United Nations | Department of
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Methodology Report

United Nations Database on Household Size and Composition 2022

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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

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Notes on regions, development groups, countries or areas

The designations employed in this publication and the material presented in it do not imply the expression of any opinions whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The term "country" as used in this publication also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas.

In this publication, data for countries and areas are often aggregated in six continental regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania. These regions are further divided into 21 geographic subregions. Further information on continental regions is available from https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/. Countries and areas are also grouped into eight Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) regions as defined by the United Nations Statistics Division and used for The Sustainable Development Goals Report (https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/). The seven SDG regions are: Sub-Saharan Africa, Northern Africa and Western Asia, Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, and Europe and Northern America. Because of the magnitude of migrant stock in the SDG region Europe and Northern America and to maintain continuity with previous revisions of the international migrant stock produced by the Population Division, Europe and the subregion Northern America are also presented separately. The names and composition of geographical areas follow those of "Standard country or area codes for statistical use" available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/ as of 2 December 2020.

The designation of "more developed" and "less developed", or "developed" and "developing", is intended for statistical purposes and does not express a judgment about the stage in the development process reached by a particular country or area. More developed regions comprise all countries and areas of Europe and Northern America, plus Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Less developed regions comprise all countries and areas of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand).

The group of least developed countries (LDCs) includes 46 countries, located in sub-Saharan Africa (32), Northern Africa and Western Asia (2), Central and Southern Asia (4), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (4), Latin America and the Caribbean (1), and Oceania (3). Further information is available at http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/.

The group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) includes 32 countries or territories, located in sub-Saharan Africa (16), Northern Africa and Western Asia (2), Central and Southern Asia (8), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (2), Latin America and the Caribbean (2), and Europe and Northern America (2). Further information is available at http://unohrlls.org/about-lldcs/.

The group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) includes 58 countries or territories, located in the Caribbean (29), the Pacific (20), and the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) (9). Further information is available at http://unohrlls.org/about-sids/.

The classification of countries and areas by income level is based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as reported by the World Bank (June 2020). These income groups are not available for all countries and areas. Further information is available at https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This *Database on Household Size and Composition 2022* presents a compilation of indicators on household size and membership composition around the world, estimated using both tabulated data and household roster micro-data from censuses and household surveys. The estimates are based on 1,059 unique data sources from 196 countries or areas, representing approximately 98 per cent of the world's population in 2022, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2021.

Standard estimation procedures were used across the data sources so that estimates may be compared both across countries and over time. The 2022 database includes estimates from 209 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), which were not available in the previous versions.

The 2022 database was prepared and developed by Yumiko Kamiya and Camille Dorion. This database builds on work carried out by the United Nations in 2017 and in 2019, to which the following contributed: Sara Hertog, Yumiko Kamiya, Mun Sim Lai, Camille Dorion and Ivan Prlincevic of the Population Division, in collaboration with a team of researchers at the Center for Demographic Studies of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, led by Professor Albert Esteve

The database is accessible on the website of the Population Division: https:// un.org/development/desa/pd/data/household-size-and-composition

DEFINITIONS

The *United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*[1] classifies a household in one of two categories: a) a one-person household, in which one person makes provision for his or her own food or other essentials for living without combining with any other person; or b) a multi-person household of two or more persons living together who make common provision for food or other essentials for living. Persons in a multi-person household may pool their incomes and have a common budget to a greater or lesser extent; they may be related or unrelated persons or a combination of persons both related and unrelated. The principles and recommendations note that an alternative definition used in many countries exemplifies the so-called household-dwelling concept, wherein a household consists of all persons living together in a housing unit. By both definitions, households are distinguishable from families in that: a) a household may consist of only one person, but a family must contain at least two members; and b) the members of a multi-person household need not be related to each other, while the members of a family must be related. Thus, a household may contain more than one family or no families at all, as in one-person households and households comprised of unrelated members.

Where guidance is offered in the principles and recommendations, the indicators selected for the *United Nations Database on Household Size and Composition 2022* are defined accordingly.[2] The set of indicators used to describe household patterns for a country in a given year include:

Average household size is the average number of usual residents (household members) per household.

Distribution of households by number of members is the percentage of households of various sizes among all households, described in four size classes: 1 member, 2-3 members, 4-5 members and 6 or more members.

Distribution of households by sex of the head of household is the percentage of male or female heads of household among all households.

Distribution of households by age of the head of household is the percentage of households with a head in the given age range among all households. The broad age ranges presented are ages 0 to 19 years, ages 20 to 64 years (the "working ages," as commonly identified), ages 60 years or over and ages 65 years and over.

Percentage of households with members of selected ages is calculated for the following age groupings:

One or more members:

under age 15 years (i.e., ages 0-14 years)

under age 18 years (i.e., aged 0-17 years)

under age 20 years (i.e., ages 0-19 years)

aged 60 years or over

aged 65 years or over

Combination of members:

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[1] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesM/Series_M67rev3en.pdf
[2] Details on the measurement of indicators are provided in Kamiya, Yumiko and Sara, Hertog (2020).

one or more under age 15 years AND one or more aged 60 years or over

one or more under age 15 years AND one or more aged 65 years or over

one or more under age 18 years AND one or more aged 60 years or over

one or more under age 18 years AND one or more aged 65 years or over

one or more under age 20 years AND one or more aged 60 years or over

one or more under age 20 years AND one or more aged 65 years or over

Average number of household members of selected ages is calculated for the following:

members under age 15 years (i.e., ages 0-14) among all households

members under age 15 years (i.e., ages 0-14) among households with at least one member under age 15 years

members under age 20 years (i.e., ages 0-19) among all households

members under age 20 years (i.e., ages 0-19) among households with at least one member under age 20 years

members aged 20-64 years (the "working ages," as commonly identified) among all households

Distribution of households by type is the percentage of households in distinct household configurations, described in seven mutually exclusive categories:

one-person households comprised of only one member;

couple only households comprised of a married or in-partnership couple and no one else;

couple with children households comprised of a married or in-partnership couple and their children (biological, step, and adopted/foster children), irrespective of children's ages, and no one else;

single parent with children households comprised of a single parent and his or her children (biological, step, and adopted/foster children), irrespective of children's ages, and no one else;

extended family households that include one or more members outside of the nuclear family unit (see below) and no members who are not related to each other;

non-relative households that include two or members who are not related to each other;

unknown households that include one or more members whose relationship to the head is unknown or not reported.

Additional indicators describe the **percentage of households by inter-generational composition:**

nuclear households as the sum of the percentages of couple only households, couple with children households, and single parent with children households;

multigeneration households that include two or more generations of related members aged 20 years or over;

three generation households that include three or more generations of related members, irrespective of age;

skip generation households consisting of grandparents and their grandchildren, but none of the parents of the grandchildren.

DATA SOURCES

The five types of sources of data on household size and composition reflected in the database include:

1. **Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) (**https://dhsprogram.com/**)**

   ICF. 2004-2018 Demographic and Health Surveys (various) [Datasets]. Funded by USAID. Rockville, Maryland: ICF [Distributor].

   Household indicators are estimated from 289 DHS household rosters, representing 74 countries or areas and with reference years ranging from 1990 to 2021. Household members are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors.

2. **Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)**

   (https://mics.unicef.org/about**)**

   Indicators are estimated from 209 MICS, representing 97 countries or areas with the reference years ranging from 2000 to 2020. As with the DHS, household members identified in MICS samples are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors.

3. **IPUMS-International (**https://international.ipums.org/international/**)**

   Minnesota Population Center. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, International: Version 7.3 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. https://doi.org/10.18128/D020.V7.3

   Household indicators are estimated from 308 IPUMS-I household rosters, representing 93 countries or areas and with reference years ranging from 1960 to 2018. As with the DHS, household members identified in IPUMS-I samples are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors. Group quarters or other non-household arrangements and their residents are not considered.

   For both DHS and IPUMS-I, estimation of the prevalence of various household types relies on information about the relationship of each household member to the head of household reported on the household roster portion of censuses and surveys.[3] The set of relationship types recorded in DHS household roster is highly standardized across countries or areas and over time and provides sufficient detail to estimate the prevalence of each of the various household types described above. The sets of relationship codes associated with the census and survey samples from IPUMS-I ICF. 2004-2019. Demographic and Health Surveys (various) [Datasets]. Funded by USAID. Rockville, Maryland: ICF [Distributor]. are less standardized and for some countries or areas and samples, the set of relationship codes reported lacks sufficient detail to estimate the prevalence of some household types.

   Specifically, for those IPUMS-I samples with relationship codes that do not distinguish children of the head from children-in-law of the head, it is not possible to estimate the prevalence of couples with children households, single-parent households, nuclear households and extended family households.

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[3] See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). Patterns and trends in household size and composition: Evidence from a United Nations dataset. (ST/ESA/SER.A/433).

Furthermore, for IPUMS-I samples that do not distinguish grandchildren of the head from other relatives, it is not possible to estimate the prevalence of multi-generation, three generation and skip generation households. Lastly, for IPUMS-I samples that use the combined relationship code "other relatives or non-relatives", the prevalence of extended family households and non-relative households, respectively, cannot be estimated.

4. Demographic Yearbook (DYB) of the United Nations

(https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/dyb_household/)

Tabulations describing households by size, sex and age of the head, and basic household type have been reported to the DYB by national statistical offices. Because the data compiled in the DYB are tabulations, as opposed to household microdata as for DHS and IPUMS-I, it is not possible to obtain estimates of extended family or non-relative households or the intergenerational household types from this source. Estimates based on DYB records for 126 countries or areas are included in the database with reference years ranging from 1995 to 2021.

5. LFS: Labour Force Surveys (LFS) of the European Union, Eurostat

(http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-labour-force-survey)

The microdata from the collection of European Union Labour Force Surveys (LFS), were processed during the assembly of the first release of the United Nations Database on Household Size and Composition in 2017, which included fewer indicators than this extended 2018 release. The subset of household size indicators from the LFS that were published in the 2017database are reproduced here as well, but no additional processing has yet been completed to produce estimates for the extended set of indicators. The database includes estimates from 47 LFS, representing 24 countries and with reference years 2001 and 2011.