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**STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
(EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)**

Joint ECE-EUROSTAT-ESCWA work session
on Migration Statistics*
(Geneva, 8-10 May 2000)

Topic 4

**THE GATHERING OF STATISTICS ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION:
CURRENT SITUATION IN BULGARIA**

Summary

Supporting paper submitted by the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute¹

1. The main aim of the paper will be to present the different current and potential sources of data on international migration used in Bulgaria.
2. Population censuses provide information on place of birth, nationality, and place of residence. Sample surveys based on a representative sample were conducted during the censuses of 1975 and 1985. A sample survey on internal and external migration was conducted in 1991, before the 1992 census. The forthcoming census in 2001 will again include a representative survey of migratory flows besides the population questionnaire.

* The documentation for this work session will be processed as for seminars.

¹ Prepared by Stefka Blajeva.

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3. The population register is a single system for civil registration and the administration of the population. All changes in civil status and permanent address within Bulgaria are recorded in the register on appropriate data-entry slips.
4. Sample surveys at the country's borders were conducted in April 1991 and June 1992. A further survey was conducted in 1996 with financial support from IMO to determine potential emigration levels.
5. With information on the visas issued at consulates abroad, it should be possible to check entries on visas into Bulgaria. The number of Bulgarians entered on electoral rolls at consulates abroad should make it possible to check on departures by Bulgarians. Nevertheless, these two sources of information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will only furnish means of corroboration, not exhaustive, reliable statistics.
6. Full information is available on applications for asylum and refugees. The statistical tables produced from the data furnished by the Refugee Agency follow Eurostat recommendations on the subject. The Refugees Act was recently approved and passed, and all information will be regulated in accordance with existing law on the subject.
7. The Police Service responsible for handling foreign passports also issues long- or short-term residence permits to foreigners in Bulgaria in accordance with the Aliens Act and other pieces of legislation. Bulgaria is currently undergoing a complete changeover in identity documents - a new identity card to replace the former civilian passport, passport for foreign travel, and driving licence.
8. Exhaustive and reliable information is provided by the Border Police operating under the Ministry of the Interior. The chief sources of data are the entry and exit data-entry forms. The main change in this process has been the introduction of a new form to be filled in by anyone, Bulgarian or foreign, entering or leaving the country regardless of the duration of or reason for the trip. The chief innovation consists in the fact that the control entails the use of a single form to be kept by the passenger and handed in upon departure or return. This procedure will be facilitated after the complete changeover in passports for foreign travel. The two movements will be linked automatically. This ought to improve the quality of data collected.
9. There is yet another source of information on international migration, one chiefly concerned with migration in search of work. This is the National Employment Service, which issues work permits to foreigners under the Aliens Act when this is necessary for the purpose of obtaining a residence permit.
10. All these sources of data on international migration will be carefully discussed in the forthcoming paper, pointing out characteristics and trends in their development as a means of shedding light on the availability and precision of the statistics. The main problems involved in their use and the legislation underlying their application will likewise be considered.

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