

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on Migration Statistics
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 8-9 September 2014

28 October 2014

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

I. Organization and attendance

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) organized this capacity-building workshop on migration statistics in cooperation with the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat), the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISStat), and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of the Republic of Moldova, with financial support from the Russian Federation and the European Union. The workshop preceded the joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics (Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 10-12 September). The working languages of the workshop were English and Russian.

2. Participants represented statistical offices from the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Mexico, the Republic of Moldova, Norway, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Experts from CISStat, Eurasian Economic Commission, Eurostat, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration, Moscow State University, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNECE participated as well.

3. The workshop consisted of two parts over two days. The first day discussed an action plan for improving migration in the CIS region, while the second day looked at methodologies for estimating emigration. The training included presentations by experts, country presentations, and group exercises. Presentations made at the workshop are available at the UNECE website: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.10.migration1.html>

II. Objective

4. The objectives of the workshop were to discuss the action plan for improving migration statistics in the CIS region, as developed by CISStat, and to introduce participants to methodologies and research on improving measurement of emigration. The workshop included discussion on ways to mainstream migration in CIS member states, dissemination and use of migration data, labour migration statistics, coordination between government agencies for the purpose of collection and improving migration statistics, as well as training on methodology to measure emigration, including inter-country data exchange and sources and methods to measure emigration. It also included region-specific examples and a training exercise to help solidify concepts for participants.

III. Action plan for improving migration statistics in the CIS Region

5. Vladimir Sokolin from CISStat served as chair and moderated discussion for the first session on Mainstreaming migration in CIS member states.
6. Olga Chudinovskikh, from Moscow State University, made an introductory presentation on harmonization of migration statistics in the CIS region. This included discussion of international recommendations on international migration statistics and their applicability to the CIS region, specific measurement challenges, and results of regional data exchange exercises.
7. CISStat made a presentation on ways and means of improving the quality of migration statistics in the CIS region. This included a summary of key conclusions from the recent Conference of European Statisticians (CES) on ways to improve migration statistics, as well as an outline of their action plan to improve migration statistics in the region.
8. CISStat also made a presentation on registration of general and labour migration in CIS member states. This included an overview of administrative methods used to measure migration in the region, use of “mirror statistics” to improve migration estimates, as well as methods to measure labour migration.
9. UNECE presented a summary of current preparations of the CES 2020 Census recommendations. It summarized the preparation process for the latest recommendations and highlighted recent proposed changes to the migration sections.
10. Maxim Dianov, from Rosstat, served as chair and moderated discussion for the second session on dissemination and use of migration data.
11. CISStat reviewed international information sources on international migration in the CIS region. It described what is available from different international organizations and documented proposed revisions to the information CIS-Stat will collect and disseminate in the near future.
12. Olga Chudinovskikh, from Moscow State University, provided a user’s perspective on the database of the Russian Federal Migration Service (FMS). This presentation included a description of recent changes to the FMS database and initial analysis of its results, as well as avenues for future research.
13. UN-DESA provided an overview of the UN Global Migration Database and their recent dissemination efforts. This included information on current trends in international migration levels and methods used to estimate these numbers, an accounting of the characteristics and impact of migrants and migration, and mapping of migration trends.
14. The Russian Federation made a country presentation on their efforts to disseminate migration information to the general public.
15. Mihail Pelah, from UNDP, served as chair and moderated discussion for the third session on labour migration statistics.
16. ILO discussed the implications of the new resolutions of the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians on the measurement of labour migration. This included discussion on how the Conference prioritized labour migration and the need to improve its measurement and harmonize definitions.
17. CISStat presented their proposed definition of “migrant worker” for use in the CIS region. Their presentation also included an overview of international definitions for migrants workers and data sources used to measure this concept.

18. UNECE provided an overview of definitions used to measure labour migration, as well as proposals to integrate labour migration into Labour Market Information Systems (LMIS).
19. Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova gave country presentations on trends and efforts to measure labour migration to and from their respective countries.
20. Irina Zbarskaya, from CISStat, served as chair and moderated discussion for the fourth session on coordination between government agencies for the purposes of collecting and improving migration statistics.
21. CIS-Stat made a brief presentation illustrating ways that countries could improve coordination between internal government agencies to improve the quality and efficiency of data collected on migration statistics.
22. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan made country presentations highlighting the legal and administrative procedures underlying the collection of migrations statistics, as well as coordination efforts in their countries.

IV. Estimating Emigration: Methods and Research

23. Lucia Spoiata, from the Republic of Moldova, served as chair and moderated discussion for the fifth and sixth sessions on data exchange between countries and data sources and methods used to measure emigration.
24. UNECE presented a summary of efforts to improve measurement of emigration through data exchange between countries. These included results of the Task Force to measure emigration using data from destination countries to compute outmigration from origin countries, as well as establishment of the Migration Clearing House Database to exchange migration information in the CIS region.
25. Eurostat discussed efforts made to support data exchange between countries (i.e. “mirror statistics”) for cross-validation purposes. Practices used to exchange data, the current state of the data exchange operation, as well as recent proposals to exchange micro-level data on migration were discussed.
26. Olga Chudinovskikh, from Moscow State University, provided an overview of current methods and data sources used to estimate emigration. These included administrative sources, censuses and household surveys, and consulate data, and providing regional examples and a summary of the strengths and limitations of these different sources.
27. UNECE summarized additional methods to estimate emigration. These included examples of residual methodologies, panel attrition methods, indirect methods, and statistical modelling.
28. Lithuania gave examples of how their country has attempted to improve measurement of emigration in recent years. This included an annual household survey to measure undeclared emigration, intercensal revision of migration flows, a pilot study of undeclared migration using longitudinal data, and plans for future longitudinal data analysis.
29. Norway provided an overview of the Norwegian statistical system and how this impacted collection of emigration data. They stressed the long development time needed to build effective registration systems, particularly for the measurement of migration.
30. Hungary provided an example of using household surveys to measure emigration. They used their labour force survey to collect information on household members living abroad, using both direct and indirect sampling methods to interview any current or former household member or sibling who had left Hungary.

31. A number of countries made presentations on their methods to collect and improve measurement on emigration in their countries. These included presentations by Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

32. For the group exercise run by UNECE, participants were split into four groups and assigned a scenario to discuss. Based on this scenario they were then given a series of questions related to the development of an action plan to measure emigration from their country. These questions related to the collection of data, sources used, methods to estimate the number of emigrants, how results could be validated, what new sources/methods would be needed, and financial sustainability. At the end, each group made a brief presentation on their results.

V. Conclusion

33. Andres Vikat, from UNECE, moderated and led concluding discussion. Each of the session chairs contributed final comments and discussion took place.

34. Participants from CIS countries reaffirmed the need to continue to try and improve harmonization of concepts and definitions between countries, as well as the need for increased coordination within and between countries in the production of migration statistics and data exchange (e.g. use of “mirror statistics” to evaluate and estimate migration flows). Labour migration, undocumented in particular, was seen as the main driver of migration in the region, and improving its measurement critical to migration statistics in general.

35. It was agreed that National Statistical Agencies should work in closer cooperation with migration services, ministries of interior, labour authorities, and other bodies responsible for the management of migration. Finally, it was deemed important to modernize statistical systems and install electronic systems that improve the efficiency of data processing and dissemination and encourage publication of metadata to explain to users the advantages and disadvantages of various data sources

36. Participants expressed satisfaction with the provided training and emphasized its relevance to their needs. They appreciated the opportunity to discuss and exchange experiences among countries and with international experts.
