UNECE Workshop on Migration Statistics

Measuring migration at times of the pandemic Wednesday, 28 October 2020

New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Israel

Olivia Blum, Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה
Central Bureau of Statistics
دائرة الإحصاء المركزية

Emerging perception with regard to the pandemic

It is a survival crisis (in changing intensity over time), and therefore,

1. **National identity** first - world citizenship later, from both ends; the citizen who needs protection services and the protection providing country (addressing citizens/non citizens, returning home, withholding emigration).

2. **Accepted price**: Ad-hoc migration regulations and policy decisions, derived economic decline (among others) for an unknown period of time.

3. **Expected social change** that will influence the migration phenomenon in the short and mid-term, and the production of migration statistics from now on.

Challenges

1. What working assumptions should we adopt? Can we assume that these are movements along the demand and supply migration-curves (consuming migration quantities according to changing prices) or these are shifts of the curves altogether, because of changing conditions (pull and push forces)?

▸ What are the questions to be asked if it is a new game?

   ▸ What new migration types are expected?

   ▸ What population groups are to be estimated?

   ▸ Should we prepare a contingency plan?

Challenges

2. Changing relations in the triangle of-

▸ Needs – updated data NOW! Since population estimates provide all denominators in the pandemic.

▸ Data availability and accessibility – less direct data collection (surveys, censuses), more indirect data collection (admin data).

▸ Uses and users – Government, local authorities and the PUBLIC.

Transparency is implemented and well accepted since data quality is judged by functionality (fit for purpose).

However, the NSOs have to keep on improving the estimation methods, to better address present and future needs

Opportunities identified

▸ Using non-traditional data sources;

▸ Establishing new traditions with new data suppliers; once you pave the way, keep on using it;

▸ Adopting technological developments that the wide spread connectivity allows.

▸ Improving while changing models to estimate migration.

▸ Providing flash estimates and now-casting on the day after.

Specific observations

▸ To Jason Schachter, US – You presented the solution to bridge the data gap created, when trying to measure the impact of COVID-19. It seems that you can gain from the present use of additional data sources to use adjustment models, tailored to changing circumstances (not scenarios), to estimate migration (not only differences).

▸ To Pubudu Senanayake and Kim Dunstan, NZ – Estimating migration based on outcomes vs. intensions to migrate, using alternative data sources. Have you compared declarations with behavior?

▸ When data of border crossing are compared, citizens and non citizens behave alike. It implies a high dependency on external limitations imposed and not on residence status. This is also the case in Israel, when looking at sub population groups.

Specific observations

- To Julien Bérard-Chagnon, CAN – Very insightful lessons learnt. Presenting emigration from Canada is half mirror exercise with the US; measuring emigration from the US to Canada, and immigration to Canada from the US. Adjusting the methodology can be expanded to the second half of the mirror exercise, if data are available for the opposite migration direction.

- We have to remember that visa is a potential migration and not necessarily actual migration.

- It is not clear if the method (Average monthly ratio between usual method and Visa data last 3 years X Visa data) improves estimates enough to encourage the external dependency on international cooperation.

Specific observations

▸ To Becca Briggs, UK – COVID impact in addition to Brexit impact on migration, and predicted on going changes in migration patterns, lead to aiming toward estimation of population stock and migration flows based on admin data.

▸ On the way to geo-demographic admin census (children are missing?).

▸ The main challenge will be the ensuring of data accessibility with no bureaucratic strings attached.