



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
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SNAPSHOT

OF CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS OF

KYRGYZSTAN



Program information

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Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems is a global knowledge and resource hub that actively supports national efforts to develop, strengthen, and scale-up CRVS systems. It collaborates with organizations and experts to broker access to information and expertise, including global standards, tools, research evidence, and relevant good practice.

The Centre of Excellence was established with funding from Global Affairs Canada and IDRC and contributes directly to the work of the Global Financing Facility, a key financing platform of the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief introduction to the civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system in Kyrgyzstan.

The information was based on a case study of Kyrgyzstan's CRVS and identity management systems, published in the *Compendium of Good Practices in Linking Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and Identity Management Systems*. It is further supplemented by a desk review of available documents. Among other things, the report presents:

- Background information on the country;
- Selected indicators relevant to CRVS improvement;
- Stakeholders' activities; and
- Resources available and needed to strengthen CRVS systems.

Brief country profile

Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous, landlocked country in Central Asia. It is bordered by Kazakhstan to the north, China in the east and south, Tajikistan to the south and west, and Uzbekistan in the west. Bishkek, the capital and largest city, is located in the north, close to the Kazakh border. Other major population centres, Osh and Jalalabad, are located in the south, where the majority of the population lives, and where the relatively more plentiful valleys and plains provide more arable land for agriculture.

Kyrgyzstan



Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Kyrgyzstan is divided into seven oblasts (regions) and two cities of national level, 40 administrative districts, 31 towns, nine urban settlements, three villages, and 453 village communities.

- Land area: 199,900 km²
- Population: 6,524,000¹ with an estimated annual growth rate of 1.81 percent.² In 2018, 36 percent of the total population resided in cities, with the remaining 64 percent in rural areas.³
- Capital city: Bishkek
- Official working languages: Kyrgyz and Russian
- Ministry responsible for civil registration: The civil registration agency reports directly to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Civil registration agency: State Registration Service (SRS)
- National statistical office: National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

CRVS dimensions

Births	
Completeness of birth registration	99% (2014) ⁴
Children under 5 years of age whose births were reported as registered	98.9% (2018) ⁵
Births attended by skilled health personnel	98% (2014) ⁶
Women aged 15–49 who received antenatal care from a skilled provider	94.6% (2014) ⁷
DPT1 immunization coverage among 1-year-olds	98% (2018) ⁸
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	25 (2017) ⁹
Total fertility rate (live births per woman)	3.3 (2018) ¹⁰
Adolescent fertility rate (per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 years)	5 (2018) ¹¹
Population under age 15	32.6% (2019) ¹²
Deaths	
Completeness of death registration	96% (2012) ¹³
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	5 (2017) ¹⁴
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	16.9 (2018) ¹⁵
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	18.9 (2018) ¹⁶
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	28.6 (2018) ¹⁷
Marriages and divorces	
Marriage registration rate	7.8% (2018) ¹⁸
Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 15	0.9% (2014) ¹⁹
Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 18	11.6 % (2014) ²⁰
Divorce registration rate	1.7% (2018) ²¹
Vital statistics including causes of death data	
Compilation and dissemination of civil registration-based statistics	Available
Medically certified causes of death	Available

Civil registration system

Legislative framework

Registration of vital events in Kyrgyzstan is regulated by the *Law on Acts of Civil Status (2005)*,²² the Rules on Procedures for Civil Status Acts Registration, Codecs on Children, and the Family Code of the Kyrgyz Republic (2003).²³

Identity management and issuing identification credentials are regulated by

- Status of National Passports of the Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic (2004);²⁴
- Decree on National Passports of the Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic (2017);²⁵
- Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on the approval of the instructions on the procedure for receiving documents, registration, fabrication (personification), accounting, issuance and destruction of the identification card passport of a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic of 2017 format (ID card), and a common citizen's passport 2006 Kyrgyz citizen;²⁶ and
- *Law on internal migration*.²⁷

Privacy and data protection are regulated by the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Personal Information.²⁸

Management, organization, and operations

Until 2009, civil registration and identification mirrored the institutional arrangements inherited from the Soviet times. Civil registration was under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, while address registration and issuing internal passports and national ID cards remained the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior. In November 2009, the

Kyrgyz government issued a decree that marked the turning point for institutional arrangements for civil registration and identification. Resolution No. 708 established the State Registration Service (SRS) as a new agency assuming the authority over registration of civil status acts and place of residence, issuing national ID cards and travel documents, registering real estate rights, and maintaining the land cadastre, vehicle registration, driver licensing, and state archive of population records.

In line with the internal organization of the newly established SRS, the Department of Population and Civil Status took over the responsibility of the registration of civil status acts from the Ministry of Justice. The Department also assumed authority over registering place of residence and issuing internal passports (national identity cards) and travel passports from the Ministry of Interior. Since then, the Department has been strategically working towards tightening integration and digitizing different registration processes.

National CRVS systems coordination mechanisms

An interagency working group comprised of representatives from the State Registration Service, Ministry of Health, and National Statistical Committee has coordinated work on automating the registration of vital events and civil status data, with participation from other institutional actors as required.

Administrative-level registration centres

Vital events are registered in the SRS network that consists of 60 civil registration offices across the country, including 519 local government authorities authorized to carry out civil registration.

Accessibility of civil registration services

No precise data available

Registration of vital events

The application for **birth registration** must be made no later than 1 month from the child's date of birth. Birth registration is initiated upon receipt of notification from health authorities that a birth has taken place. The information communicated by health authorities also contains basic information on the identity of the person who gave birth. Health authorities also provide such notification when a birth has taken place at home. A parent coming to register the birth of their child identifies herself/himself with a valid identification document, such as an ID. Before completing a birth registration, officials must ensure that the identity information on the provided identity documents match the identity information recorded on notification from health authorities. One copy of the registration is kept at the local branch of the Department while the second copy is transferred to the state archive of birth registration acts. Upon completing the registration, authorities also issue a birth certificate that the recipient may use to obtain other identification documents when they become eligible. Violating registration deadlines for a child's birth warrants a fine of 1000 Kyrgyzstani Som (KGS), or approximately US\$12.

Death registration must be completed no later than seven days from the date of death or from the date of discovery of the body of the deceased. The basis for state registration of death is a completed form of death issued by a medical organization authorized by the relevant health authority, or a court decision that establishes the fact of death or declares a person dead.

The basis for **marriage registration** is a joint application of people entering into marriage. State marriage registration is carried out by the registry office at the place of residence of one of

the people to be married, or their parents. The joint application must confirm the mutual voluntary consent to marriage, as well as the absence of circumstances that impede marriage. People who wish to be married must present their identification documents and a document that confirms the termination of previous marriages, if any.

The basis for state **registration of divorce** can be one of three cases:

- Joint application for divorce of spouses who do not have common minor children;
- Court decision on divorce, which entered into force; or
- Application for divorce filed by one of the spouses, and the court decision (sentence) that has entered into legal force in respect of the other spouse, if the latter is recognized as missing by the court.

Sample registration forms

Birth certificate – legalizuem.ru/uploads/images/svidetelstvo-o-rozhdenii-dublikat-v-kirgizii-new.jpg

Death certificate – static-2.akipress.org/127/.upload/kgnews/gallery/3/390283.1f092937fc35432fce3e5e448400903d.jpg

Marriage certificate – data.kaktus.media/image/big/2016-06-01_13-01-41_598225_w.jpg

Divorce certificate – 24.kg/files/media/109/109721.jpeg

Registration fees

Birth and death registration services are free. A registered birth certificate costs US\$1.30 (100 KGS) and a death certificate costs US\$0.25 (20 KGS). Depending on where the marriage is celebrated before the registrar, the cost of registration ranges from US\$12 (926 KGS) to US\$52 (4136 KGS). A marriage certificate costs US\$1.30 (100 KGS), and a divorce certificate costs US\$0.25 (20 KGS).

Vital statistics system

Vital statistics

Traditionally, civil registration in Kyrgyzstan has been a source of data for the production of vital statistics. Other than registering information pertaining to the identity of the person, birth and death registration also record medical statistics on a designated form. This form is not part of the vital event registration record. It is completed using information forwarded by medical authorities on the medical certificate. The form is transferred to the National Statistics Committee, which processes vital statistics.

When registration services were digitized, the communication of statistically relevant data was also digitized, which accelerated data sharing with the National Statistics Committee. The National Statistics Committee also benefits from a wider range of information available in the population register, especially in relation to demographics and population movements. Up-to-date vital statistics data is also available on the National Statistics Committee's website.²⁹

The SRS is working with health authorities to digitize the production of medical certificates and to establish digital communications with civil registration authorities. To date, these certificates are completed manually and communicated in traditional paper-based fashion. The SRS now sees this as a bottleneck for the overall process of drawing up registration records and, more importantly, compiling vital statistics records for processing by the National Statistics Committee.

Causes of death

Kyrgyzstan uses two types of death certificates: a medical death certificate and a medical certificate of perinatal death. For both certificates, the cause of death record fully complies with the recommendations of the World Health Organization, as specified in the International Classification of Diseases, version 10 (ICD-10).

Recording the cause of death on medical death certificates is mandatory. A medical certificate of death is not issued if the cause of death cannot be determined (for example, if the burial was carried out without a death certificate by a doctor, the patient was not under medical supervision, and there are no entries in the medical documentation). Relatives of the deceased are encouraged to go to court to establish the fact of death. Since death registration in the registry office is based on a court decision rather than a medical certificate of death, the cause of death is recorded as unspecified.

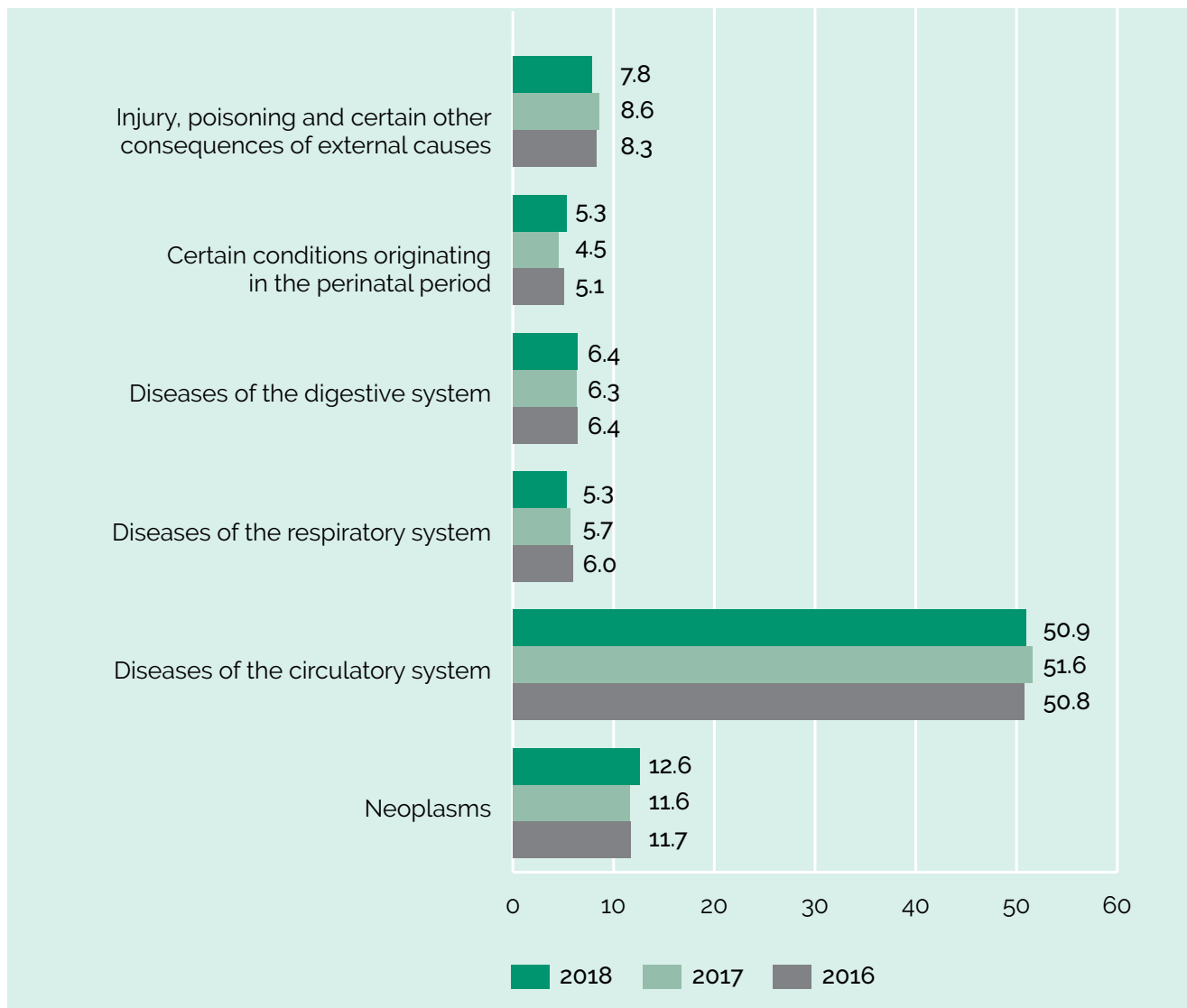
The e-Health Centre, under the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, regularly offers training on the rules for completing medical death certificates, determining the main cause of death, and coding according to ICD-10 to medical workers who are trained at the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Further Training (KSMIPiP). This training is also conducted at the request of healthcare organizations.

A rapid assessment was conducted following the WHO inter-agency country workshop on improving outcomes and strengthening accountability for women's and children's civil registration and vital statistics (Bishkek, 12-14 March 2013).

Table 1: Information collected on causes of death.

Causes-of-death information	Information collected	
	Yes	No
For deaths occurring in health facilities	X	
For natural deaths occurring in the community	X	
For non-natural deaths occurring in the community	X	

Figure 1: Kyrgyzstan – Causes of death, 2016–2018.



Digitization

From the conceptual phase of digitizing registration services, digitizing civil registration and establishing a centralized civil register were identified as pillars of a unified population register.

Computerization

Although the SRS identified the digitization of registration services as a strategic goal from the outset, implementation only intensified after 2014. Central to the digitalization of registration services was establishing a unified population registration (UPR) system designed to combine independently developed digitized systems for civil registration, registration of address of residence, and issuance of ID cards and travel documents. In addition to these traditional registration systems, the SRS also introduced a digitized citizenship register and a system to capture and store digitized biometric information.

With this in mind, the civil register was the first system to be digitized as part of establishing a UPR. It has been operating since 2014. To operate the digitized civil register, 58 civil registration offices across the country were computerized and connected to a central civil register database. Digital connection with the civil register database was extended to include 24 Kyrgyz diplomatic missions, 363 information kiosks at post offices, and 11 local authorities. Building on the experience of keeping information on registered vital life events in dedicated vital events registration books, a digital database was created for each type of registration book in the central digital civil register. Registration records are added to it sequentially. Digitizing the civil registration system enabled the aggregation of all newly registered civil registration acts within a single database. It also allowed the SRS to oversee the registration of civil status acts in any of the local civil registration offices.

Table 2: Computer use in CRVS.

Computers used in	Yes	No	Remarks
SRS offices	X		
Health facilities		X	
Local admin offices	X		Limited number of offices

Online registration services at health facilities

Although SRS plans to expand the system to link health facilities with the digitized civil registration system, this step has not yet been implemented.

Mobile technology application

Mobile devices are not used to collect and process registration data.

Unique identification number

A unique identification number (UIN) is key to operating a digitized civil register. The UIN links all of a person's registered vital events to generate up-to-date identity information. It further allows authorities to identify how characteristics of a person's identity have changed over a specific period. A UIN also ensures that a person's vital events can only be registered once.

The SRS was legally appointed as the authority responsible for issuing personal UINs. Since 1 August 2016, civil registration offices are also authorized to assign UINs to Kyrgyz citizens, resident non-citizens, and stateless persons. The UIN is automatically assigned when a birth is registered and linked to all subsequent vital events recorded under that person's name.

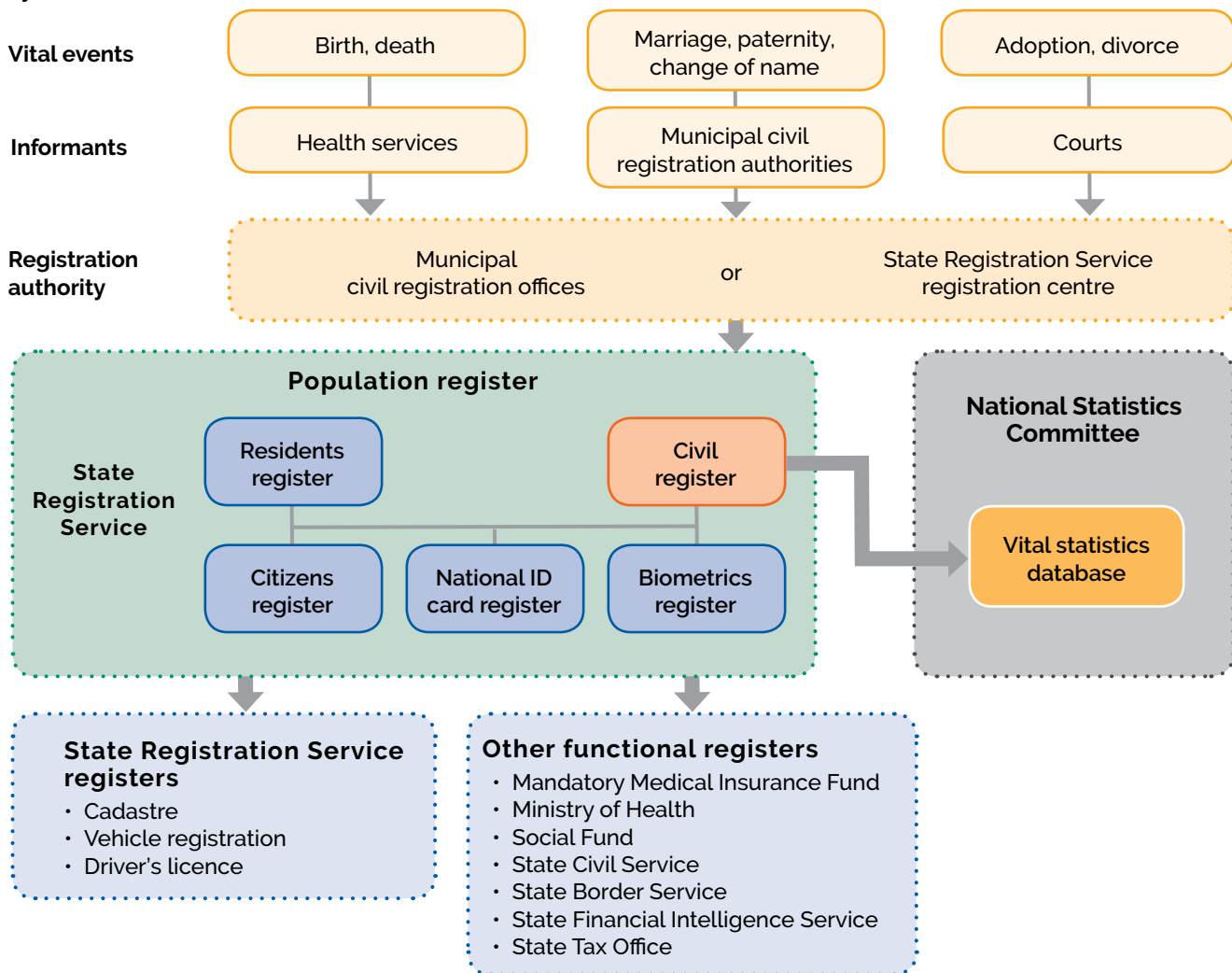
Population register

The UPR was designed to link the digitized civil registration system with the digitized systems used to issue national ID cards and travel documents. This approach ensures that all of a person's legal identity information and personal information required for identification can be easily retrieved and shared with other registers within the SRS authority. In a regulated environment, this information can be shared with functional registers operated by public authorities or commercial entities. In addition to complementing existing civil registration and civil identification data, the population register integrates the residents and

citizenship registers, which provide information on address of residence and citizenship.

The UPR combines independently developed digitized systems to record civil registration, register address of residence, and issue ID cards and travel documents. The SRS also introduced a digitized citizenship register and implemented a system to capture and store digitized biometric information. These digitized systems were modelled and built around traditional paper-based business processes. They use a system of digitized databases to mirror the traditional processes of recording vital events in registration books and national ID card and travel documents in application archive registers (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Overview of Kyrgyzstan's civil registration, vital statistics, and identity management systems.



Source: Author

Digitization of historical civil registration records

Although the digitization of the civil register was identified as a critical component of the UPR, creating digital copies of civil registration archives meant transferring approximately 15 million archived civil registration records. Another challenge was ensuring that all of a person's civil records were identified and linked using a UIN. Once the law on biometric data collection was adopted, the SRS began a country-wide biometric rollout that included transferring identity data from the legacy ID card into a digitized database, coupled with a photo and 10 fingerprint biometric data. At the end of the process, more than 3,155,000 citizens were enrolled in biometric registration. Vital events records are added over time and linked to the corresponding identity in the UPR.

As part of the ongoing process to issue a new generation of ID cards, all submitted birth certificates were scanned. As the entire population receives new generation ID cards, almost all birth certificates for the adult population will be digitized. In addition, as part of a dedicated project to digitize civil status acts, the SRS digitized all death registration records since 2009 and continues to digitize death registration records further into the past on an ongoing basis.

Over time, the volume of civil registration records remaining to be digitized will decrease and be limited to people born before 2015 who are not yet old enough to apply for a mandatory ID document. Nevertheless, as the volume of data to be digitized shrinks, the SRS may choose to clear the backlog by designing dedicated digitization projects.

Link with identification system

The digitized system that issues national ID cards automatically assigns personal identity information retrieved from the civil registration system. An applicant's national ID card only includes information that is automatically generated from the civil register. To obtain an ID card using different identity information, information must first be registered in the civil register as a vital event. The national ID card information system will not issue a card if the civil register includes a death registration for that person.

Interface with other sectors and operations

In addition to civil registration and civil identification, the SRS is legally responsible for some key functional registers in the country, such as cadastre, voter register, driver's licences, and motor vehicles. Digitized systems supporting these functional registers are part of a larger ICT platform operated by the SRS, with each system linked to the UPR and able to access up-to-date legal identity information, including other types of personal information kept in the UPR.

Kyrgyzstan's voter registration system relies exclusively on data from the UPR. Using identity information from the national ID cards register and address information from the residents' register, the SRS has developed an application that can extract and print voter lists directly from the UPR in line with the predetermined geographical boundaries of polling stations. The information subsystem used to issue driver's licences benefits from direct access to personal information stored in the national ID register.

In 2016, Kyrgyzstan introduced a state-wide electronic interoperability layer, allowing digital data to be shared among ICT platforms. The interoperability layer is built around the X-Road platform (locally branded as Tunduk platform), an open source data exchange layer solution that allows organizations to exchange information over the Internet. X-Road provides a standardized, secure way to produce and consume services. It ensures confidentiality, integrity, and interoperability between data exchange parties.

The SRS also concluded a memorandum of understanding with a number of government institutions to allow access to specific types of information within a regulated environment. This allows institutions to instantly verify documents provided by people who enroll for specific services. In addition to its own digital platform for data sharing, the SRS uses the Tunduk platform to allow access to civil registration and other data in the UPR for the following agencies:

- Mandatory Medical Insurance Fund;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- Social Fund;
- State Border Service;
- State Committee for Information Technology and Communications;
- State Committee of National Security;
- State Commission for Religious Affairs;
- State Customs Service;
- State Financial Intelligence Service;
- State Personnel Service; and
- State Tax Service.

The National Statistical Committee also uses Tunduk to access civil registration data and collect vital statistics information. While most agencies access information upon request, changes in legal identity information in the civil and national ID registers are shared daily with the Social Fund and State Tax Service.

Improvement initiatives and external support

Improvement plan and budget

Strategic plan

The State Registration Service adopted the SRS medium-term development strategy under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2016–2018. Strategic goals and results of the medium-term program focus on

- improving registration business processes;
- improving infrastructure;
- improving existing services and developing new services;
- ensuring reliability and improving data management;
- strengthening the organization's management system; and
- improving communication with the public and other stakeholders.

Budgetary allocations and requirements

The SRS draws its budget largely from generated revenues from delivered services, and the budget granted by government. The SRS has digitized registration services that rely largely on government provided budgetary and project-based financial support.

Activities identified as high priorities

With the issue of civil registration demand and supply largely resolved, the main goal of the SRS is to complete a technical overhaul of the unified state population register. The structure of the UPR represents a complex database architecture and the following components take priority as part of the modernization project:

- Biometric data on citizens above 16 years of age;
- Passport database;
- Registration of Civil Status of Citizens automated information system;
- Automated Registration information system; and
- Expanding the implementation of a UIN across databases.

Support from development partners

Kyrgyzstan's CRVS system operates primarily using its own services as a source of revenue, supported by government funding. In the process of digitizing registration business processes, the SRS benefited from policy guidance and limited financial support from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and financial support from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Union (EU), and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). Kyrgyzstan also benefited from support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in improving the quality of recording cause-of-death data. UNICEF provided support in addressing problems of stateless populations on Kyrgyz territory. Statistics Norway also supported improvements to CRVS system business processes, including by strengthening the capacity of the National Statistics Committee to generate vital statistics.

Conclusion

Reforms to the Kyrgyz identity ecosystem demonstrate that with strong political commitment and government funding, traditional paper-based civil registration business processes can be transformed into highly integrated digitized systems within several years. The results of this transformation have quickly materialized into a range of benefits for many government services and have contributed to an overall increase in public governance efficiency.

Reforms to Kyrgyzstan's civil registration and identity management systems were designed knowing that the value of information in the population register and the overall system depends on the system's ability to provide reliable, up-to-date identity information. The political commitment for this initiative stemmed from the realization by key political stakeholders that digitization and reforms of the State Registration Service would solve some burning political and governance issues.

Resources

Websites

State Registration Service – grs.gov.kg

National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic stat.kg/en/

The Ministry of Justice – Central Database of Legal Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic cbd.minjust.gov.kg

Additional materials

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