

BRIDGING DATA GAPS FOR THE FUTURE: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES FACED BY FORCIBLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

Sona Minasyan^{a,1,*}

^aRegency Cibatu, Sukabumi, 43152, Indonesia

¹sona.min.yau@gmail.com;

* Penulis Korespondensi

Received 02 Oct 2025; Revised 10 Oct 2025 ; Accepted 13 Oct 2025

ABSTRAK

This study examines the growing global crisis of forced displacement, focusing on the complex challenges faced by Forcibly Displaced Children, who make up a significant portion of the affected demographic group. The study provides a comparative analysis of key initiatives such as the Children on the Move International Data Alliance, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat and the OECD Call to Action, shedding light on their efforts to close critical data gaps. The study highlights the indispensable role of data and lack of data in understanding and mitigating problems, especially in the areas of education, civil registration and issuance of identity documents. By analyzing European statistics on children in migration, the study sheds light on subtle differences in the status of children in different countries. This research highlights the relevance of individualized, evidence-based approaches and collaborative efforts to create complete data collection, a more inclusive and secure future for forcibly displaced children.



KATA KUNCI

Forced Displacement,
Child Migration,
Data Gaps,
Humanitarian Challenges,
Global Initiatives

ABSTRACT



This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license

1. Introduction

Forcibly displaced people, commonly referred to as refugees, are people who have been forced to leave their homes or countries for various reasons, such as conflict, persecution, violence or natural disasters. The term “internally displaced persons” includes refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and asylum seekers. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a refugee is a person who has fled his or her country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. On the other hand, internally displaced persons are people who were forced to leave their homes but remained within the borders of their country. Asylum seekers are people who have applied for asylum in another country and are awaiting a decision on their refugee status [1].

The plight of forcibly displaced people is a global humanitarian issue, and international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations are working together to provide assistance, protection and support to these vulnerable populations. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol are key international legal instruments defining the rights and responsibilities of refugees, as well as the responsibilities of host countries.

Over the past decade, an alarming 110 million people have been forcibly displaced due to persecution, violence, or conflict, representing an increase of more than 1.6 million people (1 percent) compared to the end of 2022 (108.5 million). Consequently, more than 1 in 73 people worldwide are now forcibly displaced, with the majority—almost 9 in 10—residing in low- and middle-income countries. Seven major displacement situations, including ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Latin America and the Caribbean, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan, and Ukraine [2], accounted for approximately 90 percent of new displacements in the first six months of the year (Fig. 1.).

Number of refugees by age and country of origin, 2022

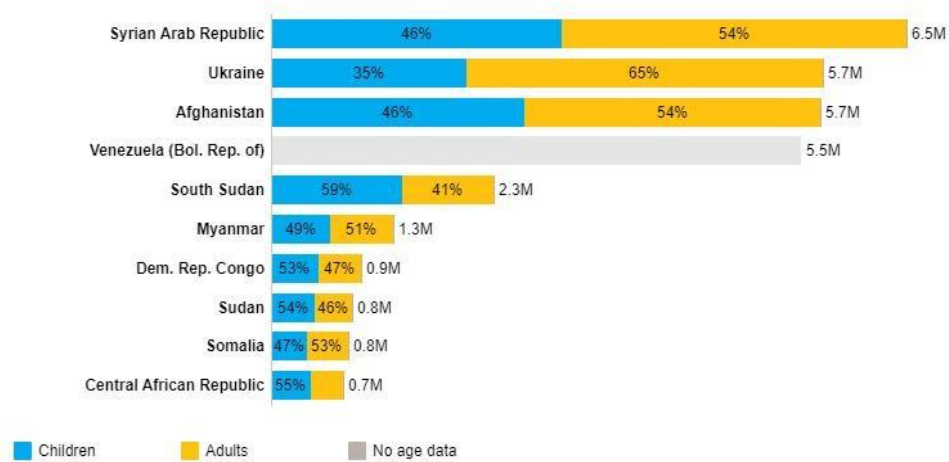


Fig. 1.Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022, UNHCR 2023

As of late 2022, traditional patterns of refugees seeking safety in neighboring countries have shifted, notably due to the Ukrainian crisis. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of refugees accepted by neighboring countries, with Ukrainians dispersed beyond the immediate geographic vicinity. Low-income countries, hosting 16% of the world's refugee population but representing only 9% of the global population and 0.5% of global GDP, bear a disproportionate burden. This includes countries such as Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda.

To complicate matters further, lower- and upper-middle-income countries, along with the unexpected income increase in high-income countries due to Ukrainian refugees, demonstrate different economic factors influencing displacement. Notably, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), comprising 46 countries, have received over 20% of the world's refugees. This figure has slightly decreased due to the redirection of Ukrainian refugees to high-income countries. There has been a significant increase in the number of protracted situations, with 23.3 million people in 57 cases by the end of 2022. This highlights ongoing challenges, from recent displacements like Venezuelans in America to protracted crises such as Somali refugees in Kenya [3].

This seismic demographic shift toward forced displacement, especially among younger populations, profoundly impacts human capital formation. Approximately 40 percent, or 43.3 million, of forcibly displaced persons are under 18 years of age [4]. Meanwhile, the number of child migrants in 2020 is 36 ml (Figure 2). The plight of displaced children, often deprived of access to education, is exacerbated by protracted crises leading to long periods or entire years of education spent outside the classroom. Despite

international commitments, such as the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), advocating limiting the time refugee children spend out of school to a maximum of three months after arrival in the country of asylum, the harsh reality remains. On average, refugee children and youth miss 3–4 years of schooling due to forced displacement [5], contributing to higher levels of learning poverty and widening learning inequalities with far-reaching consequences for economic opportunity and human resources and capital (Fig. 2).

Share of refugees among all international child migrants (2005-2020)

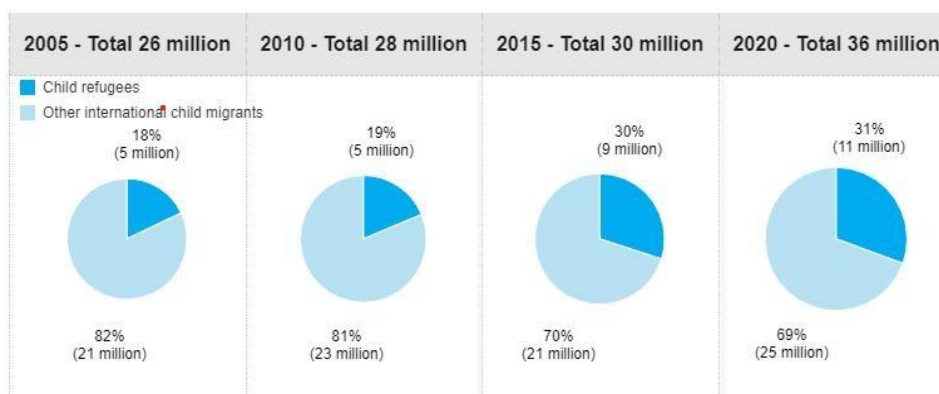


Fig. 2. Source: UNICEF analysis based on United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Population Division 2020. International Migrant Stock 2020 and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022, UNHCR, Geneva, 2021 .

The global surge in forced displacement thus presents a complex web of issues, with education as a central battleground. As millions of forcibly displaced people, especially children, face a lack of access to education, there is an urgent need for comprehensive and sustainable solutions. Refugees face significant challenges while undertaking dangerous journeys that pose risks such as physical harm, exploitation and abuse. Even after arriving in the host country, their struggle continues, marked by long periods of uncertainty and poor living conditions. Civil registration and identification are becoming critical tools to alleviate the burden faced by refugees. For example, birth registration provides concrete confirmation of a child's name, place of birth and origin, allowing the child to assert his or her citizenship and gain access to fundamental rights. Unfortunately, refugees often find themselves without such documentation due to a variety of factors, including losses during difficult journeys, increased vulnerability to theft, destruction in conflict or natural disaster zones, or confiscation during forced displacement.

The consequences of a lack of civil registration and identity documents are profound. This impedes freedom of movement as refugees without proper identification are unable to cross official checkpoints at international borders, forcing them to resort to riskier alternatives such as smuggling. Additionally, a lack of identification documents can hamper the asylum application process, leading to delays and potentially unfair denials based on less reliable methods of determining citizenship.

Family units are at risk of fragmentation as refugees find it difficult to establish relationships without the necessary documentation. Mothers who give birth during migration or in the host country may face difficulties in registering the child or confirming paternity and citizenship. This uncertainty jeopardizes the future of children born in such circumstances. Additionally, refugees without proper identification face increased vulnerability, limited access to essential services, limited employment opportunities, and increased risk of poverty, exploitation, and abuse.

Problems persist even when refugees plan to return home, as lack of identification and citizenship documents can prevent them from regaining property and rights. In response to these challenges, Member States of the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) are engaging in functional registration, a process that involves registering, updating and verifying information about displaced persons during emergencies. While this is critical to providing humanitarian assistance and protecting the rights of refugees, problems arise when functional registration efforts are not aligned with existing civil registration systems.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing these challenges, a workshop on civil registration and identity management in humanitarian settings, jointly organized by the Center of Excellence in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems (CRVS), UNICEF and UNHCR in November 2018, was aimed at developing guidelines for creating more inclusive and efficient registration systems. The results identified priorities such as increasing staffing levels, improving IT systems, increasing data sharing, contingency planning, and implementing inclusive

registration systems that connect both host and refugee populations. The workshop also identified opportunities for consultation with countries, development of guidelines and a global study on the exchange of information between functional and basic registration. These initiatives aim to improve coordination, knowledge sharing and overall efficiency of civil registration and identity management, especially in emergency situations.

2. Literature review

In recent years, the global community has witnessed a surge in initiatives aimed at addressing critical issues related to migration, refugee education and international cooperation. This essay provides a comparative analysis of three different initiatives: the International Data Alliance on Children on the Move, the UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat and OECD Call to Action. Each initiative addresses a pressing need in its field, using a variety of strategies to close data gaps, protect vulnerable populations, and promote collaboration. By examining their goals, methodologies and potential impact, we seek to gain insight into the challenges and opportunities associated with addressing humanitarian challenges.

The document, “A Call to Action: Protecting Children on the Move Starts with Better Data,” released on in 2018 [6], makes a powerful call to close the significant data gaps affecting millions of children on the move. This call to action, coordinated by UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat and the OECD, highlights the urgent need to address data gaps that hinder a comprehensive understanding of global migration patterns, especially for vulnerable groups such as children. There are the serious shortages, reliability, timeliness and accessibility of data relating to refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and internally displaced persons. Striking findings include the lack of age information for a large proportion of refugees, the low availability of age-disaggregated data for conflict-related internally displaced persons, and the significant lack of such data for migrants, especially in African countries.

Due to lack of data, migrant and displaced children are exposed to vulnerabilities such as exploitation, violence and abuse. The document highlights the indispensable role of reliable, disaggregated data in protecting children on the move. It emphasizes the need for Member States to close information gaps by ensuring reliable and shareable data. Lawrence Chandy, UNICEF Director, and Volker Türk, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, highlight the detrimental impact that information gaps have on the ability to help children, especially the most vulnerable.

Problems with data collection, such as different age categories and data recording criteria, make it difficult to accurately estimate the number of children on the move, hindering the development of targeted interventions and protective measures.

Thus, there is an urgent need for better data, especially as the development of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees continues. It urges Member States to prioritize child-related considerations, including disaggregated data by age and sex, comprehensive coverage of key issues, better use and sharing of existing data, and coordinated efforts at home and abroad. The Call to Action is a critical reminder that the success of these international agreements depends on closing evidence gaps, highlighting a commitment to ensuring the rights, protection and well-being of children on the move. This highlights the transformative power of comprehensive and reliable data in shaping policies that protect these vulnerable people.

Meanwhile, the International Children on the Move Data Alliance [7] is a transformative initiative led by UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and the OECD. This collective effort responds to a critical lack of data on millions of displaced and migrant children, highlighting the need for accurate information to address risks and implement policies to protect and empower them.

The current situation demonstrates a profound lack of data on migrant and displaced children, highlighting the important role of the International Data Alliance. The alliance, with approximately 30 members including government agencies, NGOs and civil society partners, is committed to improving data and statistics related to vulnerable migrant children. The urgency is underscored by depressing statistics: between 2014 and 2018, more

than 1,825 children, almost one per day, were reported dead or missing during migration, while countless incidents went unreported.

The Alliance's mission will be implemented over the next two years and will pursue three main goals. First, it aims to strengthen the capacity of countries and regions to collect, analyze and use data on migrant and refugee children. This strategic move aims to promote informed decision-making and targeted interventions to address the specific needs of this vulnerable population. Second, the Alliance plans to produce an annual flagship report that brings together data on migrant and refugee children. This report will be a vital tool for monitoring global progress, identifying knowledge gaps and shaping future initiatives. Finally, the Alliance seeks to develop collaboration through annual conferences and a global network. This framework aims to facilitate the sharing of best practices in data collection, analysis and dissemination, promoting a common approach to addressing the challenges faced by migrant and displaced children.

In essence, the International Children on the Move Data Alliance is becoming a beacon of hope for millions of children facing migration and displacement. By bringing together diverse stakeholders and supporting data-driven policy, the Alliance is poised to make a significant, lasting impact. As we navigate the complexities of migration in the 21st century, an unwavering commitment to providing complete and reliable data is imperative. The Alliance represents a critical step towards delivering on the global promise to leave no child behind and ensure the well-being of those on the move. Through collaborative efforts and a focus on data, the Alliance is a testament to the transformative power of information in shaping a more inclusive and protective future for the most vulnerable among us.

Besides, in the current climate of technological advances, the potential of “big data” to revolutionize international migration statistics has been greeted with considerable enthusiasm [8]. However, researchers Stefan Schil and Funda Ustek-Spilda argue that the high expectations associated with big data must be tempered by an awareness of the political challenges inherent in migration statistics. This essay delves into the intricacies of why big data can face challenges in solving the complex problems of migration statistics, highlighting the complex interplay of policy, methodology, and national differences.

Quantitative policy in migration statistics is a multifaceted task that goes beyond the capabilities of big data. Institutional interests and agendas often influence the reporting of migrant numbers to serve specific policy goals. For example, at the height of the 2015 migration crisis, the European Union's border agency Frontex published data showing that "more than 710,000 migrants entered the EU in the first 9 months of 2015." However, research by migration scholar Nando Sigona identified potential inflation, prompting Frontex to acknowledge the possibility of double counting. This episode highlights how political motivations can influence reported figures and that this phenomenon is not easily mitigated by the adoption of big data methodologies.

The politics of method is intertwined with the politics of numbers, as different methodologies used by national statistical institutes contribute to discrepancies in migration statistics. The diverging data on immigration to the UK and Poland in 2015 reported by Eurostat highlight problems of methodological heterogeneity. The UK reported 42,403 immigrants from Poland, while Poland reported sending only 11,682 emigrants to the UK. This difference is explained by the use of different data collection methods. Even established methodologies are coming under scrutiny, as evidenced by an international survey of passengers in England and Wales, which has led to concerns about underestimating immigration. The essay argues that methodological diversity represents a major obstacle to the quest for standardized and reliable migration statistics, limiting the transformative potential of big data.

Migration statistics are inherently concerned with the politics of (national) difference, reflecting the sovereignty of nation states in determining entry and residence within their borders. Despite efforts by the European Statistical System to standardize reporting, national differences remain. For example, Germany's national statistical institute DeStatis provides detailed information on asylum seekers, distinguishing between pending, rejected and accepted cases. In contrast, Norway excludes asylum seekers from its demographic statistics, demonstrating the influence of national policies on statistical categorization. The essay argues that the politics of national difference, rooted in questions of sovereignty and identity, introduces an additional layer of complexity that big data methodologies may struggle to address.

In conclusion, while big data holds promise for the field of migration statistics, it cannot work in isolation from the deep-rooted policy challenges that characterize the field. The politics of numbers, the politics of method, and the politics of national differences persist, influencing the development and use of big data methodologies. The essay emphasizes the need to consider not only the novelty of the methods, but also the

political context of their development, highlighting the complex nature of attempts to revolutionize migration statistics.

In comparing these initiatives, several common themes emerge. First, all three initiatives recognize the critical role of data in addressing the unique challenges faced by vulnerable populations—whether children on the move or refugee students. Secondly, they emphasize the need for collaboration, bringing together various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs and international organizations. Third, each initiative contributes to broader global commitments, whether related to the Sustainable Development Goals or the development of international treaties.

Taken together, the above highlights the need to close data gaps, protect vulnerable populations, and promote cooperation in the areas of migration and refugee education. Whether through international alliances, calls to action, or comprehensive reports, these efforts highlight the interconnectedness of global challenges and the need for collaborative, data-driven solutions. As the world faces complex humanitarian challenges, these initiatives serve as beacons of hope, demonstrating the transformative power of comprehensive information and international cooperation.

3. Methodology

The research methodology begins with an extensive literature review to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation surrounding forced displacement, child migration, and the serious problem of data gaps. This thorough review includes scientific articles, reports, and relevant documents from authoritative sources. Key findings from this literature review form the basis for subsequent phases of the study, providing a detailed understanding of the challenges and gaps faced by forcibly displaced children.

3.1 Selection of Initiatives

Identifying and selecting three significant initiatives for comparative analysis. These initiatives include the International Data Alliance on Children on the Move, the UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat, and OECD Call to Action, and the International Children on the Move Data Alliance. The rationale behind choosing these initiatives and their relevance to the research objectives are explained. The selection of initiatives is based on specific criteria. The International Data Alliance on Children on the Move is chosen for its emphasis on leveraging data, incorporating a collaborative approach involving diverse stakeholders. The UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat, and OECD Call to Action is included for its comprehensive strategy in closing data gaps and protecting vulnerable populations, with the involvement of major international organizations adding significance. The International Children on the Move Data Alliance, led by UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, and the OECD, is selected for its transformative role in addressing the acute lack of data on displaced and migrant children, aligning with the research focus.

3.2 Integration of Data Mining

Data mining is incorporated into the methodology to extract insights from European statistics on children in migration. The focus is on international migration flows, number of nationals and non-nationals in the population, with specific attention to stocks. This data mining process allows for a detailed examination of the status of children across European countries, emphasizing variations in statelessness and unknown categories. It sheds light on the diversity in the status of children in different countries, providing valuable insights for policy making and targeted interventions.

The chosen initiatives collectively underscore the pivotal role of data in addressing challenges faced by forcibly displaced children. Each initiative contributes a unique perspective and approach to data collection, analysis, and utilization, aligning with the research objectives.

3.3 Data Mining

Data mining is extracted from European statistics (Eurostat, 2023) on children in migration based on international migration (flows), number of nationals and non-nationals in the population (stocks). The focus is

on flows and numbers of foreign and stateless children by EU and non-EU nationals, according to Eurostat data.

Table 1. The focus is on flows and numbers of foreign and stateless children

	Total number of children aged less than 15	% of EUcitizens	% of non-EU citizens	% of stateless	% of unknown
EU	5 725 288	31.3	67.2	0.2	1.3
Belgium	242 126	57.2	34.7	0.0	8.0
Bulgaria	9 132	5.4	92.5	1.8	0.3
Czechia	63 765	27.3	72.6	0.1	0.0
Denmark	84 858	35.6	62.4	2.0	0.0
Germany	1 580 326	34.8	64.9	0.3	0.0
Estonia	10 333	15.9	83.7	0.0	0.5
Ireland	67 805	63.7	36.0	0.2	0.0
Greece	97 961	9.4	90.6	0.0	0.0
Spain	802 802	26.0	74.0	0.0	0.0
France	982 836	22.9	77.1	0.0	0.0
Croatia	2 365	26.3	70.0	2.5	1.2
Italy	900 902	25.3	74.7	0.0	0.0
Cyprus	18 667	60.4	39.6	0.0	0.0
Latvia	5 006	9.2	90.7	0.1	0.0
Lithuania	1 936	6.0	93.8	0.3	0.0
Luxembourg	48 792	79.4	20.4	0.1	0.2
Hungary	13917	38.1	60.7	0.0	1.1
Malta	12 430	36.6	63.4	0.0	0.0
Netherlands	163 274	47.0	49.1	0.9	2.9
Austria	259 252	48.9	45.9	0.4	4.8
Poland	50 786	4.1	92.8	0.2	3.0
Portugal	65 690	17.8	82.2	0.0	0.0
Romania	30 494	10.0	8.2	0.0	81.8

Slovenia	23 363	5.9	94.1	0.0	0.0
Slovakia	3 185	52.4	47.6	0.0	0.0
Finland	45 579	32.6	65.0	0.3	2.1
Sweden	137 706	27.4	64.0	1.8	6.8
Iceland	6 328	76.4	23.5	0.0	0.1
Liechtenstein	1 428	54.6	45.4	0.0	0.0
Norway	99 208	55.7	44.0	0.3	0.0
Switzerland	354 369	57.9	41.9	0.0	0.2

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_pop1ctz)

- Total number of children aged less than 15 in the EU is 5,725,288.
- EU citizens constitute 31.3%, non-EU citizens make up 67.2%, while stateless and unknown categories are relatively low at 0.2% and 1.3%, respectively.

The countries with the highest combined percentages of stateless and unknown categories, allowing for a clear comparison of their rates.

Table 2. The countries with the highest combined percentages

Country	Stateless(%)	Unknown(%)	Combined(%)
Belgium	8	0	8
Croatia	2.5	1.2	3.7
Sweden	1.8	6.8	8.6
Denmark	2	0	2
Luxemburg	0.1	0.2	0.3

These findings highlight the variability in the status of children in different European countries, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing issues related to statelessness and unknown status in the context of child demographics.

By focusing on countries with the highest combined percentages of stateless and unknown categories for children aged less than 15:

- *Belgium (8.0%)*: Belgium has the highest combined percentage of stateless and unknown categories among children aged less than 15. With an 8.0% rate, this indicates a noteworthy presence of children with unknown or stateless status.
- *Croatia (3.7%)*: Croatia follows with a combined percentage of 3.7%, comprising 2.5% stateless and 1.2% unknown. This suggests a significant proportion of children with unclear citizenship or identity.
- *Sweden (8.6%)*: Sweden has a combined percentage of 8.6%, with 1.8% being stateless and 6.8% unknown. This points to a notable proportion of children with unknown or unspecified status.
- *Denmark (2.0%)*: Denmark has a 2.0% combined rate, indicating a moderate presence of children with stateless status and a negligible percentage of unknown status.
- *Luxembourg (0.3%)*: Luxembourg has the lowest combined percentage among the clustered countries, with only 0.3% being stateless or unknown. This suggests a relatively lower presence of children in these categories.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Result

Thus, the data underscores the diversity in the status of children in migration across European countries, as well as gaps on data collection.

The varying rates of stateless and unknown categories highlight the importance of understanding and addressing issues related to citizenship and identity among children. These insights can inform policymakers and organizations working on migration issues to tailor interventions based on the specific challenges observed in each country.

It provides a snapshot of the migration-related dynamics concerning children in different European countries, shedding light on the prevalence of statelessness and unknown status within this demographic.

The European Statistics on Children in Migration statistic presents a detailed breakdown by the main group of citizenship of children aged less than 15 who do not have citizenship of their country of residence as of 1 January 2022. We can see a comprehensive overview of the distribution of children based on their estimate citizenship status.

The data shows the proportion of national residents and non-citizen residents under 15 years of age, and also classifies non-citizen residents by major citizenship groups, including EU citizens, non-EU citizens, stateless persons and persons of unknown citizenship. Which focuses on the consequences of these demographic patterns, such as the proportion of children among migrants depending on the relevant citizenship group. It is also possible to delve further into the differences observed across EU Member States and the implications of these differences for understanding the composition of non-EU children.

4.2 Discussion

Comprehensive solutions for data processing. Our study highlights the urgent need for robust data collection mechanisms. We offer expertise in developing comprehensive data solutions that address both quantitative and qualitative aspects, providing accurate, disaggregated and context-sensitive information on forcibly displaced children. *Capacity Building Programs:* Addressing the educational challenges faced by forcibly displaced children, we offer customized capacity building programs. Focused on skills development and psychosocial support, these programs use accurate and context-sensitive data to empower displaced children to build a better future. *Collaborative data infrastructure initiatives.* Advocate collaboration between international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations to prioritize initiatives to strengthen data infrastructure. Our offerings include advice and support to establish collaborative mechanisms to integrate data, providing a more inclusive approach to addressing the unique needs of forcibly displaced children. *Research validation workshops.* That bring together experts, policy makers and organizations working on migration issues. These workshops aim to validate research findings, discuss potential interventions, and promote collaborative efforts to address the widespread lack of data on forcibly displaced children. *Individual training in data collection.* Recognizing the importance of accurate data, our offerings include tailored training programs for policymakers, organizations and data collection teams. These programs equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to implement effective data collection practices, helping to close data gaps.

In addition, there is a need to understand the distribution of children according to their citizenship status in order to develop policy, allocate resources and provide support and services to non-EU children. It may also highlight the need for individualized approaches to address the specific needs and challenges faced by children of different backgrounds. By the corresponding share of children under 15 years of age in the total population for each major citizenship group for 2022. At the EU level, 15.0% of the country's residents were under 15 years of age, while 15.2% of non-citizen residents were under 15 years of age. While these shares are comparable, this is not the case when considering the proportion of children in the non-citizen population by major citizenship group: 13.1% for non-EU citizens, 16.2% for non-EU citizens, 23.7% for stateless and 24.3% for persons with unknown citizenship. This indicates that the proportion of children among migrants depends on the relevant citizenship group. This pattern observed at the EU level is observed only in Germany, Luxembourg and Austria and is different in all other EU member states. The proportion of non-EU children with EU citizenship is, for example, higher than the proportion of non-EU children in six member states (Ireland, Cyprus, the Baltics and Romania).

Thus, a detailed analysis of the distribution of children aged less than 15 years based on their estimate citizenship status, offering valuable insights into the composition of the non-national child population in the EU and its implications for policy and decision-making.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the critical importance of addressing the widespread lack of data on forcibly displaced children, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions. The rise in forced displacement, which affects more than 110 million people worldwide, requires a detailed understanding of the challenges facing these vulnerable children, especially since almost 40% of them are under 18 years of age. Lack of comprehensive data compounds challenges in developing effective strategies to support forcibly displaced children, limiting our ability to provide timely and tailored interventions. Challenges in education, especially the loss of an average of 3–4 years of schooling for refugee children, highlight the urgent need for data-driven initiatives. Lack of civil registration and identity documents further exacerbates the situation, affecting freedom of movement, family cohesion, access to basic services and employment prospects. Initiatives such as the Global Compact on Refugees highlight the importance of closing data gaps to ensure that every displaced child has documented proof of identity, citizenship and origin. A comparative analysis of key initiatives, including the Children on the Move International Data Alliance, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat and the OECD Call to Action, as well as the Children on the Move International Data Alliance, shows a general recognition of the importance of data in solutions problems faced by forcibly displaced children. However, the persistent lack of complete and disaggregated data poses a major barrier to developing targeted, evidence-based solutions. The results of the data analysis, in particular the analysis of European statistics on children in migration, shed light on the different status of forcibly displaced children in different countries. The varying numbers of stateless and unknown categories highlight the need for robust data collection mechanisms. Policymakers and organizations working on migration issues must prioritize the creation of reliable data sources, recognizing that the lack of accurate information prevents us from understanding and addressing the unique challenges facing each country. Going forward, addressing the data gap will require concerted efforts to improve data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Focusing on skill development and psychosocial support for forcibly displaced children must be based on accurate and context-sensitive data. Collaboration between international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations should prioritize initiatives that strengthen data infrastructure to ensure the unique needs of forcibly displaced children are adequately captured and addressed. This study also highlights the need to prioritize data integration in efforts to support forcibly displaced children. Complete and accurate information is the cornerstone of effective policy and intervention strategies, and closing data gaps is essential to creating a more inclusive and protected future for these vulnerable children.

References

- [1] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "Convention relating to the Status of Refugees". 1951. [Online] Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-are/1951-refugee-convention>.

- [2] McConnell, A., UNHCR. "Data and Statistics, Mid-Year Trends". 2023. Statistics and Demographics Section UNHCR Global Data Service.
- [3] UNHCR. "Global Trends 2022 Report". 2023. Statistics and Demographics Section UNHCR Global Data Service, [Online] Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>.
- [4] UNHCR. "Refugee Data Finder". 2023. [Online] Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>.
- [5] Zavallis, A., UNHCR. "Missing Out: Refugee Education in Crisis". 2016. [Online] Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/fr/en/media/missing-out-refugee-education-crisis>.
- [6] International Data Alliance for Children on the Move (IDAC). "Improving Data Upholding Rights: A Partnership to Protect Migrant and Displaced Children". 2022. Annual report of the International Data Alliance for Children on the Move. [Online] Available at: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/annual-report-idac-2022/>.
- [7] UNICEF. "A Call to Action: Protecting Children on the Move Starts with Better Data". 2018. [Online] Available at: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/call-action-protecting-children-move-starts-better-data/>.
- [8] Scheel, S. and Ustek-Spilda, F. "Big Data, Big Promises: Revisiting Migration Statistics in Context of the Datafication of Everything". 2018. [Online] Available at: <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2018/05/big-data-big>.
- [9] UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM. "Access to Education for Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe". 2019. [Online] Available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/press_release/file/access-to-education-for-refugee-children.pdf.
- [10] Korhonen, L. and Mattelin, E.. "Inclusion of Children With Refugee Backgrounds in Research". 2023. Roth, M., Alfandari, R. and Crous, G. (Ed.) Participatory Research on Child Maltreatment with Children and Adult Survivors (Emerald Studies in Child Centred Practice), Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 113-127.