

## **STATISTICAL ANNEX**

## INTRODUCTION

Data on the flows and stocks of migrants and related issues, such as their performance in the labour market, are derived from a wide variety of sources and the nature of these sources varies across countries. This makes the application of standardised definitions difficult and hence particular attention needs to be paid to the characteristics of the data, especially in the context of international comparisons. Section A of this annex describes the sources and methods used to generate migration statistics and is followed by presentation of data in Section B. These data are a selection from the OECDs' database of migration statistics.

Some preliminary remarks are required concerning the nature of the OECDs' migration data. Most of the data are taken from the individual contributions of correspondents appointed by the OECD Secretariat with the approval of national governments. In this regard it should be noted that:

- As discussed in the Foreword to this report, the Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI) covers almost all of the Member countries of the OECD.
- The coverage of countries in the data and the ability to construct time-series is to a certain extent affected by the dates at which countries became members of the SOPEMI network. Recent participants to SOPEMI do not necessarily provide historical data in their reports and, in addition, further clarification is sometimes required before data can be published.
- SOPEMI has no authority to impose changes in data collection procedures. It has an observatory role which, by its very nature, has to use existing statistics. However, it does play an active role in suggesting what it considers to be essential improvements in data collection and makes every effort to present consistent and well documented statistics.

## A. SOURCES AND COMPARABILITY OF MIGRATION STATISTICS

Compared to some other areas of statistics, such as labour force data, there exists little international standardisation of migration statistics. Consequently there are varying degrees of comparability between countries. One reason for this is that relatively few sources have as their *raison d'être* the recording of migration. Population registers, a common source of migration statistics, are used for a number of other administrative and statistical purposes. As a result, tailoring registers such that migration data conform to an international standard is made more difficult. Comparability is also problematic if data are based on residence or work permits. The data reflect migration systems and the policies of national governments and so, once again, it can be difficult to generate harmonised data. Hence, although there has been some development and agreement in the definition and classification of migration for statistical purposes (see Box 1), these standards have proved difficult to implement.

Aside from problems relating to international comparability, there are other difficulties with migration statistics, most notably the problem of measuring illegal immigration. Estimation is difficult and the figures that exist should be viewed, therefore, with some scepticism (see OECD, 1989). For this reason, explicit estimates of illegal immigrants have not been included in this annex. However, some stock and flow data partially incorporate illegal migration, therefore the phenomenon does not necessarily go completely unmeasured. For example, individuals may remain on population registers after their permits have expired, residing as illegal (or “undocumented”) immigrants. Finally, it should be noted that those achieving legal status under “regularisation programmes” are sometimes included in inflow data and must be taken into account when analysing trends. In addition, regularisation programs may be followed by an additional wave of immigration depending on the extent to which the acquisition of legal status allows family reunification.

The following provides a brief review of the sources of migration statistics (1); this is followed by a discussion of the techniques used for measuring migration flows (2), and of data issues relating to stocks of migrants and the immigrant population (3).

### 1. Sources of migration statistics

The principle sources of migration statistics are population registers, residence or work permits, censuses and surveys. However, a wide variety of other data sources (e.g. special surveys, counts at border crossings, analysis of landing cards) may sometimes be used. Table 1 provides an overview of data sources and shows that population registers are commonly used as a source of flow and stock data on migration, especially in northern Europe. In other countries, data on residence permits and census data are the most common means of measuring flows and stocks of international migrants.

### ***Population registers***

Population registers are accounts of residents within a country. They are typically maintained via the legal requirement that both nationals and foreigners residing in the country must register with the local authorities. Aggregation of these local accounts results in a record of population and population movement at the national level. As a result, the registers can provide data on all migrant flows (inflows and outflows of both nationals and foreigners) as well as data on stocks of foreigners and nationals. For this reason they tend to be widely used. However there are some drawbacks: individuals often fail to record their departures and therefore data on outflows can be less reliable. Also, there are differences in the type of migrants counted which must be taken into account in international comparisons.

### ***Permit data***

Residence and work permit data commonly form the basis of flow statistics for countries which do not have population registers. The data are necessarily more limited in scope as they do not capture all flows and it can be difficult to use them to generate stock and outflow data as these require careful accounting of the number of permits both issued and expired.

### ***Census and household survey data***

Census data enable comprehensive, albeit infrequent analysis of the stock of immigrants (censuses are generally conducted every 5 to 10 years). In addition, many labour force surveys now include questions about nationality and place of birth, thus providing a source of annual stock data. However, some care has to be taken with detailed breakdowns of the immigrant population from survey data as sample sizes can be very small. Inevitably, both census and survey data may under-represent migrants, especially where they tend not to be registered for census purposes, or where they do not live in private households (labour force surveys do not usually cover those living in institutions, such as reception centres and hostels for immigrants).

## **2. Measurement of migration flows**

The inflows and outflows included in this annex are all based either on population registers or on permit data. The types of flow measured differ quite markedly between these two sources and there are also differences to account for between different registers and the different types of permit used to generate the statistics.

### ***Flows derived from population registers***

Population registers can usually produce inflow and outflow data for both nationals and foreigners, however there are differences in the type of flows measured due to differences in the way migrants are defined in the registers. In this regard, a key condition used to define immigrants is intention to reside for more than a specified length of time. In addition, foreigners who register may have to indicate possession of an appropriate residence and/or work permit. Emigrants are usually identified by a stated intention to leave the country, however a period of (intended) absence is not typically specified.

Key features of migration data derived from population registers are as follows:

- Departures tend to be less well recorded than arrivals, often because registration results in certain rights and benefits to the individual, whereas there is less incentive to inform authorities of departure. In order to provide more accurate figures, some countries use additional information such as host-country estimates to generate emigration data.
- The rules governing entry into the register and who is defined as a migrant vary across countries. Notably, the minimum duration of stay for individuals to be defined as immigrants varies between three months and one year, implying that for some countries the data include short as well as longer term migration flows.
- Asylum seekers are included in some register data but excluded from others. Inclusion typically occurs when the asylum seekers live in private households (as opposed to reception centres and hotels). In the data presented in this annex, some asylum seekers are included in the data for Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway.

Despite these qualifications, population registers are generally regarded as a good source of migration data and are used in preference to other sources, especially in the generation of annual estimates.

### ***Flows derived from residence and work permits***

Countries which do not have population registers use a variety of sources to generate flow data. Inflows for Australia, the United States, Canada, and France are based on residence and/or work permits. Data for the United Kingdom are based on information from landing cards. Note that permit data usually represent the number of permits issued in a given period and have the following general characteristics:

- The nature of the flows measured obviously depends on the type of permit(s) used to generate the statistic. Inflows for the so-called “settlement countries” (Australia, Canada and the United States) are calculated as the number of permanent residence permits (also known as “acceptances for settlement”) issued. In the case of France, a sum of various types of permit issued (all of limited duration) is used.
- Flows of nationals are not recorded in the data and some flows of foreigners may also not be recorded, depending on the type of permit used as a basis for the statistic and also on the nature of free-circulation agreements. In France, some inflows from other EU countries are included in the data as permanent work permits are still required for EU nationals (this is a formality rather than a means of restricting entry).
- Permit data do not necessarily reflect physical flows or actual lengths of stay since:  
*i)* permits may be issued overseas but individuals may decide not to use them, or delay their arrival; *ii)* permits may be issued to persons who have in fact been resident in the country for some time, the permit indicating a change of status, or a renewal of the same permit. The data for Australia do not include those who have been accepted for permanent settlement whilst resident in Australia, whereas data for Canada and the United States include all issues of permanent settlement permits.

- Permit data may be influenced by the processing capacity of government agencies. In some instances a large backlog of applications may build up and therefore the true demand for permits may only emerge once backlogs are cleared.

### ***Estimation of net migration***

From the preceding discussion on flow data it is evident that some countries have readily available means to calculate net migration (*e.g.* through population registers) whilst others face greater difficulties and estimates must be made on the basis of a variety of sources. This annex does not contain data for the net migration of foreigners. Those data can be calculated on the basis of immigration and emigration figures. Note that for some countries, figures for total net migration (*i.e.* including the movement of both foreigners and nationals) are presented in the Country Notes. The OECD also publishes a series of total net migration figures in *Labour Force Statistics*. These are calculated as a residual from data on annual population change and natural increase.

### ***Refugees and asylum seekers***

Asylum seekers are usually allowed to remain in the country whilst their applications are processed. The time taken to process applications varies and it is therefore difficult to determine whether they should be counted as migrants or not. In practice, asylum seekers are not generally counted in migrant inflows unless they are subsequently granted asylum. However there are some countries where they are partially, or wholly included in the data. For example, asylum seekers often enter population registers because they have been resident for some time and live outside reception centres.

Statistics on asylum seekers and the numbers granted asylum are usually readily available from administrative sources, however there are some differences in the type of data made available. In a number of countries, asylum seekers are only counted when their application has been approved, in which case they appear in the statistics, not according to the date of arrival but according to the date of approval (note that approval of application simply means that the application will be considered by the authorities and allows the individual certain rights as an asylum seeker whilst their application is being processed). For some countries (*e.g.* Switzerland), the data include the dependants of the principal applicant; for certain others (*e.g.* France), they do not, since dependants are admitted under other provisions.

In addition to asylum seekers entering under the usual administrative channels there are some cases where individuals are allowed entry under exceptional circumstances and who are given other forms of status. For example, in the early 1990s, a number of European countries (*e.g.* Austria, and the Nordic countries) granted temporary residence to those fleeing conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Some of these individuals have been allowed to remain in these countries through renewal of permits and therefore effectively represent a group of *de facto* refugees.

## **3. Stocks of migrants and characteristics of the immigrant population**

Time series of stocks are used in conjunction with flow data to examine trends in migration. In addition, data which include socio-economic variables can be used to examine differences between

immigrants and native populations. In both cases, there are differences in how ‘immigrants’ are defined.

### ***Definition of the immigrant population***

In data, the immigrant population is usually defined in one of two ways. Some countries have traditionally focused on producing data that represents foreign nationals (European countries, Japan and Korea) whilst others refer to the foreign-born (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States). This difference in focus relates in part to the nature and the history of immigration systems and legislation on citizenship and naturalisation (see Box 2).

The foreign-born population can be viewed as representing first-generation migrants, and may consist of both foreign and national citizens. The size and composition of the foreign-born population is influenced by the history of migration flows and mortality amongst the foreign-born. For example, where inflows have been declining over time, the stock of the foreign-born will tend to age and represent an increasingly established community.

The population of foreign nationals may represent second and higher generations as well as first-generations of migrants. The characteristics of the population of foreign nationals depend on a number of factors: the history of migration flows, natural increase in the foreign population and naturalisations. Higher generations of immigrants arise in situations where they retain their foreign citizenship even when native-born. The nature of legislation on citizenship and the incentives foreigners have to naturalise both play a role in determining the extent to which this occurs in practice.

A more comprehensive view of the immigrant population is possible when both nationality and birthplace are known. This type of data is becoming increasingly available for some OECD countries and allows four sub-populations to be examined: the foreign-born who are foreign citizens; the foreign-born who are nationals; the native born who are foreign nationals and the native born who are nationals. The first three of these groups represent the “immigrant population”, as defined either by nationality or by place of birth. Note that in some countries, such as the United States, those who are native-born but who are foreign nationals are a non-existent or negligible group as legislation is such that birth within the country usually entitles individuals to citizenship.

### ***Time series of stocks of the immigrant population***

Time series of stocks are generally derived either from population registers or from labour force survey or census data. In this annex, the figures for Australia, Canada France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States are based on survey, census or permit data, data for all other countries are from population registers (see Table 1).

### ***Impact of naturalisation on the development of the immigrant population.***

Naturalisations must be taken into account in the analysis of the populations of foreigners and nationals. Also, differing approaches to naturalisation between countries must be considered when making international comparisons. In France and Belgium, for example, where foreigners can fairly readily acquire the nationality of the country, increases in the foreign population through

immigration and births can eventually contribute to a significant rise in the native population. In Germany and Switzerland (see OECD, 1995), on the other hand, where naturalisation is more difficult, increases in immigration and births amongst foreigners manifest themselves almost exclusively as rises in the foreign population. In addition, changes in rules regarding naturalisation can have significant numerical effects, for example during the 1980s, a number of countries made naturalisation easier and this resulted in noticeable falls in the foreign population (and rises in the population of nationals).

However, host-country legislation is not the only factor affecting naturalisation. For example, where naturalisation involves forfeiting citizenship of the country of origin, there may be incentives to remain as a foreign citizen. Where the difference between remaining a foreign citizen or becoming a national is marginal, naturalisation may largely be influenced by the time and effort required to make the application for naturalisation and the symbolic and political value individuals attach to being citizens of one country or another.

Data on naturalisations are usually readily available from administrative sources. As with other administrative data, resource constraints in processing applications may result in a backlog of unprocessed applications which are not reflected in the figures.



**Box 1: Definitions of migration flows and immigrant populations developed by the United Nations*****Recommendations on statistics relating to international migration***

The United Nations, in co-operation with other international organisations, has recently revised its 1976 recommendations on statistics relating to international migration in order to 1) propose a simplified and more pragmatic definition of « international migrant » which would take into account the emerging importance of temporary migration and 2) provide guidelines for the compilation of statistical information which would fit with the new definitions (United Nations, 1998).

According to the new United Nations recommendations, an international migrant is defined as « any person who changes his or her country of usual residence ». The « country of usual residence » refers to the country in which a person lives, that is to say, the country in which he or she has a place to live where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest. As a consequence, all movements which are not accompanied by a change of usual residence are not considered as migrations. For example, movements for the purpose of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage should not be considered as migrations.

In order to take into account the increase in short term international movements (except tourism), long term and short term migrations have been taken into account separately:

- A long-term migrant is a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.
- A short-term migrant is a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage.

**Immigrant population**

The immigrant population is usually measured either as the part of the resident population who are foreign nationals, or as the part of the foreign-born in the resident population. In the latter case there are situations where individuals are difficult to classify due to changes in national boundaries. The United Nations recommends that the 'foreign-born' be defined as those born outside the country or area where the 'country or area of birth' is based on current national boundaries (or, more precisely, those that existed at the time the data were collected).

## **Box 2: Migration systems**

Historically, migration systems developed alongside the evolution of nation-states and the concomitant desire to enumerate and sometimes influence the size and composition of the resident population. The need to implement immigration control is also linked to the increased numbers of individuals who are aware of attractive economic and social conditions elsewhere and able to afford the expense and risk associated with a long-term, or permanent move overseas. In some areas of the world, immigration control has also developed at an international as well as national level, creating zones of free movement, the most notable example being the European Union.

Whether operating at a national or an international level, most migration systems have the following features:

- The opportunity to enter the country and remain there for a limited length of time (often three months). Depending on the nationality of the entrant, a visa may or may not be required. Generally, the regulations are designed to encourage movements of individuals which provide economic benefits. Such movements include, *inter alia*, tourism and business travel. However, there are situations where entry may be strictly monitored. This type of movement is not regarded as migration as such and is commonly referred to as “short-term movement”.
- A mechanism for spouses and close relatives of citizens or permanent residents to enter the country on a permanent basis. They may arrive as “accompanying family” at the same time as the migrant, or at a later date under what is often called “family reunion”.
- A means for individuals who claim social and political persecution in their country of origin to apply for asylum. Such “asylum seekers” are usually treated on a case-by-case basis and may also have the right to remain in the country whilst their application is being processed.
- Mechanisms for individuals to enter largely for the purpose of employment and business. Policies governing this type of migration may reflect purely economic considerations such as perceived labour shortages or a desire to encourage international business links. However, policy may also be influenced by diplomatic considerations as well as policies and agreements in international trade.
- Means by which foreign citizens can acquire national citizenship (“naturalisation”). The ease with which this may be achieved and the incentives to do so vary across countries and may also depend on the implications of a change in legal status in the country of origin (see OECD, 1995, pp. 157-181).

Beyond these general features of immigration systems, it is common to distinguish between “temporary permit” systems and “permanent residence” systems (for a more detailed classification, see OECD, 1994). In temporary residence systems, characteristic of most OECD countries, initial entry to the country is typically made on the basis of a temporary residence permit and permanent status can only be granted after several years stay in the country. Only certain special groups (*e.g.* close relatives, refugees) are able to acquire permanent residence status on entry into the country. In permanent residence systems, typified by settlement countries (*e.g.* Australia, Canada and the United States), there are more channels available for individuals to enter with permanent resident status, beyond those catering for special groups. This reflects the historical, if not always current, use of migration policy as a means for populating the country. The additional channels available to

immigrants take a variety of forms but are generally based on attracting individuals with certain characteristics, such as high levels of skill or experience in certain occupations.

There are differences between these systems in the type of migration statistics commonly used. “Permanent residence” type countries tend to focus on acceptances for permanent settlement as an indication of inflows and on the population of foreign-born as an indication of the stock of immigrants. “Temporary permit” type countries, coincidentally, tend to have population registers and use these to focus on inflows and stocks of foreign citizens (as distinct from the foreign-born). Two notable exceptions are France and the United Kingdom who do not have population registers and rely on other sources of data.

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## **B. STATISTICAL SERIES**

### **Introduction to the statistical Annex tables**

The Tables are divided into two series. The A series tables provide aggregate data on stock and flow statistics as well as administrative data on asylum seekers and naturalisations. The B series tables present data disaggregated by country of origin (as defined either by country of birth or by nationality). As is evident from the preceding discussion on the sources and methods used to generate migration statistics, the presentation of the tables in a relatively standard format should not lead users to think that the data have been fully standardised and are comparable at an international level. In order to facilitate understanding of the data, detailed notes on the sources and definitions are presented at the end of the Statistical Annex.

A number of general comments apply to the tables:

a) The tables provide annual series for the ten most recent years (in general 1992-2001). However data relating to the stock of foreign-born population by country of birth (Tables B.1.4 and B.2.1) and of foreigners by nationality (Tables B.1.5 and B.2.2) are only given for certain years (in general 1986, 1991, 1996 and the most recent available year).

b) Up to 1994 (inclusive), European Union (unless stated otherwise) refers to the following 12 countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, members of the European Union at 31 December 1994. From 1995 onwards, European Union also includes the following three countries: Austria, Finland and Sweden.

c) The A series tables are presented in alphabetical order by the name of the country in English. In the other tables, the nationalities or countries are ranked by decreasing order of the stocks for the last year available.

d) In the tables by country of origin (series B) only the main 15 countries are shown and only when this information is available. "Other countries" is a residual calculated as the difference between the total foreign population and the sum of the nationalities indicated in the table. For some nationalities, data are not available for all years and this is reflected in the residual entry of "Other countries". This must be borne in mind when interpreting changes in this category.

e) Tables on inflows of asylum seekers by nationality (Tables B.1.3) are presented for the top ten host countries in 2001.

f) The rounding of entries may cause totals to differ slightly from the sum of the component entries.

g) The symbols used in the tables are the following:

- .. Data not available.
- Nil, or negligible.

### **Tables of the Statistical Annex**