



# **International standards for a vital statistics system and the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda**

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## Definition

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- Vital statistics constitute the collection of statistics on vital events in a lifetime of a person as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the persons(s) concerned
  
- For statistical purposes vital events refer to life and death of the individuals as well as their family and civil status



## Uses of vital statistics

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- ❑ Knowing size and characteristics of the population – prerequisite to socio-economic planning and informed decision-making
- ❑ Monitoring programmes on health care, social security, family planning, maternal and child care, education, nutrition ...
- ❑ Estimating size and growth of population
  - ❑ Particular emphasis on small areas
- ❑ Use in implementing and evaluating the success of programmes
  - Mortality
  - Life births by weight and place of occurrence
  - Age of mother in terms of family planning programmes
  - Fertility
  - Use in producing development indicators



## Vital statistics and SDG's

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3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio

3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate

3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate

3.4.1 Mortality rates attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease

3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate

3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries

3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

**Data generated from civil registration and population registers support the measurement of over 60 SDG indicators**

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## Vital events – UN Principles and Recommendations

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- Vital events proper
  - Live births
  - Deaths, including foetal deaths
- Dual events – occurring simultaneously in the lives of two individuals which cannot occur again in the life of either individual without a previous change
  - Marriage (legal partnership, where appropriate)
  - Divorces (legal dissolution of partnership, where appropriate)
  - Annulment
  - Judicial separation
- Vertical family events involving a descendant
  - Adoption
  - Legitimation
  - Recognition



## Principles and recommendations

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### **The original version in 1953**

- ❑ vital statistics system was defined as including the legal registration, statistical recording and reporting of the occurrence, and collection, compilation, analysis, presentation and distribution of statistics pertaining to vital events, which in turn include live births, deaths, foetal deaths, marriages, divorces, adoptions, legitimating, recognitions, annulments and legal separations
- ❑ essentially civil registration was defined as a part of vital statistics system



## Principles and recommendations

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### **The first revision - 1973**

- ❑ vital statistics system, irrespective of how it is organized, is defined as the total process of (a) collecting by registration, enumeration or indirect estimation, of information on the frequency of occurrence of certain vital events, as well as characteristics of events themselves and of the person(s) concerned, and (b) compiling, analysing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form
- ❑ introducing enumeration and indirect estimation – recognizing the reality of the lack of civil registration in many countries



## Principles and recommendations

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### **The second revision - 2001**

- vital statistics system as the total process of (a) collecting information by civil registration or enumeration on the frequency of occurrence of specified and defined vital events, as well as relevant characteristics of the event themselves and of the persons or persons concerned, and (b) compiling, processing, analysing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form
- omits indirect estimation – as *ad hoc* and temporary methods





## Principles and recommendations

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### **The third revision - 2015**

- ❑ In the context of defining a system as a set of interacting or independent components forming an integrated whole and for the purposes for which these principles and recommendations are to be applied, the components of a vital statistics system are: (a) legal registration, (b) statistical reporting of, and (c) collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics pertaining to vital events
  
- ❑ Focus on civil registration, back to 1953



## Definition of the vital statistics system

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- A system – set of interacting or independent components forming an integrated wholesome
  - Legal registration
  - Statistical reporting
  - Collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics pertaining to vital events



## Expanding the scope – identity management

**TARGET 16-9**

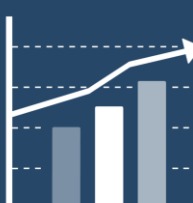
**16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**



**PROVIDE UNIVERSAL LEGAL IDENTITY**

**TARGET 17-19**

**17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**



**SYSTEMIC ISSUES**

**FURTHER DEVELOP MEASUREMENTS OF PROGRESS**

The United Nations Legal Identity Agenda: *Fulfil the promise to Leave No One Behind*





## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ Everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law, as enshrined in Article 6 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and a number of international human rights instruments
  - ❑ To address this, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established SDG Target 16.9 – legal identity for all, including birth registration
  - ❑ Civil registration establishes the existence of a person under the law & is fundamental to granting legal identity
    - ❑ It is recognized as the ultimate source for production of comprehensive, regular and reliable vital statistics
  - ❑ In an effort to increase civil registration coverage worldwide the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established SDG Indicator 17.19.2 – proportion of countries that have achieved 100% birth registration and 80% death registration
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## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ Definition of legal identity
  - ❑ Legal identity is defined as the basic characteristics of an individual's identity, e.g. name, sex, place and date of birth conferred through registration and the issuance of a certificate by an authorized civil registration authority following the occurrence of birth. In the absence of birth registration, legal identity may be conferred by a legally-recognized identification authority; this system should be linked to the civil registration system to ensure a holistic approach to legal identity from birth to death. Legal identity is retired by the issuance of a death certificate by the civil registration authority upon registration of death.
  - ❑ In the case of refugees, Member States are primarily responsible for issuing proof of legal identity. The issuance of proof of legal identity to refugees may also be administered by an internationally recognized and mandated authority



## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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### ❑ Definition of civil registration

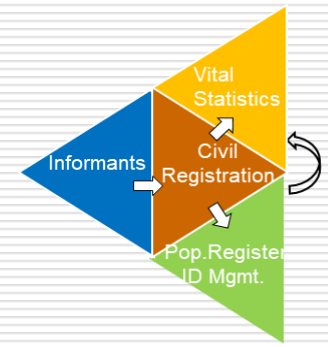
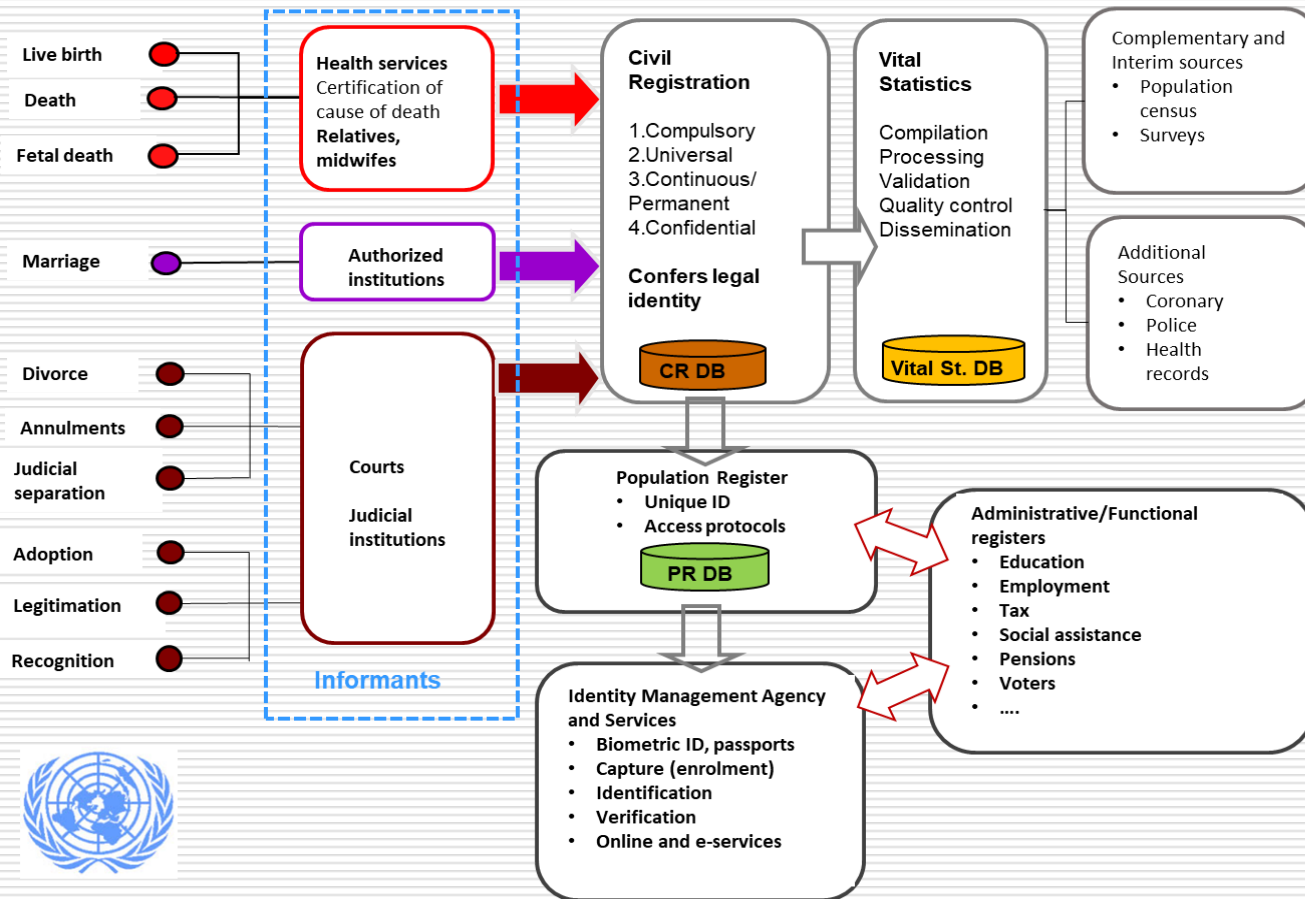
- ❑ Civil registration is defined as the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrences and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population, as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirements in each country
  - ❑ Primary purpose – establish the documents and the legal proof of occurrence of a vital event

### ❑ Definition of the proof of legal identity

- ❑ Proof of legal identity is a credential—e.g. birth certificate, identity card or digital identity credential—recognized as proof of legal identity under national law



### Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management System



**Simplified flow**

This model represents a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management recommended by the United Nations, adapted from the United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3*; it can be adjusted to national circumstances and governing structures as necessary.





## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ The UN Legal Identity Agenda consists of the holistic approach to complete civil registration and universal registration of all vital events, production of vital statistics, the establishment and maintenance of population registers and identity management apparatus from birth to death, and there should be full interoperability between these functions in a simultaneous manner, according to international standards and recommendations. All Member States should adopt and implement this agenda as a systematic and perpetual mechanism for ensuring legal identity for all.





## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ This model is being introduced and implemented in a number of countries instituting the holistic approach to this process by linking
  - ❑ **Civil registration function** which is distinct as its procedures for issuing legal tenders related to civil status of individuals require adequate and strict protocols. The establishment and maintenance of population registers, in this model, go hand in hand with the civil registration function
  - ❑ **Vital statistics function** remains with the national statistical authority, which is responsible for producing regular vital statistics based on records submitted by the population register or the civil registration agency
  - ❑ **Identity management function** is firmly incorporated by accessing the population registers and issuing biometric identity credentials at different points in a lifetime of an individual



## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ This holistic model establishes a mechanism for conferring legal identity to all in a continuous, universal and inclusive manner—from birth to death.
  - ❑ This builds upon the interoperability of the system to provide access to all the services in effective and equal fashion, and develop other registers for different purposes using the same definitions, classifications and overall methodology
- ❑ Countries are advised and strongly encouraged to adopt this longitudinal solution of simultaneous build-up of civil registration and vital statistics and identity management systems based on unique legislative foundations and overall methodology



## United Nations Legal Identity Agenda

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- ❑ Member States should adopt and implement the holistic approach to:
  - ❑ universal civil registration of all vital events;
  - ❑ production of regular, reliable, accurate and small area vital statistics;
  - ❑ the establishment and maintenance of population registers and identity management apparatus from birth to death while ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of individual records
- ❑ There should be full interoperability between these functions simultaneously, in accordance with international standards and recommendations



## United Nations Methodological Framework

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- ❑ Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, United Nations 2014
  - ❑ Definition, concepts and uses of vital statistics
  - ❑ Guiding principles of a vital statistics system
  - ❑ Topics and themes to be covered
  - ❑ Compiling and processing vital statistics
  - ❑ Presentation of results and dissemination
  
  - ❑ Civil registration
  - ❑ Use of population registers
  - ❑ Role of health institutions
  - ❑ Census and surveys
  
  - ❑ Quality assurance
  - ❑ Recommended strategies



## United Nations Methodological Framework

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- ❑ Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance, Revision 1, United Nations 2018
  - ❑ Institutional arrangements for civil registration and the interface with the vital statistics system
  - ❑ Civil registration operational functions and activities
  - ❑ Maintenance of civil registration and vital statistics components
  - ❑ Evaluation of the quality of civil registration and vital statistics systems
  - ❑ Integrating civil registration, vital statistics, population registers and identity management
  - ❑ Application and use of civil registration and vital statistics information
  - ❑ Digitizing civil registration and vital statistics
  - ❑ Medical certification of the cause of death
  - ❑ Coding the underlying cause of death



## United Nations Methodological Framework

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- ❑ Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management, United Nations 2019
    - ❑ Overview of Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems
    - ❑ Human Rights and Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems
    - ❑ Institutional Arrangements for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems
    - ❑ Legislative Framework
      - ❑ General provisions
      - ❑ Civil Registration
      - ❑ Identity Management
      - ❑ The Population Register
      - ❑ Vital Statistics
      - ❑ Data Protection, Privacy and Security
      - ❑ Compliance, Enforcement, Rights and Remedies
    - ❑ Other Laws and Policies that Support CRVSIID Systems: Incentives, Medical Profession Training and Technology
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## United Nations Methodological Framework

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- ❑ Handbook on civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems: Communication for development, United Nations 2019
  - ❑ Organizational aspects of communication for development for effective civil registration, vital statistics and identity management
  - ❑ First steps for an effective communication for development strategy: formative research, behavior analysis and identification of main actors
  - ❑ Methods and tools to be used in the communication for development programme
  - ❑ Resources for the communication for development programme
  - ❑ Implementation of the communication for development programme
  - ❑ Recommendations to strengthen national cr/vs and id management systems
  - ❑ Annexes – developing strategies ...