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Economic Commission for Europe
Conference of European Statisticians
Group of Experts on Migration Statistics
Work Session on Migration Statistics
Geneva, 17-19 October 2012
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

Annotated provisional agenda

To be held in room V at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, starting at 9:30 am on Wednesday, 17 October 2012.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers
2. Experiences with using data from the 2010 round of censuses for measuring migration
3. Producing migration data using household surveys and other sources
4. Circular migration
5. Return migration
6. Aspects of Migrant Integration
7. Migration and development
8. Future Work
9. Adoption of the report

II. Annotations

The meeting is organised jointly with Eurostat following the provisions of the UNECE Statistical Programme for 2012, approved by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and the UNECE Executive Committee.

1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

The UNECE in cooperation with Eurostat regularly organize sessions for the Group of Experts on Migration Statistics. The main purpose of the sessions is to facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries and increase knowledge on various issues related to migration statistics. This results in increased capacity by countries to collect, evaluate, and disseminate migration statistics in compliance with the international and UNECE recommendations. The members of the UNECE-Eurostat Steering Group agree upon the proposed provisional agenda on Migration Statistics. The provisional agenda will be presented for the approval by the participants of the session.

2. Experiences with using data from the 2010 round of censuses for measuring migration

The population census is an important source of data on migration, particularly with regard to migrant stocks. It is expected that the 2010 census round has produced more and better data on migration, in part due to the increased number of “core topics” on migration included in the CES Recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses. Countries will have the opportunity to report on migration results from the 2010 Census round. This session will include presentation of migration data from the recent round of censuses, including preliminary results, as well as applications of these results to demographic programs, such as revision of intercensal population estimates.

3. Producing migration data using household surveys and other sources

Statistics on migration and migrants can be produced using various sources, including many surveys or registers that are not designed exclusively or primarily for collecting migration data. Household surveys have the potential to be an important source for the production of data on migration and migrants. A task force was created to work in this field, and a number of studies were launched with the participation of experts from countries and international organizations. The results of this work will be presented at the meeting, as well as other projects involving the collection of migration data via household surveys and other sources.

4. Circular migration

Circular migration has become a priority for many migrant sending countries, thereby ensuring the temporary nature of their citizens’ outmigration. It is often seen as a “win-win” proposition, providing gains to both host countries (fulfilling immediate labour market needs, increasing economic productivity, limiting long-term integration concerns, etc.) and origin countries (providing unemployment relief, bringing capital and skills back to their country, offsetting population loss, etc.). In November, the CES Bureau will consider establishing a new task force on circular migration, which would prepare a proposal for a common international statistical definition of circular migration, taking into account the needs of data users, as well as available information from ad hoc studies on this phenomenon. This session could provide critical inputs for the future development of this project.

5. Return migration

Return migration is an important concept with significant implications for both migrant sending and receiving countries. As a critical element of many destination country

governments' policies, it is seen by many as a strategy to deter irregular migration. From a source country perspective, many countries actively pursue a policy of encouraging return migration, as it can result in the bringing in of new skills, financial capital, brain-gain, and is even thought of as a strategy to offset population decline. This session will include both methodological and analytical discussion on return migration. In addition to country experiences, methodological questions on how return migration should be defined, as well as what the short- and long-term impact return migration has on both origin and destination countries, could be discussed.

6. Aspects of Migrant Integration

Both socio-economic status and internal mobility are aspects of migration integration. At the 2010 Joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics, a task force on measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants was created. This task force studied how to better measure the social and economic situation of migrants, and to improve the availability, quality and comparability of data in this field, taking into account all available sources. Though international migrants tend to arrive in specific urban geographic areas, after some time, these migrant groups often redistribute within their destination countries, impacting areas which do not normally receive migrant groups. The future distribution of these migrants is of interest from the perspectives of internal migration, regional population growth/decline and regional labour market capability. This session will present the results of this task force, as well as other relevant experiences from countries and international organizations on similar topics, including internal mobility of migrant populations.

7. Migration and development

The 2006 High-Level Dialogue and the subsequent Global Forums on Migration and Development concluded that international migration could play an important role in national development, provided it was supported by appropriate policies and development strategies. Many of these policies have been in relation to populations living outside their countries of origin, often referred to as the diaspora. There has been a gradual realization of the diaspora's potential positive social and economic contributions towards the development of origin countries, for example, in terms of transfer of financial assets, knowledge and skills, and/or increased business opportunities. Despite the growing impact of the diaspora on development, there is a lack of internationally agreed standards with regards to its measurement, leading to disparities when individual countries report the size of their diaspora. Focusing more on the stock of emigrants living abroad than flows, how should the diaspora be defined, and how could we measure its size and impact on countries of origin? This session will look at the connection between the need for data collection and measurement of migration's impact on development, and could include information on measuring the size, characteristics, and impact of diaspora populations.

8. Future Work

The meeting is invited to discuss proposals for future international work in migration statistics and topics for the 2014 Work Session.

9. Adoption of the Report

A short report outlining the conclusions and decisions taken at the meeting will be presented for adoption before the meeting adjourns.