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SNAPSHOT

OF CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS OF

CHILE



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Program information

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Published by the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems with input from the Organization of American States (OAS). This publication was authored by Zoran Đoković, a consultant with the Centre of Excellence.

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The research presented in this publication was carried out with financial and technical assistance from the Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems. Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), it is jointly funded by Global Affairs Canada and IDRC. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of Global Affairs Canada, IDRC, or its Board of Governors.

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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 Chile.

The information is based on a case study of Chile, published in *The Nexus between Civil Registration and Social Protection Systems: Five Country Practices*. It is further supplemented with findings from a desk review of documents, including publications from the Inter-American Development Bank. Among other things, the report presents:

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

Brief country profile

The Republic of Chile is a South American country occupying a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It borders Peru to the north, Bolivia to the northeast, Argentina to the east, and the Drake Passage in the far south. Chilean territory includes the Pacific islands of Juan Fernández, Salas y Gómez, Desventuradas, and Easter Island in Oceania.

The territory of the republic has been divided into 16 regions, 56 provinces, and 346 communes for the interior government and administration within the state.

- Land area: 756,096 km²
- Population: 18,729,160¹ with an estimated annual growth rate of 1.4 percent.² In 2018, 88 percent of the population resided in urban areas, with the remaining 19 percent residing in rural areas.³
- Capital city: Santiago

Chile



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

- Official working language: Spanish
- Ministry responsible for civil registration: Ministry of Justice
- Civil registration agency: Civil Registration and Identification Service
- National statistical office: National Statistics Institute of Chile

CRVS dimensions

Births	
Completeness of birth registration	99% (2011) ⁴
Children under 5 years of age whose births were reported as registered	99% (2011) ⁵
Births attended by skilled health personnel	100% (2016) ⁶
Women aged 15–49 who received antenatal care from a skilled provider	95% (1993) ⁷
DPT1 immunization coverage among 1-year-olds	99% (2018) ⁸
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	13 (2017) ⁹
Total fertility rate (live births per woman)	1.7 (2017) ¹⁰
Adolescent fertility rate (per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 years)	41 (2017) ¹¹
Population under age 15	21% (2012) ¹²
Deaths	
Completeness of death registration	100% (2011) ¹³
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	6 (2017) ¹⁴
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	6.1 (2018) ¹⁵
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	7.2 (2018) ¹⁶
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	13 (2017) ¹⁷
Marriages and divorces	
Marriage registration rate	3.4 (2016) ¹⁸
Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 15	Not available
Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 18	Not available
Divorce registration rate	0.1 (2011) ¹⁹
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

The *Civil Registry Law*, which is part of the so-called Secular Laws, represents a modern organic law that defines the functional and territorial structure of the Civil Registration Service. It also created norms related to employees, monitoring, and inspection. It further designated other functions to the Civil Registry and Identification Service. Today, these form a set of strategic functions for carrying out some of the government's most important aims. These include capturing links between families, the makeup of the family, and identity of family members.

Management, organization, and operations

The Civil Registration and Identification Service is a functionally decentralized agency with its own legal personality and heritage. Its operation is overseen by the President of the Republic through the Ministry of Justice. The agency is responsible for issuing identification credentials and registering the vital events of everyone living in Chile. This includes registering births, marriages, and deaths, and providing national identity cards.

The agency also has authority over:

- General Registry of Convictions (1925);
- Records of fouls (1925);
- Production and issuance of identity cards (1925);
- Passport registration (1925);
- Cadaster of arrests, detention, and prevention (1960);
- Register of Professionals (1981);
- National Registry of Motor Vehicles (1985);
- National Registry of Drivers of Motor Vehicles (1985);

- National Registry of Disability (1994);
- National Registry of Intrafamily Violence (1994);
- National Register of Land Freight Transport (2003);
- National Registry of Effective Possessions (2003);
- National Register of Wills (2003);
- National System of DNA Records (2004);
- Registration of garments without displacement (2011);
- Registration of legal entities (2012); and
- Civil Union Agreement (2015).

In 1994, the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Modernization of Public Administration was created to spearhead modernizing public management. Based on a policy of ongoing reform, it has supported change in how public services are managed in the areas defined in the Strategic Modernization Plan:

- Human resources;
- Service quality;
- Transparency;
- Strategic management;
- Information technology; and
- Institutional reform.

National CRVS systems coordination mechanisms

Historically, overhauling and upgrading public administration systems was executed as per the National Modernization Plan. Under the most recent National Modernization Plan, adopted in 2019, future improvements of the Civil Registry and Identification Service will be supported by the Secretary of Modernization under the Ministry of Finance and coordinated by an Advisory Committee. This Committee is composed of the Undersecretary of Justice (Subsecretaria de Justicia), Ministry of the General Secretary of the

Presidential Office (Ministerio Secretaría General de la Presidencia), Budget Department (Dirección de Presupuestos), and Secretary of Modernization (Secretaría de Modernización y Presidencia). The Advisory Committee ensures that the modernization project is developed and approved, and will coordinate its implementation.

Administrative-level registration centres

The Civil Registration and Identification Service operates 477 offices nationwide that deliver all services offered by the agency. There are also 25 offices located in hospitals, which record only births and deaths. All of the offices are interconnected and working online.

Accessibility of civil registration services

No precise data available.

Registration of vital events

During the first 30 days of a child's life, only the mother or father can **register their birth**. The mother or father (if married), or legal guardian, must present their national identity card and proof of birth care issued by the doctor or midwife. A registration official completes the birth registration through a digitized system. They must also create a physical record due to provisions in the legal framework. This procedure is standard at all Offices of the Civil Registration and Identification Service. After the first 30 days of the child's life, birth registration can be done by a close relative or *ex-officio* by a doctor or the head of the public establishment where the birth occurred. The law does not regulate late registrations and there are no barriers to registering a birth after the first 30 days.

People can order a copy of the birth certificate on the agency's website or mobile application, or at any office at the national level. They must enter the unique identification number (UIN), make the payment, and authorize the printing of the document.

They can also visit an office to rectify any errors in the record, which is done as a short administrative procedure. If the information that needs to be changed was not entered in error, it must be resolved by a court.

Death registration should be done at the office at the place where the death occurred. Registration is completed based on verbal or written information by the relatives of the deceased, or the tenants of the house in which the death occurred. If these informants are not available, the neighbours may also register the death. If the death has occurred in a convent, prison, hospital, or similar facility, the head of the institution is responsible to apply for registration.

Marriage registration is done by a civil registrar of the constituency where one of the partners is a permanent resident. It is concluded in the presence of two witnesses who can read and write. Partners must tell the civil registrar in advance that they intend to marry and provide information on at least two witnesses, to prove that they are not affected by any impediment or legal prohibition.

Sample registration forms

Specimen images of vital events records certificates are available at: unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/new-york-egm-on-management-and-evaluation-of-crvs-systems/Session18-Chile-Civil-Registration.pdf

Registration fee

Registration of vital events is free of charge. A copy of a birth certificate is 710 pesos (US\$1.11). The certificate is issued free of charge in the event that the certificate is needed to file a claim for a social grant.

Vital statistics system

Vital statistics

Vital statistics are generated from the vital events registration records in the Civil Registration and Identification Service's CRVS system. Statistical processing is carried out in parallel by the Ministry of Health and the National Statistics Institute.

The list of data types from the civil register provided for the production of vital statistics is established through common agreement by three institutions, based on:

- Current legal regulations (*Civil Code and Civil Registry Law No. 4,808*);
- *Organic Law of the National Statistics Institute* (Law No 17,374);
- Sanitary Code; and
- *Health Authority and Management Law* (Law No. 19,937).

In addition to the legal acts above, the institutions' responsibilities have been regulated by a tripartite agreement since 1982 that governs their joint activities. (The most up-to-date version is in force as of 2018.)

Causes of death

Causes of death are registered in the medical death certificate in line with the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th revision (ICD-10). All deaths are captured irrespective of the location where the death occurred (Table 1). To achieve an adequate classification, medical death certificates provide two subsections for cause-of-death information. The first subsection gives the immediate cause of death, underlying cause of death, and the previous conditions that influenced the development of other causes. The second section records other significant pathological states that contributed to death.

Table 1: Information collected on causes of death.

Causes of death information	Information collected	
	Yes	No
Deaths occurring in health facilities	X	
Natural deaths occurring in the communities	X	
Non-natural deaths occurring in the communities	X	

Statistics on cause of death are compiled from the basic cause of death. The basic cause of death is defined as the disease or event that started the chain of pathological events that led to death, or the circumstances of the accident or violence that caused the injury or fatal poisoning. Specialized coders of the Ministry of Health apply rigorous selection rules in line with ICD-10 codification to record the underlying cause of death.

Digitization

The Civil Registration and Identification Service established a digital civil registration database in 1982. Since then, most historic civil registration records have been digitized and new records are created digitally and on paper. Also since 1982, each person in Chile has been assigned a unique identification number (UIN). Mass-scale digitization of historic birth, marriage, and death data began in 1990 and since 2001 the system has been integrated, with all offices connected online with the central register. Thanks to the successful transition from paper to digital processes, the Civil Registry and Identification Service was the best-rated public service in Chile from 1997 to 2002. Such high regard for the agency's work comes as a result of successfully adopting state-of-the-art technologies, establishing a nationwide computer network, and introducing modern customer service systems.

Computerization

Vital events registration is fully computerized. The system relies on the UIN of an informant, such as the mother's UIN in case of birth registration, which allows the system to automatically supply other data associated with the UIN from the central database. For instance, for birth registration, the system automatically assigns the child's last name if their parents are married. If the parents are not married and only the mother makes the registration, the father's registration data will be marked to allow him to formalize his recognition of parenthood of the child at a later date.

Once the system has retrieved information using the UIN, the official enters the remaining information, including the name of the newborn, place and date of birth, sex, address, and the parents' profession or office. This information is verified, a UIN is created for the newborn, and the certificate is printed for signature. The certificate features registration data, the UIN, a barcode, and a digital stamp. It also indicates whether the birth was credited by medical proof of birth or by witness statement.

Computerization of the registration processes has been extended to provide a range of services for citizens through a dedicated web portal. Computers are used for registration in registration offices and health facilities (Table 2). This allows citizens to order vital events certificates, check the status of a national ID or passport application, and validate the identity information of individuals. Citizens can also access services under the authority of the Civil Registration and Identification Service that are not directly linked with civil registration and identification.

Table 2: Computer use in CRVS.

Computers used in	Yes	No
Registration offices	X	
Health facilities	X	

Online registration services at health facilities

The Civil Registration and Identification Service operates 25 offices in health facilities across the country. These offices are authorized only for birth and death registration. Registrations are done using the same computerized platform as in other offices.

Mobile technology application

The Civil Registry and Identification Service regularly organizes visits of mobile registration teams to conduct registration in hard-to-reach geographical areas. Registration is done by mobile registration equipment which may transfer registration data over mobile operator networks.

Unique identification number

The UIN is a unique number assigned to every Chilean resident, foreign resident, and other foreigners visiting Chile for extended periods of time. The number is issued by the Civil Registration and Identification Service right after birth registration or when a person applies for a national identity card (for Chilean citizens born abroad).

The UIN is an eight-digit number followed by a verification digit or letter, which indicates if the first eight digits have been entered correctly. The first eight digits can be verified using an algorithm that returns the verification digit.

Digitization of historical civil registration records

All registrations of vital events completed since 1982 were also entered into the central electronic database. Starting in 2000, all registrations completed in the field offices have been entered online directly into the central database. As of 2019, all birth records created since 1940 have been digitized and entered in the central database. All marriage and death records created since 1960 have been also digitized. If a certificate of vital events is required but it was registered prior to the digitization target year (1940 for births and 1960 for deaths), the digitization of such a record is done upon request.

Link with identification system

In 1998, the National Directorate of the Civil Registration and Identification Service decided to upgrade the procedures for capturing and managing individuals' identification data. It prioritized this activity to meet international security standards and prevent an increase in document fraud.

A key innovation was the central computerized identification system, which contains a database of biometric information including digitized images of each person's photograph, signature, and fingerprints. This centralized system ensures that the identity of any living or dead individual can be immediately and automatically verified from anywhere in the country.

Over 28 million manual records and sets of fingerprints were scanned to build the database, which contains information on all Chilean citizens and is linked with the vital events records database. This means that each time a request for a new national ID card or renewal of existing ID is made, the system retrieves up-to-date legal identity information based on the relevant vital events records.

Interface with other sectors and operations

Several public and private entities are interconnected with the Civil Registration and Identification Service database architecture. Before an organization can establish interconnection and gain access to a specific set of personal data, it must undergo an assessment of its competencies, the type of information it needs, and why it needs it. This assessment determines the level of access and the specific data types that the organization should be allowed to access. Once access is authorized, an inter-institutional agreement is signed to transfer the requested data. Currently, 622 such agreements have been signed, of which 200 have been signed with the private sector.

Public entities include:

- Administrative Commission of the Credit System for Higher Studies
- Administrative Corporation of the Judiciary
- Carabiniers of Chile
- Chilean Air Force Health Division
- Chilean Directorate of Forecasting
- Chilean Gendarmerie
- Commission of the National System of Certification of Labour Competences
- Comptroller General of Chile
- Directorate General of Civil Aeronautics
- Directorate General of National Mobilization
- Directorate General of Public Works
- Directorate General of the Maritime Territory and Merchant Marine
- Directorate of Labour
- Directorate of Libraries Archives and Museums
- Directorate of Purchasing and Public Procurement
- Education Quality Agency
- Electoral Service
- General Treasury of the Republic
- Grouping of Relatives of Former Deceased Political Prisoners
- House of Deputies
- Institute of Agricultural Development
- Institute of Occupational Safety
- Institute of Planned Standardization
- Institute of Public Health of Chile
- Institute of Social Welfare
- Intendency of the Valparaiso Region
- Internal Revenue Service
- Judicial Assistance Corporation of Biobio Region
- Judicial Assistance Corporation of Metropolitan Region
- Judicial Assistance Corporation of Tarapaca and Antofagasta Region
- Judicial Assistance Corporation of Valparaiso Region
- Legal Medical Service

- Los Ferrocarriles Del Estado Company
- Medical Service of the Chilean Chamber of the Construction
- Metropolitan Health Service West
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Education and Superintendency of Education
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of General Secretariat of the Presidency
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Health and National Institute of Statistics
- Ministry of Housing and Urbanism
- Ministry of Interior and Public Security
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of National Property
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of Planning and Undersecretary General of Government
- Ministry of Social Development
- National Board of Chilean Fire Corps
- National Child Service
- National Children's Garden Board
- National Civil Service Directorate
- National Commission for Energy
- National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research
- National Congress Library
- National Consumer Service
- National Corporation for Indigenous Development
- National Council of Culture and Arts
- National Customs Service
- National Defence Forecasting Fund
- National Disability Fund
- National Disability Service
- National Fisheries and Aquaculture Service
- National Health Fund
- National Highway Directorate of the Ministry of Public Works
- National Institute of Human Rights
- National Institute of Industrial Property
- National Institute of Sports of Chile
- National Institute of Youth
- National Intelligence Agency
- National School Aid and Scholarship Board
- National Service for the Elderly
- National Statistical Institute
- National Television Council
- National Tourism Service
- National Training and Employment Service
- Police of Investigations of Chile
- Polla Chilena de Beneficencia S.A.
- Presidency of the Republic
- Production Development Corporation
- Provincial Governorate of Valdivia
- Public Criminal Defender
- Secretariat and General Administration of the Ministry of Finance
- Solidarity and Social Investments
- State Defence Council
- Superintendency of Banks and Financial Institutions
- Superintendency of Electricity and Fuels
- Superintendency of Gambling Casinos
- Superintendency of Health
- Superintendency of Insolvency and Entrepreneurship
- Superintendency of Pensions
- Superintendency of Social Security
- Superintendency of Values and Insurance
- Technical Cooperation Service
- Undersecretariat for Crime Prevention
- Undersecretariat for Human Rights
- Undersecretariat for Transport
- Undersecretariat of Economy and Small Business
- Undersecretariat of Social Security
- Undersecretary for Regional and Administrative Development
- Undersecretary of Labour (Ministry of Labour)

Improvement initiatives and external support

Improvement plan and budget

Strategic plan

Over the last 40 years, Chile's civil registration service has undergone a major transformation to reflect innovations in information technologies, and to ensure interconnection and interoperability with other public and private organizations. Key drivers of the transformation process include strategic plans first implemented through the Strategic Modernization Plan, as well as specific large-scale procurement projects such as the 1991 project New Civil Identification, Identity Card, and Passport System. The State Modernization Agenda adopted in 2019 provided the basis for the development of the plan for modernization of the Civil Registration and Identification Service. The work on the development of the modernization plan is entrusted to the Secretariat for Modernization under the Ministry of Finance and the Advisory Committee established to coordinate development and implementation of the modernization plan.

Budgetary allocations and requirements

The budget of the Civil Registration and Identification Service depends on its own revenues from delivered services, and the budget granted by government. The total budget for 2019 was projected at 149 billion pesos (US\$181 million).²⁰

Support from development partners

Chile's civil registration system operates primarily using its own services as the source of revenue, with support from government funding. The Civil Registration and Identification Service is a member of the Latin American and Caribbean Council on Civil Registry, Identity and Vital Statistics, which operates as a knowledge-sharing platform for civil registration and identification authorities in that part of the world.

Conclusion

The Chilean model of a civil registration and identification system has evolved and improved over decades and is now firmly established in society and the public sector. Significant investments in the system came naturally for the Civil Registration and Identification Service, which has been historically positioned as critical for ensuring the efficiency of public administration. The scope of registration services has increased over the years, creating a need to fulfil registration duties in the most efficient manner. The introduction and timely upgrade of information and communications technology solutions that support registration processes has helped Chile attain universal registration rates.

The Civil Registration and Identification Service has achieved full data interoperability within its own databases, as well as interoperability with other government and private entities. This demonstrates how civil registration and identification services can dramatically improve the quality and efficiency of public administration.

Resources

Websites

Civil Registration and Identification Service:
registrocivil.cl

Inter-American Development Bank:
iadb.libguides.com/registros/civilregistration

National Statistics Institute of Chile:
ine.cl

Additional materials

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