

UNECE Online Meetings on Migration Statistics, 26–28 October 2021

ABSTRACT

Title	The Impacts of COVID-19 on Forced Displacement
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Session	Covid impact on immigrants and related population groups (27-28 October)
<p>The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have aggravated previous humanitarian, social, and economic challenges, and disproportionately affected the most vulnerable groups in society, including the 82.4 million forcibly displaced persons who have fled war and persecution. Cross-border and movement restrictions have directly impacted the functioning of asylum systems all over the world. The closure of borders and restrictions on movement have made it considerably harder for people fleeing war and persecution to reach safety. At the peak of the pandemic during 2020, some 164 countries had closed their borders, with 99 States making no exception for people seeking asylum. This scenario has led many countries to adapt their asylum procedures, shifting to remote registration and adopt medical screenings at borders and quarantine measures. Despite efforts to adapt asylum procedures, the number of new asylum applications registered worldwide during 2020 was 45 per cent lower than in 2019. In addition to these protection challenges, forcibly displaced persons have faced increased economic insecurity as they are more likely to live in low- and middle-income countries, and to be employed in the informal sector or in lower-quality jobs that have been more adversely affected by the pandemic. More than ever, timely and accurate data has been key in order to understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable populations. UNHCR's presentation will shed light into the main consequences of the pandemic on the forcibly displaced as well as present UNHCR's and other partners' efforts to fill data gaps and collect data remotely to better understand the impacts of the health, protection, and socio-economic crises caused by COVID-19 on this population group.</p>	