Benefits and challenges of using *signs of life* approach to estimate unregistered migration

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Estonian Population Register (PR)

PR contains data about
- all Estonian citizens
- foreigners, who have registered their address in Estonia
- foreigners, who have got an Estonian residence permit

BUT:
- people who have left Estonia often do not register their leaving in PR;
- people who have come (back) into Estonia do not give this information to PR

**THIS LEADS TO:**
- Over-coverage of population register
- Migration flows are underestimated
**Signs of life approach to estimate residential population**

**General idea:** It can be assumed that the people who actually live in Estonia are represented in other administrative registers because they are using services and receive payments.

For example, a person gets a sign of life if he or she works, goes to school or visits a doctor, is in conscript service, applies for a document or receives social benefits.
Benefits and challenges in the context of migration statistics

Benefits: We are able to detect unregistered migration

RVR05: EXTERNAL MIGRATION by Year. Total, Immigration, Males and females.

Data from: https://andmed.stat.ee/en/
Benefits and challenges in the context of migration statistics

Challenges: Lack of descriptive information about the migrants

RVR05: EXTERNAL MIGRATION by Country and Year. Immigration, Males and females.

Data from: https://andmed.stat.ee/en/
Future prospects

Additional data sources: further administrative data sources, big data

New types of migration: transnational migrants and commuters
Thank you!

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