

Report on the IUSSP Panel on Population Registers, Ethics and Human Rights

The [Panel on Population Registers, Ethics and Human Rights](#) was established in 2023 to address the ethical and human rights challenges emerging from the modernization and digitization of population register systems. This initiative builds upon the work of the previous [IUSSP Panel on Population Perspectives and Demographic Methods to Strengthen Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems](#) (2019–2022).

Fellowship:

A key component of the new Panel's activities is the Population, Ethics, and Human Rights Fellowship. The fellowship began with a one-year residential program for 3 early-career researchers and practitioners to conduct interdisciplinary research at the cross-section of population registers, ethics, and human rights. The 3 fellows—Georges Macaire Eyenga, Elizabeth Nansubuga, and Janaina Costa—, recruited via an extremely competitive call for applications, began their fellowship at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in February 2023 and, after 6 months, moved to Uganda to spend the following 6 months of their residential fellowship with the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER). After the residential fellowship ended, the fellows continued to receive mentoring from the Team of researchers involved in this project. They met up again (in person for 2 of the 3 fellows) at the International Population Conference in Brisbane with the team of senior researchers for 2 sessions and research workshop.

Activities and publications:

As part of the previous Panel:

- **Session on Emerging Ethics and Human Rights Issues in the Digitization of Population Register Systems at the (online) International Population Conference (IPC2021)** on 10 December 2021. ([Watch the recorded session.](#))

As part of the current Panel:

- **Webinar on Population Registers, Ethics and Human Rights** on 10 October 2023 ([Watch a video recording of the webinar](#)).
- **Working Paper: [Rights and Ethics in Biometric Population Registration : Mapping the limits of digital recognition and the drivers of exclusion](#)** (9 October 2023)

International Population Conference

The Panel organized two sessions at the IPC2025 in Brisbane:

- [Research Leader Session on The Future of Population Register Systems](#), Monday, July 14, 15:30 - 17:00
- [Population Registers, Human Rights and Ethics](#), Tuesday, July 15, 15:30 - 17:00

Collaborations and Support

The initiative is a collaborative effort between the IUSSP, the **Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER)** in South Africa, the **Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)** in Uganda, and the **USC Institute on Inequalities in Global Health (IIGH)** in the United States. It is supported through two successive grants from the **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)**, Canada.