

What do users of migration statistics expect from statisticians?

The EECCA users perspective

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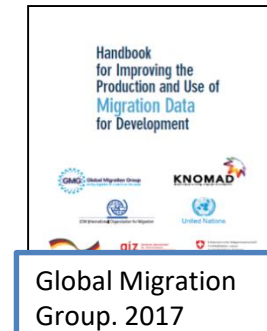
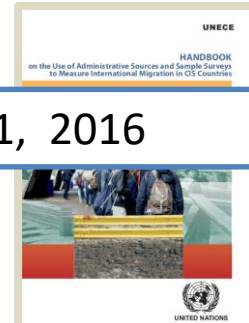
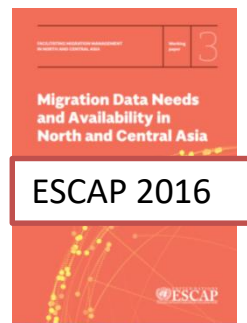
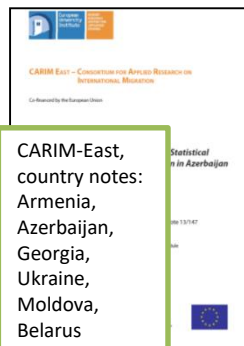
The EECCA –is an area of large-scale migration processes, it includes both migrants sending and receiving countries

- Russia and Ukraine are formally among the top-ten migrant receiving countries in terms of the stock of “foreign born” population
- Volume of annual flows of long-term migration exceeds 500 thousand people, moving mainly within the region (est.)
- Temporary migration dominates and migration for work is the most typical feature: every year several million persons are involved into labour migration (only Russia every year receives > 5 million of potential workers).
- Migrants’ remittances reach up to 30% to GDP in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (WB 2019 Oct. est.)
- Russia is among the top-ten countries receiving foreign students
- It means that migration is in focus of national interests .
- Do we know much about this phenomenon??

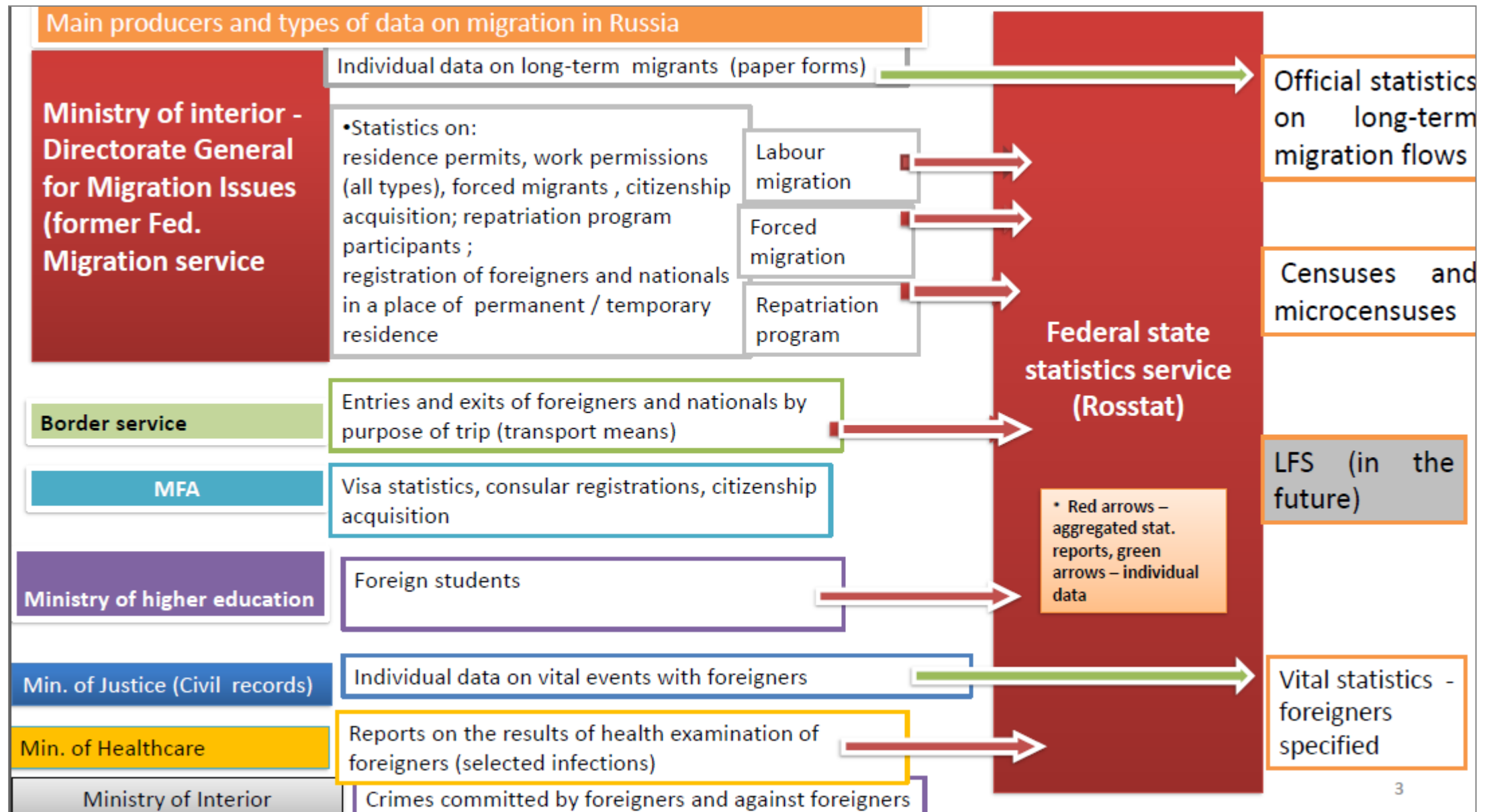
Many initiatives (incl. regional) have been undertaken, but the situation in the EECCA area is changing very slowly and not obligatorily for better

- ❖ While speaking about users' needs in statistics on migration it is difficult to avoid well known and already discussed facts
- ❖ As all other users in sending and receiving countries we want to have data on flows and stocks, we want to study reasons and consequences of migration, migrants' integration, their position on the labour market, naturalization process, situation about women and children.... etc. for both descriptive papers and in-depth analysis. And we want all relevant information from different sources be processed and published in understandable and convenient form
- ❖ This presentation:
 - is not a exhaustive review of available data sources and types of statistics in individual countries of EECCA (including quality issues)
 - highlights the most typical and important problems that regional users face;
 - is based on personal experience of the author as well as
 - incorporates ideas expressed by colleagues from Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Eurasian economic commission
 - **Its goal is not to criticize statistical or other agencies and some officials in individual countries, but to discuss the problems**

Info on the RF might be more detailed



Statisticians or data owners/(producers)? That is not the same..... (Example of the Russian Federation)



Data on flows and stocks most often comes from different sources.
 Data driven analysis rather than demand driven statistics.
 Data availability differs

Censuses – were conducted in most cases, core questions are included + q on absent household members .

Surveys
 (national and large scale)

No longitudinal surveys

Administrative statistics
Limited variety of types
 (mainly- registration based statistics of flows)

Armenia	2001	2011	X	X
Azerbaijan	1999	2009		X
Belarus	1999	2009	?	X
Georgia	2002	2014		X
Kazakhstan	1999	2009		X
Kyrgyzstan	1999	2009	X	X
Moldova	2004	2014	X	X
Russia	2002	2010		X
Tajikistan	2000	2010	X	X
Turkmenistan	1995	2012		X
Ukraine	2001		X	X
Uzbekistan				X

Microdata is available not everywhere

Most important issues mentioned by national users

(sequence does not mean ranking by significance)	NSA	Other data owners
• Absence of certain types of data (and necessity to rely on indirect methods of estimation)	X	X
• Information exists and available, but quality is unsatisfactory	X	X
• Statistics is not disaggregated by necessary variables , or combinations are not sufficient	X	X
• No info on status change	n/applic.	X
• No time series (necessity to collect info from separate files)		X
• Lack of information on migration within free-mobility zone - administrative records are very incomplete, no surveys in receiving countries	X	X
• Absence of specialized large-scale sample surveys of migration in the main receiving countries	X	n/applic.
• Access to admin data is often either prohibited or very difficult (bureaucratic), requests are not welcomed.	n/applic.	X
• Limited access to microdata of censuses and surveys	X	n/applic.
• Deficit of “stories” – including analysis of methodology development, attempts to check data quality via compilation data from different sources, deficit of analytical notes or papers on the websites of data producers, even descriptive reports are a rare practice	X	X
• Unwillingness of admin. agencies (especially – the “new players”) to produce or publish migration related statistics : data with migration variables is not processed. Lack of tradition to develop and publish a variety of statistics	n/applic.	X
• Lack in coordination between NSA and admin. agencies and between admin. agencies themselves	X	X
• Unsatisfactory form of statistics presentation: non-convenient navigation through the websites, difficulties in finding necessary data (data is not classified by topic – only “migration” in general), Information on different types of migration should be searched for in different places; it is not always possible to get info. in English or other languages. Poor visualization , old-fashioned design of available tables.	X	X

Some quotes from national users' comments:

- “When we address questions to administrative data owners (managers of different registries), the answer is always the same: first, migration statistics is not their task, and if the government considers such a task important, it needs money, which, as always, is not available. In addition, registries accumulate personal data, and their safety is a sacred matter, you can not take any risks”.
- “Basic problems and needs about statistics on migration in our country were described in analytical report in 2014. None of our recommendations have been implemented”.
- **«.....The main problem is not even absence of statistics, but its conscious closure»**
- «Access to (NSA's) information is the main problem. Only the most general numbers are published. Probably more detailed statistics are produced, but they are not available”
-”Information exists, but not available... for technical / technological reasons. If you do not know how to reach needed section, you will not find it. No instructions... That's it! The impression that it is made in order that as few people as possible could receive it”....
- «..... Again my request for border crossing statistics was refused, and there was a comment in the refusal letter that I could challenge their decision in court....”
- “Statistics are scarce, there are no time series with retrospective data, as if data collection began only after reorganization (of migration service). Published data is not disaggregated by many necessary and interesting for many users characteristics of migrants (age, sex, e purpose of entry, etc.)” (*Available at a request)

Own experience (the slide should not be understood as a list of personal “old grudges”)

- **Administrative agencies:**
- **A very** bureaucratic procedure of request – official letter from university needed, long time to wait, calls to ask if data is ready, discussion (not always possible) on completeness and quality of provided information.....
- Agencies provide scanned **images instead of tables** – we had to enter all info manually (once again)
- Data is not disaggregated even by countries - just one number – the sum of procedures in the reporting year, (no clear reasons why : “we think, that will be enough for you”)
- Data requested for several years **provided in total for the period but not by years** (with weird explanation that software does not allow to extract table for one year)
- Instead of file with database functions - very convenient for work, the producer provided plain tables with **disabled DB function** (explanation - “this form is for service use , if you need more details – send us as new request”)
- **Ministry of health did not react** to our question (official request) about possibility to process data on place of education and training of health workers from Federal Health workers Registry . (We wanted to study migration of foreign-trained health workers)
- Pension Fund (although being polite) wrote that the data we asked about **“is not collected as not having practical implementation”**. (We asked on info on how many people started receiving Russian pension after citizenship acquisition since it is very popular among residents of some foreign countries)
- **Stat. agency:**
- **Recommendations** to publish retrospectively adjusted statistics of labour migration for 1994-2010 were **ignored** (the users continue to work with data based on absolutely incorrect methodology)
- It was **extremely difficult to persuade** the officials that LFS can be used for migration measurement and research (Russian LFS conducted since 1994, only in 2019 question of country of birth and year of arrival were included)



To be continued.....

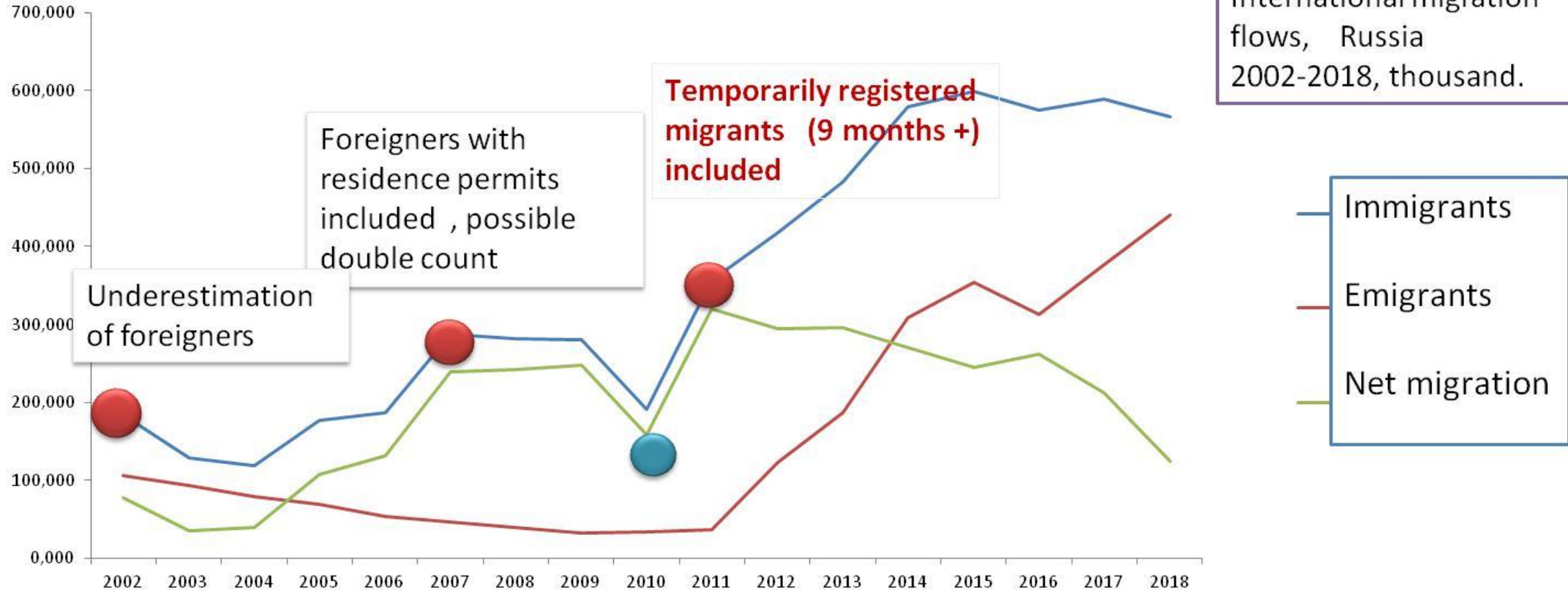
Non-machine readable format (of a very extensive statistical report)

РАЗДЕЛ 2. ЧИСЛЕННОСТЬ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ГРАЖДАН ПО СТРАНАМ ПРОИСХОЖДЕНИЯ.															
№ строки	Страны	Код страны по ОКСМ	Всего работало в отчетн. периоде (чел) гр. 5+6	физических лиц			у юридических лиц								
				Число прибыло за отчет. период	Число выбыло за отчет. период	Число иностр. гр по состоян. на конец отчетного периода гр. 12+16	число иностр. гр по состоян. на начало отчетного периода	число прибыло за отчет. период	число выбыло за отчет. период	число иностр. гр по состоян. на конец отчетного периода гр. 9+10-11	число иностр. гр по состоян. на начало отчетного периода	прибыло за отчет. период	выбыло за отчет. период	число иностр. гр по состоян. на конец отчет. пер	число иностр. гр по состоян. на конец отчет. пер
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
O1	Общая численность иностранных граждан в том числе:		292236	131791	160445	194951	97285	206	518	409	315	131585	159927	194542	96970
O2	Из стран бывш. СССР, всего в том числе:		154304	69895	84409	106917	47387	136	402	299	239	69759	84007	106618	47148
O3	Азербайджан	O31	2200	745	1455	1208	992	11	51	36	26	734	1404	1172	966
O4	Армения	O51	7150	2374	4776	4982	2168	9	27	17	19	2365	4749	4965	2149
O5	Беларусь	112	10277	7429	2848	9656	621	14	2	0	16	7415	2846	9656	605
O6	Грузия	268	8090	3284	4806	5550	2540	3	27	17	13	3281	4779	5533	2527
O7	Казахстан	398	2165	1070	1095	1467	678	13	1	4	10	1057	1094	1483	668
O8	Кыргызстан	417	1184	362	822	643	541	3	20	3	20	359	802	640	521
O9	Латвия	428	511	289	222	186	345	0	0	0	0	289	222	186	345
10	Литва	440	4591	1790	2801	2957	1634	8	40	5	43	1782	2761	2952	1591
11	Молдова	498	9426	3554	5872	6184	3242	0	2	0	2	3554	5870	6184	3240
12	Таджикистан	762	2027	284	1743	1649	378	5	82	72	15	279	1661	1577	363
13	Туркмения	795	305	57	248	213	92	0	0	0	0	57	248	213	92
14	Узбекистан	860	4108	1466	2642	3213	895	43	86	107	22	1423	2556	3106	873
15	Украина	804	98696	45093	53603	67138	31558	27	64	38	53	45066	53539	67100	31505
16	Эстония	233	3574	2098	1476	1871	1703	0	0	0	0	2098	1476	1871	1703
17	Из стран быв. Югославии, все в том числе:		18613	7238	11375	12925	5688	0	0	0	0	7238	11375	12925	5688
18	Босния и Герц	O70	839	268	571	566	273	0	0	0	0	268	571	566	273
19	Македония	807	1253	687	566	1091	162	0	0	0	0	687	566	1091	162
20	Хорватия	191	1869	962	887	1437	432	0	0	0	0	982	887	1437	432
21	Словения	705	411	208	203	253	158	0	0	0	0	208	203	253	158
22	Югосл. респ. (Сербия, Черногория)	891	14241	5093	9148	9578	4663	0	0	0	0	5093	9148	9578	4663

Quality issues (example of statistics of long-term flows in Russia)

dynamics of long-term migration in Russia depends on external factors no less than on the migration itself.
External factors – inconsistency in interaction with the Ministry of internal Affairs, gaps in the regulatory framework, technological obstacles .

International migration
flows, Russia
2002-2018, thousand.



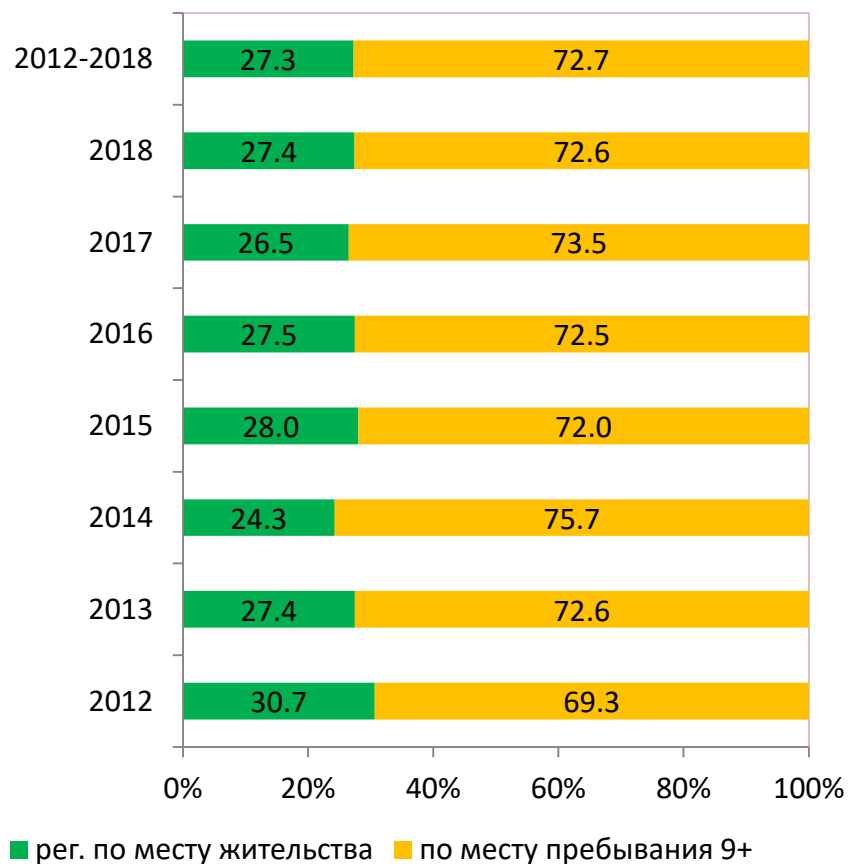
Since 2011 emigration is counted
automatically – when registration expires

- Moments of changes to the methodology (**unintentional** and **intentional**)
- Changes in Citizenship law that led to decline in registered flow

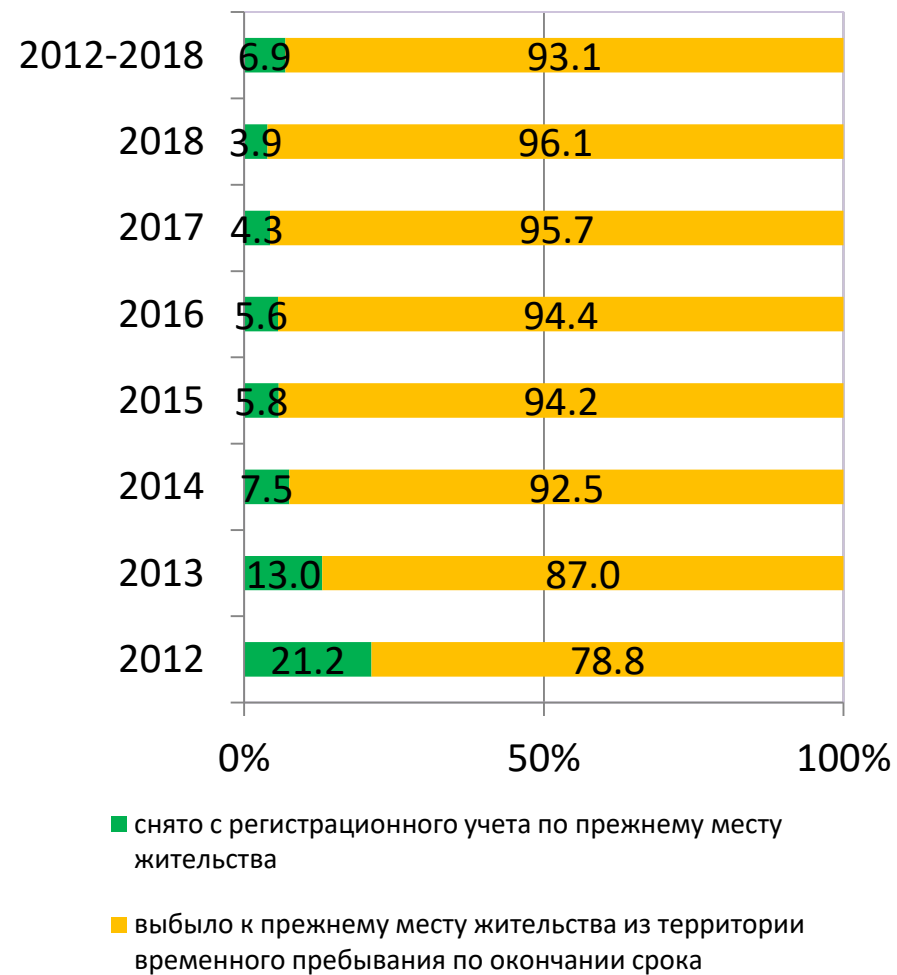
Quality issues (continued). Temporary migrants prevail.

*Type of registration of long-term international migrants , RF, 2012-2018, % ,
yellow – temporary, green – permanent .*

Immigrants



Emigrants



Quality issues (continued).

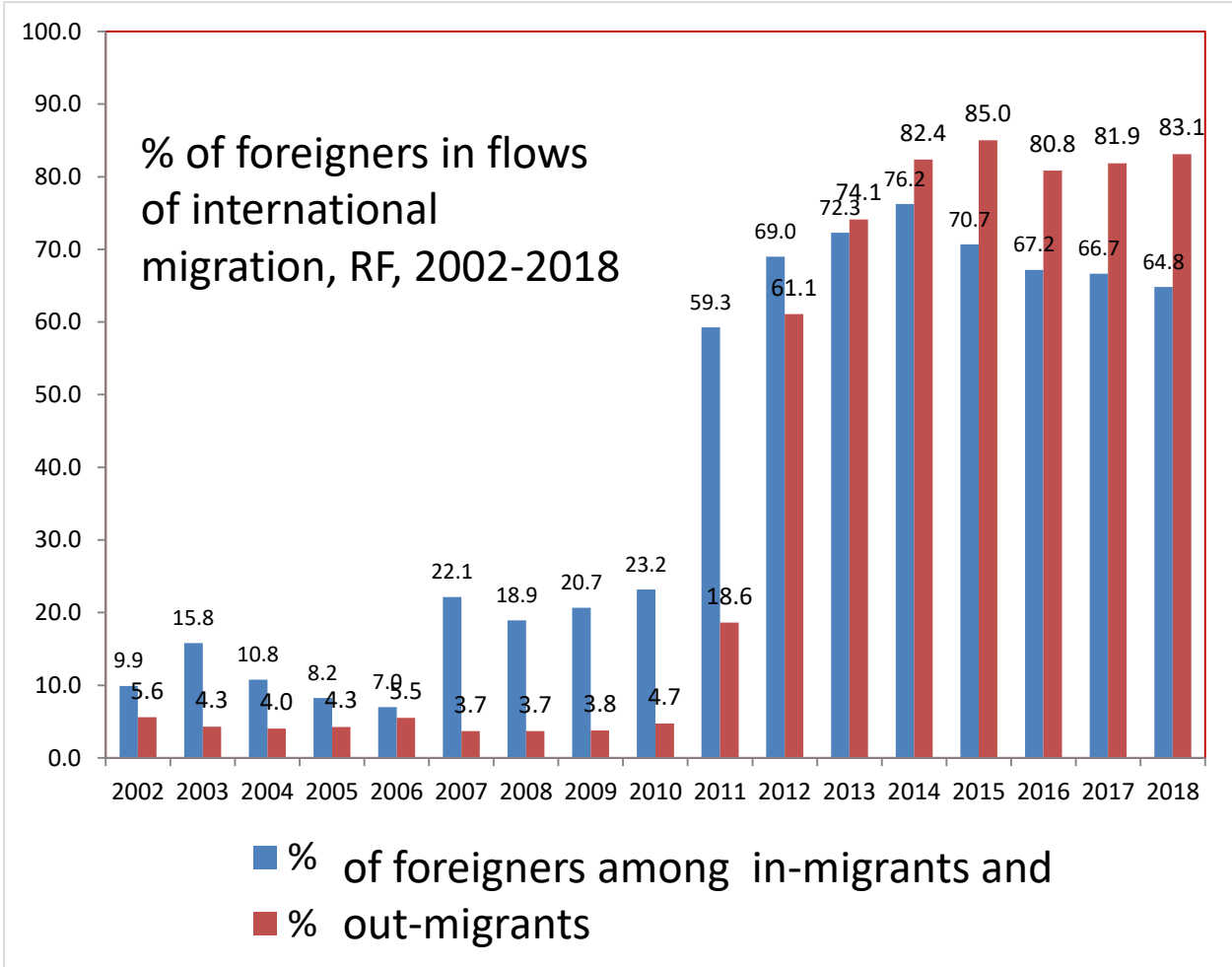
The new methodology (includes temporary migrants registered for 9months +):

- Is based on a set of simplifying assumptions , that might be not correct (and lead both to underestimation or double count)
- Led to absolute incomparability with statistics collected in the countries sending migrants to the RF,
- Broke the time series (incomparability with previous years)
- Cannot guarantee correct measurement of migration flows if data is not adjusted with administrative records of migration authorities

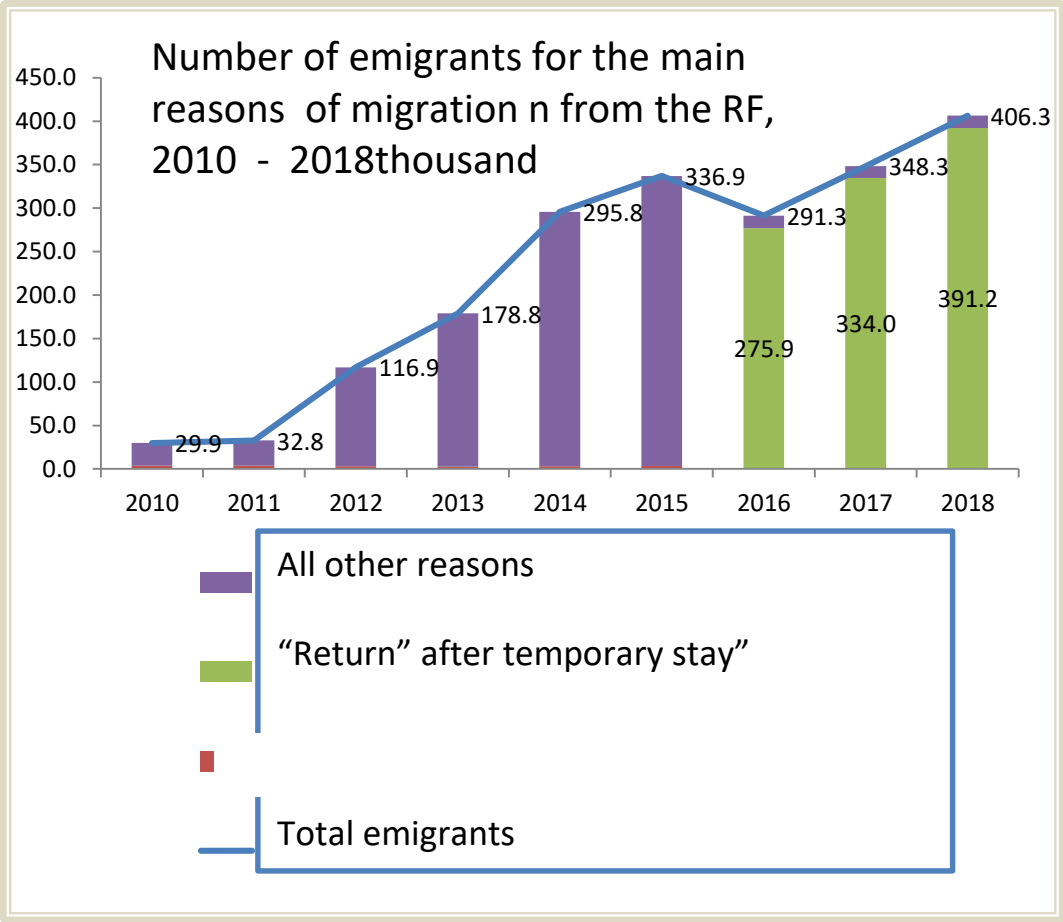
Assumption	Doubt	Result
•All migrants register immediately for 9+ months	Not obligatorily – many can register many times for shorter periods and accumulated period will exceed 9 months	Undercount of both in and out-migrants
•All migrants stay until registration expires	Not true , early departures are rather numerous , new arrival and registration are possible	Undercount of early departures and new arrivals , double count of same people
•All migrants “emigrate” to the same country they came from	No guarantee	Errors in distribution of emigrants by destinations

Quality issues (continued). Problems with migrants' characteristics:

New methodology led to considerable increase in share of foreigners both in in- and out- flows, the latest is not typical for emigration



Reasons for out-migration are fictitious because , since 2017 majority are considered to “return to the previous place of residence”



Quality issues

Example of the LFS of the Russian Federation , conducted since 1994, around 900 000 respondents per year

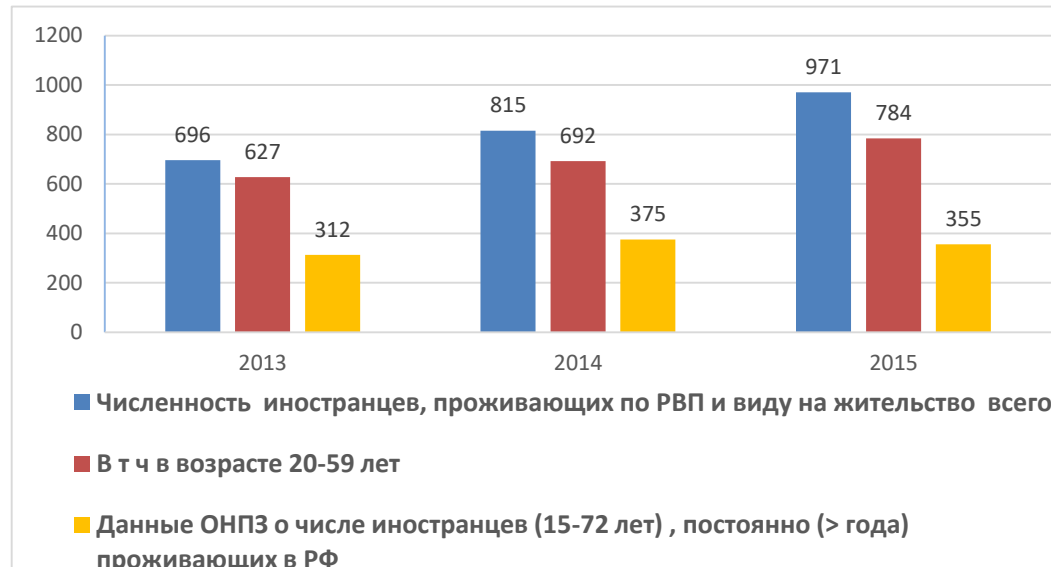
Mid-year population of foreigners with residence permits and the foreigners (1 year of residence) covered by the LFS, Russia, 2013-2015, thousands

Till 2019

- No questions of country of birth and year of arrival
- Question on citizenship with 3 options of answer – Russian / other / both
- No questions on incomes (so far)

Module 2019:

1. What country were you born in?
2. In what country did you live in 1992?
3. How long have you been continuously living in Russia?
 - Less than 3 months
 - From 3 months to 1 year
 - From 1 year to 5 years
 - More than 5 years
4. What was the main reason for your arrival in Russia?
 - Work
 - Study
 - Family circumstances
 - Moving to permanent residence
 - Unfortunate situation in their own country
 - etc



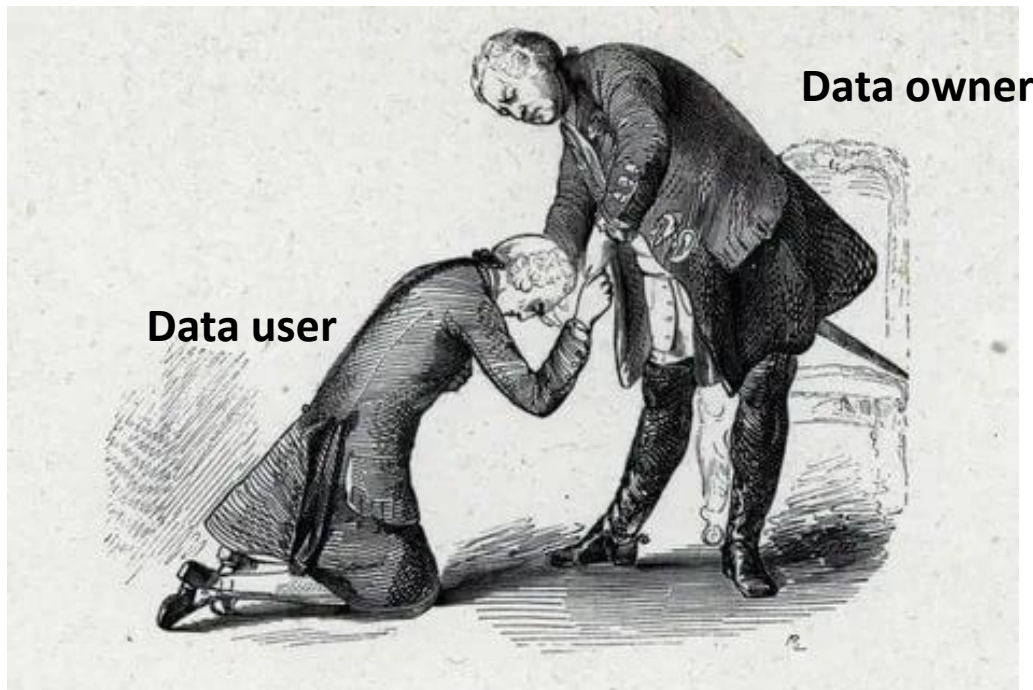
In accordance with Migration service data stock of foreigners (with different statuses) staying in Russia > 1 year in 2015 amounted at approx. 3,5 million . LFS (weighted) covered around 355 thousand. Stock of lawful residents with residence permits in comparable age = 784 thousand

Concluding remarks 1 (general considerations)

- Status quo of the availability and quality of data in the EECCA region is not absolutely satisfactory. In many cases available data is enough only to general description of current trends, a lot of important data needed for more fundamental studies is either missing or not available.
- Access to statistics is one of the main problems data users meet with in the region of EECA. It is not easy to solve the problem due to institutional, political and technical barriers and circumstances, (but we should not give up)
- Many data owners are not involved into production of statistics and are rare guests at the meetings like we are having today. It is necessary to involve them into the orbit of statistics production and dissemination through training courses, seminars etc. to broaden their outlook (from the perspective of statistics production and access of users to data)
- **Data producers should provide some analysis: analytical papers are welcome on the websites of corresponding agencies. It will help the users to better understand the methodology and possible fluctuations in data series, better know the history of different data sources etc.**
- National statistical offices should better utilize their potential - collect migration data at censuses, surveys and **provide access to information, including microdata**
- Better communication of data owners / producers with users is necessary

Concluding remarks 2 (dealing in particular with access to data)

- It is necessary to involve (admin.) data owners into discussion, persuade them that it is not fashionable and out-of-date to hide statistics, the users should not feel like supplicants and the gains from co-operation will be far larger than from restrictions in access. One party provides data – the other – analysis, together we create more colourful and comprehensive image of migration.
- **National statistical agencies** can be the last resort for the users – in accordance with national Law on statistics they **can and should** require necessary statistics from the agencies that are not ready to publish information themselves. Thus the country will get valuable information for research and decision-making. **Power from statistics sometimes depends on power and self-confidence of statisticians.**



- **Thank you for your attention!**