic, education, housing, and labour force and employment characteristics. • Can serve as a basis for preparing sampling frames for specialized migration surveys and to improve the coverage of migrants in major survey such as labour force surveys to improve the efficiency and precision of estimates by migration status.	• For field-based censuses, training of staff, sensitization campaigns, Multilanguage options, and other special protocols are essential to ensure participation and minimize potential under-coverage among migrant populations. • For register-based censuses, limited information may be available on the labour force status and employment characteristics of migrants. • Use of sampling to capture economic or migration characteristics of the population may impact the quality and precision of the estimates.
Household and individual surveys	Labour force surveys	• Labour force surveys generate nationally representative statistics of the working-age population resident in the country. As such, they cover international migrants resident in the country as well as returned migrants. • As the primary source of labour force statistics, they collect detailed characteristics on the labour force status, employment and working conditions of the population, and serve to generate headline indicators of the labour market. • Conducted regularly, often on a sub-annual or continuous basis, these surveys offer a sustainable means of producing frequent headline indicators on migrants' labour force participation, as well as important characteristics of their employment in a way that supports comparisons with non-migrants and monitoring trends over time, particularly in contexts with significant resident migrant populations. • Inclusion of special add-on modules targeting migrants can also serve to produce statistics on special topics such as skills, language proficiency, recognition of qualifications, occupational safety and health, and so on. • They may also produce statistics on residents employed abroad and on the labour market situation of returned international migrants, provided these populations are identified by the survey.	• International migrants may be underrepresented, with some groups (for example, those in collective living quarters) excluded or insufficiently covered. This can result in biased estimates of their labour market participation, particularly for selected sectors of employment and migrant groups such as refugees or migrant workers in employer provided accommodation. • Disaggregation by migration status may lead to unreliable results, especially when migrant populations are small or when the sampling design has not taken into consideration this objective. • Special field procedures may not be integrated to promote participation of migrant populations, impacting the overall quality of the resulting statistics

Data source		Potential uses for ILM statistics	Challenges and quality considerations
Household and individual surveys (continued)	Specialized migration surveys, forced displacement surveys, and demographic surveys covering migration	- These surveys can be tailored to focus on international migrants resident in the country, refugees and asylum seekers, emigrants, returned migrants, residents working abroad, and/or selected categories of non-residents working in the country, for example, seasonal migrant workers, depending on the interest and prevailing migration and mobility dynamics in the country. - They can generate reliable nationally representative estimates on the size of resident migrant populations and their characteristics, including their labour market characteristics as a result of their specialized design and special field procedures designed to target migrants. - These surveys can also be well placed to produce statistics on special topics of particular importance to migrant populations, for example, recruitment costs, occupational injuries, recognition of skills, destination country language proficiency, social protection coverage, reasons for migration or displacement, and so on.	- These surveys require specialized design to adequately cover the target migrant populations. Suitable sampling frames to achieve this may not always be available or may be out-of-date, requiring an update of the enumeration areas of the sampling frame to reduce its impact on the overall quality of the survey estimates. - Their frequency may vary and may be subject to the availability of non-regular funding sources. - These surveys may not support comparisons between migrant and non-migrant populations limiting their use to shed light on their relative situation.
	Other national socio-economic surveys (working conditions, living standards, socio-economic, household income and expenditure, household budget)	- These surveys are typically designed to produce nationally representative results of the resident population with an established frequency of every 3-5 years. - As these surveys generally include a short module on labour market characteristics, they may serve to produce structural information on the employment of international migrants, particularly in contexts with significant migrant populations. - Inclusion of modules on household sources of livelihood also makes them a potential source for statistics on remittances received from abroad.	- International migrants may be underrepresented, with some groups (for example, those in collective living quarters) excluded or insufficiently covered. - Sample sizes may be too small to support disaggregation of estimates by migration status, or by other household characteristics relevant for ILM data - Special field procedures may not be integrated to promote participation of migrant populations, impacting the overall quality of the resulting statistics
Establishment census and surveys	Economic census/survey, Sectoral surveys	- Provided information is captured separately by international migrant status of the workers, these sources could serve to provide estimates of payroll employment, contractual hours and wages paid to for aggregate categories of international migrants, and by branch of economic activity. - May serve to generate statistics on employment in selected sectors with a concentration of migrant workers, or with workers that tend to live in group quarters and/or employer provided accommodation, for example, agriculture, fishing, mining, construction, tourism,	- Establishment surveys may not take into consideration migrants in their design. Statistics derived may not support disaggregation by migrant status, or yield estimates that are biased or without sufficient precision. - May exclude establishments below a certain size or production threshold, as well as informal sector businesses, leading to exclusion of certain groups of migrant workers.

Data source		Potential uses for ILM statistics	Challenges and quality considerations
Administrative records	Population register /Foreign register /Registers of foreign workers	- Can serve to provide stock and flow data on annual basis regarding registered international migrants, particularly international migrants resident in the country and foreign nationals registered for employment in the country - When person-level unique identifiers are included or can be established, population registers can be linked to other administrative and survey sources that capture information about the employment characteristics of international migrants	- International migrants not registered are not captured - May suffer problems with non-deregistration of foreigners upon departure - Other relevant sources may not include unique identifiers to support linking
	Registers of nationals abroad	Can serve to provide data on the registered emigrant population	- Unregistered emigrants are not captured. - Generally, do not capture emigrants' employment experience abroad.
	Residence, visa, permits, and work authorization records	- Important for monitoring managed labour migration trends, to assess employment rights among different groups of migrants with residence, visa and/or work permit - When combined with other sources they can serve to assess the contributions of migration policy to employment	- Do not reflect actual employment of migrants if not linked with other sources that confirm their employment (e.g., social security, tax records etc.) - May not cover migrants in informal jobs and those not subject to administrative procedures for employment (for example, free movement of workers)
	Border entries / exits	- Important for tracking international migration flows (arrivals/departures), especially when entry and exit records capture all travellers, and are linked to a population register - Can support improvements in population registers by helping adjust for unrecorded emigration or missing de-registrations.	- Reported reason for migration may not capture all those arriving / departing for employment reasons. - May not cover migrants if regional mobility frameworks allow entry without formal border checks - Will not cover irregular entries and departures
	Social insurance/security records	- Can provide statistics on international migrants covered by social insurance/security and their wages, provided international migrants are identifiable in the records - Can be used to confirm the employment status of international migrants when linked with other sources	- Misses employment in informal sector or informal employment - Does not capture immigrants that are not registered
	Registers for specific groups	Important for producing statistics on specific groups that are often not covered in general registers (for example, asylum seekers and refugees, seasonal workers, voluntary repatriations and so on).	- Targeting only specific subgroups of migrants - Generally, does not cover employment characteristics

Data source		Potential uses for ILM statistics	Challenges and quality considerations
Mirror and related statistics	Population census, population register, migration surveys, labour force surveys, social security records, and similar sources of major destination countries	• Can serve to generate statistics on the number of native-born persons or national citizens resident in selected destination countries and their main labour force and employment characteristics • Important in improving the quality of statistics on emigrants and/or national citizens residing in major destination countries from a country-of-origin perspective	• May be available only at aggregate level • Depend on data exchange agreements with major destination countries • Destination countries may not have precise information on international migrants by country of birth or country of citizenship, or on their labour force status and employment characteristics.

Major national household or individual surveys also play an important role in producing priority ILM statistics, particularly on the labour market access, participation, employment and working conditions of migrants, on emigration and return migration of nationals and on residents employed abroad. These sources are better suited for generating descriptive statistics and to support monitoring changes over time. Nevertheless, not all major national surveys are well-suited for this purpose. This is because, in general, capturing migrant populations in surveys requires special considerations. Surveys that do not consider explicitly the characteristics of migrant populations in their design and operations (that is, size, distribution, living arrangements, languages, sensitivity, and so on) can be impacted by issues of under coverage and/or insufficient sample, leading to problems of bias and inadequate precision in the resulting statistics for migrant populations.

The most appropriate surveys to produce statistics on migrant populations are **specialized migration surveys** (which can also include forced displacement, intercensal population and demographic surveys covering migration). These surveys, by design, target migrant populations and are a good source for capturing detailed migration and employment characteristics, including of migrants in irregular situations, in informal jobs, or living in different types of accommodation, including camps, worker quarters or employer provided accommodation. When these surveys are planned shortly after the population census, they can be designed efficiently using migration information captured in the census for stratification as part of the survey sampling strategy. This can significantly lower the costs of conducting specialized migration surveys and at the same time minimize potential problems with the coverage, representation and precision of the survey results. However, when these surveys are not designed to support comparisons with non-migrants, or to be comparable with results from other surveys, including the national labour force survey, their value in meeting user-demands may be impacted. Additionally, if these surveys are not included as part of the national statistical plan, their regular implementation may be impacted by insufficient or unreliable budget allocation, leading to problems of long-term sustainability, and/or ad-hoc implementation.

Other relevant surveys include labour force surveys and other major household surveys covering closely related topics, including working conditions, socio-economic, living standards, household budget and household income and expenditure surveys. **Labour force surveys** (LFS) in particular are an important potential source for ILM statistics to monitor labour market dynamics of international migrants resident in the country compared to non-migrants. As the main source of official labour force statistics, LFS are particularly important for generating headline labour market indicators for disaggregation by migration status and monitoring trends over time. For countries with relatively large shares of international migrants in the resident population, LFS should support this objective and produce statistics on the employment and working conditions of migrants, in line with the 21st ICLS Guidelines and the 19th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization. Add-on modules can capture special topics less frequently. Inadequate migrant coverage can impact LFS usefulness in

monitoring the labour market, as migrants often exhibit different employment patterns and dynamics compared non-migrants. **Other socio-economic surveys** may serve to generate statistics particularly on remittances, and, depending on the sample design and size, on selected characteristics of international migrants.

Administrative Records, including population registers, foreigner registers, residence, work permits and authorizations to work records, border entry/exit records, records of labour inspections, records from tax authorities, social security and similar, are also an important source for ILM statistics. Population registers are particularly important as a base to support the development of register-based population statistics. Where established, population registers can provide a basis to integrate information from different sources to generate statistics on a frequent basis. Where comprehensive population registers covering migrant populations exist, these can serve to generate benchmark statistics on stocks and flows. Registers that enable linking with other sources can also serve to generate statistics on selected employment characteristics of migrants, for example, branch of economic activity, occupation, gross or net earnings, contractual work hours or social security coverage. These sources, however, cover registered individuals only, excluding migrants in irregular situations, those in informal employment, or not covered by specific programmes or services, or exempt from taxation.

Mirror and related statistics are statistics on a common topic or population group produced by two different countries. They are often used to assess the quality of estimates generated by the two countries. For example, mirror statistics may be used to compare the quality of estimates on migration flows by comparing the outflows to country B compiled by country A, with the inflows from country A compiled by country B. Mirror statistics and, more generally, migration data sharing can be a useful source for migration flows as well as for stock data on emigrants and/or citizens resident abroad and their employment characteristics in the destination country. Obtaining these data requires cooperation among countries to facilitate the data exchange and/or major destination countries regularly publishing statistics on labour force status and/or employment characteristics of foreign-born persons by country of birth. These data may only be shared or published at an aggregate level (that is, totals) and may only be available in major destination countries. When the data is available using only the country of citizenship criterion, it may include second generation migrants and exclude those who may have changed their citizenship, thus not clearly capturing the emigrant population.

An example of a rapid listing of ILM data sources is shown in **Box 29**. It illustrates the types of sources identified as part of an ILM data assessment conducted for Egypt (ILO, 2023)⁴³. The sources included the population census and various household surveys, including a specialized migration survey, the labour force survey, the Egyptian Labour Market Panel Survey and other sample surveys. It also included the economic census and multiple administrative data sources, including work permits for immigrants, work permits for nationals to work abroad, records of arrivals and departures, records of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as applications for various services. The sources listed were not exhaustive, focusing on aspects related to migration or labour, as relevant to the assessment.

⁴³ See [A Diagnostic Study on labour migration data collection mechanisms in Egypt](#)

► **Box 29. Example on listing data sources for ILM statistics in Egypt****Data sources on international labour migration in Egypt (ILO, 2023)****1- Population Census and other household surveys**

- General census of population and housing
- Labour force survey
- Economic census
- Egyptian Labour Market Panel Survey
- Survey on Young People in Egypt
- Household Income, Expenditure, Consumption Survey
- Egypt Household International Migration Survey (Egypt-HIMS)

2- Administrative sources

- Work permits for foreigners
- A database of contacts for Egyptians working abroad
- Work permits for Egyptians to work abroad
- Immigration applications and Egyptians who hold foreign nationalities
- Departures and arrivals database
- Student enrolment platform
- Database of registered Egyptian migrant workers' insurance
- Public sector, those on unpaid leave who have gone abroad to work

Step 2: Mapping institutions (producers and users)

Once the rapid mapping of data sources has been completed, Step 2 turns to a rapid mapping of relevant institutions. The main aim is to better understand the institutional landscape for ILM data, and more practically, to identify all potential stakeholders to be consulted or contacted. Multiple institutions may be involved in producing and using ILM data. Main actors include the national statistical office, which serves as the central coordinating authority for official statistics, as well as key line ministries responsible for different aspects of international migration and mobility policy—such as ministries of labour, migration, interior, and foreign affairs, including consular services. Other institutions with specific administrative functions, such as tax and social security administrations, also play an important role. Social partners, the private sector, representatives of migrant and refugee communities, and civil society organizations are likewise essential partners.

At the international level, regional and international organizations should also be considered. Institutions such as the International Labour Organization, the United Nations, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees play a key role in setting international statistical standards and promoting their implementation as technical partners, while others—including the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, UN Women, and the World Bank—are important partners, data users, and stakeholders to engage.

The specific functions and institution names will vary across countries, and so it is important when conducting the rapid listing to ensure it reflects the national and/or regional context.

- **National Statistical Office:** Coordinates the production of official statistics in the country. May be responsible for planning and implementing main survey-based sources including the population census, economic census, and major establishment and household surveys. May coordinate with relevant line ministries in planning the labour force survey, specialized migration surveys, and in compiling or assuring the quality of administrative data sources for official statistics.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Develops policies and regulations for migrant integration and monitors labour standards compliance. Holds administrative records on work permits, employment services, social security affiliations, and labour market programs.
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** Oversees migration policy, compliance with international agreements, and social and labour integration of migrants.
- **Consulates Abroad:** Maintain contact with diaspora communities, collect data on nationals working abroad, and provide estimates on labour migration flows.
- **Department of Migration:** Enforces migration policies, manages border entries and exits, and produces data on migration flows and residency status.
- **Ministry of the Interior:** Issues identification documents, enabling migrants' participation in the formal labour market and tracking regular migration flows.

- **Ministry of Economy/National Accounts System:** Quantifies remittances and their impact on the economy, both incoming and outgoing.
- **Ministry of Health:** Manages healthcare access for migrant populations and collects data on healthcare utilization by various migrant groups.
- **Ministry of Planning:** Develops population policies and territorial distribution plans that affect migration and labour mobility.
- **Ministry of Social Development:** Addresses the welfare needs of vulnerable migrant workers and develops social support programs.
- **National Refugee Council:** Serves as a coordination, advisory, and, in some cases, operational body that supports refugee protection and integration within the national context.
- **National Human Rights Institutions:** Monitor and investigate cases related to access to services and protection of migrant rights.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Provide emergency assistance, information services, and advocacy for migrants' rights.
- **Educational Institutions/Vocational Training Centres:** Facilitate the integration of migrant workers through training and certification programs.
- **Employer Organizations:** Represent business interests in filling labour shortages with migrant workers and understanding occupational needs.
- **Private Sector:** Engage in hiring practices and provide employment opportunities for migrant workers.
- **Trade Unions:** Advocate for fair treatment and workplace rights of migrant workers.
- **Local Governments:** Oversee territorial planning and public services that impact migrant communities.
- **Social Security Institutions:** Manage access to social security benefits for migrants and establish agreements with counterpart institutions abroad.
- **Tax Authority:** Monitors tax obligations of migrants concerning their work-related income.
- **Social and Labour Research Centres:** Conduct studies on the economic and social impacts of migration and integration of migrant workers.
- **Labour Intermediation Agencies:** Assist migrants in job placement and provide information on available employment opportunities.
- **Financial Institutions:** Provide financial services to migrants, including remittance transfers and loans.
- **International Organizations:** Establish international statistical standards, promote their implementation, and use national statistics to produce global indicators and evaluate migration policies.
- **Media Outlets:** Use migration statistics for public information and reporting.
- **Civil Society and General Public:** Utilize migration data for advocacy and understanding migration trends.

Once the relevant national stakeholders have been identified, it is useful to list and classify the different institutions by their primary role vis-à-vis ILM data. **Illustration 4** provides a simple template that may be used for this purpose, allowing to list and classify institutions based on their roles as ILM data producers, data users, or both.

► **Illustration 4. Listing main stakeholders involved in the production and use of official ILM statistics**

Stakeholder list		
Institution	Producer	User
National Statistical Office	X	X
Ministry of Labour	X	X
Ministry of Foreign Affairs		X
Department of Migration	X	
Consulates of the Country Abroad	X	
Ministry of the Interior	X	X
Ministry of Economy		X
Ministry of Health	X	
Universities		X
Ministry of Planning		X
Ministry of Social Development		X
National Human Rights Institutions		X
Non-Governmental Organizations		X
Vocational Training Institutions	X	X
Employer Organizations		X
Private Sector Companies		X
Trade Unions		X
Local Governments	X	X
Social Security Institutions	X	X
Tax Authority	X	X
Social and Labour Research Centres		X
Labour Intermediation Agencies	X	X
Financial Institutions	X	
International Organizations		X
Media Outlets		X
Civil Society and General Public		X

Engaging stakeholders during the rapid mapping stage is highly recommended. This consultation process can help identify existing and potential new data sources and encourage stakeholder collaboration in the assessment. It may also help confirm or shed light on new priority data requirements, which can be readily integrated into the ILM data priority plan established during stage I of the assessment.

Once the relevant data sources and stakeholder institutions have been identified, it may be useful to combine these lists and integrate a few additional details regarding the periodicity of the source. This can help in subsequent stages to assess the timeliness of data availability from those sources. An example from the Republic of Korea (ILO,

2024)⁴⁴ is provided in the **Box 30**. It illustrates a mapping of data sources with their respective producers, along with details on the periodicity and time coverage of each data source.

► **Box 30. Example of listing relevant data-producing institutions and data sources from Korea**

ILM data producers, sources, periodicity and time coverage in Korea			
Producer	Data source	Periodicity	Time coverage
Statistics Korea (KOSTAT)	Population Census	Quinquennial	1966 -
Korea Immigration Service under Ministry of Justice	Border Entry/Exits	Monthly	1960 -
Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL)	Work permit records	Semi-annually	2004 -
Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOSPA)	Foreign registry	Annual	2006 -
Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MOGEF)	Survey on the Actual Conditions of Multicultural Families (SACMF)	Triennial	2009 -
Statistics Korea & Korea Immigration Service	Survey on Immigrant's Living Conditions and Labour Force (SILCLF)	Annual	2012 -

After listing the data sources along with the responsible institutions (and other details such as collection frequency, time coverage if available at this stage), the final step is to create a matrix listing the priority indicators identified during Stage I with the sources that are currently being used to produce them, or if not yet being produced, the potential sources that could be considered for their production; and finally, the responsible institutions.

Step 3: Matrix of priority ILM indicators, data sources, and institutions

The final step in Stage II is to prepare a matrix that combines the priority ILM indicators identified during Stage I with the corresponding data sources and responsible institutions identified during Stage II.

The matrix serves as a key output of Stage II, summarizing the priority ILM indicators alongside the data sources and responsible institutions associated with each. It helps evaluators assess which data are already available, how existing sources are being used, and where gaps remain in producing priority indicators. This process facilitates a clearer understanding of the current ILM data landscape and supports the prioritization of sources for more detailed assessment in Stage III (see **Illustration 5** and **6**).

Illustration 5 presents the hypothetical case from a country-of-origin perspective focused on returned international migrants and emigrants. **Illustration 6** shows a hypothetical example reflecting a country with international temporary labour mobility, emphasizing residents employed abroad and non-residents employed in the country. A template that may be used for this purpose is provided in the Appendix (see **Template II**).

⁴⁴ See [Case studies in international labour migration statistics: Measuring international labour migration in the republic of Korea](#)

► Illustration 5. Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions —Returned migrants and emigrants

Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions for return international migrants and emigrants								
Source list (Step 2 of Stage II)	Source Type	Population census	Specialised migration survey	Mirror statistics (produced by major destination countries)	LFS (Special topics)	Border entry / exit records	Work permits issued prior to departure (Ministry of labour)	...
	Producer	NSO	NSO	NSO (Compiles the data collected by the NSO of countries where emigrants reside)	NSO	Ministry of Interior	Ministry of labour /Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
	Frequency	Every 10 years	Every 10 years	Every 5 years	Every 5 yrs	Yearly	Monthly	
Indicators and tabulations list (Step 3 of Stage I)	Return migrants (stock) by sex, age and education	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Not applicable	
	Return migrants with work experience abroad (stock) by sex, age and education	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Not applicable	
	Emigrants (stock) by sex, age and education	Yes (partial)	Yes (partial)	Yes (Selected countries)	No	Yes	No	
	Emigrants (stock) with work experience by sex, age and education	Yes (partial)	Yes (partial)	Yes (Selected countries)	No	No	Yes (Partial coverage)	
	...							

► Illustration 6. Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions —Temporary mobile workers

Matrix of priority indicators, data sources, and responsible institutions for temporary mobile workers								
Source list (Step 2 of Stage 2I)	Source Type	Population census	LFS	Establishment survey	Specialised migration survey	Social insurance records	Work permit records	...
	Producer	NSO	NSO	NSO	NSO / Ministry of Interior	Migration Directorate	Ministry of labour	
	Frequency	Every 10 years	Yearly	Every 2 years	Every 5 yrs	Quarterly	Yearly	
Indicators and tabulations list (Step 3 of Stage I)	Stock of residents in employment abroad	Yes (partial)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (covers the region only)	Yes (partial)	
	Mean monthly earnings of the residents in employment abroad	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (covers the region only)	No	
	Social security contributions of residents in employment abroad	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (covers the region only)	No	
	Stock of non-residents in employment in the country	No	No	Yes (formal emp only)	No	Yes (formal emp only)	Yes (formal emp only)	
	Mean monthly earnings of the non-residents in employment in the country	No	No	Yes (formal emp only)	No	Yes (formal emp only)	Yes (formal emp only)	
	Social security contributions of non-residents in employment in the country	No	No	Yes (formal emp only)	No	Yes (formal emp only)	Yes (formal emp only)	

► Chapter 5: In-depth assessment by source

Stage III, the in-depth assessment by source, is the main stage of the assessment process. It focuses on a detailed evaluation of one or several data sources identified during Stage II as central to producing the priority ILM indicators identified in Stage I. The in-depth evaluation considers different aspects of the statistical process known to impact the quality of the data produced. For this, it is crucial to establish close communication with the institution(s) responsible for the data source(s), as this stage will require compiling detailed metadata and other relevant information that may not be publicly available. The main outputs of stage III include detailed documentation of each data source evaluated (Step 1), a summary of the main findings highlighting any issues identified taking into consideration different aspects of quality (Step 2), and a summary of the comparative analysis across the ILM data sources assessed documenting any issues of comparability and coherence, as well as potential complementarities (Step 3).

	STAGE III In-depth assessment by source
Step 1	Detailed documentation of identified data sources
Step 2	Metadata source analysis
Step 3	Comparative source analysis

Step 1: Detailed documentation of identified ILM data sources

The first step to conducting an in-depth assessment of the ILM data sources identified starts with a detailed documentation of their methodology. The main focus should be on listing specific methodological aspects that could impact the use of the source to generate the priority ILM data, as relevant. This includes aspects relating to its design, population and geographic coverage, unit of compilation and reporting, the data items compiled or collected that are relevant for ILM statistics, the definitions, operational criteria and classifications used, special procedures implemented to promote migrants' participation, and the frequency of data collection or compilation and reporting. Additionally, it is important to compile any measures of quality already produced by the responsible institution, including measures to assess coverage error, non-response error, sampling error, measurement error and processing errors. Also important are dissemination practices for ILM data produced to assess aspects relating to timeliness, clarity and accessibility. The main output of this step should be a detailed methodological document for each data source being assessed.

Source metadata templates can be particularly useful to help document these various methodological aspects in a systematic way. This Guide provides metadata templates for three main types of ILM data sources:

- **Population Censuses**, including field-based and register-based censuses (see Appendix, **Template III**).
- **Surveys** covering individual and household-based surveys (see Appendix, **Template IV**).
- **Administrative records** covering different types of registers (see Appendix, **Template V**).

These templates include a minimum set of elements relevant to the compilation of statistics on ILM that need to be considered. They may be expanded or adjusted to cover additional methodological aspects, for example, additional data items on detailed topics (for instance, migrant recruitment costs). It is also possible to prepare a dedicated template for establishment censuses and/or surveys.

The templates provided organize the metadata information under four broad headings:

- **Section A: Source description and methodology**
- **Section B: Core data items**
- **Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications**, and
- **Section D: Quality measures and dissemination.**

To the extent possible, these sections are consistent across all three source metadata templates, enabling systematic documentation by source and across sources. To facilitate analysis during Steps 2 and 3 of this stage, the templates prioritize capturing relevant metadata information through “**Yes**”, “**No**”, “**Don’t Know**”, or “**N/A**” (not applicable) answers. Nevertheless, the templates are flexible allowing for the recording of additional details as needed, for example, to collect contact information (for instance, name of the contact person, data-producing institution), record needed clarifications, or specify particular practices (reference period, selected items).

A summary description of the metadata captured under each section of the templates is presented below. Examples using different types of data sources are used to illustrate the use of the templates and, more generally, the type of information to document.

Section A: Source description and methodology

The documentation for each data source begins by capturing essential descriptive information. This includes the name of the source, the responsible institution and the most recent date it was conducted or compiled (**Section A.1**). It also includes an overview of the source type and its periodicity (**Section A.2**), and key design features—particularly its intended coverage of different groups of international migrants. Other important characteristics, which vary depending on whether the source is a population census, a survey, or an administrative register, are detailed in **Section A.3**. For example,

- For population censuses, important design features captured in this section that may inform its use as a source for ILM statistics include the census methodology used (whether field, register, or a combination of methods), the enumeration approach, the type of population counts produced, and the concept of resident population applied.
- For surveys, this section captures aspects of the sampling strategy that are important for ensuring adequate inclusion of migrant populations. It also documents whether the survey is explicitly designed to produce statistics about migrant populations and/or to support the disaggregation of survey results by international migrant status.
- For administrative records, the documentation covers methodological aspects such as the data collection and reporting units, whether registration is compulsory or voluntary, the types of events recorded (for example, additions, deletions, modifications), and whether unique person-level identifiers are used and their type.

Additionally, for field-based sources, this section (**Section A.4**) captures whether special procedures have been implemented to promote the participation of migrant populations in the census or survey.

This type of methodological information can be valuable in determining the population scope and coverage of the different sources, which can vary significantly. Overall, field-based population censuses and surveys designed to capture migrant populations using area-based sampling can provide more comprehensive coverage of migrant groups, including those in informal or irregular situations. By contrast, administrative records typically cover only registered individuals, contributors or beneficiaries of a particular service. Surveys not specifically designed to target migrants may generate statistics for migrants living in private households, if they represent a relatively significant share of the population, although they may be impacted by low precision, especially for disaggregated results by detailed characteristics.

Illustration 7 provides an example of how Section A of the metadata source template may be completed for a specialized migration survey.

► Illustration 7. Source Metadata Template Section A —Specialised migration survey (excerpt)

Survey metadata template		
Section A. Description and methodology		
Instructions Complete a separate form for each survey identified.		
A.1- Identification of organisation and contact person		
Evaluator details		
Name and surname of the evaluator	Anne Smith	
End and start date of the assessment	10. October.2024	15. October.2024
Source and contact details		
Survey title	3 rd Round of Specialized Migration Survey	
Most recent year conducted	2023	
Organization conducting the survey	[Country XX] Statistics Service	
A.2- Survey details (most recent round)		
Survey type		
Specialized migration survey	YES	
Specify other (e.g., Refugee survey, Forced displacement survey etc.)	-	
Survey characteristics		
Frequency of the survey		
Continuous	NO	
Every N* year (Specify)	YES (every 5 years)	
Timing of data collection for the survey or module on international labour migration topics		
Throughout 12 months period	NO	
Specific months in a year (Specify)	March-May	
A.3- Survey design		
Measurement objectives include priority statistics for		
Do the survey objectives include generating statistics on international migrant populations (specify: immigrants, emigrants, returned migrants, refugees, etc.)?	YES	
Population coverage		
Survey target population		
Persons present at the time of the survey (de facto)	-	
Persons usually resident in the country (de jure)	YES	
Living in		
Private households	YES	
Are all collective living quarters (e.g., worker camps, refugee camps, hotels, guest houses, etc.) covered?	NO	
<i>If not, please specify below which ones are included.</i>	Hotels, guest houses, employer provided accommodation	
Time threshold used to define the (usually) resident population		
3 months	NO	
6 months or more	YES	
Other, specify	-	
Sampling strategy		
Sampling frames		
Area-based frame (if yes, specify)	NO	
List-based frame (if yes, specify)	YES	
Combination of area and list frames (if yes, specify)	NO	
Do the frame(s) include a variable on migrant characteristics?	YES	
Is the variable on migrant characteristics used for stratification?	YES	
Specify the variable(s) used for stratification	Visa categories, Country of citizenship	
A.4- Special procedures for migrant population		
Was a sensitization campaign targeting migrant communities conducted?	YES	
Were community leaders engaged to support migrant participation?	NO	
Were enumerators trained to reduce non-response among migrant populations?	YES	

Section B: Core data items

Once the basic design features of the source have been recorded, the second aspect to document is the data items captured by the source (**Section B.1**). This includes data items needed to:

- Identify the different groups of migrants, such as country of birth, country of citizenship, residence status, reason for migration, ever resided abroad, and so on.
- Capture essential labour market characteristics such as labour force status, occupation, branch of economic activity, country of place of work, and informal employment.
- Support essential cross-cutting disaggregation's, for example, to generate statistics on employed international migrants by sex, age group, and/or by level of education attained; and
- Capture any other data item needed to meet the priorities identified as part of the **ILM national data plan** during stage I of the assessment.

Additionally, for survey-based sources, this section records whether universal personal identifiers are captured or compiled, and if so, whether this applies to national and foreign citizens alike.

Most ILM indicators require information captured for migrants at the individual level. Thus, in addition to documenting whether the source includes the needed data items, it is also important to record whether this information is captured at the individual level, as relevant. For example, questions on the reason for migration to identify forcibly displaced populations need to be captured at the person level, not the household level, as household members may have migrated for different reasons. Capturing this information only at the household level can impact the quality and value of the data source for ILM statistics with respect to forcibly displaced populations.

Likewise, particularly for population censuses, it may be important to document whether the relevant data items for ILM statistics are collected or compiled for all persons (universal enumeration), regardless of the type of living quarters. This includes documenting whether the item is collected from the entire population in private households, from a sample of the population only, and/or from persons living in collective living quarters, including worker camps, refugee centres, and other collective dwellings. This type of detail may also be important to record in the case of specialized migration surveys or other surveys, if different questionnaire forms are used for different groups depending on their type of living quarters.

This detailed level of documentation is needed to assess the expected coverage of the source with respect to different groups of migrants, to identify potential gaps, and also potential uses for ILM statistics.

Illustration 8 shows how information on the data items covered by the source can be documented in a way that captures these important methodological aspects. The example uses the Source Metadata Template for Population censuses. It helps quickly identify missing data items and gaps in the groups for which the information is collected. By documenting these details, the template makes it easy to determine where improvements may be needed. For example, the illustration indicates that core international migration characteristics were only asked of a 20 per cent sample of the population living in private households. This could impact the use of the population census to generate statistics on international labour migration, especially if persons with migration characteristics are a relatively small group in the population.

► Illustration 8. Source Metadata Template Section B —Population Census (excerpt)

Population census metadata template							
Section B. Data items and population coverage							
B.1- Data items for population characteristics							
Population census topics	Data items	Total population in private households	A sample of population in private households	Population in collective living quarters			Clarifications, if any:
			Specify share of population (e.g., 20%)	Refugee, IDP camps	Workers' camps	Others (Institutions, hotels, rooming houses, military camps, etc.)	
			20%				
Socio-demographic characteristics	Age	YES	-	YES	YES	YES	
	Sex	YES	-	YES	YES	YES	
	Marital status	YES	-	YES	YES	YES	
	...						
International migrant characteristics	Country of birth	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	
	Country of citizenship	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	
	...						
Economic (employment) characteristics	Labour Force Status	YES	-	YES	-	-	
	Occupation	YES	-	YES	YES	-	
	Branch of economic activity (industry)	YES	-	YES	YES	-	
	Location (country) of place of work	YES					
Returned international migrants	Ever lived abroad	NO	YES	-	Not applicable		In past 5 years
	Date/period of departure	NO	YES	-			
	Country of destination	NO	YES	-			
	Previous country of residence	NO	YES	-			
B.2 – Data items for household characteristics							
Emigrants	Former household members who moved abroad (ever or N* years before)	NO	YES	Not applicable			In past 10 years
	Date/period of departure	NO	YES				
	...						

Section C: Definitions, criteria, and classifications

In addition to documenting the data items captured by the source, there is a need to review how those data items are defined and operationalized. These aspects are documented in **Section C** of the Metadata source templates. This section is designed to document how key ILM-related variables—such as country of birth, citizenship, employment status, and occupation—are defined in practice, the measurement criteria applied, the reference periods and classifications used. These factors directly influence the degree to which the resulting statistics are consistent, harmonized across sources and aligned with international recommendations.

How definitions for essential concepts are operationalized can vary significantly between different types of sources. For example, population censuses and surveys typically collect data through structured interviews with individuals, using closed and open-ended questions that elicit responses based on self-declaration. In contrast, administrative sources often rely on information as documented in official records such as passports, birth certificates, or employment registries. For some variables, however, they may use abridged coding lists or aggregate categories that may or may not be aligned with international recommendations. Reference periods can also vary significantly. While full input harmonization across sources is not necessary to achieve coherence, it is important to determine whether the way core data items are operationalized in the different data sources can support output harmonization and combined use.

Illustrations 9 and **10** show the type of metadata to record in order to assess issues with respect to definitions and operational criteria used to capture core data items for ILM statistics. It shows the examples of a field-based population census and an administrative data source. Note that the way the information is documented can vary across the different types of sources, as the operationalization approach used can differ significantly.

► Illustration 9. Source Metadata Template Section C —Population Census (excerpt)

Population census metadata template				
Section C. Definitions, thresholds and classifications				
C.1- Migration characteristics				
	Concepts	National practices in population census	Answers	Comments
Country of birth	Question type	Open ended question	YES	
		Pre-coded list of individual country names or codes	YES	
		Other (Specify)	-	
	Criteria	Country of actual birth	NO	
		Country of residence of mother at time of birth	YES	
		Other (specify)	-	
Country of citizenship	Question type	Only one citizenship captured	NO	
		Multiple citizenships captured	YES	
		Citizenship acquisition channel captured	NO	
		Person without any citizenship (stateless) separately identified	NO	All those without citizenship are coded as unknown
		Other (Specify)	-	
C.2- Employment characteristics				
Concepts		National practice in the population census	Answers	Comments
Employed	Main question type	Worked for pay or profit in the reference week	YES	
		Employment self-declared as main activity	NO	
		Employment self-declared as usual activity	NO	
		Other (specify)	-	
	Recovery questions	Worked in casual, small job, short hours job	YES	
		Temporarily absent from the job	YES	

► Illustration 10. Source Metadata Template Section C —Administrative Records (excerpt)

Administrative records metadata template				
Section C. Definitions, thresholds and classifications				
C.1- Migration characteristics				
Concepts		National practices in population census	Answers	Comments
Country of birth	Question type	Open ended question	NO	
		Pre-coded list of individual country names or codes	YES	
		Pre-coded list with a mix of individual country names and country groupings	-	
		Other (Specify)		
	Criteria	Self-reported	NO	
		As per official document	YES	
		Specify the official document		Birth certificate
Country of citizenship	Question type	Only one citizenship captured	YES	
		Multiple citizenships captured	NO	
		Citizenship acquisition channel captured	NO	
		Person without any citizenship (stateless) separately identified	NO	
		Other (Specify)	-	
	Criteria	Self-reported	NO	
		As per official document	YES	
		Specify the official document	Copy of the passport(s)	
C.2- Employment characteristics				
Concepts		National practice in the population census	Answers	Comments
Employed	Definition	Workers insured for social security benefits		
	Criteria applied	Contribution to social security		
	Exclusions	Workers not registered with the social security program		
		Workers who have not accumulated enough quarters of coverage over their working lifetime to become insured		
	Reference Period	As of December 15		

Section D: Quality measures and dissemination

Beyond documenting the source methodology, the data items contained and how these are operationalized, it is also important to compile quality measures that can shed light on other stages of the data production process. In particular, to the extent possible, it is important to compile measures of quality relating to the data collection or compilation, processing, analysis and dissemination phases. These include assessments of actual achieved coverage, non-response, missing data, internal consistency, and other such measures.

For surveys, in particular, it is important to capture the type of respondent used, share of proxy responses, achieved sample size for particular migrant groups and relative standard errors (RSEs) reported for key estimates. This information is particularly useful to help determine the statistical precision of the data, highlighting sources that may yield estimates that are too imprecise for dissemination and use. These measures are captured in **Section D.1** of the Source metadata templates.

Illustration 11 shows how this information may be captured for the case of a household survey. In addition to the measures described above, this section also captures whether imputation methods are used to address item non-response, and whether external sources (for example, administrative registries) are used to generate specific variables. Finally, it considers whether results are adjusted to align with known population totals, such as through

calibration or post-stratification techniques. Together, these elements can help identify the potential sources of error and limitations that may affect the quality of the ILM estimates derived from the source.

► **Illustration 11. Source Metadata Template Section D.1 —Specialized migration survey (excerpt)**

Survey metadata template		
Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination of results		
D.1- Quality evaluation		
Evaluation criterions		Answer
Survey or module non-response rate (%)		10%
Type of priority respondent for labour migration topics	Direct respondent prioritized	YES
	Knowledgeable adult allowed	After 3 rd attempt
	Share of proxy responses	15%
Total achieved sample size	Resident international migrants of working age	2540
	International migrants in the labour force	850
	Emigrants of working age	2000
	Emigrants with employment experience abroad	800
	Return international migrants of working age	750
	Return migrants with employment experience abroad	500
	Residents in employment abroad (e.g., Frontier workers, seasonal workers, cross-border service providers)	-
Relative Standard Error (RSE) of survey estimates (e.g., <10%, 10-19%, 20-29%, 30+%)	Resident international migrants of working age	8 % RSE
	International migrants in the labour force	10 % RSE
	Emigrants of working age	14% RSE (proxy)
	Emigrants with employment experience abroad	16% (proxy)
	Return international migrants of working age	15 %
	Returns migrant with employment experience abroad	19 %
	Residents in employment abroad (e.g., Frontier workers, seasonal workers, cross-border service providers)	-
Share of missing valid responses in core variables (%)	Resident international migrants of working age	
	Country of birth	2%
	Country of citizenship	3%
	Labour Force status	7%
	Emigrants of working age	
	Currently residing abroad	5%
	With employment experience abroad	10%
	Return international migrants of working age	
	Ever resided abroad	2%
	With previous employment experience abroad	3%
	Residents in employment abroad	-
	Country of residence	-
	(Current / previous) employment abroad	-
	Country of place of work	
Was data imputation used to address missing responses in core variables?		NO
Were external sources (e.g. administrative records) used as input to generate selected variables? (e.g. citizenship status, refugee status, earnings, branch of economic activity, etc.)		NO
Were survey results adjusted using external data to match population totals (e.g., calibration, post-stratification adjustments)		YES (Population census estimates used for calibration)
What is the time lag between data collection and reporting/publication?		1 year

For administrative records, quality assessment focuses primarily on the consistency and completeness of the recorded data. This includes comparing figures across time periods to identify major deviations or anomalies, checking alignment with other official sources (for example, censuses, surveys), and verifying the use of valid identification variables to detect duplicates and ensure full record traceability. Rather than evaluating sampling or response rates, the emphasis is placed on data validation procedures and internal quality control mechanisms (see **Illustration 12**). It is also important to document some aspects of the legal and institutional environment for sharing data from administrative sources, especially if the assessment does not include a separate stage to evaluate the institutional context and ILM data system coordination.

► **Illustration 12. Source Metadata Template Sections D.1 and D.2 —Administrative records (excerpt)**

Administrative record metadata template	
Section D. Data quality and dissemination of administrative records	
B.1- Data quality	
The number of registered units is compared to	
Register data in previous period	YES
Numbers obtained in other registries	NO
Statistics from censuses and surveys	YES
All units have valid identification variable	NO (Asylum seekers do not have unique identification numbers)
Percentage of units with no valid identification	4%
All units have checked to ensure that they have information on the main variables	
Main variables are in valid formats	YES
Codes used for the main variables are valid	YES
Missing or erroneous data in the main variables are less than 5%.	NO
The frequency distributions of the variables are reviewed	YES
Variations from previous periods are reasonable or can be explained by known facts or situations	YES
State the frequency of quality controls (Daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual, no control)	Monthly
B.2 – Dissemination of administrative records	
Types of information	Availability
Registry is used for statistical purposes	YES
Statistics produced by this registry is regularly shared with public	YES (yearly)
Is this registry legally required to share microdata with other governmental agencies?	NO
Is there agreement between this institution and other agencies for microdata sharing? (List those institutions)	YES
Is the microdata shared with other government agencies anonymized?	YES
Through deletion of unique national and/or foreign identification numbers	NO
Through other anonymisation techniques	YES (creating synthetic identification numbers)
Data is shared with identification keys without anonymization	NO
Data is shared through	
Electronic media or via internet	YES
USB	NO
Other (specify)	NO
Users are all informed about methodological changes	YES
User consultations are answered between reasonable timeframes	YES
In what unit is the data published?	
Event (e.g. border crossings, permit application, permit issuance)	NO
Person (e.g. long-term residence permit holders, work permit holders)	YES (events are converted to persons)

In the case of dissemination practices, it is important to document aspects that can support evaluation of the availability, accessibility and clarity of source data outputs. This is covered in **Section D.2** of the Source Metadata Templates (see **Illustrations 12** and **13**). This section captures information regarding whether the data source results are anonymized, whether microdata is made available to the public and whether metadata and other methodological information is also published. Importantly, it also captures whether data tabulations and reports published include information on the labour market characteristics of migrants and/or compare the labour market characteristics between migrants and non-migrants covered by the source. All too often, a source captures the necessary data items for ILM statistics, but the information is not cross-tabulated, analysed, or published to enable its use by different stakeholders.

► **Illustration 13. Source Metadata Template Section D.2 —Specialized migration survey (excerpt)**

Survey metadata template		
Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination of results		
D.2 – Dissemination of results		
Types of information	Availability	Link or reference
Public use microdata files	YES	https://
Are the observations shared anonymized?	YES	
Public use microdata with variables on migration and economic characteristics included	YES	
Methodology, definitions, and metadata	YES	https://
How frequently are the results of this survey published each year?	Once	
What is the time lag between data collection and reporting/publication?	1 year	

Finally, as part of the source documentation, it is important to capture aspects that support assessment of its timeliness and stability over time, including how frequently the results are published, and the time lag between data collection and release. This information is critical for assessing both the sustainability of the data over time and its potential for monitoring changes on a timely basis to inform policy.

Completing the detailed documentation for each identified data source is a prerequisite for the next step of the in-depth assessment. The accuracy and completeness of this step determine the efficiency and consistency of the overall ILM data source assessment. When properly completed, the templates filled provide a solid foundation for assessing each source's capacity to produce priority ILM indicators and for formulating recommendations for improvement.

Step 2: Metadata source analysis

Once the source metadata documentation is completed for all identified data sources, the second step of the in-depth assessment focuses on evaluating whether each documented source can produce, or be adapted to produce, with adequate quality the priority ILM indicators identified for the assessment (Chapter 4). The main objectives are to determine the extent to which the data source supports the production of quality ILM statistics, identify existing limitations and possible solutions for improvement.

To support the in-depth assessment, it is useful to use as a reference a statistical quality framework, as this can help to systematically evaluate each data source across the different dimensions of statistical quality. This Guide draws on the United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF, 2019), —a framework designed to ensure the quality and reliability of official statistics, particularly those produced by national statistical agencies.

The NQAF is structured around four levels: (A) Managing the statistical system, (B) Managing the institutional environment, (C) Managing statistical processes, and (D) Managing statistical outputs. The in-depth assessment of

sources focuses primarily on Level D, which includes six core principles. These principles assess output quality based on the extent to which the statistics are relevant, accurate and reliable, timely and punctual, readily accessible by and clear to users, and coherent and comparable (see [Box 31](#)).

► **Box 31. UN National Quality Assurance Framework, Level D**

UN National Quality Assurance Framework, NQAF (2019) – Level D. Managing statistical outputs	
Assuring relevance	Statistical information should meet the current and/or emerging needs or requirements of its users.
Assuring accuracy and reliability	Statistical information should accurately and reliably portray reality. Accuracy reflects the degree to which the information correctly describes the phenomena it was designed to measure, namely, the degree of closeness of estimates to true values
Assuring timeliness and punctuality	Statistical outputs should be disseminated as quickly as possible after the reference period. Timeliness measures the speed of release, whereas punctuality refers to the adherence to pre-announced release schedules.
Assuring accessibility and clarity	Data should be easy to locate and retrieve, presented in user-friendly formats, and disseminated impartially. Clarity also implies that users can interpret and understand the data, supported by clear documentation and visualisation. Controlled access to anonymised microdata for research purposes is encouraged.
Assuring coherence and comparability	Statistics should be internally consistent and compatible with other datasets over time and across geographies. Harmonization of concepts, classifications, and definitions is essential for coherent and comparable outputs.
Managing metadata	Users must be provided with transparent documentation on data definitions, classifications, collection methods, and quality attributes. Well-documented metadata enables users to correctly interpret statistics and understand their limitations.

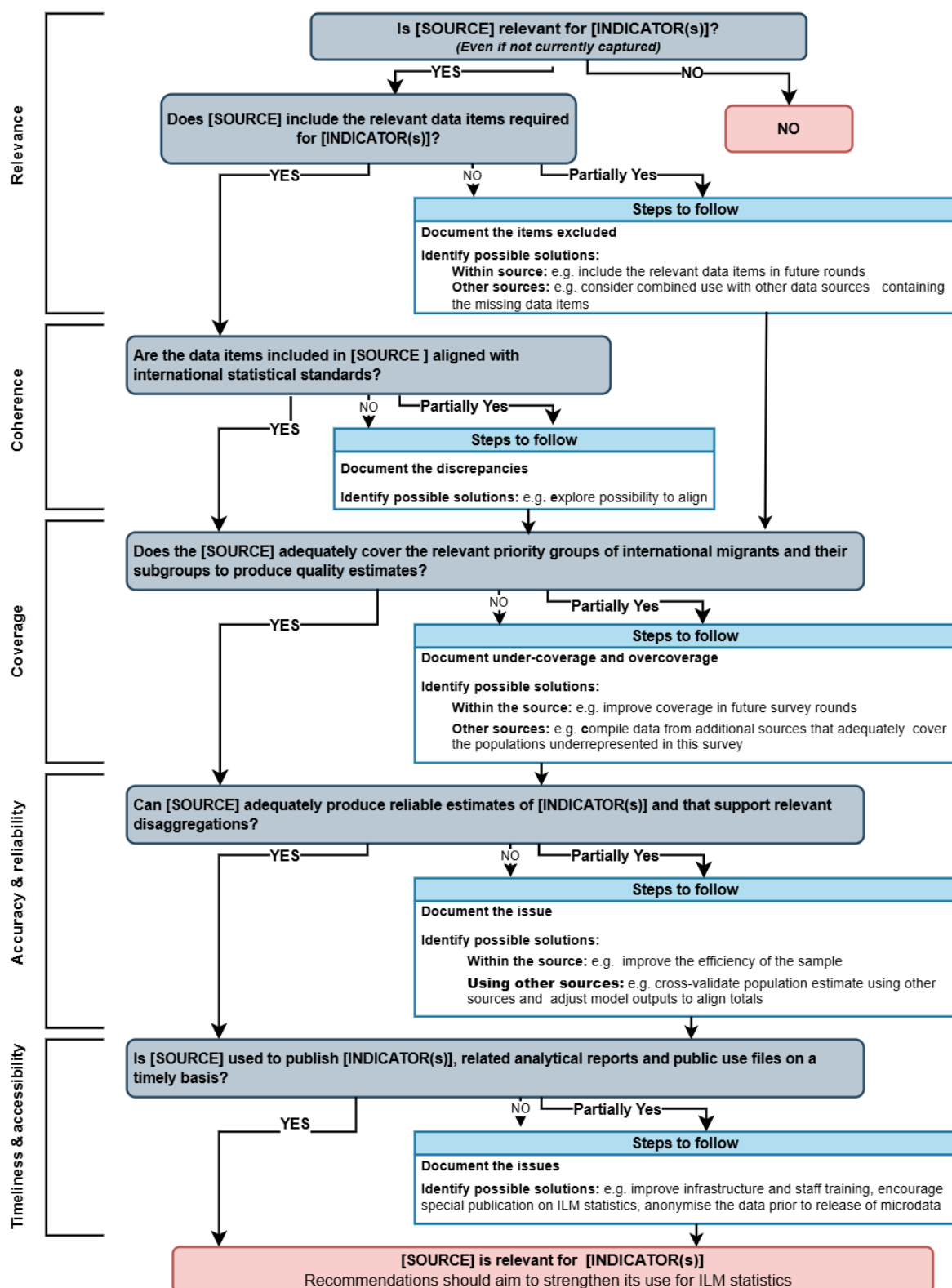
To conduct the metadata source analysis, it is first important to review the priority ILM indicator plan established for the assessment and its mapping to relevant data sources (Chapter 4). As discussed in previous chapters, not all data sources are suitable for producing all ILM indicators. Each data source should be evaluated only with respect to the priority ILM indicators that the source is suitable for, whether it is already being used for this purpose or not.

Once the relevant ILM indicators have been specified for the source, it is useful to conduct the analysis following the six principles of statistical output quality in a systematic fashion. The flowchart shown in [Figure 7](#) offers a structured step-by-step process for conducting the metadata source analysis.

A logical sequence of questions helps guide the analysis, ensuring all sources are evaluated in a systematic way and across all quality principles:

0. Is the source relevant for the specified ILM indicators?
1. Are the necessary data items to produce the specified ILM indicators included?
2. Are definitions, reference periods and classifications aligned with international standards?
3. Does the source adequately cover the relevant migrant population(s)?
4. Can the indicator(s) be produced with sufficient accuracy and reliability?
5. Is the source being used to publish the specified ILM indicators on a regular and timely basis?
6. Are reports and microdata files available to the public, and accompanied by clear metadata?

► Figure 7. Step-by-step process for conducting the metadata source analysis



The first step in the metadata source analysis is to evaluate the **relevance** of the source to generate the priority ILM indicators it is considered suitable for. From there, the analysis centres on whether the required data items are present; if critical data items are missing, these should be documented, along with possible solutions.

The next dimension to assess is **coherence**, which concerns the extent to which the variables and classifications used in the source align with international statistical standards. Any inconsistencies—such as deviations in definitions, criteria, classifications, or reference periods—should be documented, along with possible suggestions to improve comparability with international standards

Coverage is then assessed by determining whether the source adequately represents the migrant populations targeted by each indicator. Depending on the indicator being considered, this may include groups such as return migrants, temporary mobile workers, migrants in informal jobs, irregular migrants, or those residing in collective living quarters. Any gaps in coverage should be clearly noted, with possible actions noted such as reviewing the sampling design, considering the use of multiple frames, enhancing outreach to underrepresented groups, adjusting fieldwork procedures to improve representation, introducing incentives to register, improving de-registration through data linking or considering the combined use of other data sources.

Accuracy and reliability focus on the statistical robustness of the indicator estimates. It is important to analyze whether the source can support reliable disaggregation, based on sufficient sample sizes, acceptable non-response rates, and appropriate treatment of missing data, even if the source is not yet being used to produce the relevant ILM indicators. Any limitations should be documented, and possible recommended actions recorded, such as oversampling of priority groups, use of improved imputation methods, or recalibration of weights using auxiliary variables.

Finally, **timeliness and accessibility** are considered. This includes whether the source produces regular outputs on ILM indicators, whether microdata is anonymized and disseminated, and whether documentation and metadata are available to users. If dissemination is irregular or limited, possible actions to recommend should be listed to improve reporting cycles or public access.

Illustration 14 provides an example of how to record the findings of the Metadata source analysis. The example, based on a specialized migration survey, demonstrates how to organize the findings and identify potential solutions to be considered during the formulation of targeted recommendations to improve the source's capacity to produce quality ILM statistics. The corresponding **Metadata Source Analysis Template** is available in **Appendix VI**.

Once the individual source analysis is completed, there is a need to conduct one further step: the comparative analysis of ILM data sources. This broader, comparative perspective—covered in Step III—can help to identify issues with cross-source comparability and coherence, as well as opportunities for combined use, for quality assurance, or calibration and to formulate coordinated recommendations that are informed by the overall ILM data source ecosystem.

► Illustration 12. Recording the findings of the metadata source analysis

Metadata source analysis for specialised migration survey			
Relevance I. Indexing indicators			
No	Name of the indicators		
IND 1	Labour force participation rate of international migrants		
IND 2	Composite index of labour underutilisation		
IND 3	Non-fatal occupational injuries (SDG indicator 8.8.1)		
IND 4	Migrant recruitment costs (SDG Indicator 10.7.1)		
...	...		
Relevance II. Inclusion of necessary data items			
No	Data items	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1	Yes	No issue identified	-
IND 2	No	Selected data items on time related underemployment are missing (desire to work more hours)	Include survey question on desire to work more hours in the next survey round
IND 3	No	Date items on non-fatal occupational injuries are missing	Include survey questions related to non-fatal occupational injuries in the next survey round
IND 4	Yes	First month’s earnings after arrival are not captured	Include a question to capture the first month’s earnings on the job after arrival to the country in the next survey round
...	...	...	...
Coherence			
No	Standards-aligned	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1	Yes	No issue identified	-
IND 2	-	-	-
IND 3	-	-	-
IND 4	No	Information on the earnings refers to the current job and not to the job on arrival impacting computation	Include a question to capture the first month’s earnings on the job after arrival in the next survey round
...	...	...	...
Coverage			
No	Full coverage	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1	Partially yes	The list frame used for sampling refers to the foreigner register excluding irregular migrants	Assess potential impacts of excluding irregular migrants in the estimates and adjust the estimates accordingly
IND 2	Partially yes	“	“
IND 3	Partially yes	“	“
IND 4	Partially yes	“	“
...	...	...	...
Accuracy & reliability			
No	Accurate and reliable estimates	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1	Yes	No issue identified	-
IND 2	TBD	“	-
IND 3	TBD	“	-
IND 4	Partially yes	Disaggregation by migration corridor and sex is impacted by low precision	Consider options to increase the sample by priority migration corridors
...	...	...	...
Timeliness & accessibility			
No	Timely and accessible	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1	Partially yes	Survey is conducted in every 3 years, the data on this indicator should be produced yearly	Use alternative sources to produce the indicator yearly, or increase the frequency of the source
IND 2	-	-	-
IND 3	-	-	-
IND 4	Yes	No issues identified	-
...	...	...	...

Step 3: Comparative data source analysis

The third and final step of the in-depth assessment moves beyond the evaluation of individual sources to a cross-source perspective. Whereas previous steps focused on the methodological documentation of each data source and the assessment of their potential to produce priority ILM indicators, this step aims to compare and synthesize information across all sources to identify gaps, overlaps, and complementarities.

Several aspects can be explored in the comparative ILM data source analysis. Particularly important are a comparative evaluation of:

- Coverage of priority migrant groups, and sub-groups
- Inclusion of core data items
- Conceptual comparability and alignment with international standards
- Reporting frequency and dissemination

These aspects can be readily assessed, building on the specific source metadata documentation and analysis completed in Steps I and II. From there, a comparative analysis examines whether the different sources adequately capture the priority migrant groups identified in Stage I, whether different sources can be used in a complementary fashion to generate ILM statistics for different migrant groups or sub-groups, and whether certain populations—such as return migrants, non-residents, or temporary workers—are systematically excluded.

It then assesses whether the core data items needed to compile the ILM indicators are included across sources and whether these items are collected in a harmonized and consistent way. Particular attention is paid to the alignment of concepts, definitions and classifications with international statistical standards, identifying inconsistencies that could undermine comparability or data integration.

Finally, the comparative assessment can also be used to evaluate the quality of the data across sources, including the robustness of estimates, the availability of metadata, and the frequency of reporting. This latter can help identify potential complementarities across sources to generate different types of priority ILM data with different periodicity, for example, benchmark estimates of stocks every 10 or 5 years provided by a population census, complemented with annual estimates of indicators on the essential labour market characteristics of migrants, provided by a survey, and estimates of specific topics such as occupational injuries provided through administrative data sources or specialized migration surveys every 3 years.

By applying this framework, evaluators can determine how individual sources complement or substitute for one another, and where coordination or methodological adjustment is needed to improve overall data quality. This comparative review is important to generate targeted, system-level recommendations grounded on a comprehensive understanding of the existing data environment for ILM statistics.

Practical templates to conduct the comparative assessment of ILM data sources, considering the above dimensions, are provided in the Appendix (see **Template VII**). It is useful at the start to index all data sources identified as relevant for producing the priority ILM indicators. This index can serve as a reference for the remainder of the analysis, allowing the analyst to refer to each source by its assigned number rather than its full name.

Each source is indexed alongside its type (for example, census, survey, administrative record) and the institution responsible for its production. The example shown in **Illustration 15** below demonstrates how this indexing can be carried out.

► **Illustration 13. Indexing of ILM data sources, source types and producing institutions**

Indexing the data sources, source type and institution producing the data			
Index No	Data source	Source type	Responsible institution
1	Population Census	Population census	National Statistical Office
2	Labour force survey (LFS)	Household survey	National Statistical Office
3	International Migrant Register	Administrative record	National Statistical Office
4	Public Employment Agency Records	Administrative record	Ministry of Labour
5	Micro Business survey	Establishment survey	National Statistical Office
6	Contribution form to Social Security	Administrative record	Ministry of Health and Social Security
7	Nationals living abroad registry	Administrative record	Ministry of Interior
8	Residence permits	Administrative record	Special Administrative Unit on Migration Colombia - UAEMC
...	...	...	...

Examples drawn from national ILM data source assessments are shown below. In the case of Colombia, a study commissioned by the ILO identified 8 different data sources as relevant for ILM statistics. The sources included the following: (1) Population and housing census, (2) Large Integrated Household Survey⁴⁵ —a main national household survey, (3) International migration registry, (4) Records of the public employment agency, (5) Microbusiness survey, (6) Social security records, (7) Records of the Special Administrative Units on Migration, and (8) Residence permits. The results of the comparative assessment of the sources with respect to their population coverage is shown in **Box 32** and with respect to priority ILM data items included in **Box 33**.

► **Box 32. Example on comparative assessment of data sources on population coverage from Colombia**

Comparative data source assessment on population covered in Colombia (ILO, 2021)								
Population covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Residents in the country	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Residents in private dwellings	x	x						
People born in the country	x	x	x	x				
Citizens of the country			x	x			x	
Foreign citizens			x	x			x	x
Foreign citizens with exceptions			x				x	
People born abroad	x	x	x	x				x
Foreign-born migrants	x	x	x	x			x	x
Foreigners with temporary work permit				x			x	x
Asylum seekers			x					
Refugees			x					
Citizens who work abroad				x				
Foreign-born citizens arriving to work			x				x	
Others (specify)	*			**		***		
*Returned population in the previous 5 years.								
** Returned migrants.								
*** All persons who make contributions to the General System of Social Security in Health.								

⁴⁵ Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (GEIH).

Based on these and other findings, the report concluded that Colombia had several data sources to estimate and characterize international migrants employed in the country and a part of citizens employed abroad. Return migrants could also be identified, but not return migrants with employment experience abroad, because the data items required in their definition were not included in the available sources.

► **Box 33. Example on comparative assessment of data sources on data items from Colombia**

Comparative data source assessment on data items covered from Colombia (ILO, 2021)								
DATA ITEMS AVAILABLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sex	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Age or date of birth	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Marital status	x	x		x			x	
Level of education attained	x	x		x	x			
Type of dwelling (private, collective, other)	x							
Country of birth	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Country of citizenship			x	x			x	
Country of current usual residence			x	x			x	x
Country of previous usual residence	x	x	x	x			x	
Language proficiency								
Date of arrival to the country	x		x				x	
Reason for change of country of residence								
Type of visa, residence or work permit		x	x				x	
Length of stay		x	x				x	
Restrictions on the right to residence or work		x						
Labour force status	x	x						
Branch of economic activity		x			x	x		
Occupation		x	x	x	x	x		
Status in employment		x						
Hours of work (effective, regular, contractual)		x						
Seniority in the job		x		x	x			
Income from work		x			x			
Other working conditions					x			
Remittances sent outside the country								
Social security affiliation in the country		x				x		

► Chapter 6: ILM data assessment extensions

ILM data source assessments may be extended to include additional stages covering other aspects known to impact the quality of ILM statistics. When feasible, it is valuable to include as part of the assessment a review of the **(a) comparability of key ILM estimates** derived from different sources, **(b) institutional capacities for ILM data production**, and **(c) institutional environment and ILM data system coordination**. Evaluating these aspects requires access to detailed, often unpublished information as well as close collaboration with the national statistical office and with stakeholders responsible for selected data sources. When incorporated, these stages can help shape broader recommendations for enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the national statistical system in generating priority ILM data through the combined use of multiple data sources.

This chapter provides an overview of the elements to consider when including an evaluation of these additional dimensions. It also provides suggested steps and practical illustrations. The guidance provided here aims to serve as initial reference. Further development and adaptation of the evaluation approach may be necessary to achieve the intended objectives of the assessment.

Comparability of key ILM indicators

An assessment of the comparability of key international labour migration (ILM) indicators aims to evaluate how well estimates from different data sources align—and, more importantly, to understand the reasons behind any discrepancies.

For example, a population census, a population register, and a national survey may all include the necessary data items to estimate the stock of resident international migrants and resident international migrants in employment. However, the resulting figures may vary across these sources due to differences in definitions, coverage, inclusion criteria or reference periods. A comparability assessment can help explain these differences, guiding decisions on which source to consider as primary for a given indicator, whether revisions or improvements are needed in some or all of the sources, and how to reconcile the estimates and/or combine them to generate a more accurate estimate.

Two main steps are generally needed to assess the comparability of estimates for a given indicator produced by different sources:

- 1. Compilation:** The first step involves compiling the relevant data sources—such as censuses, population registers, administrative records, or surveys—and documenting their content, scope, coverage, definitions, reference periods, and relevant variables. The goal is to produce a comprehensive inventory, supported by detailed metadata tables for each source. Much of this groundwork should have been completed during the previous stages of the ILM data source assessment (**Stage III, Step 2**). However, in addition to compiling metadata, there is a need to also compile the relevant microdata or to gain access to special tabulations to be produced during step two.
- 2. Comparison:** The second step is to systematically compare the sources to identify main differences in the coverage of different population sub-groups, reference periods, and/or definitions. This aligns with the **comparative analysis conducted in Stage III, Step 3** of the assessment. However, there is a need to go further and list the different sources alongside the estimates they generate for different population sub-groups. The goal is to break down the estimates by population sub-group, making sure to distinguish between groups common to all or most sources separately from those covered only by one or more sources. This is where access to microdata or special tabulations becomes essential. This breakdown of estimates into different population sub-groups allows for a structured assessment of the reasons behind any potential discrepancies

in the estimates generated by the sources. The result is a set of comparative tables highlighting areas of divergence and alignment.

An illustration of this approach is shown in the ILO Case study *Measuring international labour migration in the Republic of Korea* (2024)⁴⁶. In the Republic of Korea, three main sources provide data on the stock of international migrants: the population census, the foreigner register and the Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force (SILCLF). Two additional sources—the Domestic Residency Report of Foreign National Koreans and the Employment Permit System (EPS)—also offer complementary information. The Statistics of Arrivals and Departures (SAD) are further used to update the foreigner register, for validation purposes and to produce estimates for specific subpopulations. As shown in **Box 34**, the estimates produced by the three main sources, when taken at face value, differ significantly.

► **Box 34. Stock estimates for migrant populations by data source in the Republic of Korea (2018)**⁴⁷

Stock estimates of migrant populations in Korea (2018)					
2018	Census (register based) ⁴⁸	Foreigner Register ⁴⁹	SILCLF ⁵⁰	Domestic Residency Report of Foreign National Koreans ⁵¹	EPS ⁵²
Reference date	November 1	December 31	May 15	December 31	December 31
Total foreign population	1,651,561	1,246,626	NA	441,107	NA
Total foreigners 15 years and older	1,588,634	1,177,327	1,300,800	NA	NA
Total foreign population in the labour force	NA	(584,140)	929,100	NA	222,374

For instance, in 2018, the census recorded 1,651,561 foreign residents, while the foreigner register counted 1,246,626. This discrepancy was largely due to the exclusion of persons of Korean descent with foreign nationality from the foreigner register. This group is instead captured in the Domestic Residency Report. When figures from the register and this report are combined, the estimate rises to 1,687,733—narrowing the discrepancy with the population census to 2.1 per cent (36,172 persons).

To examine the source of the remaining discrepancy, there was a need to review the concepts, definitions, reference periods and other methodological aspects underlying these sources.

- In the population census, a resident is defined as a person who has resided in Korean territory for the past three months or more, or a person who intends to live in Korea for the next three months. This concept is

⁴⁶ See [Case studies in international labour migration: Measuring international labour migration in the Republic of Korea \(2024\)](#)

⁴⁷ The figure in parentheses is estimated based on different work-related visa type classifications, including intra-company transfer work (D-7), corporate/foreign investor (D-8), international trade (D-9), jobseeker (D-10), professor (E-1), foreign language instructor (E-2), researcher (E-3), technical instructor/technician (E-4), professional (E-5), artist & athlete (E-6), foreign national of special ability (E-7), non-professional (E-9), working holiday-maker (H-1), and working visit (H-2) visa holders.

⁴⁸ KOSTAT. 2019a. Population Census 2018

⁴⁹ KIS. 2019. Korea Immigration Service Statistics 2018

⁵⁰ KOSTAT. 2018c. Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force 2018

⁵¹ KOSTAT. 2018c. Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force 2018

⁵² MOEL. 2018. Statistics for Foreigners Employment Trend under the EPS 2018

the main principle in determining whether people should be counted or not, regardless of their citizenship (KOSTAT, 2018b).

- In the Foreigner register, based on *the Immigration Act*, foreigners intending to stay in Korea for more than 90 days after entry are required to register. However, the Foreigner register has some limitations, such as excluding foreign residents who overstay their visas and including foreigners who have left the country and are currently residing outside of Korea but who have not been deregistered. The latter is also a problem in the Resident register among Korean nationals and is due to a failure to de-register following a departure from the country (emigration).

To address these discrepancies, KOSTAT has constructed a statistical register by integrating data from various sources. **Box 35** shows, in the form of a reconciliation table, how the statistical foreigner register is constructed by integrating three data sources: the Foreigner Register, the Domestic Residency Report of Koreans with a foreign nationality and the Statistics of Arrivals and Departures (SAD).

After integrating these three sources, a series of rules are applied to check which records refer to the resident population that should be counted in the register-based Population census.

- Under-counted foreigners are added: this includes persons of Korean descent with foreign nationality (+318 thousand), foreigners staying on an irregular situation (+127 thousand), foreign arrivals (stayed more than 3 months) who were previously registered in the foreigner register but not in the current year (+106 thousand), and newly registered foreigners within three months after the census reference day (+21 thousand).
- Over-counted foreigners who should not have been counted are removed: this includes registered foreigners who were out of Korea for three months (-282 thousand) and duplicate records across the census, foreign register, and SAD (-69 thousand) (KOSTA, 2018).

Once the process of adding and subtracting is completed, the balance is 0, as the register-based population census figure is the reconciled number based on the combined use of the different data sources.

► **Box 35. Reconciliation of data between the Population Census and the foreign register, Korea 2015**

Reconciliation of data between the Population Census (2015) and the foreign register (2015)					
Population Census 2015			Foreign Register 2015		
		Number			Number
1	Total ⁴	1,371,841	1	Total ¹⁾	1,149,484
2			2	Koreans with foreign nationality ²⁾	+318,910
3			3	Foreigners staying in an irregular situation ³⁾	+127,118
4			4	Foreign arrivals (stayed more than 3 months) previously in foreign register but not in this year ^{3), 1)}	+106,724
5			5	Foreigners arriving within 3 months after the previous census reference day ^{3), 1)}	+21,450
6			6	Registered foreigners who were outside of Korea for 3 months ³⁾	-282,140
7			7	Duplicate records in the census, foreign register, and SAD ^{1), 3), 4)}	-69,705
8			8	Total = 1+2+3+4+5-6-7	1,371,841
9	Balancing item = 1,371,841-1,371,841	0	9		

Note 1: ¹⁾ Foreign register; ²⁾ Domestic residency report of foreign national Koreans; ³⁾ Statistics of Arrivals and Departures; ⁴⁾ Population census.

The register-based population census is thus recognized as the primary source for producing estimates of the stock of international migrants resident in Korea. It is also used as the benchmark for assessing the quality of other key data sources on the characteristics of international migrants, such as the Survey of Immigrant Living Conditions and Labour Force (SILCLF). This survey is the main source to produce key labour market indicators for international migrants resident in Korea.

The target population of SILCLF is foreigners 15 years and older who are usually resident in Korea. SILCLF uses the same residency rules as the population census. It also uses the same three data sources (the Foreigner Register, the Domestic Residency Report of foreign national Koreans, and SAD) as a sample frame. However, the survey target population excludes foreigners staying in an irregular situation with the types of visas for short-term visits because of a lack of a contact address. Diplomats and foreign government officials (A-type visa holders) are also not included in the survey (KOSTAT, 2019c). This is the main reason that the total number of foreigners 15 years and older in SILCLF is smaller compared to the population census count (1.3 million and 1.59 million, respectively), as shown in **Box 34** above.

Considering these methodological differences, **Box 36** shows how the SILCLF can be reconciled with the Population census. According to the SILCLF, the target foreign population age 15 and older was estimated at 1.3 million in May 2018. In the SAD for the same month, the count for foreigners staying in an irregular situation was 225,000 and A-type visa holders (that is, diplomats, government officials, and individuals associated with international agreements) were less than four thousand. Thus, the estimated total number of the foreign population of working age should be 1.53 million in total. In the case of the population census, there is a need to consider the different reference periods. For this, the estimate of the working age population is adjusted based on estimates of net migration for the 5.5-month difference in the reference periods.

► **Box 36. Reconciliation of data between the Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force and the Population Census, Korea 2018**

Reconciliation of data between SILCLF (2018) and Population Census (2018)					
SILCLF 2018 (Reference date: May 15th)			Population Census 2018 (Reference date: November 1st)		
		Number			Number
1	Total working age foreign population (in May) ⁵³	1,300,752	1	Total (all ages) ⁵⁴	1,651,561
2	Foreigners staying in an irregular situation (in May) ⁵⁵	+225,784	2	Working age foreign population (age 15+) ⁴⁶	1,588,634
3	Foreigners not included in the survey scope (A1, A2, A3 visa type holders) ⁴⁷	+3,934	3	Working age population ratio to total population = (2) / (1)	(0.962)
4	Total= 1 + 2	1,530,470	4	Foreign population decreased by net migration for 5.5 months (Nov. 1 to May 15) ⁵⁶	(- 67,695)
5			5	Working age foreign population decreased = (3) * (4)	- 65,123
6			6	Total working age foreign population (in May) = (2) - (5)	1,523,511
7	Balancing item = 1,530,470 - 1,523,511	6,959	7		

⁵³ Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force (2018)

⁵⁴ Population Census (2018)

⁵⁵ Statistics of Arrivals and Departures (2018)

⁵⁶ International Migration Statistics (2018)

The resulting balance between the adjusted figures shows a discrepancy in the estimate of the working-age foreign population between the two sources of only 6,959 persons. This indicates a close agreement between the data sources after adjustment for the identified differences in scope, definitions and reference periods. It also indicates that estimates from the SILCLF for key labour market indicators have good overall coverage and quality. Improvement recommendations would focus on steps to expand coverage to foreigners staying in an irregular situation, and/or to assess their labour market characteristics through special studies

The case of Korea illustrates the value of assessing the comparability of key ILM indicators to identify the reasons behind any discrepancies, and its use, not only to inform decisions regarding the improvement of different data sources, but also to reconcile and combine estimates derived from different sources to arrive at a more robust figure for core international migration indicators such as the stock of international migrants. Similarly, such an assessment can serve to validate the quality of other sources, such as a specialized migration survey, that can then be used with confidence to generate estimates of international migrants in the labour force and their employment characteristics.

Institutional capacities for ILM data production

As part of the ILM data sources assessment, it may be important to consider including within scope an assessment of the institutional capacities to produce ILM data. Such an assessment helps determine whether the responsible institution(s) —namely the national statistics office and possibly other key data producers— have the necessary resources, expertise, and operational systems to generate reliable, timely, and policy-relevant ILM data. Such an assessment focuses on the institution(s) internal capacity, examining its technical competence, staffing, infrastructure, procedures and adherence to statistical standards as relevant to produce ILM statistics.

Ideally, such an assessment should be conducted by the responsible institution itself, led by its statistical or data management team, with input from relevant internal departments, and in collaboration with partner agencies that contribute data or expertise. In that case, the role of the evaluator—if external to the institution, is to facilitate the process by providing a reference framework for the self-assessment, or by providing independent advice to undertake the exercise.

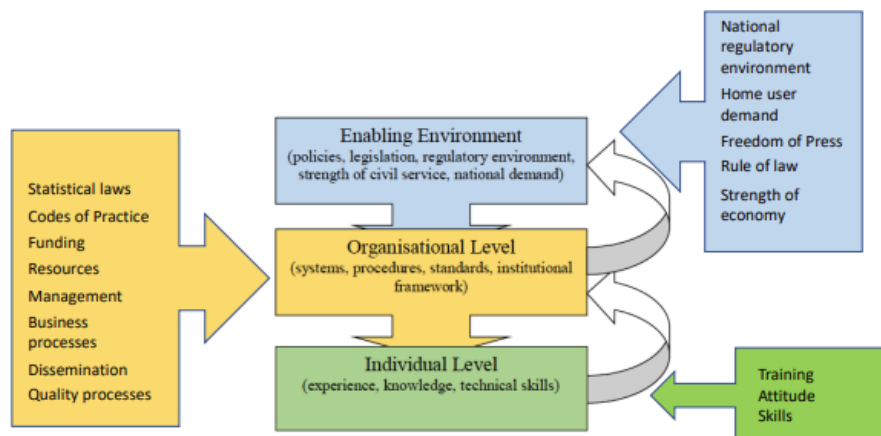
Different frameworks exist to guide such assessments. The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS 21) has reviewed and consolidated relevant guidance in its publication, *Assessing the capacity of national statistical systems*^{57, 58}. The PARIS21 Capacity Development Framework distinguishes between three interlinked levels of analysis: individual, organisational, and enabling environment (see [Figure 8](#)).

The individual level focuses on the competencies, technical skills, training, and knowledge of staff employed within the institution. The organizational level addresses the institution's resources, business processes, infrastructure and internal management practices. The enabling environment, comprising legal and systemic factors, is addressed separately in the next section of this chapter. Here, the primary focus is on the organizational level and the individuals employed within the institution.

The PARIS21 Capacity Development Framework provides guidance for an overall institutional capacity assessment considering all domains of statistical data production. In the case of ILM data production, there is a need to tailor the approach to consider the specific requirements and challenges that ILM data production may pose. International migrants, including refugees, irregular migrants, seasonal migrant workers, and other groups, are often small, mobile, or hard-to-reach populations. Therefore, assessing institutional capacity for ILM statistics requires evaluating specialised competencies and systems.

⁵⁷ See [Assessing the capacity of national statistical systems: a user's guide \(PARIS21, 2018\)](#)

⁵⁸ Hereafter referred as PARIS21 Capacity Development Framework

► **Figure 8. PARIS21. Capacity model for national statistical systems**

Key ILM-specific factors to examine as part of an institutional capacity assessment include:

- The extent to which the institution has the resources and expertise to integrate core recommended international migration and economic activity questions in the population and housing census, to undertake sensitization campaigns to ensure full enumeration of different migrant populations, and to prepare and publish statistical and communication outputs covering joint analysis of international migration and economic characteristics of the population.
- The institution's capacity to develop master sampling frames incorporating migration variables for stratification, and to combine different data sources for constructing such frames.
- The presence of staff trained specifically in international migration and labour migration statistics.
- The existence of coordination mechanisms between teams responsible for international migration statistics and those producing labour statistics, particularly when housed in separate Departments.
- Access to expertise in designing specialized sampling techniques for hard-to-reach migrant groups.
- The resources and expertise to conduct dedicated surveys on migration and to assess the feasibility of embedding relevant modules into existing household and labour force surveys.
- The ability to transform administrative records for statistical uses, and to apply data linkage techniques to complement and enhance survey-based data.
- The readiness to manage data securely, including implementing anonymization protocols and data integration tools that protect confidentiality while enabling effective statistical use.

Conducting an institutional capacity assessment with specific reference to ILM statistics can help with:

- Identifying gaps in mandates, funding, technical expertise, coordination and other resource needs
- Identifying capacity building needs by highlighting priority areas for training and investment
- Informing evidence-based strategic planning for strengthening ILM data systems.

An assessment of ILM data sources conducted for Tunisia provides a clear example of the value of evaluating the institutional capacities to produce ILM statistics. As documented in the publication entitled *État des lieux du système*

d'information sur les migrations internationales de main-d'œuvre depuis et vers la Tunisie (ILO, 2020)⁵⁹, the assessment identified important limitations in funding, staffing, infrastructure and quality assurance that constrained the national statistical system's ability to generate reliable and disaggregated data (See Box 37). The report also proposed several strategic actions to address these deficits and improve the technical and institutional readiness of key actors.

► **Box 37. Example of an assessment of institutional capacity for ILM statistics in Tunisia**

Institutional capacity assessment for ILM statistics in Tunisia (2020)

Key findings

- **Limited budgets:** Financial allocations are insufficient to sustain regular, high-quality data collection on labour migration.
- **Insufficient human resources:** Staff numbers are low, and technical expertise specific to ILM statistics is lacking.
- **Inadequate infrastructure and equipment:** Existing tools and IT systems are outdated and do not support secure or efficient data management.
- **Low sensitivity to data quality:** Quality assurance mechanisms are underdeveloped, affecting the credibility and comparability of outputs.
- **Data gaps:** Tunisia does not collect many key ILM indicators; existing data are often fragmented and poorly disaggregated.

Recommendations

- Strengthen human and technical capacity through targeted staff training, organizational development, and institutional reinforcement, particularly within the National Institute of Statistics (INS) and partner agencies.
- Develop a standardized ILM module to be integrated into the National Survey on Population and Employment (ENPE), capturing key demographic, labour market, and migration-related variables (for example, remittances).
- Establish and mainstream quality assurance procedures, including a dedicated quality committee and standardized performance indicators across producers.
- Explore non-traditional data sources (for example, big data) to complement conventional surveys and address gaps in coverage, especially for mobile or hard-to-reach migrant populations.

The internal capacity assessment lays the groundwork for evaluating the broader institutional environment—that is, the legal, institutional and systemic enablers that support ILM data production within the national statistical system.

⁵⁹ See *État des lieux du système d'information sur les migrations internationales de main-d'œuvre depuis et vers la Tunisie*.

Institutional environment and ILM data system coordination

The third assessment extension focuses on the institutional environment—referred to as the enabling environment in the PARIS21 Capacity Development Framework (see [Figure 8](#) above)—and aligns closely with the principles outlined in *the UN Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems (2022)*⁶⁰. Such an assessment focuses on whether the necessary mandates, coordination mechanisms, technical systems, and safeguards are in place to enable effective data integration and production of ILM statistics. This can add significant value by identifying institutional strengths and gaps, offering recommendations to improve institutional arrangements and coordination.

Ideally, such an assessment should be carried out in consultation with the institution responsible for ILM statistics, the national statistical office (NSO), and other relevant agencies involved in migration data production and management.

An institutional assessment aims to examine five core areas:

- **Legal mandate and coordinating authority:** A foundational component is the presence of a legal mandate and a designated coordinating authority—ideally the NSO or an inter-institutional committee—with the capacity to oversee ILM statistical activities. Such a mandate is expected to assign leadership, outline roles and responsibilities across agencies, and enable the coordinating body to integrate data from multiple sources. It is advisable that the coordinating authority have access to administrative data from other agencies at no cost, in line with principles outlined in the UNECE's *Using Administrative and Secondary Sources for Official Statistics: A Handbook of Principles and Practices* (2011)⁶¹.
- **Inter-institutional coordination mechanisms:** In addition to formal mandates, effective collaboration across agencies benefits from appropriate institutional arrangements. The legal framework can facilitate cooperation agreements, such as data-sharing protocols, among agencies contributing or potentially contributing to ILM statistics. This includes agencies maintaining administrative records that may serve as primary or supplementary sources. Agencies already producing ILM statistics are encouraged to align their outputs with the standards set by the coordinating body, supported by mechanisms for addressing operational challenges and promoting adherence to national statistical standards.
- **Data protection and confidentiality safeguards:** An enabling institutional environment is expected to incorporate comprehensive legal and technical measures to safeguard data protection and confidentiality. Ensuring privacy is not only a legal requirement but also essential for maintaining public trust and upholding ethical standards. Recommended provisions include clear prohibitions on unauthorized disclosure, legally binding confidentiality obligations for data-sharing entities and technical safeguards to secure sensitive information.
- **Transparency and user engagement:** Institutions involved in ILM statistics are advised to promote transparency and establish mechanisms for engaging users to ensure that statistical outputs remain relevant, timely, and responsive to policy needs. Transparency involves, for example, informing the coordinating body about changes to administrative data systems. User engagement may include regular consultations with policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders to help prioritize outputs and ensure alignment with national and international statistical requirements.
- **Technical infrastructure for data integration:** Finally, legal and institutional frameworks are most effective when supported by adequate technical capacity for secure data sharing and integration. This includes interoperable IT systems that facilitate data exchange in standardized formats; the application of

⁶⁰ See [UN Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems \(4th edition, 2022\)](#)

⁶¹ See [UNECE Using Administrative and Secondary Sources for Official Statistics: A Handbook of Principles and Practices \(2011\)](#)

unique identifiers to link datasets across sources while safeguarding confidentiality; secure transfer protocols (such as encrypted platforms or secure portals); and protected data storage environments. It is also recommended that such systems incorporate anonymization and disclosure control techniques to minimize risks to identifiable information while enabling its statistical utility.

The **Table 11** summarizes these institutional dimensions and the key features to consider during an assessment of ILM data sources.

► **Table 12. Institutional environment assessment dimensions**

Dimension	Key features to assess
Legal mandate and coordinating authority	• Existence of a coordinating body for ILM statistics • Legal authority to access administrative data free of charge • Legal authority to integrate multi-agency data • Clearly defined roles and responsibilities across participating agencies
Inter-institutional coordination mechanisms	• Formal cooperation agreements (for example, data-sharing protocols) • Inter-agency committees or working groups • Shared rules and standards for production, dissemination, and planning
Data protection and confidentiality safeguards	• Legal obligations to protect data privacy • Binding confidentiality agreements across agencies • Enforcement mechanisms against unauthorized disclosure
Transparency and user engagement	• Procedures for consulting and incorporating user feedback • Notification requirements for data system changes • Mechanisms for aligning outputs with national and international needs
Technical infrastructure for data integration	• Interoperable IT systems enabling standardized data sharing • Use of unique identifiers for secure record linkage • Secure transfer methods (encrypted platforms, secure portals, encrypted media) • Secure data storage environments • Anonymization and disclosure control measures

The example of Tunisia also illustrates the value of including an assessment of the broader institutional environment underpinning ILM data production. The assessment report documented systemic challenges in governance, inter-agency coordination and recognition of legal authority (ILO, 2020). These constraints were found to hinder the development of an integrated, interoperable data system. In particular, the report identified institutional fragmentation and the absence of formal cooperation mechanisms as key barriers and proposed concrete actions to establish a more coordinated and transparent governance structure (See **Box 38**).

Overall, by examining these institutional dimensions, the ILM data source assessment can provide valuable insights into whether the institutional arrangements are sufficient to support the development of integrated, high-quality ILM statistics. This optional assessment can inform targeted recommendations for strengthening coordination and data governance to improve ILM data systems.

► **Box 38. Example on assessment of institutional environment in Tunisia (2020)****Institutional capacity assessment in Tunisia (2020)****Key findings**

- **Inadequate legal and regulatory framework:** There is no comprehensive legislative basis empowering a central institution to coordinate or enforce data-sharing across agencies.
- **Lack of institutional coordination:** No centralized authority or mechanism exists to coordinate among data-producing institutions.
- **Absence of data-sharing agreements:** There are no formal protocols or memoranda of understanding to regulate the exchange of information between relevant agencies.
- **Weak technical coordination and limited harmonization:** Concepts, definitions, and classifications are inconsistent across agencies, limiting data comparability and integration.

Recommendations

- Adapt legal and organizational frameworks to ensure that institutions responsible for labour migration statistics are mandated and empowered to cooperate and share data.
- Establish a thematic working group on labour migration under the National Council of Statistics (CNS) to improve institutional coordination, define data needs, and guide statistical programming.
- Extend INS standards and classifications to all agencies within the labour migration data system (SISMMO) to promote harmonized practices and interoperability.
- Adopt formal cooperation agreements and protocols to institutionalize inter-agency data exchange and strategic planning.
- Implement comprehensive dissemination strategies, including a national statistical release calendar, user feedback mechanisms, and a national annual report on international labour migration to synthesize data and highlight gaps.

► Chapter 7: Recommendations and report preparation

The final stage of the assessment focuses on developing actionable recommendations, preparing the final report and ensuring its validation with stakeholders. This last stage transforms the findings from previous stages into concrete proposals towards improving ILM data availability, quality and relevance for monitoring labour-related aspects of international mobility, taking into consideration the national and/or regional context.

This stage can also be structured around three steps. First, is the formulation of recommendations based on the in-depth assessment conducted during Stage III. The main output of Step 1 is a set of source-specific and general recommendations addressing the issues identified with a view to enhance the capacity of the data sources to generate the priority ILM data indicators identified in Stage I. Step 2, centres on the preparation of the final report, summarising all stages of the assessment process and integrating the recommendations formulated in step 1. The last step is the final validation of the assessment report through stakeholder consultation. Engaging data producers and users before finalizing the report and its recommendations is critical to ensure that the proposed actions are feasible and aligned with institutional capacities, fostering ownership, and facilitating future implementation.

FINAL STAGE Recommendations and report preparations	
Step 1	Specifying data source recommendations
Step 2	Preparation of the assessment report
Step 3	Final stakeholder validation

Step 1: Data source recommendations

Step 1 focuses on formulating practical recommendations to address the issues identified during the in-depth assessment of data sources. It is important to distinguish between two main types of recommendations: First, **source-specific recommendations**, which focus on particular aspects of the design, methodology, and/or content of each data source assessed, with the aim of proposing targeted actions for improvement. Second, **general recommendations**, which address broader issues, such as promoting harmonization across data sources or encouraging their complementary use. In cases where the assessment includes some of the optional extensions, general recommendations may also cover cross-source consistency of estimates, institutional capacity for ILM data production, and the overall institutional context and coordination of the ILM data system. Overall, it is essential that these recommendations are coherent, mutually reinforcing and that they contribute collectively to strengthening the ILM data ecosystem.

Source-specific recommendations

Source-specific recommendations include concrete actions proposed to improve each of the ILM data sources assessed, in alignment with the priority ILM indicator plan. These actions should be based on the results of the metadata source analysis conducted during the in-depth assessment stage (Stage III, Step 2). This analysis documented issues related to six core dimensions of data quality: relevance, coherence, coverage, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and accessibility and metadata transparency. It thus provides a solid foundation for proposing actions to enhance the use of each data source in generating the priority data highlighted in the ILM indicator plan.

Identified issues may include missing data items or inconsistencies in how certain items are defined and measured relative to international statistical standards. For example, a source may fail to capture information on the country of citizenship or may record a different but related concept, such as ancestry, instead. In such cases, appropriate source-specific recommendations could include adding the missing data items or revising the definitions and measurement approaches to align with international guidelines.

The following example, drawn from an in-depth assessment conducted in Colombia in 2020, illustrates the types of recommendations that can be made for a major household survey based on the issues identified (see [Box 39](#)).

► **Box 39. Example of recommendations for Colombia's Large Integrated Household Survey (GEIH)**

Recommendations for Colombia Large Integrated Household Survey (GEIH)

To the National Statistical Office

- The GEIH Field Collection and Basic Concepts Manual precisely defines the concept of usual residence and presents examples of those who should be considered non-usual residents of the dwelling. It would be necessary to add a paragraph to contemplate people newly arrived in Colombia, who in the recent past have lived most of the time in another dwelling, but who intend to reside in the interviewed dwelling. These people should be considered usual residents. This element is key to identifying recent international migrants, return migrants, international migrant workers and return international migrant workers. It is recommended to include the paragraph mentioned in the Manual and add, in the migration module, a question about the country of residence.
 - Respondents interviewed in the GEIH, who resided in Venezuela 12 months (or 5 years) ago, may be international migrants or return migrants, depending on the country of birth. To identify (quantify and characterize) these two categories of migrants, the question "Where were you born?" (where the answer may be in a municipality in Colombia or in another country) could be used.
 - To quantify international migrants by country of citizenship, the following question can be included in the migration module.
- What is the nationality of [...]?
- A national citizen of this country
 - Naturalized citizen of this country
 - A citizen of another country _____
- If the question allows multiple answers, then it will be possible to generate statistics on the number of foreign nationals by channel of citizenship acquisition. If this information becomes available, those born abroad who have acquired citizenship of the country may be distinguished from foreign-born, foreign-citizen migrants.

The metadata source analysis may also have revealed coverage gaps related to priority migrant groups—for example, if a source excludes refugees or migrants living in collective quarters. It may have likewise identified over-coverage issues, such as incomplete de-registration from a population register when migrants leave the country or die. Recommendations to address such coverage issues might include expanding the scope of data collection—such as modifying a population census or survey to include refugees in reception centres or camps—or leveraging complementary data sources that adequately cover these groups to produce the priority ILM indicators.

Other issues may pertain to the accuracy and precision of existing sources in generating ILM indicators. For instance, an in-depth assessment may find that a national household survey produces headline indicators with acceptable precision but lacks sufficient sample size for disaggregation by key variables such as sex or age group. In such cases, recommendations might include reviewing the survey's sampling design to assess potential improvements or exploring the feasibility of conducting a specialized migration survey.

The following example, drawn from an ILM data source assessment conducted in Mauritania, illustrates these types of issues and presents specific recommendations made for the Population and Housing Census (RPGH) and the national ENESI survey (see [Box 40](#)).

► **Box 40. Example of recommendations for Mauritania's Population Census (2020)****Recommendations for Mauritania's Population and Housing Census (RGPH)**

To the National Statistical Office

- The data from the Population and Housing Census (RGPH) and other surveys do not allow for the production of the indicators [highlighted as a priority], although the RGPH provides sufficient information on the stock of immigrants at a given date, on recent immigration (module VIII) and recent emigration from Mauritania (module IX). Module VI addresses both internal (A) and international (B) migration. It includes some data on immigrants and Mauritanian emigrants abroad. The published data mainly concern the distribution by age at departure, reason for departure, highest level of education at departure and current country of residence. All data are disaggregated by sex.
- To better meet the data needs for indicators aligned with international standards, it will be necessary to revise the questionnaire on international migration to be included in the next RGPH, scheduled for 2023. In the meantime, the national ENESI survey planned for 2020 could compensate for this shortfall. A standardized labour migration module could be introduced, including questions on sociodemographic characteristics (sex, age, education level, country of birth, country of nationality, country of usual residence) and on migrant employment characteristics (labour force status, branch of economic activity, occupation, duration of employment, income from employment), as well as questions on remittances received by households. [This would require a consideration of the ENESI sampling design and sample size, to ensure it can support coverage of migrant households].

Other types of issues identified during the in-depth source assessment may concern the timeliness of data sources in meeting the demand for priority ILM indicators. Recommendations to address these issues could include improving the frequency of data collection or minimizing delays in data processing, analysis and reporting, to ensure that ILM data are released in a timely manner and are responsive to users' needs.

In addition, the assessment may have identified challenges related to data accessibility or metadata transparency. For instance, public-use files from the population census or surveys might not be readily available, or may lack comprehensive metadata describing the concepts, definitions, and methodologies used. In such cases, recommendations may focus on improving public access to data and strengthening metadata documentation to enhance transparency and informed use.

General recommendations

After source-specific issues are addressed, general recommendations should reflect the broader ILM data environment. Drawing on findings from Stage III, Step 3, general recommendations would focus on actions to improve cross-source comparability or identify opportunities complementary uses of the data sources assessed. They may also include actions to improve institutional coordination among the agencies responsible for different ILM data sources.

The example below, drawn from Morocco's 2020 ILM data mapping and assessment exercise, highlights key findings and general recommendations. These include the harmonization of key data items, the establishment of data-sharing agreements and the creation of a regional information exchange platform to facilitate collaboration between producers and users of ILM statistics (see [Box 41](#)).

► **Box 41. Example from Morocco's Data Mapping and Assessment Exercise (2020)****General recommendations for ILM statistics in Morocco****Recommendations for all institutions producing ILM statistics:**

- Harmonize classifications
- Improve data sharing among producers, following a partnership model
- Improve the dissemination of produced data by implementing technological tools (web platforms with options to extract data into Excel, SPSS, STATA, etc.), similar to what HCP has done for the RGPH microdata and household surveys, allowing real-time access to datasets.
- Establish a regional information exchange platform among producers/users of ILM-related data, as part of a sub-regional initiative: For example, ASEAN Labour Migration Statistics. This platform, developed with ILO support, serves as a benchmark, bringing together various sources of data on international migrants and their labour market status in the ten ASEAN member states.

ILM data source assessments conducted at regional level may also consider recommendations aimed at promoting cross-country comparability, while accounting for national differences in migration profiles and national statistical systems. The example below is drawn from a regional ILM data mapping and assessment exercise conducted in 2020 for the Arab States (see [Box 42](#)). This assessment covered the following countries: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

► **Box 42. Example from a regional assessment of Arab States' ILM data (2020)****General recommendations for ILM statistics in Arab States (2022)****General recommendations common to all Arab States:**

- National institutions responsible for data collection should systematically adopt international definitions on migration and labour, as established by the United Nations and the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).
- National statistical offices should have access to data generated by other agencies.

Recommendations specific to migrant workers' destination countries:

- National statistical offices should develop tools to estimate the size and characteristics of populations not fully captured in official statistics, such as irregular migrant workers, migrants in the informal sector, migrant domestic workers, and return migrant workers.
- States should develop administrative records for statistical purposes, particularly in collaboration with national statistical offices. To support this, states should:
 - Systematise the use of a national individual identifier to merge administrative data from different sources.
 - Ensure public administrations collect individual-level data on country of birth, country of citizenship, duration of stay and purpose of migration.
 - Enable real-time data provision to monitor changes.
 - Empower national statistical offices to lead improvements in data collection tools, integrate data from surveys and administrative sources, and identify gaps to improve accuracy and reliability.
 - States should ensure public access to data.

Recommendations specific to refugee-hosting countries:

- National statistical offices should include refugee populations in existing surveys or conduct dedicated surveys to estimate their size, geographic distribution, education levels, skills, and occupations. The aim should be to support self-sufficiency where return or resettlement options are not feasible in the short term.

These two examples demonstrate how general recommendations can address broader challenges within the ILM data environment. The Morocco example emphasizes practical national-level actions, such as harmonisation and data-sharing frameworks. The Arab States example shows how regional issues can be addressed through recommendations that encourage coordinated adoption of international standards and improved institutional practices, while still being responsive to the national context.

Step 2: Preparation of the assessment report

The final report is the key output of the assessment process, providing a structured summary of the entire exercise and supporting informed planning for future improvements in ILM statistics. The report should present the methodology, key findings, and recommendations, offering a clear and concise reference for decision-makers, data producers, and stakeholders involved in ILM data production.

The report should include:

- A summary of the assessment plan and methodology followed
- The institutions and stakeholders engaged throughout the process of data assessment and mapping
- The findings from each stage of the assessment, including:
 - Policy priorities and priority groups identified (Stage I, Steps 1 and 2)
 - Established ILM indicator plan (Stage I, Step 3)
 - Mapped data sources and key stakeholder institutions (Stage II, Step 3).
 - Strengths and limitations of current and potential ILM data sources (Stage III, Steps 2 and 3).
 - Detailed recommendations, both source-specific and general (Final Stage, Step I).

This ensures that the final report not only documents the assessment but also provides a practical basis for planning next steps to develop reliable and timely ILM data that meets national and international user needs.

Below is an outline of the suggested sections of the report and contents:

1. **Executive summary:** A concise overview of the report's purpose, key findings and main recommendations. This section should summarize the core outcomes of the assessment.
2. **Introduction:** It provides the background for the ILM data source assessment, the main objectives, and a description of the methodology used, including the mechanisms used to promote stakeholder consultation.
3. **Migration context and priority ILM data needs:** This chapter provides an overview of migration trends and the identified policy priorities, considering commitments and plans at national, regional and international levels (Stage I, Step 1). It also summarizes the existing ILM indicators, the statistical plan (Stage I, Step 2) and presents the priority ILM indicator plan specified to guide the assessment (Stage I, Step 3).
4. **Rapid mapping of data sources and stakeholders:** This chapter describes the ILM data sources and stakeholders identified, and elaborates on the matrix developed in Stage II, Step 3, which links each priority ILM indicator to the relevant data sources and the institutions responsible for producing them. The matrix highlights key data providers and stakeholders involved in ILM statistics and distinguishes between data already produced and data that could potentially be produced, but is not yet compiled, by each source and institution. Importantly, it should highlight the identified ILM data gaps and potential data sources.
5. **In-Depth Assessment by Source:** This chapter summarizes the findings for each data source evaluated during Stage III. Depending on the number and type of sources assessed, the chapter can be split into several chapters or structured with subsections dedicated to each source—for example, "In-depth Assessment of the Population Census," "In-depth Assessment of the Specialised Migration Survey," or "In-depth Assessment of the Migration Registry." For each source assessed, the chapter(s) should provide a summary of its methodology, its value for

producing the priority ILM indicators identified, and outline the main issues identified, such as gaps in coverage, missing data items, misalignment with international standards, or other data quality concerns.

6. **Recommendations:** The recommendations developed through the assessment should be consolidated in a dedicated chapter. Doing so not only improves clarity for readers but also helps ensure that source-specific and general recommendations are coherent and mutually reinforcing. As discussed previously, source-specific recommendations may include actions such as introducing or revising data items, reviewing definitions, or expanding the coverage of a given data source. General recommendations, on the other hand, address broader systemic issues within the ILM data ecosystem—such as the harmonization of concepts and definitions across sources, alignment with international standards, strengthening institutional coordination and addressing capacity development needs.
7. **Concluding Remarks:** As the final section of the report, it is useful to include concluding remarks covering reflections on the overall assessment, key takeaways, lessons learnt and considerations for the next steps.
8. **Annexes:** Templates used and completed during the assessment should be made available as an annex. This serves to maintain detailed documentation of the process and enhances transparency.

The example shown in **Box 43** presents the table of contents used in the data mapping and assessment case study from Uganda⁶².

► **Box 43. Example of table of contents from Uganda (2023)**

Table of contents from the data mapping and assessment report from Uganda (2023)	
► Table of Contents	
► Foreword	ii
► Executive summary	iv
► Introduction	5
► International Labour Migration in Uganda	13
► Assessment of National Population and Housing censuses	23
► Assessment of National Labour Force Surveys	33
► Assessment of the Uganda National Household Surveys	41
► Assessment of other Household/Establishment Surveys	47
► Mapping of administrative sources of data	53
► Institutional Capacity of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics	69
► Recommendations	77
► References	83

⁶² See [Report on the assessment of sources of data on international labour migration in Uganda \(2023\)](#)

Step 3: Final stakeholder validation

Once the draft report is completed, it is recommended that it be shared with key stakeholders for validation and feedback. Engaging data producers, relevant institutions and other stakeholders at this stage is critical to ensure that the findings and recommendations are both realistic and actionable. This collaborative review process helps foster a shared understanding of the identified issues and proposed solutions, increasing the likelihood of institutional buy-in and support for implementation.

Stakeholder validation also provides an opportunity to identify any gaps, clarify interpretations, and refine the conclusions of the assessment. This step is essential not only for strengthening the quality and credibility of the final report but also for building commitment to the recommended improvements across the ILM data ecosystem.

The example shown in **Box 44** from Morocco illustrates how this final consultation phase can be organized. Following an initial stakeholder meeting in May 2019, the data mapping and assessment exercise was conducted between July and September. Upon completion of the draft, the same network of stakeholders reconvened in October to review and validate the findings.

► Box 44. Example of final stakeholder consultation from Morocco (2021)

Final stakeholder consultation from Morocco (2021)

This report was produced based on published documents and interviews conducted with various organizations during the period from July to September 2019:

- High Commission for Planning – Directorate of Statistics
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Ministry Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs
- Ministry of the Interior
- Ministry of Labour and Professional Integration
- National Observatory of the Labour Market
- National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills
- General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises
- Private recruitment agencies

It considers observations made during the first meeting held on 16 May 2019 and the October 2019 meeting. It is a network of institutions and individuals who have mutually recognized the roles, agreements and functions related to the production, storage, dissemination and use of information on labour migration to maximize the potential for implementing relevant policies and for formulating policies and programmes.

► Appendix

► Template I: National ILM indicator plan for ILM Statistics

National ILM indicator plan for ILM Statistics (Stage 1)			
National context (Step 1)			
Priority groups (Step 2)	Indicators and tabulations (Step 3)	Disaggregations (Step 3)	Frequency of publication (Step 3)
...	...	...	...

► **Template II: Matrix of priority indicators, data sources and responsible institutions**

Matrix of priority indicators, data sources and responsible institutions for <i>[Type priority group here]</i>							
Source list (Step 2 of Stage 2)	Source Type						...
	Producer						...
	Frequency						...
Indicators and tabulations list (Step III of Stage I)							...
							...
							...
							...
							...
							...
							...
							...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

► **Template III. Population census metadata, Section A: Source description and methodology**

Population census metadata template Section A. Description and methodology		
Instruction: Focus on the most recent round		
A.1- Identification of organisation and the contact person		
Evaluator details		
Name and surname of the evaluator		
End and start date of the assessment		
Census organisation details		
Organisation conducting most recent population census		
Contact person for the most recent population census (Name, title, department, and email)		
Most recent population census		
Reference date (census date or period)		
Census title		
Link to questionnaire		
Link to census documentation		
Upcoming population census plans		
Date of upcoming census (date or period)		
A.2- Methodology		
Census approach		
Full field enumeration with no use of register information		
Full field enumeration with use of register information as frame or control		
Register-based census with no use of survey data		
Register-based census with use of existing survey data for selected variables		
Combination of register data and field data collection for census purposes		
Rolling census (cumulative continuous survey)		
Other, specify		
Type of population counts produced		
Present		
(Usually) resident, excluding temporarily absent		
(Usually) resident, including temporarily absent		
Other, specify		
Criteria used to define (usually) resident population		
Duration of stay		
Intention to stay		
Legal right of stay (including citizenship)		
Listing in national register(s)		
Other, specify		
Time threshold used to define (usually) resident population		
3 months		
More than 3 months		
6 months or more		
More than 6 months		
12 months or more		
More than 12 months		
Other, specify		

Coverage of the population census	
Geographic coverage	
Full territory covered	
A part of the territory excluded	
Specify territory excluded (e.g., remote areas, areas under conflict, overseas territories and so on.)	
Population coverage	
Full population coverage	
A part of the population excluded	
Specify population excluded (e.g., foreign nationals, refugees, military personnel, roofless population etc.)	
Dwelling coverage	
All private and collective dwellings covered	
Selected types of dwellings excluded	
Specify types of dwellings excluded (e.g., worker camps, hostels, guest houses, military barracks)	
A.3- Special procedures for migrant populations	
Has the institution conducted a sensitization campaign targeting migrant communities prior to the census?	
Has the institution engaged with community leaders to support migrant participation?	
Have enumerators or interviewers received special training by the institution to reduce non-response among migrant populations?	
Has the institution recruited interviewers from migrant communities to strengthen outreach and build trust?	
Were different language options provided in the census to ensure migrants could understand and respond to census questions accurately?	

► **Template III. Population census metadata, Section B. Data items and population coverage**

Population census metadata template							
Section B. Data items and population coverage							
B.1- Data items for population characteristics							
Population census topics	Data items	Total population in private households	A sample of the population in private households	Population in collective living quarters			Clarifications, if any:
			Specify share of population (e.g., 20%)	Refugee, IDP camps	Workers' camps	Others (Institutions, hotels, rooming houses, military camps, etc.)	
Individual identification	National identification number (citizens)						
	Foreign identification number (foreigners)						
Socio-demographic and housing characteristics	Age						
	Sex						
	Marital status						
	Level of education attained						
	Type of living quarters						
International migrant characteristics	Country of birth						
	Country of citizenship						
	Year or period of arrival						
	Reason for arrival						
	Employment reasons identified						
	Forced displacement reasons identified						
	International legal protection status						
	...						

Economic (employment) characteristics	Labour Force Status						
	Occupation						
	Branch of economic activity (industry)						
	Status in employment						
	Country of place of work						
	...						
Returned international migrants	Ever lived abroad				Not applicable		
	Date/period of departure						
	Country of destination						
	Reason for departure						
	Date/period of return						
	...						
B.2 – Data items for household characteristics							
Emigrants	Former household members who moved abroad (ever or N* years before)						
	Date/period of departure						
	Reason for departure			Not applicable			
	Country current residence						
	Employment abroad						
	Occupation of job abroad						
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of job abroad						
	...						

► Template III. Population census metadata, Section C : Definitions, criteria and classifications

Population census metadata template				
Section C. Definitions, criteria and classifications				
C.1- Migration characteristics				
Concepts		National practices in population census	Answers	Comments
Country of birth	Question type	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded list of individual country names or codes		
		Pre-coded list with mix of individual country names and country groupings		
		Native born vs foreign born (dichotomous question)		
		Other (Specify)		
	Criteria	Country of actual birth		
		Country of residence of mother at time of birth		
		Other (specify)		
Country of citizenship	Question type	Only one citizenship captured		
		Multiple citizenships captured		
		Citizenship acquisition channel captured		
		Person without any citizenship (stateless) separately identified		
		National vs foreign national (dichotomous question)		
		Other (Specify)		
Date of arrival	Criteria	First arrival to the country		
		Most recent arrival to the country		
		Unspecified		
		Other (Specify)		
	Approach	Year and month captured		
		Only year captured		
		Period of arrival captured (specify interval)		
		Duration of stay since arrival captured		
Reason for migration	Criteria	Main reason as self-declared		
		First reason selected from a read-aloud list		
		Multiple reasons captured		
		Other (Specify)		
	Reasons captured	Employment reasons identified (e.g., employment, looking for work)		
		Forced displacement reasons identified (e.g., conflict, violence or persecution, ...)		
		Other reasons captured in census (Specify)		
Forced displacement status	Criteria	Main reason for migration		
		International legal protection status		
		Previous experience of forced displacement		
		Other (Specify)		
	Approach	Individual level self-declaration		
		Household level self-declaration		
		Proof of documentation requested		
		Based on registration		
		Other (Specify)		

C.2- Employment characteristics				
Concepts	National practice in the population census		Answers	Comments
Age limits applied	Lower age limit			
	Upper age limit (if any)			
Employed	Main question type	Worked for pay or profit in reference week		
		Employment self-declared as main activity		
		Employment self-declared as usual activity		
		Other (specify)		
	Recovery questions	Worked in casual small job		
		Temporarily absent from job		
		Production of goods mainly own final use (in agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry) is included in employment		
		Production of goods mainly own final use (in agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry) is included in employment		
	Reference Period	Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Other (specify)		
Unemployed	Main question type	Not employed		
		Looked for a job or to start a business		
		Was available to start a job or a business		
		Unemployed self-declared as main activity		
		Unemployed self-declared as usual activity		
	Reference period for job search criterion	Other (specify)		
		Specified 4 calendar weeks		
		Specified month		
		Specified 30 days		
		Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Other (specify)		
	Reference period for availability to work criterion	Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Specified two calendar weeks after interview		
		Fifteen days after interview		
		Other (specify)		
Occupation	Question type	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded question		
		Variable obtained from another source linked to census data		
		Other (specify)		
	Classification	National occupational classification (Specify name)		
		Region specific occupation classification		
		ISCO (version 88 or 08)		
		Other (specify)		
	Level of coding	1-digit coding		
		2-digit coding		
		3-digit coding		
		4-digit coding		
		5+ digit coding		

► **Template III. Population census metadata, Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination**

Population census metadata template		
Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination of results		
D.1- Quality evaluation		
Evaluation criteria	Estimates	
Rate of census omission		
Percentage of missing or inconsistent data items on migration characteristics		
Percentage of imputed data items on migration characteristics		
Percentage of missing or inconsistent data items on economic characteristics		
Percentage of imputed data items on economic characteristics		
...	...	
D.2 – Dissemination of results		
Types of information	Availability	Link of reference
Public use sample microdata files		
What is the sample percentage?		
Is the sample data anonymized?		
Published methodology?		
Results of the census disseminated by migration characteristics		
Thematic section (or separate publication) dedicated to international migration		
A thematic section (or publication) on international migration includes the economic characteristics of migrants		
A thematic section (or publication) dedicated to the economic characteristics of the population includes international migration characteristics		
Any other report related to international migration and its economic characteristics (please specify)		
How frequently are results of this survey published each year?		
What is the time lag between data collection and reporting/publication?		
...	...	...

► **Template IV. Survey metadata, Section A : Source description and methodology**

Survey metadata template Section A. Description and methodology		
Instructions		
Complete a separate form for each survey identified.		
A.1- Identification of organisation and contact person		
Evaluator details		
Name and surname of the evaluator		
End and start date of the assessment		
Source and contact details		
Survey title		
Most recent year conducted		
Organisation conducting the survey		
Contact person for survey (Name, title, department, and email)		
Link to survey questionnaire		
Link to other survey documentation		
A.2- Survey details (most recent round)		
Survey type		
Specialized migration survey		
Labour force survey (LFS)		
Other socioeconomic surveys (e.g., HIES, LSMS, SILS, etc.)		
Specify other (e.g., Demographic survey, Forced displacement survey, etc.)		
Survey characteristics		
Frequency of the survey		
Continuous		
Annual		
Every N* year (Specify)		
Ad-hoc		
If LFS or other non-specialized migration surveys, the frequency of questions or modules on international labour migration topics		
Continuous		
Annual		
Every N*year (Specify)		
Ad-hoc		
Timing of data collection for a survey or module on international labour migration topics		
Throughout 12 months period		
Specific months in a year (Specify)		

A.3- Survey design	
Measurement objectives include priority statistics for	
Do the survey objectives include generating statistics on international migrant populations (specify: immigrants, emigrants, returned migrants, refugees, etc.)?	
Population coverage	
Survey target population	
Persons present at the time of the survey (de facto)	
Persons usually resident in the country (de jure)	
Special populations only (e.g., refugees, frontier workers etc.)	
Living in	
Private households	
Are all collective living quarters (e.g., worker camps, refugee camps, hotels, guest houses, etc.) covered?	
<i>If not, please specify below which ones are included.</i>	
Worker camps	
Other employer provided accommodation	
Refuge/asylum reception centres	
Other(specify)	
Time threshold used to define (usually) the resident population	
3 months	
More than 3 months	
6 months or more	
More than 6 months	
12 months or more	
More than 12 months	
Other, specify	
Geographical coverage	
Total national	
<i>If not, please specify below which ones are included.</i>	
Urban areas only	
Main city(ies) or metropolitan areas	
Other (specify)	
Sampling strategy	
Sampling frames	
Area based frame (if yes, specify)	
List based frame (if yes, specify)	
Combination of area and list frames (if yes, specify)	
Does the frame(s) include a variable on migrant characteristics?	
Is the variable on migrant characteristics used for stratification?	
Specify the variable(s) used for stratification	
A.4- Special procedures for the migrant population	
Was a sensitization campaign targeting migrant communities conducted?	
Were community leaders engaged to support migrant participation?	
Were enumerators trained to reduce non-response among migrant populations?	
Were interviewers recruited from migrant communities to improve outreach and trust?	
Were language options provided to ensure migrants could understand and respond accurately?	

► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section B. Data items

Survey metadata template		
Section B. Data items		
B.1- Core data items		
Topics	Data Items	Included (YES/NO)
Universal individual identification	National identification number (citizens)	
	Foreign identification number (foreigners)	
Socio-demographic characteristics	Age	
	Sex	
	Marital status	
	Level of education attained	
	Type of living quarters in the destination country	
Resident international migrants	Country of birth	
	Country of citizenship	
	Year (date) of arrival	
	Duration of stay	
	Reason for arrival	
	Employment reasons identified	
	Forced displacement reasons identified	
	Previous experience of forced displacement	
	Legal international protection status	
	Labour force status	
	Hours actually worked	
	Hours usually worked	
	Looking for full time work /additional working hours (for employed)	
	Main/Usual activity	
	Occupation	
	Branch of economic activity	
	Status in employment	
	Formal/informal sector employment	
	Formal/informal nature of the job	
	Social security coverage	
Returned international migrants	Ever lived abroad	
	Date/period of departure	
	Country of destination	
	Reason for departure	
	Employment abroad	
	Occupation of job abroad	
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of job abroad	
Emigrants	Date/period of departure	
	Reason for departure	

	Country current residence	
	Employment abroad	
	Occupation of job abroad	
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of job abroad	
Residents in employment abroad	Labour force status	
	Current/previous employment abroad	
	Location (country) of place of work	
	Location (country) of employer/economic unit	
	Type of visa/work permit (e.g., frontier work, seasonal work, posted worker etc.)	
	Type of contract of job abroad (e.g., seasonal work)	
B.2- Additional data items		
Topics	Data Items	Included (YES/NO)
Main socio-demographic characteristics	Disability status	
	Field of study	
	Country of highest education qualifications	
	Recognition of foreign education and qualification	
	Language proficiency in the destination country	
	...	
Resident international migrants	Acquisition of citizenship	
	Country of birth of parents	
Return international migrants	Date of return	
	Reason for return	
	Labour force status	
	Reintegration support	
	...	
Employment	Type of employment agreement	
	Duration of work agreement	
	Duration of employment in the economic unit	
	Employment related income	
Unemployment	Duration of job search	
	Main obstacles finding a job	
Special Topics	Occupational injuries	
	Recruitment costs	
	Social security entitlements	
	Remittances	
	...	

► Template IV. Survey metadata, Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications

Survey metadata template Section C. Definitions, thresholds, and classifications				
C.1- Migration characteristics				
	Concepts	National practices in survey (module)	Answers	Comments
Country of birth	Question type	Open-ended question		
		Pre-coded list of individual country names or codes		
		Pre-coded list with a mix of individual country names and country groupings		
		Other (Specify)		
	Criteria	Country of actual birth		
		Country of residence of mother at time of birth		
		Other (specify)		
Country of citizenship	Question type	Only one citizenship captured		
		Multiple citizenships captured		
		Citizenship acquisition channel captured		
		A person without any citizenship (stateless) is separately identified		
		National vs foreign national (dichotomous question)		
		Other (specify)		
Date of arrival	Criteria	First migration to the country		
		Most recent migration to the country		
		Unspecified		
		Other (Specify)		
	Approach	Year and month captured		
		Only the year captured		
		Only period of arrival captured (specify interval)		
		Duration of stay since arrival captured		
Reason for migration	Criteria	First migration to the country		
		Most recent migration to the country		
		Unspecified		
		Other (Specify)		
	Reasons captured	Employment reasons identified (e.g., employment, looking for work)		
		Displacement reasons identified (e.g., conflict, violence, persecution, ...)		
		Other reasons captured in the survey (specify)		
Forced displacement status	Criteria	Main reason for migration		
		International legal protection status		
		Previous experience of forced displacement		
		Other (Specify)		
	Approach	Individual level self-declaration		
		Household level self-declaration		
		Proof of documentation requested		
		Register based		
		Other (Specify)		

C.2- Employment characteristics				
Concepts		National practice in the survey (module)	Answers	Comments
Age limits applied		Lower age limit		
		Upper age limit (if any)		
Employed	Main question	Worked for 1 or more hours		
		Temporarily absent from a job		
		Employment self-declared as main activity		
		Employment self-declared as usual activity		
		Other (specify)		
	Recovery questions	Worked in small casual small job		
		Temporarily absent from job		
		Production of goods mainly for sale		
	Reference Period	Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Other (specify)		
Unemployed	Main question	Not employed		
		Looked for a job or to start a business		
		Was available to start a job or a business		
		Unemployed self-declared as main activity		
		Unemployed self-declared as usual activity		
		Other (specify)		
	Recovery question	Specified 4 calendar weeks		
		Specified month		
		Specified 30 days		
		Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Other (specify)		
	Reference period for the availability to work criterion	Specified calendar week		
		Specified 7 days		
		At present		
		Specified two calendar weeks after the interview		
		Fifteen days after the interview		
		Other (specify)		
Occupation	Approach	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded question		
		Variable from another source linked to census data		
		Other (specify)		
	Classification	National occupational classification		
		Region specific occupation classification		
		ISCO (version 88 or 08)		
Branch of economic activity	Approach	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded question		
		Variable from another source linked to census data		
		Other (specify)		
	Classification	National classification		
		Region specific classification		
		ISIC (rev 3, 4 ...)		
		Other (specify)		
	Level of coding	Specify (e.g. 1, 2,3,4,5-digit coding)		

► **Template IV. Survey metadata, Section D: Quality evaluation and dissemination of results**

Survey metadata template		
Section D. Quality evaluation and dissemination of results		
D.1- Quality evaluation		
Evaluation criteria		Answer
Survey or module non-response rate (%)		
Type of priority respondent for labour migration topics	Direct respondent	
	Knowledgeable adult	
	Share of proxy responses	
Total achieved sample size	International migrants of working age	
	International migrants in the labour force	
	Emigrants of working age	
	Emigrant with work experience	
	Return migrants of working age	
	Return migrant with work experience	
	Residents in employment abroad (e.g., Frontier workers, seasonal workers, cross-border service providers)	
Relative Standard Error (RSE) of survey estimates (e.g. <10%, 10-19%, 20-29%, 30+%)	Immigrants of working age	
	Immigrant in the labour force	
	Emigrants of working age	
	Emigrant with work experience	
	Return migrants of working age	
	Return migrant with work experience	
Share of missing valid responses in core variables (%)	Residents in employment abroad (e.g., Frontier workers, seasonal workers, cross-border service providers)	
	Immigrants of working age	
	Country of birth	
	Country of citizenship	
	Labour Force status	
	Emigrants of working age	
	Currently residing abroad	
	Current employment abroad	
	Return migrants of working age	
	Ever resided abroad	
	Previous employment abroad	
	Residents in employment abroad	
	Country of residence	
	(Current/previous) employment abroad	
	Country of place of work	
Was data imputation used to address missing responses in core variables?		
Were external sources (e.g. administrative records) used as input to generate selected variables? (e.g. citizenship status, refugee status, earnings, branch of economic activity, etc.)		
Were survey results adjusted using external data to match population totals (e.g., calibration, post-stratification adjustments)		

D.2 – Dissemination of results		
Types of information	Availability	Link or reference
Public use microdata files		
Are the observations shared anonymized?		
Public use microdata with variables on migration and economic characteristics included		
Methodology, definitions, and metadata		
Reports include the results of the labour market characteristics of migrants covered		
Reports compare migrant and non-migrants' labour market characteristics		
How frequently results of this survey is published each year?		
What is the time lag between data collection and reporting/publication?		

► **Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section A : Source description and methodology**

Administrative record metadata template Section A. Metadata and methods		
Instructions		
Complete a separate form for each admin sources identified.		
A.1- Identification of organisation and contact person		
Evaluator details		
Name and surname of the evaluator		
End and start date of the assessment		
Source details and contacts		
Name of the administrative record		
Years of coverage (specify first publication date)		
Responsible organisation name		
Contact person for the administrative record (Name, title, department, and email)		
Link to administrative record publications		
A.2- Administrative record details		
Administrative record type		
Population registry		
Residence permit registry		
Registry of foreign citizens		
Registry of visas granted to foreigners		
Civil identification registry		
Refugee registry		
Asylum seekers registry		
Border control registry		
Work permit registry for foreigners		
Work permit registry for citizens abroad		
Social security registry		
Tax authority registry		
Employers' association registry		
Trade union organization registry		
Education enrolment registry		
Enrolment registry in vocational trainings		
Healthcare registry		
Consular registers of citizens living abroad		
Registers for remittances sent and received		
Other (Specify)		

Administrative record characteristics	
Register operation	
Register is compulsory	
Register is free of charge	
Other (Specify)	
Form of the data collection	
No digital record available	
Digital records are available but not organised in a database	
Digital records available and stored in a database	
Since year N* digital records are available in a database	
Register is used to record	
Additions only (new cases)	
Additions and deletions (closures)	
Additions deletions and modifications	
Other (Specify)	
Data collection and reporting units	
Person (e.g., work permit holders, insured persons)	
Event registry (e.g., work permit applications, applications to social security)	
Person identification number used during data collection	
A unique identification number used	
National identity number (citizens)	
Foreign identity number used (foreigners)	
Is this number used to link events and to aggregate records to person level	
If not, specify the identification strategy (e.g., identification variables used in statistical modelling)	
A.3- Design	
Coverage	
Administrative records' target population	
Citizens only	
Foreigners only	
Persons usually resident	
Special populations (e.g., refugees, frontier workers etc.)	
Time threshold used to define (usually) resident population	
3 months	
More than 3 months	
6 months or more	
More than 6 months	
12 months or more	
More than 12 months	
Other, specify	
Geographical coverage	
Total national	
Urban areas only	
Main city(ies) or metropolitan areas only	
Other (specify)	

► **Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section B : Data items**

Administrative record metadata template		
Section B. Administrative record core data items		
Topics	Data Items	Included (YES/NO)
Individual Identifiers	National identification number (citizens)	
	Foreign identification number (foreign citizens)	
Main socio-demographic characteristics	Age	
	Sex	
	Marital status	
	Level of education attained	
	Language proficiency of the destination country	
	Disability status	
	Other(specify)	
Resident international migrants	Country of birth	
	Country of citizenship	
	Current migration status	
	Acquisition of citizenship	
	Date of arrival in the country	
	Duration of stay	
	Reason for arrival	
	Employment reasons identified	
	Forced displacement reasons identified	
	Legal international protection status	
	Occupation	
	Branch of economic activity	
	Status in employment	
	Contractual hours of work	
	Type of employment agreement	
	Duration of work agreement	
	Duration of employment in the economic unit	
	Employment related income	
	Occupational injuries	
	Components of recruitment fees	
	Social security entitlements	
	Remittances	
Return international migrants	Ever lived abroad	
	Date/period of departure	
	Date/period of return	
	Duration of stay abroad	
	Destination country	
	Reason for return	
	Employment abroad	
	Occupation of a job abroad	
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of a job abroad	
	Reintegration support	

Emigrants	Date/period of departure	
	Reason for departure	
	Country current residence	
	Employment abroad	
	Occupation of job abroad	
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of job abroad	
	Contractual hours of work	
	Type of employment agreement	
	Duration of work agreement	
	Duration of employment in the economic unit	
	Employment related income	
	Occupational injuries	
	Components of recruitment cost	
	Social security entitlements	
	Remittances	
Residents employed abroad	Current/previous employment abroad	
	Location (country) of place of work	
	Location (country) of employer/economic unit	
	Type of visa/work permit (e.g., frontier work, seasonal work, posted worker etc.)	
	Type of contract of job abroad (e.g., seasonal work)	
	Reintegration support (for returned migrants)	
	Socioeconomic conditions after return (for returned migrants)	

► Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section C: Definitions, criteria and classifications

Administrative record metadata template Section C. Definitions, criteria, and classifications				
C.1- Migration characteristics				
Concepts		National practices in the survey (module)	Answers	Comments
Country of birth	Question type	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded list of individual country names or codes		
		Pre-coded list with a mix of individual country names and country groupings		
		Other (Specify)		
	Criteria	Self-reported		
		As per the document		
		Specify the official document		
Country of citizenship	Question type	Only one citizenship captured		
		Multiple citizenships captured		
		Citizenship acquisition channel captured		
		A person without any citizenship (stateless) separately identified		
		Other (specify)		
	Criteria	Self-reported		
		As per the official document		
		Specify the official document		
Date of arrival	Question type	Year and month		
		Only year		
		Only period of arrival (specify interval)		
		Duration of stay since arrival		
		Other (Specify)		
	Criteria	First migration to the country		
		Most recent migration to the country		
		Unspecified		
		Other (Specify)		
Reason for migration	Question identifies	Employment reasons (e.g., employment, looking for work)		
		Displacement reasons (e.g., conflict, persecution, violence, ...)		
		Other reasons captured in the survey (specify)		
	Criteria	As documented or assigned in legal document		
		Main reason as self-declared		
		First reason selected from a read-aloud list		
		Multiple reasons captured		
		Other (Specify)		

C.2- Employment characteristics				
Concepts		National practice in the survey (module)	Answers	Comments
Age limits applied		Lower age limit		
		Upper age limit (if any)		
Employed	Definition			
	Criteria applied			
	Exclusions			
	Reference period			
Unemployed	Definition			
	Criteria applied			
	Exclusions			
	Reference period			
Occupation	Approach	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded question		
		Variable obtained from another source linked to census data		
		Other (specify)		
	Classification	National occupational classification		
		Region specific occupation classification		
		ISCO (version 88 or 08)		
Level of coding	Specify (e.g. 1, 2,3,4,5-digit coding)			
Branch of economic activity	Approach	Open ended question		
		Pre-coded question		
		Variable obtained from another source linked to census data		
		Other (specify)		
	Classification	National classification		
		Region specific classification		
		ISIC (rev 3, 4 ...)		
Level of coding	Specify (e.g. 1, 2,3,4,5-digit coding)			

► **Template V. Administrative record metadata, Section D : Quality evaluation and dissemination**

Administrative record metadata template Section D. Data quality and dissemination of administrative records	
B.1- Data quality	
The number of registered units is compared with the number from previous periods.	
The number of registered units is compared to	
Register data in previous period	
Numbers obtained in other registries	
Statistics from censuses and surveys	
All units have valid identification variable	
Percentage of units with no valid identification	
All units have checked to ensure that they have information on the main variables	
Main variables are in valid formats	
Codes used for the main variables are valid	
Missing or erroneous data in the main variables are less than 5%.	
The frequency distributions of the variables are reviewed	
Variations from previous periods are reasonable or can be explained by known facts or situations	
State the frequency of quality controls (Daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual, no control)	
B.2 – Dissemination of administrative records	
Types of information	Availability
Registry is used for statistical purposes	
Statistics produced by this registry is regularly shared with public	
Is this registry legally required to share microdata with other governmental agencies?	
Is there agreement between this institution and other agencies for microdata sharing? (List those institutions)	
Is the microdata shared with other government agencies anonymized?	
Through deletion of unique national and/or foreign identification numbers	
Through other anonymisation techniques	
Data is shared with identification keys without anonymization	
Data is shared through	
Electronic media or via internet	
USB	
Other (specify)	
Users are all informed about methodological changes	
User consultations are answered between reasonable timeframes	
In what unit is the data published?	
Event (e.g. border crossings, permit application, permit issuance)	
Person (e.g. long-term residence permit holders, work permit holders)	

► Template VI. Metadata source analysis

Metadata source analysis			
Relevance I. Indexing indicators			
No	Name of the indicators		
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...	...		
Relevance II. Inclusion of necessary data items			
No	Data items	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...			
Coherence			
No	Standards-aligned	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...	...	...	...
Coverage			
No	Full coverage	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...	...	...	...
Accuracy & reliability			
No	Accurate and reliable estimates	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...	...	...	...
Timeliness & accessibility			
No	Timely and accessible	Issues identified	Possible solutions
IND 1			
IND 2			
IND 3			
IND 4			
...	...	...	...

► **Template VII. Section A: Indexing of ILM data sources, source types, and producing institutions**

Indexing the data sources, source type and institution producing the data			
Index No	Data sources	Source type	Institution producing data
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
...			

► **Template VII. Section B: Cross-source coverage assessment of priority migrant groups**

[illegible]

[illegible]

► **Template VII. Section C: Cross-source coverage assessment of priority data items**

Priority groups	Priority data items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Individual identification	National identification number (citizens)								
	Foreign identification number (foreigners)								
Socio-demographic characteristics	Age								
	Sex								
	Marital status								
	Level of education attained								
	Type of living quarters in the destination country								
Resident international migrants	...								
	Country of birth								
	Country of citizenship								
	Year (date) of arrival								
	Duration of stay								
	Reason for arrival								
	Employment reasons identified								
	Forced displacement reasons identified								
	Previous experience of forced displacement								
	Legal international protection status								
	Labour force status								
	Hours actually worked								
	Hours usually worked								
	Looking for full-time work /additional working hours (for employed)								
	Main/Usual activity								
	Occupation								
	Branch of economic activity								
	Status in employment								
	Formal/informal sector employment								
	Formal/informal nature of the job								
	Social security coverage								
Return international migrant priority characteristics	...								
	Ever lived abroad								
	Date/period of departure								
	Country of destination								
	Reason for departure								
	Employment abroad								
	Occupation of a job abroad								
	Branch of economic activity (industry) of a job abroad								
Emigrant characteristics	Date/period of return								
	...								
	Date/period of departure								
	Reason for departure								
	Country of current residence								
	Employment abroad								
	Occupation of a job abroad								
Emigrant characteristics	Branch of economic activity (industry) of a job abroad								
	...								

Residents employed abroad characteristics	Labour force status								
	Current/previous employment abroad								
	Location (country) of place of work								
	Location (country) of employer/economic unit								
	Type of visa/work permit (e.g., frontier work, seasonal work, posted worker etc.)								
	Type of contract of job abroad (e.g., seasonal work)								
Non-residents employed in the country	...								
	Current/previous employment abroad								
	Location (country) of place of work								
	Location (country) of employer/economic unit								
	Type of visa/work permit (e.g., frontier work, seasonal work, posted worker etc.)								
	Type of contract of job in the country (e.g., seasonal work)								
	...								

► **Template VII. Section D: Cross-source assessment on alignment with international statistical standards**

Data items compared with international standards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Socio-demographic characteristics								
Is [data item] captured in line with relevant international statistical standards? (Y/N)								
Age								
Sex								
Level of education attained								
Migration characteristics								
Is [data item] captured in line (or consistent) with relevant international standard? (Y/N)								
Country of birth								
Country of citizenship								
Usual residence								
Country of usual residence								
Country of previous usual residence								
Ever resided abroad								
Reason for change of country of usual residence								
Previous experience of forced displacement								
Legal international protection status								
Type of visa, residence or work permit								
Restriction of the rights of residence or work								
...								
Employment characteristics								
Is [data item] captured in line (or consistent) with relevant international standard? (Y/N)								
Labour force status								
Employed								
Unemployed								
Potential labour force								
Time related underemployment								
Available potential job seekers								
Unavailable job seekers								
Wages								
Occupation								
Branch of economic activity								
Status in employment								
Formal/informal sector employment								
Formal/informal nature of the job								
Social security coverage								
Employment experience abroad								
...								

► **Template VII. Section E: Cross-source assessment of data reporting frequency and dissemination**

Availability and dissemination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Availability								
Complete microdata base								
Microdata base with selected variables								
Metadata, definitions, methodologies								
Macro data, indicators, statistics summary								
Reports with analysis of the evolution of migration								
Models, time series and projections								
Dissemination								
Printed publications								
Publications on websites								
By formal requests to the responsible institution								
Other								
Collection or update frequencies								
Data is collected only once								
Are collected and updated per month								
Are collected and updated per quarter								
Are collected and updated once a year								
Are collected and updated without periodicity								
Periodicity of reporters								
Per month								
Per quarter								
Once a year								
No periodicity								
No reports are produced with the source data								
Data is available for statistical use								

► **Annex**► **Annex. Table I. Migration in the SDG Indicator Framework (UN, 2017)**

SDGs, Targets and Indicators	
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.	
Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, especially women migrants, and those in precarious employment.	Indicator 8.8.1 Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status Indicator 8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status
Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.	
Target 10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through planned and well-managed migration policies.	Indicator 10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee [migrants] as a proportion of monthly income earned in the country of destination
Target 10.C Reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.	Indicator 10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted

► **Annex. Table II: Selected GCM Indicators on labour migration**

GCM Indicators related to labour migration	
Background statistics: Number/proportion of international migrants in the resident labour force	
Objective 2. Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin	
Core indicators Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities (SDG 8.5.2)	Additional indicators: - Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, and other characteristics (SDG 1.3.1). - Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex (SDG 8.3.1). - Level of national compliance with labour rights based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status (SDG 8.8.2). - Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (SDG 8.6.1).
Objective 5. Enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration	
Core indicators	Additional indicators

• Whether or not the Government has a national policy or strategy for regular migration pathways, including labour migration (SDG 10.7.2) • Visa or residency categories for which family reunification is possible	• Existence of a defined programme for managing labour immigration (i.e. adjusting visa awards based on labour market demand) into the country. • Level of national compliance with labour rights based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status (SDG 8.8.2). • Whether or not the Government has bilateral agreements on migration, including labour migration (SDG 10.7.2) • Whether or not the country has different types of visas to attract specific labour skills.
Objective 6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work	
Core indicators • Recruitment cost borne by employee [migrants] as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination (SDG 10.7.1) • Level of national compliance with labour rights based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status (SDG 8.8.2)	Additional indicators • Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities (SDG 8.5.2). • Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex (SDG 8.3.1). • Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age (SDG 8.7.1). • Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status (SDG 8.8.1). • Whether or not the country has different types of visas to attract specific labour skills. • Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (SDG 5.1.1). • Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location (SDG 5.4.1). • Whether or not migrants can be members and participate in trade union associations and work-related negotiation bodies. • Whether or not the country has developed measures that promote ethical recruitment for migrant workers
Objective 10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration	
Core indicators • Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation (SDG 16.2.2). • Whether or not the Government has formal strategies to address trafficking in persons (SDG 10.7.2)	Additional indicators • Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age (SDG 8.7.1) • Recruitment cost borne by employee [migrants] as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination (SDG 10.7.1)
Objective 22. Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits	
Core indicators • Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex and other characteristics (SDG 1.3.1).	

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