

The Third CIS International Statistical Forum

Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan
24-26 September 2025

Lessons from the 2020 round and the 2030 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses

Presented by
Seiffe Tadesse
UNSD



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Outline

- Resolution on the 2030 World Programme on PHCs
- Findings from UNSD surveys
- Key lessons from 2020 round
- Anticipated trends for the 2030 round
- UNSD activities in support of the 2030 round



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

2030 World Population and Housing Census Programme

- The **Resolution** establishing the **2030 World Programme** on PHCs was approved by the Statistical Commission at its 56th session in March 2025, and adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 10 June 2025
- The 2030 Word Programme:
 - ❖ Urges Member States:
 - conduct at least one PHC or otherwise produce population and socioeconomic statistics at the small area level in the period 2025—2034
 - consider the 4th revision of the **Principles and Recommendations** as the international standard for conducting PHCs and for concepts, definitions and classifications on population and related statistics
 - give attention to advance planning, cost efficiency, coverage and the timely dissemination of, and easy access to census results for all
 - set quality standards for the conduct and evaluation of PHCs in order to uphold the integrity, reliability, accuracy and value of the population and housing census results
 - georeference censuses to enable aggregation to the lowest geographical level, dissemination of geocoded census data, and to enable the integration of geospatial information w/ census data and other data sources, while ensuring data confidentiality
 - enhance the exploration and use of administrative data sources to support census operations and to consider the establishment of national **Statistical Population Registers (SPRs)**, in accordance with the provisions of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and national laws on data confidentiality



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

2030 World Population and Housing Census Programme

- The 2030 Word Programme:

- ❖ Mandates UNSD:

- prepare or update international statistical standards, methods and guidelines to facilitate the planning and implementation of 2030 round PHCs
- provide technical assistance to NSOs to strengthen national capacity through regional and subregional activities that facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons learned
- create platforms for exchanging knowledge, national experiences, practices, and lessons learned, including in the utilization of administrative data sources
- enhance coordination and cooperation among partners and relevant stakeholders to assist Member States to plan and carry out PHCs
- monitor and regularly report to the Statistical Commission on implementation of the Programme



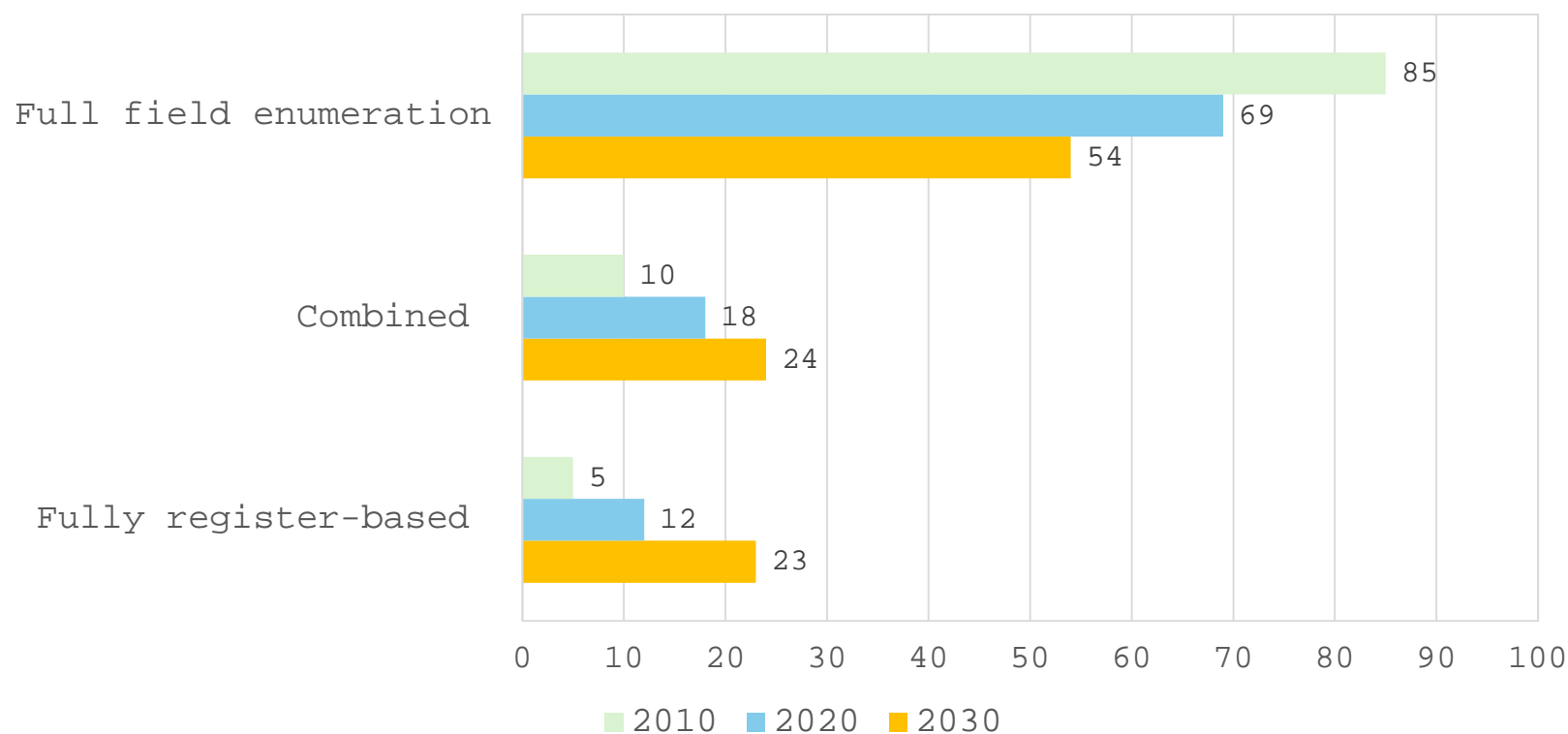
**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Findings from UNSD surveys

Proportion of countries by census methodology
(2010, 2020, 2030 rounds)



- A growing number of countries plan to change census methodology from the traditional to other approaches involving the use of administrative data sources, mainly because of:
 - high costs
 - increasing non-response
 - demand for more timely information
- Significant progress observed in use of administrative data sources, due to:
 - Improving coverage and quality of registers
 - Enhanced legal provisions for use of admin data

Sources: UNSD surveys conducted in 2013 (126 responses) and 2024 (155 responses)



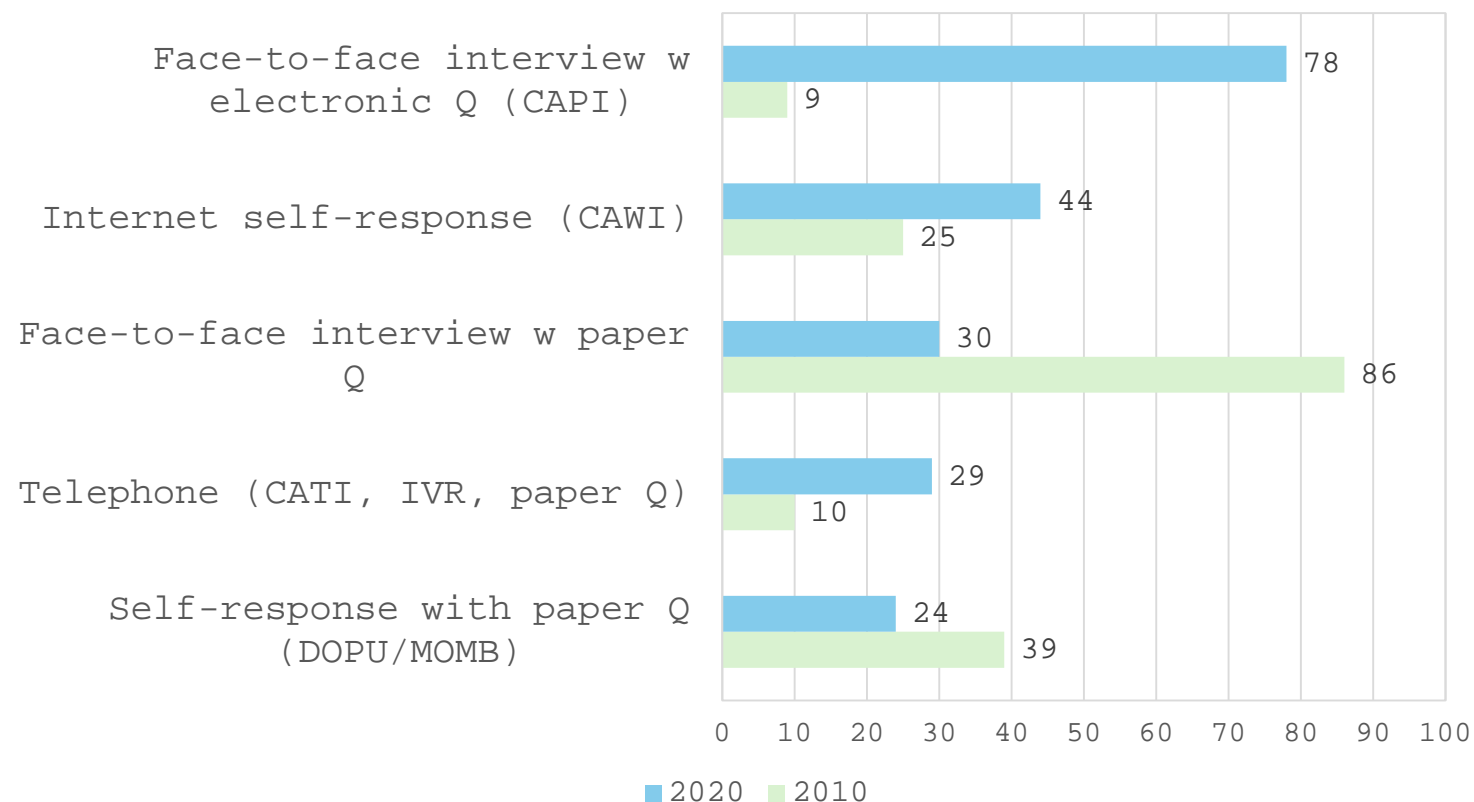
United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Findings from UNSD surveys

Proportion of countries by enumeration method
(2010, 2020 rounds)



In 2020 round:

- Nearly 80% of countries used tablets or smart phones (CAPI) for data collection
- Almost half of countries adopted Internet based self response (CAWI)

PAPI - Paper questionnaire with face-to-face interview

CAPI - Computer-assisted personal interview

CAWI - Computer- assisted self-interview

PASI - Paper questionnaire with self-interview

CATI - Computer- assisted telephone interview

Source: UNSD surveys conducted in 2013 (126 responses) and 2024 (155 responses)



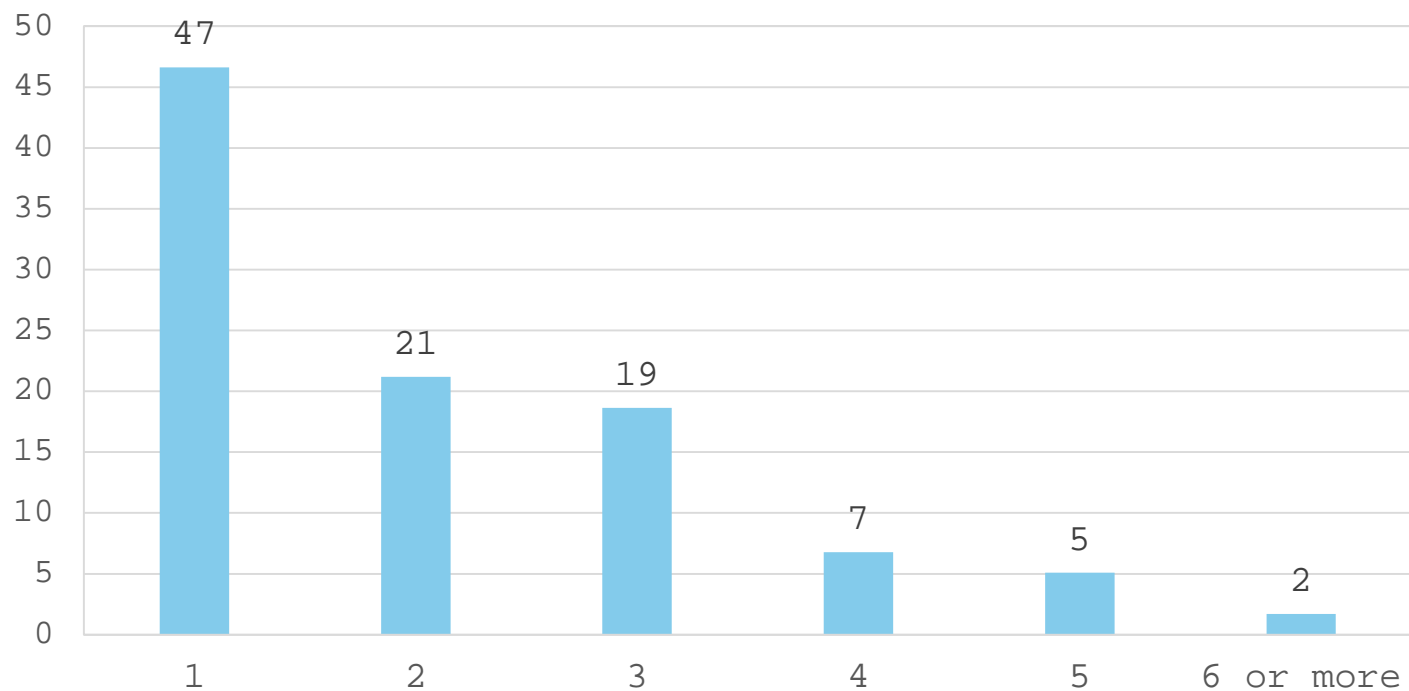
United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Findings from UNSD surveys

Number of modes of enumeration used
(proportion of countries, 2020
round)



In 2020 round:

- In most countries, multi-mode data collection was used, whereby electronic questionnaires (CAPI or CAWI) were used in combination with paper questionnaires (PAPI or PASI) and/or CATI

Source: UNSD survey conducted in 2024 (155 responses)



**United
Nations**

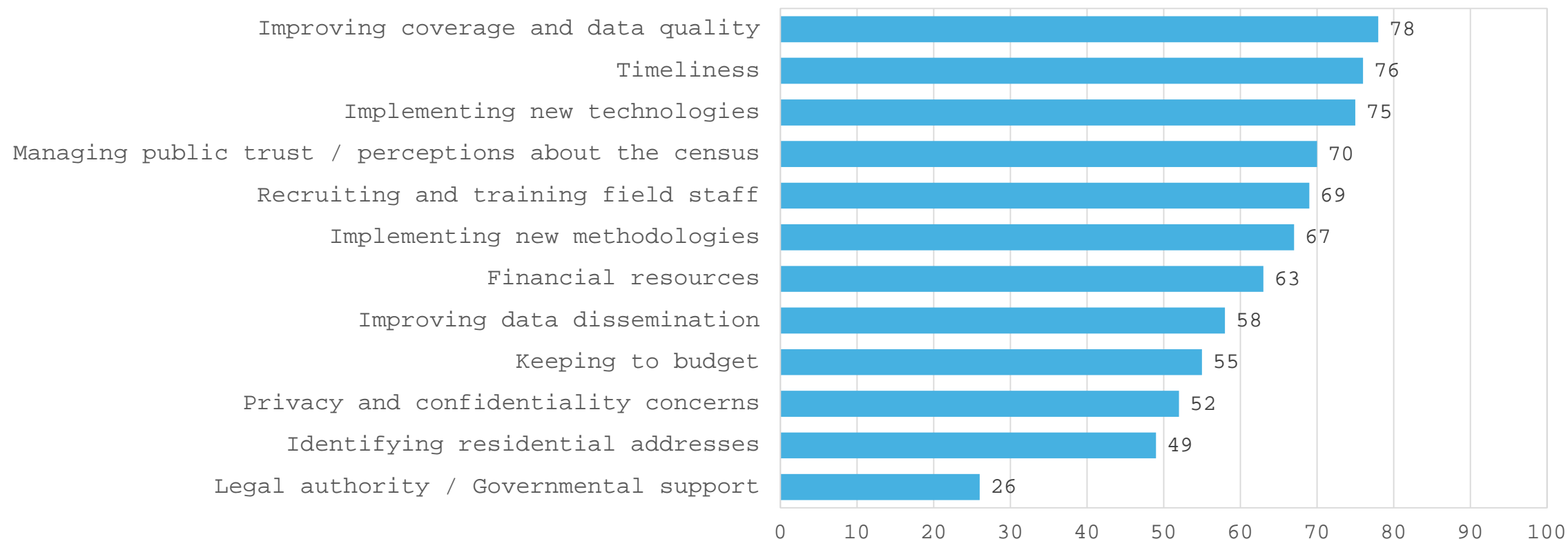
Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Findings from UNSD surveys

"Significant" or "Moderate" Challenge

(proportion of countries, 2020 round)



Source: UNSD survey conducted in 2024 (155 responses)



**United
Nations**

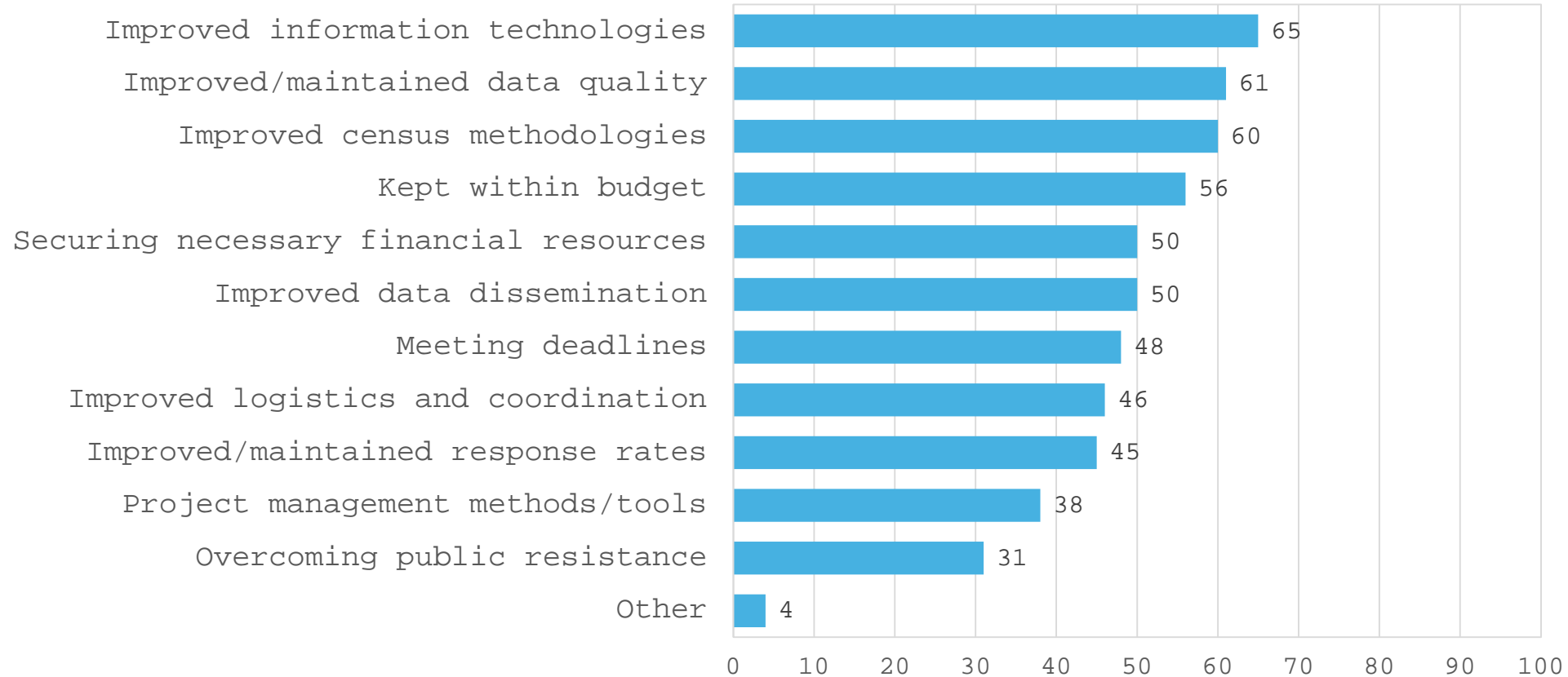
Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Findings from UNSD surveys

Success

(proportion of countries, 2020 round)



Source: UNSD survey conducted in 2024 (155 responses)



United Nations

United Nations

Department of Statistics Division

Department of Statistics Division

Department of Statistics Division

Department of Statistics Division



Key lessons from 2020 round

❖ Census methodology

- no one-size-fits-all solution; balance cost-effectiveness, time, efficiency, respondent burden, data quality

❖ Project management

- robust contingency planning, flexibility to adjust timeline and operational plans

❖ Technology

- robust IT infrastructure, security measures to protect sensitive data, testing, early attention to development of IT

❖ Geospatial information

- leveraging geospatial information improves efficiency of census operations, data quality

❖ Communication and public engagement

- robust communication strategies for public trust and encourage participation

❖ Capacity building

- investing in training of staff essential for successful census

❖ Innovation

- continuous culture of innovation



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

Anticipated trends for the 2030 round PHCs

❖ The 2030 round is expected to witness further methodological/technological transformations:

- Increased adoption of digital, multi-mode methods (CAWI, CAPI, CATI)
- Increased leveraging of administrative data sources
 - as a data source
 - to support field-based operations
- Increased role of geospatial information/tools
 - planning and conducting field operations
 - analysis and dissemination of geocoded census results
- Use of AI in census processes
- Lessons from COVID-19 (emergency preparedness and contingency planning)
- Further advancement of population data systems (with PHC as pillar)



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

UNSD activities in support of 2030 round PHCs

1. International Methodological Census Guidelines

- Prepare/update (and translate) international statistical standards, methods, and guidelines

2. Capacity-Building and Technical Support

- Conduct regional training workshops and virtual webinars to train participants on the latest international standards and census methodologies\
- Provide direct technical assistance to countries upon request
- Facilitate South-South cooperation, including study visits to enable countries to learn from each other's experiences and best practices
- Develop platforms for exchanging knowledge, national experiences, practices, and lessons learned will be developed.

3. Coordination

- Strengthen coordination and cooperation with partners and stakeholders to assist Member States in implementing the Programme

4. Monitoring

- Monitor the implementation of the Programme and regularly report on its progress to the Statistical Commission



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section

UNSD methodological framework for PHCs

Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 4
(2025)
NEW

Handbook on Management of Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2
(2016)
Under review

Technical
Report on
Post
Enumeration
Surveys
(2010)

Handbook
on GIS in
support of
Census
Activities
(2009)

Under
review

Handbook
on
Measuring
Economic
Activity
(2010)

Revised
under E-
learning
course

Handbook
on
Measuring
International
Migration
through
censuses
(2017)

Guidelines
on the use of
registers and
administrativ
e data for
population
and housing
censuses
(ECE 2018)

Guidelines
on the Use
of Electronic
Data
Collection
Technologie
s in
Population
and Housing
Censuses
(2019)

Handbook
on Editing
for
Population
and Housing
Censuses,
Revision 2
(2019)

Technical
Report on
Measuring
SDG
Indicators
through
Population
and Housing
Censuses
and Civil
Registration
Data
(2021)
NEW

Handbook
on
Registers-
based
Population
and Housing
Censuses

(2022)

NEW



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Statistics Division
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch
Demographic Statistics Section