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Integration of data from censuses, administrative sources, and surveys for measuring migration

“Youth emigration - combining administrative and survey data”

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Abstract

Youth mobility has become an important research object in recent years. Topicality is related to the decline of the number of young people and resulting impact on the future development of countries. Moreover, young people's mobility is appreciated as a significant economic and personal gain. In Latvia, as elsewhere in Europe, decrease in the number of children and young people has already resulted in declination of working population, which can have a significant impact on the long-term economic development of the country. With the decrease in the number of Latvian students, the education export industry, which attracts young students from European countries, is rapidly developing.

The aim of the research is to assess how accurately it is possible to determine the number of youth emigration flows and the number of young migrants, as well as analysis of the geographic and socio-economic profile using administrative data, surveys and other data sources. Among the Latvian emigrants, the largest group includes young people under age of 30, while the number of foreign students in Latvia have grown five times over the last 10 years. A typical emigrant from Latvia is often a young person from the region who has no higher education.

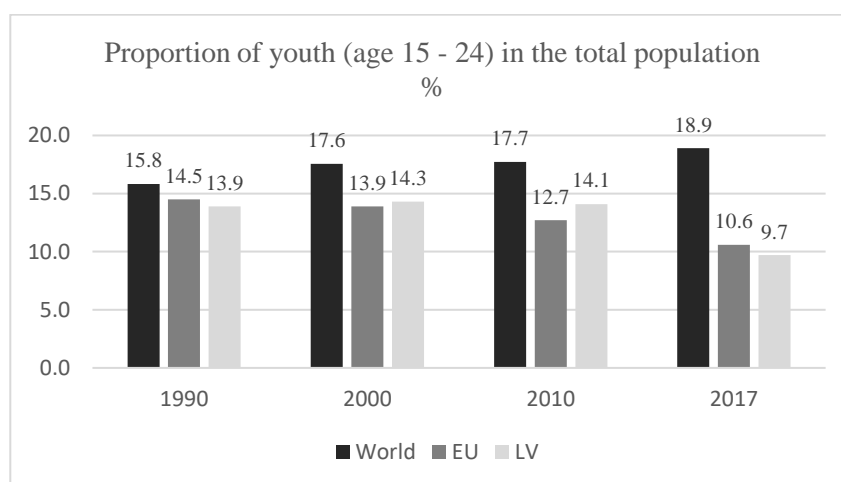
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I. Youth – concept and definition

1. Young people studying abroad are motivated to acquire foreign experience, which allows them to get better paid work after graduation (Baláz and Williams, 2004), besides they are increasing social, cultural and experiential capital (Holloway et al., 2012; Waters 2005). Youth is the vitality of every nation and serves as a main resource of further well-being. It also influences social and economic development and rebirth trends of a nation. The population of Latvia has steadily decreased since the independence in early 1990ies, where not only negative natural increase took place, but also multiple waves of emigration.

Youth is the most valuable resource of the population – nowadays, large proportion of twenty-year-olds are not only studying but have already acquired their first experience in labour market and have travelled and lived abroad more extensively than previous generations. The definition of youth age groups varies in country national legislation and adopted documents of the international organization. Youth in Latvia is considered to be from thirteen to twenty-five years (Law of youth, 2008), who are economically dependent from parents or other adults. It is observed that there is inequality according to the age groups (Trapenciēre, 2006). According to United Nation Organization youth is defined between fifteen to twenty-four years of age (UN, 1981). This definition is also mostly used in gathering statistical data and performing research. Nowadays it is common, that youth period lasts longer, for instance, in 1990 statistically Latvian women gave birth to their first child aged 20, however, in 2017 most common age of new mothers have increased up to 29 years.

Figure 1. Proportion of youth (age 15 - 24) in the total population



Source: author's projection based on the CSB and UNECE data (2018)

2. In Latvia the proportion of youth since 1990 has decreased by 4.2%, similar tendency can be observed in Europe, where the population of youth has decreased by 3.9% when comparing years 1990 and 2017. Whereas globally youth population is growing from 15, 8% in 1990 to 18, 9% in 2017.

II. Data and methods

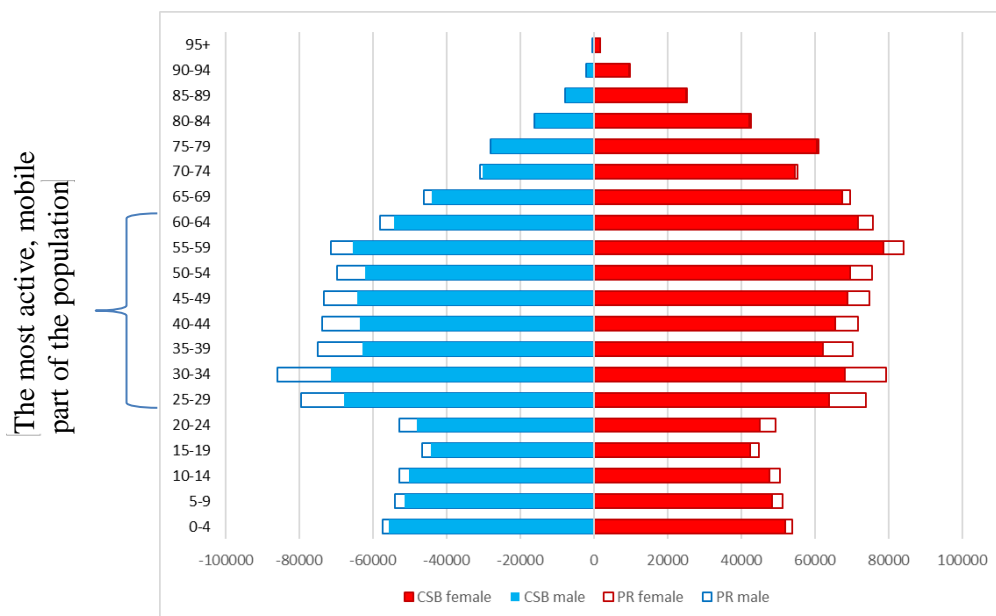
3. Measuring migration is the most complex process in social statistics, especially in recent years, when the rules for crossing borders between many countries (including the EU) have changed and the global crisis of migration has taken its' part in it.

4. The benefit of administrative data registries is the wide range of quantitative data that can be conveniently linked if a single identifier is available (for example, a personal code, a social security number or tax payer number. The use of administrative data is complicated by the fact that the purpose of creating registries is not the collection of statistical data, and therefore the definitions of indicators may differ, the identifier can be missing or timeliness can be different. In addition, often the registry owners are not interested to give access to the data.
5. For production of migration statistics the data of the Population Register, the Foreigners Register, tax registers, social insurance registers, health care registers, education and other registers are used.
6. The main benefits of surveys are two - possibility to obtain necessary data in necessary scale and periodicity which can also be combined with other data (for instance administrative data) with a single identifier. Main disadvantages are that not entire population participating in survey (including population census), some of the data obtained may not be correct due to questions that are not correctly answered or could be incorrect due to the subjective opinion of the respondent.
7. For production of migration statistics Population Census, Labor Force Survey and special surveys (travellers, population mobility and migration) data are used.
8. The main advantage of mirror statistics is the acquisition of information on the number of citizens abroad. Trustworthy information can be obtained from countries where population statistics are produced using registry data, but most EU Member States are not able to provide mirror statistics on migration. Latvia uses migration mirror statistics from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Iceland, Germany, the United Kingdom and Ireland (Method of preparing population statistics, 2012.).
9. Migration statistics have also become complicated due to the specific needs of data users - migration dynamics requires timely information not only on the number of migrants and standard demographic indicators, but also on different socio-economic indicators. In addition, a large number of EU countries also plan Population Census not using classic survey method, but using only administrative registers, therefore active work on testing and researching have started in Latvia which indicators and in what quality are available.
10. For instance, using the administrative data on the individual level from various registers and Labor Force survey, it is possible to construct geographic, demographic and socio-economic profile of the emigrant. The study uses administrative data on the individual level for the 2014-2016 emigrants-recognized persons.
11. The typical data collected for each Latvian emigrant includes age, gender, place of residence (according to the method of the Central Statistical Bureau (Method of preparing population statistics, 2012.)) and marital status. From the socio-economic indicators, the level of education was arranged according to ISCED 2011. Every year, emigrants are evaluated as a separate data set without considering the returnees.

III. Profile of Latvian young emigrant

12. Since 2012 the population in Latvia is estimated by defining the probability for each person declared in the Population Register whether the person is in Latvia or outside of Latvia. Still the difference between Population register and official statistics estimation is remarkable – it has reached more than 8%.

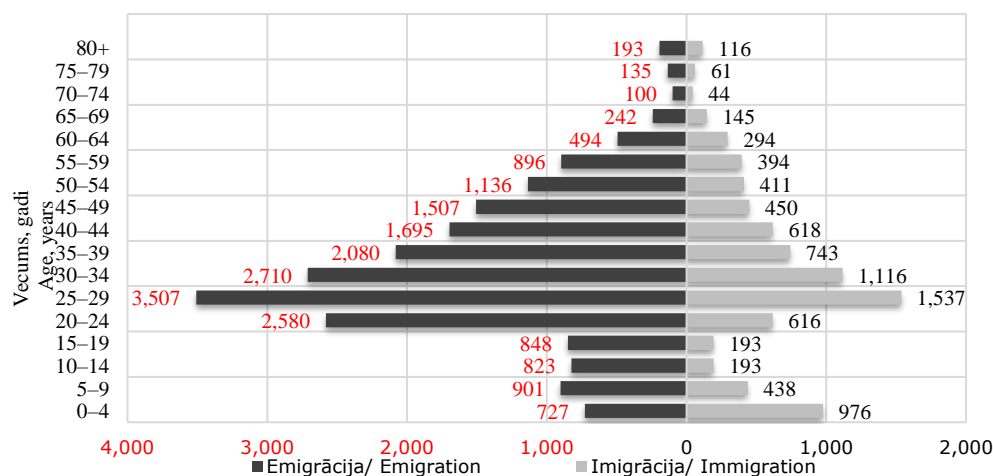
Figure 2. The number of population at the beginning of 2018



Source: author's projection based on the CSB data (2018)

13. The most evident changes are observed in the age groups from 18 when a person has reached the adulthood and start active employment or studies. It is common that these people engage in dynamic mobility's. Also, data on differences in the population register indicate that the number of emigrant increases in age groups over 19 and decreases after 60 years (see Figure 3.). Residents of Latvia do not register the fact of departure in all cases.

Figure 3. International long-term migrants (persons) in 5-year age groups; 2017



Source: author's projection based on the CSB data (2018)

A. Demographic characterisation of a typical Latvian emigrant

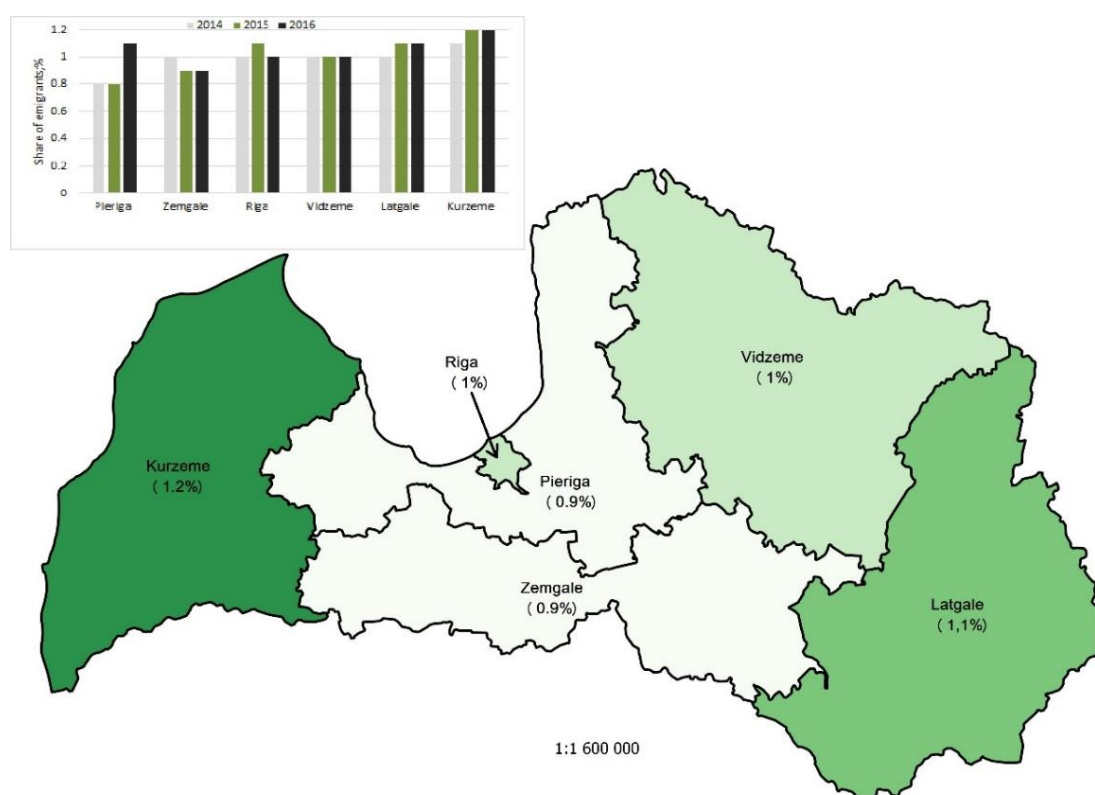
14. Most of migrants are in the age group of 25 to 29 both men and women, and the main aim of emigration is work, also the data of 2017 show that the population of this age group is the most active both in emigration and immigration (see Figure 3.).

15. The data analysis shows that around 30% of the emigrants were married, and 50% were single. The number of the divorced emigrants decreased from 22% in 2014 to 17% in 2016. The divorce rates of people older than 40 were two times higher for emigrants than the usual residents. Most of young people were unmarried and this is in line with the actual trends - increasing age of the first marriage.

16. According to NUTS classification, Latvia divided in five regions – Kurzeme, southern part – Zemgale, Eastern part – Latgale, northern part – Vidzeme and two central parts - capital Riga and suburbs of Riga named – Pieriga.

17. According to results the largest proportion of population has emigrated from western part Kurzeme (1.2%), but the highest number of emigrants are registered from eastern part Latgale (see Figure 4) (Emigration data, 2014-2016). This goes in line with relevant issues in peripheral regions which are unable to support educational and employment choices particularly for young people.

Figure 4. Share of emigrants in usual residents 2014 – 2016 %



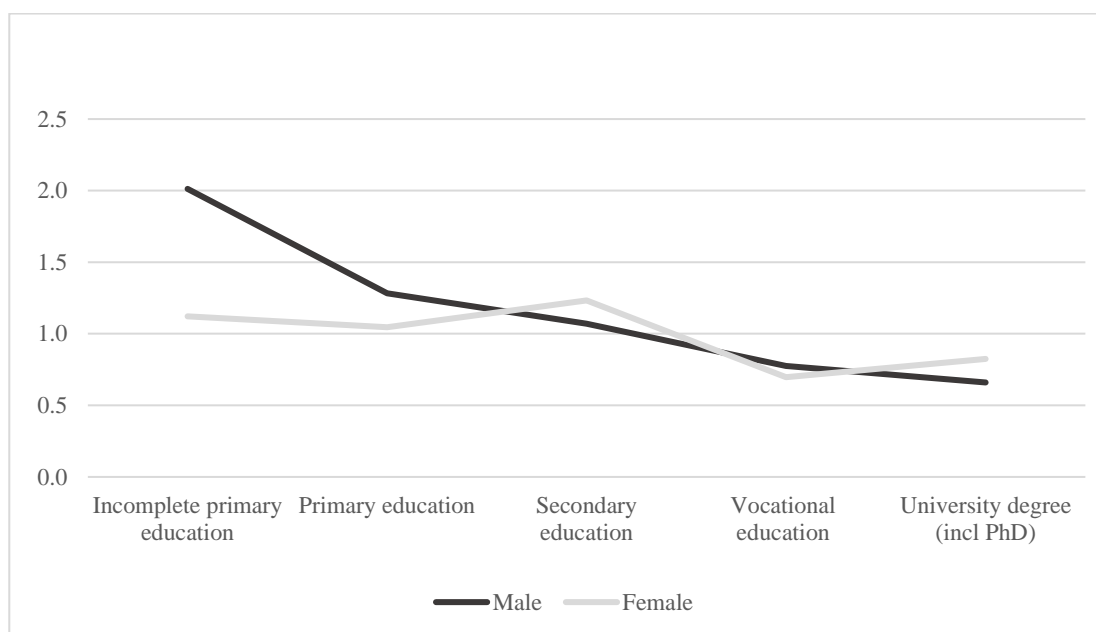
Source: author's projection based on the CSB data (2018)

18. The age structure of the emigrants of the other regions essentially differs from emigrant's age structure of the Riga and Pieriga region. Regions have mostly lost population in the 20 - 34 age group. The data show a high proportion of 0 – 4 year old immigrants. Such fact can be explained with two reasons. Firstly, the late registration of the children born abroad in the previous year, and, secondly, parents of the children under 3 years of age with usual residence abroad have made the declaration of the child in Latvia, because in the case of a remigration, the child has a place in kindergarten.

B. Education and employment of emigrants

19. Emigration of younger migrants from Riga region is the indication firstly of more active engagement into educational system abroad and secondly shows the role of Riga as a transit territory for regional youth mobility. Data on 2016 emigrants confirms that more people emigrate with a relatively low level of education (Krišjāne, Z. 2007). But from gender perspective, the alarming fact is that every fourth woman emigrant have a university degree. Besides women hold highest level education more often with the highest proportion in Riga and Pieriga region. Looking on impact of education on the possibility of emigration (see Figure 5.), tendency are the same for both genders, but for male the effect of education on the possibility of emigration is greater.

Figure 5. Impact of education on the possibility of emigration



Source: author's projection based on the CSB data (2017)

20. Comparing employment indicators from Labor Force Survey and administrative data on usual resident's employment on emigrant's previous employment, analysis on occupations was elaborated. Compared to the occupations of usual residents, in 2016, the proportion of emigrants was higher among skilled workers and craftsmen and executives (see Figure 6.). The executive group in Latvia includes also business owners, therefore the proportion of emigrants in this group is relatively high.

Figure 6. Employed persons aged 15-64 by main occupational group

Source: author's projection based on the CSB data (2017)

21. The Labor Force Survey data is qualitative data source for assessing in which sector emigrants were employed, as well as whether they were employees or business owners. The survey data showed a large difference in the assessment of whether the emigrant was economically active, unemployed, employed or economically inactive, as the proportion of emigrants shows 3 times more economically inactive persons than the proportion of usual residents.

22. There are three possible reasons for the difference: perhaps a large proportion of the emigrants have been employed in the shadow economy, or part of the persons classified as emigrants with a delay of several years. Moreover, given the fact that a large proportion of emigrants are young people who going abroad to study or gain first work experience, a large number of them previous can actually be economically inactive. Research should be continued using additional administrative data sources and evaluating data for several years. |

IV. Conclusions

23. In order to ensure the availability of high-quality migration statistics, it is essential to have qualitative administrative data and obtain the experience combining them with a high degree of precision for assessing the migration habits of the most active groups of society - youth and working age population.

24. For instance, in Latvia proportion of emigrants with a nationality of another country, as compared to the proportion of such persons among usual residents, increased from 2.5% in 2014 to 5.4% in 2016. The increase in 2016 can be explained by the fact that several counties in Latvia found a large number of people with the citizenship of non-European country who declared their place of residence at the address of employer. Similar cases should be analysed and administrative data quality evaluation system could be best tool for analysis and for improvement.

25. The Labor Force Survey is an effective source of individual comparative socio-economic indicators for usual residents and migrants, however, specialised surveys are needed for assessing

migration flows and migrant stock. Latvia has started to organize additional surveys, and in addition to 2014 Labor Force Survey module on migration, in 2015, organized Micro Census, and 2017 and 2018, an External Migration Survey.

26. The External Migration Survey is organized because in the age group 19-24, where hypothesis testing shows statistically significant differences between population statistics and Micro Census results. In this case, this is an indication of genuine differences, because the fact that the differences are in several age groups in a row indicates that the difference is not a random error.

27. In addition, a new population estimation method must be developed. Since the population estimation methodology developed in 2012 is based on the 2011 Population Census data, which are aging each year and becoming less informative about the current situation. Consequently, an estimated annual error of up to 2% of the total population is estimated every year, however, in small areas it may exceed the permissible limit.

V. Sources

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