

Use of the Harmonized Module on Migration and Remittances in Selected Household Surveys in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

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List of acronyms

HBS – Household Budget Survey

LFS – Labour Force Survey

CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States

Introduction

1. To this date, countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia have been frequently using and continue to use selective household surveys to study international migration flows. To this end, questions on migration and remittances from working migrants, or an additional thematic section (hereafter – module), have been added to the surveys. Nevertheless, the list of additional questions and the content of thematic modules vary not only from one country to another, but between surveys conducted in the same country. As a result, our knowledge about international migration and remittances from migrant workers has substantially improved, but the issue surrounding the comparability of data between the countries of the region remains unsolved.

2. Comparable data on international migration and remittances can only be achieved through the development of a harmonized approach for the conducting of such surveys. The harmonized approach involves the use of a single thematic module, based on standardized measurements of the scope, characteristics and influence of migration and remittances. An internationally agreed upon migration survey should, ideally, be conducted in all countries of the region¹.

3. Data obtained through this approach would enable countries of the studied region to improve the quality and reliability of their statistics, which will eventually lead to the development of more effective measures to improve the overall wellbeing of the population.

4. Until recently, the use of thematic modules on migration in multipurpose surveys was focused on the evaluation of labour market situations, in light of international migration. In this sense, questions on international migration were prevailing over those on remittances, and the act of receiving remittances was usually related to a household member working abroad. In parallel, more and more specialized surveys were conducted in recent years, focusing on different aspects and impacts of migration and remittances, such as the level of wellbeing or qualitative transformations of human capital of both migrants and their family members, residing in the country of origin.

5. There is potential for some multipurpose surveys to be of use for the study of the economic effects of migration and remittances at a micro level. For example, surveys that aim at measuring standards of living, and obtaining data on income and expenditures of households. The results of these surveys are used to determine poverty rates, to calculate indicators for minimum subsistence level, to assess low-income population rates and eventually, for taking corresponding measures in social and economic policy.

6. This paper presents a version of the migration and remittances harmonized module (hereafter – harmonized module), recommended for inclusion into the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and other integrated surveys in which incomes and expenditures are measured. The development of this module takes into account international guidelines and recommendations for

¹ Handbook on the Use of Administrative Sources and Sample Surveys to Measure International Migration in CIS Countries. UNECE, New York and Geneva, 2016

conducting migration questionnaires, as well as the experience of the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, in conducting multi-purpose surveys where a thematic module or additional questions on migration and remittances are included.

Chapter 1 Survey summary

7. The choice to integrate the harmonized module into HBS-type surveys is justified by the fact that they are used by countries, including those of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, to assess population poverty rates based on the household income and expenditures structure. The inclusion of a harmonized module into the survey facilitates the study of the relationship between the fact of receiving remittances and the level of household welfare. In addition to income and expenditure indicators, the HBS questionnaire includes a series of other indicators that can be used for the assessment and comparison of living standards between households that receive remittances and those that do not. More specifically, these include indicators related to housing facilities, usage of land, as well as the subjective assessment of poverty level.

8. To this day, all countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia conduct HBS-type surveys, although the names of said surveys vary from one country to another (Table 1). In Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the HBS is combined with the LFS. In Armenia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, different households participate in the two different surveys. On the contrary, in Kyrgyzstan, these two surveys are fully merged².

Table 1. HBS-type surveys in countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

Azerbaijan	Sample Survey of Household Incomes and Expenditures
Armenia	Integrated Survey of Household Living Standards
Belarus	Sample Survey of Household Living Standards
Kazakhstan	Sample Survey of Household Living Standards Evaluation
Kyrgyzstan	Integrated Sample Survey of Household Budgets and Labour Force
Republic of Moldova	Household Budget Survey
Russian Federation	Household Budget Sample Survey
Tajikistan	Household Budget Sample Survey
Turkmenistan	Household Budget Sample Survey
Uzbekistan	Household Budget Sample Survey
Ukraine	National Statistical Sample Survey of Household Living Standards
Georgia	Household Monitoring

9. In the Russian Federation, a HBS is conducted quarterly, covering 48,000 private households in all constituent territories of the Russian Federation. Additionally, a Population Incomes and Social Programs Participation Survey is conducted annually, covering 60,000 households in all constituent territories of the Russian Federation; and since 2017, the coverage is increased to 160,000 households once every five years.

10. The HBS consists of several tools: 1) a household questionnaire; 2) a household diary; and 3) a household journal. The household diary is used in all CIS countries to collect information about household expenditures for food and food products received as in-kind

² Consolidating HBS conducting experience in CIS countries. Statistics Methodology. CISSTAT. 2010. The document was reviewed at the Plenary Session of CISSTAT Board of Academics and sent to the national statistical offices with official letter No. 4- IOI/2-79 dated November 22, 2010.

payment. Additionally, in most countries, this form is used to record the cost of purchasing non-food items and paying for services. The household journal has been introduced in many countries to provide a more accurate account of expenditures related to non-food products and services. All CIS countries use "questionnaires" while conducting the survey, which are filled out during interviews with household members, and contain a wide range of questions about the composition of the household, employment and educational level of its individual members, incomes and expenditures, living conditions and the provision of durable goods, the availability of land and economic activities³.

11. Experience in the use of HBS-type surveys for the study of migration and remittances can be found in countries such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova and Georgia, however the approaches used in compiling the thematic modules, as well as questions on migration and remittances are very different. Differences relate to the choice of the tool used (household diary or questionnaire), where the module is placed in the general survey questionnaire, the reference period applied in questions about migration events and receipt of remittances, and finally, the total number of questions in the module and the number of questions related specifically to migration and remittances (Table 2).

12. The HBS program conducted in Russia includes questions about expenditures of household members while traveling for various purposes (work, vacation or tourism, education, medical treatment, visiting friends or relatives) to other regions of the Russian Federation and abroad. In addition, the Household Income Survey⁴ includes questions about receiving remittances from other regions of Russia or from abroad. In the case of an affirmative answer, the total amount of remittances received in the previous calendar year (12 months) is recorded. At present, work is under way to improve the methods of recording labour migration in order to obtain information on the number, composition, hours worked and income of labour migrants.

Table 2. Experience of using thematic module and/or questions on migration and remittances within HBS-type surveys

	Modules		Questions	
	<i>Migration</i>	<i>Remittances</i>	<i>Migration</i>	<i>Remittances</i>
Armenia	X	X		
Azerbaijan				X
Georgia		X		X
Kyrgyzstan			X	
Republic of Moldova			X	X
Russian Federation				X

13. Most often, thematic modules or questions are placed in a household questionnaire. An alternative approach used, for example, in the Republic of Moldova, is to include the issue of the

³ Consolidating HBS conducting experience in CIS countries. Statistics Methodology. CISSTAT. 2010. The document was reviewed at the Plenary Session of CISSTAT Board of Academics and sent to the national statistical offices with official letter No. 4- IOI/2-79 dated November 22, 2010.

⁴ Survey description available here (in Russian): <http://rulaws.ru/acts/Prikaz-Rosstata-ot-20.06.2018-N-383/>

receipt of remittances in the household diary (in the section “Foreign remittances received by the household”)⁵.

14. The choice of where the module is integrated into the HBS-type survey is determined by the general structure of the questionnaire. The existence of sections on household incomes and expenditures appears both as an advantage and a disadvantage in terms of ease of integration of the module. On the one hand, questions on migration logically come after questions on the structure of the household. In practice, during interviews, questions on migration are always accompanied by the question on receipt of remittances from a migrant-member of the household. On the other hand, questions on remittances as an additional income source and/or an additional expenditure are logically placed along with the corresponding sections of the general survey questionnaire. However, in that case there is a gap between questions on migration and questions on remittances, and furthermore, questions about remittances might be repeated.

15. For instance, the Household Monitoring Survey in Georgia contains several questions on migration in the “Household Structure” section, while additional questions on migration and remittances are in the “Other household incomes, changes in financial state” section (Subsection 4. “Parcels received/sent from/to persons who left the household (temporary or permanently)”, between the subsections “Changes in financial state of the household during the past three months” and “Expenses and incomes in foreign currency”). As the purpose of the section is to study changes in the financial situation of the household over the past three months, the same time period applies for questions related to migration and remittances. Subsection 4 contains a total of 10 questions, which cover internal and external migration, as well as transfer of remittances between households.

16. In Armenia, The Integrated Survey of Household Living Standards⁶ includes detailed questions on migration and remittances in a separate module “Migration” that follows the section “Household Structure” and contains a total of nine questions, investigating domestic and international migration (over the past three years), as well as cash or in-kind remittances. There are 14 additional questions about monetary remittances received and sent by the household, which are included in the “Monetary and commodity flows between households” section. The thematic section covers domestic and cross-border remittances. Questions in both sections cover the period of “the last 12 months”. The difference lies in that the “Monetary and commodity flows between households” section recognizes any person as the sender, not only the present/absent household member, including someone that has never resided in Armenia.

Did the household receive money or goods (as a gift or assistance) from an absent household member or any other person during the last 12 months? /За последние 12 месяцев домохозяйство получало деньги или товары (в качестве подарка или помощи) от отсутствующего члена домохозяйства или других лиц? *

1. Yes/Да

2. No – section I./Нет – раздел I

⁵ The experience of the Republic of Moldova in using Household Surveys to measure migration and remittances. Workshop on Migration Statistics, November 1-2, 2017, Geneva.

https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.10/2017/mtg2/Item_04_Presentation_6_UNECE_Migration_Moldova.pdf (in Russian)

⁶ Conducted in 2015.

№	1	2
	<p>Number of the household member whom the money or goods were received from /идентификационный номер члена домохозяйства, от которого были получены деньги или товары</p> <p>For the non-household members/Для тех, кто не является членом домохозяйства</p> <p><u>To the interviewer/ Внимание интервьюер:</u> <i>Put code 77 if this member was not absent from Armenia, or was absent only for a period up to one year / Впишите код 77, если этот член находился в Армении или отсутствовал не более 1 года</i></p> <p><i>Put code 99 if he/she was permanently absent for more than a year or never resided in Armenia / Впишите код 99, если он/она постоянно проживает за пределами Армении более 1 года или никогда не проживал в Армении</i></p>	<p>Where does he/she live? / Где он/она проживает?</p>

**Перевод на русский язык- автора / Translation into Russian by the author*

17. The use of separate modules for migration and remittances would require additional time on the part of the interviewer, but also add supplementary strain on the respondents. One of the solutions is to divide the questions between the interviewer's visits. For example, in Armenia, questions on migration are asked during the first visit, while questions concerning remittances are asked during the fifth visit.

18. The choice of a particular time period for the study of migration events and remittances receipt could be justified by the frequency of the survey. For instance, the Household Monitoring Survey is conducted quarterly in Georgia, while data collection for the Integrated Living Standard Survey in Armenia takes place monthly. Harmonization of questions on the time period is possible, if the frequency of updating information on international migration and on remittances is coordinated. Meanwhile, question blocks should be used simultaneously to maintain the connection between migration events and the receipt of remittances.

19. The total number of questions on migration and remittances included in the thematic modules of each country varies between 10 and 25. We may therefore consider them as the conventional minimum and maximum number of questions that can be contained in the thematic module. Further, the number of the questions on migrants' socio-demographic characteristics can be reduced if said questions are asked in other sections of the household questionnaire. Particular attention should be given to the content of the "Household Structure" section, as well as the sections on "Education" and "Employment".

Chapter 2 Harmonized Migration and Remittances

Module

2.1 Characteristics of the harmonized module

20. The harmonized module is conceptually different from previous versions of thematic migration modules that have been applied or proposed for use in sample surveys on a common theme. Its goal is not only to serve as a tool for obtaining / clarifying key indicators of international migration and remittances, but also to optimize the task of taking these indicators into account when developing public policy measures to reduce poverty among the population, including in the framework of achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

21. The growing impact of migration on the countries of origin, especially in economic terms, is evaluated through remittances that the working migrant sends to their family back home. It is known that remittances increase the level of income of the household, thereby contributing to the reduction of poverty at the macro level.

22. Assessing the economic impact of migration and remittances at the micro level can be done through a sample household survey. Additionally, the parameters of this assessment can be used as indicators of the status of employment of all members of the household, receipt of state subsidies, the structure of the total household expenditure, including for paid services, the availability of durable goods and others. Thus, the inclusion of a harmonized module in an HBS-type survey would contribute to informed conclusions about the role of remittances in changing the level of household welfare in the countries of origin.

2.2. Aims of the harmonized module

2.2.1 Regular measurements of international migration

23. The design of the harmonized module suggests dividing questions on migration and remittances into two separate modules, in order to distinguish between the existence of a temporary emigrant in the household and the receipt of remittances sent by an individual who is not related to the household by family ties. Simultaneously, the harmonized module also seeks to resolve several other issues that remain outside the scope of the surveys mentioned above.

24. The first task consists in including basic questions for measuring international migration, in order to regularly assess the influx and total number of migrants. To this end, the "Migration" section of the harmonized module includes a question for determining the migration status of respondents, based on the criterion of their respective host country.

25. Questions on the country of birth and date of arrival can be included into the Household Structure section of the questionnaire. Currently available data suggest that Armenia is the only

country which includes the question on the country of birth in the Household Structure section of the Integrated Living Standards Survey.

2.2.2 Distinguishing between temporary and permanent emigration

26. The second task is to distinguish between short-term (temporary, with a duration of absence of more than 3 months, but less than 1 year) and long-term (permanent, with a duration of 1 year or more) external emigration. The difficulties associated with the allocation of long-term migration within the framework of the HBS survey, are related to the specifics of the methodology for determining the household composition. As a rule, members of a household that are absent for more than 1 year are not considered as part of the household⁷

27. In order to identify "long-term emigrants" – former members of the household – the harmonized module includes a series of questions on "Permanent migrants". Hence, differences in the definition of a household will not affect the ease of integration of the module.

2.2.3 Expanding the Household with a Migrant Category

28. The third task is to expand the category "Household with a migrant". This would be possible as a result of the identification of "long-term emigrants" among former members of the household. As survey results in the countries of the region show, a significant proportion of households receive remittances from a person who is not a member of the household. For example, according to the results of HBS in Moldova, about 60% of households that receive remittances obtain them from persons who are not members of their household⁸.

29. The introduction of a "permanent emigrants" category among former household members that have been away from the country for a year or more, enables the comparison between two types of households – one with a temporary working emigrant and the other, with a permanent (working) emigrant, and provides relevant information about the receipt of remittances.

2.2.4 Standardization of the measurement of remittance expenditure patterns

30. The key element that determines the evolving impact of remittances is the answer to the question on what do households spend the money that they receive from abroad. The classification of the types of remittance spending used in migration surveys is based on the distinction between two main types of expenditures – consumption and investment. The long-

⁷ Exceptions to this rule are Russia and Armenia, where, according to the HBS methodology, a household includes persons who are absent for a long period of time - 1 year or more - but who have kinship ties with the remaining members of the household, which potentially increases the chances of more households with migrants entering the sample. - Note by the author

⁸ The experience of the Republic of Moldova in using household surveys to measure migration and remittances. Workshop on migration statistics. 1-2 November 2017. Geneva.
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.10/2017/mtg2/Item_04_Presentation_6_UNECE_Migration_Moldova.pdf (in Russian)

term evolving impact of remittances is associated with investment-oriented financial behavior of households, which also includes investing in human capital.

31. In this regard, the undeniable advantage of using HBS surveys to integrate a harmonized module is the use of a unified system for aggregating and reporting household expenditures on consumer goods and services - the Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP)⁹. The system identifies four consumption types: 1) non-durable goods; 2) goods of semi-durable use; 3) durables; 4) services (more details in Table 3).

32. The application of the main sections of the classification in the formulation of answers to the questions on the structure of remittance expenditures allows for the consolidation of the list of options and a more accurate comparison between countries, in addition to obtaining more detailed information on the financial behaviors of households with / without migrants, and households with / without remittances.

Table 3. Classification of the Individual Household Consumption by goals in HBS

Non-durable goods	Half-durable goods	Durable goods	Services
Food products and non-alcoholic beverages	Clothing and footwear	Domestic items, household appliances, daily maintenance	Healthcare Services
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products			Housing services, water, electricity, gas and other types of fuel
			Transportation
			Communication services
			Education
			Hotels, restaurants, cafes
			Organization of vacations and recreation

33. An analysis of the HBS survey questionnaires in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, revealed that 9 out of 11 countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, Ukraine) use COICOP to process results of the survey, and that the existing differences between country classifiers (in terms of lists of goods and services, the degree of aggregation by separate groups) do not generate systemic distortions. In regards to countries that do not use COICOP (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), it has been concluded that the application of the harmonized

⁹ Along with indicators developed on the basis of the COICOP, the data is organized based on the classification corresponding to the section on consumer spending, into the main groups of goods and services: food products, alcoholic beverages, non-food products and payment for services.

questionnaire is also possible in their case: the general approach to identifying household expenditure is not particularly different¹⁰. Thus, the use of the COICOP classification by most countries indicates the possibility of harmonizing questionnaires in the event that questions, and the processing of results are based on sections of this classification.

34. The analysis of the questionnaires from multipurpose and specialized sample surveys in the regions shows that countries used different answer options and question formulations in relation to remittances spending. Furthermore, the module format creates limitations for the number of questions and the time used for each question. That is why the number of options for the question on remittances spending in the module questionnaire of the multipurpose survey is fewer than in the specialized survey questionnaire:

Table 4. Examples of questions on how remittances are spent in the multi-purpose sample household survey (Armenia)*

ILCS Armenia Money and Commodity Transfers between Households (2014)	<i>For what purpose was the transferred money used?</i> (На какие цели был потрачен денежный перевод?)	<i>1. For the recipient's daily consumption expenses (including expenses on health, education and other) /на каждодневные расходы получателя, включая расходы на здоровье, образование и другое</i>
		<i>2. In the recipient's construction or acquisition of real and movable property. /На строительство или приобретение недвижимой и движимой собственности для получателя</i>
		<i>3. In the sender's (your) construction or acquisition of real property / На строительство или приобретение недвижимой и движимой собственности для отправителя</i>

**Перевод на русский язык – автора/ Translation into Russian by the author*

¹⁰ Khasanov R., Khasanova S. Developing the model set of questions for household budget survey. Report prepared for UNECE. 2017
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.15/2017/workshop_montenegro_2017/Report_PovertyQuestions_Rus__3__EN.pdf

Table 5. Examples of questions on how remittances are spent in the specialized survey (Tajikistan)*

<p>Tajikistan Jobs, Skills, Migration, Consumption Survey Remittances and gifts from non-household members (2013)</p>	<p><i>What was the main reason why [DONOR] provided this assistance? /Какова была основная причина предоставления [ДОНОРОМ] помощи?</i></p>	<p>1. <i>Purchase of food and basic necessities/покупка продуктов питания и предметов первой необходимости</i> 2. <i>Investment in construction/Инвестиции в строительство</i> 3. <i>Investment in household Enterprise/Инвестиции в частный бизнес домохозяйства</i> 4. <i>Purchase of a durable good/Покупка товаров длительного пользования</i> 5. <i>Educational expenses/Расходы на образование</i> 6. <i>Medical expenses/Медицинские расходы</i> 7. <i>Wedding/ funeral/Свадьба/похороны</i> 8. <i>Child support/Помощь детям</i> 9. <i>Charity/Благотворительность</i> 98. <i>Other (specify)/Другое (уточнить)</i></p>
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As can be observed from these examples, the wording of the questions presents one significant difference: in one case, the question concerns the actual spending of the money, while in the other, it interrogates the purpose of the money received. Conclusions about the expenditure structure of remittances are drawn in both cases, however comparing the results is not possible due to discrepancies in the lists of answer options.

35. In order to solve the problem of harmonizing the approach to measuring the structure of remittance spending, the harmonized module suggests using the wording of the main expenditure items from COICOP for developing a list of answers to the question "On what, above all, did your household spend most of the money received from abroad in the last 12 months?".

2.3 Harmonized module structure

36. The harmonized module consists of two main question sections “*Migration*” and “*Remittances*”, which are intended for simultaneous use in the country of the origin, and the country of destination.

37. Section 1 “*Migration*” contains questions for the country of destination and the country of origin, to obtain information on the international migration experience of members of the household in the country of origin that are absent at the time of the survey, as well as the members of the household present in the country of destination. The questions of the section cover the following descriptive characteristics of migrants: duration of residence in the host country, the main reason for departure / arrival, occupation, profession / speciality and

employment (for working migrants). If the section "Employment" is present in the main survey questionnaire (for example, in the case of an integrated survey combined with a Labour Force Survey), the relevant employment questions and codes are transferred from the main questionnaire. In total, the "Migration" section includes 4 questions for the country of destination and for the country of origin.

38. The second main unit of the harmonized module is devoted to remittances. It contains questions focused on households in the country of origin and in the country of destination: "Outgoing Remittances" and "Incoming remittances". In many respects, both sections contain identical questions, the purpose of which is to describe the role of remittances in the income and expenditures structure of household members, living on each side of the border. In both cases, a qualification period of 12 months is used. The questions in both sections cover characteristics of transfers (cash or parcels / gifts), such as the frequency of the transfer (the number of times per year), the total amount of remittances for the year, and the method for sending money. In addition to that, there are questions concerning the reasons for transfer (motivation on the part of the sender), and the spending of the money received (consumption). The section "Incoming remittances" ends with a question on subjective assessment of the impact of remittances on the welfare of the receiving household. In total, the "Cross-border Remittances" section contains seven questions for the country of origin, and six questions for the country of destination.

39. In addition to the two main sections – "Migration" and "Cross-border Remittances" – the harmonized module contains two additional sections – "Returned Emigrants" and "Permanent Emigrants". The "Returned Emigrants" section is addressed to all respondents over 15 years old who hold citizenship of the country in which the survey is being conducted.

40. The "Returned Emigrants" section identifies experience of migration (3 months or more) among present household members over the past 5 years. Questions in this section cover the following descriptive characteristics of returned emigrants: age at the time of last departure abroad, country of destination of last departure abroad, duration of stay, main reason of departure and return, and employment status while abroad. The "Returned Emigrants" section ends with a question on migration intentions over the course of the next year. This section is optional; therefore, its inclusion in the survey remains at countries' discretion.

41. The "Permanent Emigrants" section is intended for situations in which the methodology employed in HBS type surveys does not cover former household members that no longer reside in the household, i.e. who have been residing abroad for a year or more, including those who may come back for short visits. In accordance with the definition of "household" provided by the HBS methodology, such individuals are usually not considered as members of said household¹¹. Since the reference period for identification of permanent migrants, as defined in the harmonized module, is 5 years, the question of citizenship of the host country of such emigrants is asked conjointly. Other questions relevant to migration include the date of departure, the reason for

¹¹ With the exception of Russia and Armenia (see footnote 7), where, according to the HBS methodology, the household includes those who are absent for a long period of time, i.e. more than 1 year, subject to the presence of family ties with the permanent members of the household.

departure, and the country of current stay. Socio-demographic characteristics of emigrants include sex, age at the time of departure and current marital status.

42. The total of questions in the additional sections – “*Returned Emigrants*” and “*Permanent Emigrants*” – amounts to twelve, and the use of questions marked with an asterisk (*) remains at the discretion of the agency responsible for conducting the survey.

Chapter 3 User's Guide

3.1 Comments on selected questions of the Harmonized Module

3.1.1 Individual questions to all present household members

3.1.1.1 Migration Section: questions for the country of destination

M1. How long have you been living in this country?

In the event that the respondent has been living in the country of the survey since birth, he is not assigned a migration status, and needs not answer further questions from the "Migration" section.

M2. What country did you come from?

M3. What was the main reason for your arrival?

M4. What is your current activity?

The question is intended for the clarification of the respondent's occupation. Additionally, in the event that the respondent chooses the answer "work", the domain of employment can be further specified, in accordance with the "Employment" section of the questionnaire.

3.1.1.2 Returned Emigrants Section

RE1. In the last five years, have you lived in another country for at least 3 months?

The five-year boundary period can be adjusted depending on the year in which the harmonized module survey is conducted; and the tasks to be performed in the course of data collection on return migration.

RE2. When was the last time you left this country, for any other reason than to go on holiday?

The response to this question should include information about the country of residence and duration of residence.

RE3. What was the main reason for your departure?

The list of answer options for this question, as well as other questions concerning reasons for migration include: work, education, family reasons, and other.

RE4. Did you work while abroad?

This question is asked in addition to the previous question, in order to distinguish between those who migrated directly for a job opportunity, and those who migrated for other reasons but still engaged in work while abroad.

RE5. What was the main reason for your return?

RE6. In the coming year, do you plan on going abroad for a period of 3 months or longer?

3.1.2 Questions for the head of the household

3.1.2.1 Permanent Emigrants Section

PE1. In the last five years, has any member of your household left to live abroad?

Such formulation of the question facilitates the identification of potential senders of remittances related to the household. Thus, the category of senders includes not only temporarily missing members of the household, but also permanently absent former members of the household. In the event that the sender had no experience of cohabitation in the surveyed household, the answer is given a special code. To obtain information on the relationship between the remittance sender and the receiving household, a question on the relationship with the head of the household is asked additionally.

PE2. In which country does {NAME} currently live?

PE3. [If person resides abroad] Since when has {NAME} been permanently living abroad?

PE4. What was the main reason for {NAME}'s departure?

PE5. Is {NAME} a citizen of that country?

PE6. What is {NAME}'s current activity in that country?

The basic characteristics of a permanent emigrant proposed within the framework of the harmonized module are limited, however they provide key information for the specification of immigration statistics in the country of destination. The question of citizenship and the length of residence in the country of destination are also important for the subsequent description of the flows of cross-border remittances between households.

3.1.2.2 Cross-border Remittances Section

Outgoing / Incoming remittances

CR1. Over the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household sent money and/or parcels abroad? / Over the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household received money and/or parcels from abroad?

The wording in this question aligns with the wording used in most questionnaires about remittances, as defined by the International Monetary Fund, including cash and in-kind transfers.

CR2. In the last 12 months, how many times have you or your household sent money or parcels abroad? / In the last 12 months, how many times have you or your household received money or parcels from abroad?

This wording is suggested as an alternative to the question of the frequency of receiving remittances, in order to facilitate the counting of respondents. Based upon the answer to the question about the total amount of money received, it is possible to calculate the average amount per transfer.

CR3. To which country/countries did you or your household send money and/or parcels? / From which country/countries did you or your household receive money and/or parcels?

The answer comprises multiple choices.
(The list of countries depends on the country where the survey is taking place).

CR4. What is the total amount of all remittances sent abroad over the past 12 months? / What is the total amount of all remittances received from abroad over the past 12 months?

The amount is written down in the currency that the respondent has named.

CR5. What was the most common way you/your household sent remittances abroad? / What was the most common way you/your household received remittances from abroad?

OR6. For what purpose did you and/or other members of your household send money abroad?

The purpose of this question is to find out the motives of the sender, in addition to the question about the actual spending of the money that is asked in the country of origin.

IR6. On what, above all, did your household spend most of the money it received from abroad in the last 12 months?

The list of answer options has been developed in accordance with COICOP, by taking into account key expenditure items that have been previously used in multi-purpose and specialized surveys in the region.

IR7. In your opinion, over the past 12 months, how have remittances from abroad affected your family's financial situation?

The purpose of this question is to obtain a subjective evaluation of the influence of remittances. A similar question on subjective evaluation of the poverty level can be found in the HBS questionnaire.

Questions about outgoing remittances could be also used in the country of origin to evaluate remittance cross-flows. Similarly, questions on incoming remittances could be used optionally by countries like Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Armenia – i.e. those with a large diaspora. This pool of questions can be useful to obtain additional information in the study of emigration, as well as maintaining contact with the emigrants (temporary as well as permanent).

3.2 Integration of the harmonized module into the HBS

43. The success of the harmonized module in surveys of the HBS type for measuring migration and remittances is due to several factors. First, the design of the sample should be such as to ensure sufficient coverage of households with migrants, both in the origin and destination countries. As shown by the analysis of migration surveys in the countries of the region, the concerned households are fairly evenly distributed across the territory of donor countries of labor migration. In this regard, the probabilistic sample used for conducting surveys of the HBS type

will provide a relatively accurate reflection of the scale of labor emigration¹². On the other hand, the situation in some countries may be different: for example, the results of a survey on labor migration in Ukraine between 2008 and 2012, indicate that households with labor migrants were unevenly distributed throughout the country. For instance, the scale of labor emigration in western regions located near the state border is much higher than in other regions of the country (for example, in the central, northern, southern or eastern regions), and the number of migrant workers in the southern and eastern regions is almost twice as high as the ones in central and northern regions.

44. In countries that predominantly act as destination countries for migration, in order to improve the coverage of households with immigrants, it is recommended to use a pre-determined sample. In other words, households in areas with the highest concentration of migrants should be selected, based on administrative data on the distribution of foreigners in territorial entities. Such an approach will help to cover respondents who fall into the category of "long-term labor migrants", i.e. staying in the territory of the country of destination for 1 year or more. With regards to the coverage of short-term labor immigrants in countries of destination within the HBS, it is difficult to make specific recommendations. One can expect that short-term immigrants will be part of households with long-term immigrants (due to the effect of migrants' social networks), but this does not guarantee qualitatively reliable information, since there are many undocumented workers among these migrants. Evidence from past experience demonstrates that a survey on this category of migrants can be carried out using alternative methods, for example, an anonymous online survey¹³. Therefore, a harmonized module can hardly be considered as a tool for measuring temporary labor immigration.

45. Secondly, given that the HBS surveys in countries of the region differ in structure, some modification to the contents of the harmonized module questions may be required in order to merge them with the household questionnaire in a particular country. Additionally, some formulations of the final modules, especially time periods, may need to be adjusted in some countries, specifically if the module is simultaneously used in the donor and the recipient country. This would allow for a more specific evaluation of the effectiveness of the developed toolkit.

46. Thirdly, usage of the harmonized module in the destination countries might require additional adjustment, as the module was initially developed for migrants' countries of origin, which is why it is a better tool for the study of emigration. Countries that mainly accept migrants, such as Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, can also use the module to study emigration, especially since administrative data sources do not provide complete information on the extent of emigration. The section "Returned emigrants" can be adapted as a tool for regular measurement of return migration, including in the monitoring of the implementation of government programs to facilitate the return of nationals.

¹² Chudinovskikh O.S. Summary of the worldwide experience in measuring labor migration through sample surveys of the population. Report to the CIS Statistical Committee. Moscow, 2015.

¹³ Berg, Lauri and Bassina Farbenblum. Wage Theft in Australia. Findings of the National Temporary Migrant Work Survey. November 2017.

47. The harmonized module could be useful to all countries as a tool for studying internal migration. For example, for Russia, obtaining additional information on internal movements of citizens is no less interesting than data on external migration.

48. Given that countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia have different approaches to collecting migration and remittances data through regular household surveys, the sections of the harmonized module can be used individually or in other household sample surveys. In addition, the harmonized module questions may also be useful in the design of an extended questionnaire for specialized surveys.

3.3 Tabulation Plan

49. In order to analyze the data obtained through the use of the harmonized module, it is suggested that the following tabulation plan be used as a guide. It is designed to solve two problems: 1) describe the cohorts of immigrants and emigrants; 2) compare the level of well-being of households with migrants and of households without migrants, using poverty estimates applied by countries.

M1. Distribution of migrants' cohorts by destination country and duration of stay

Destination country	Country 1		Country 2	
	Over three months but less than a year	One year or longer	Over three months but less than a year	One year or longer
Duration of stay in the recipient country				
Gender				
Men				
Women				
Age				
15-19				
20-29				
30-39				
40-49				
50-59				
60+				
Education level*				
Elementary				
General secondary				
Secondary vocational				
Academic degree				

* List the educational levels set by the national educational legislation of the country

RM1. Distribution of the returned migrants over 15 years old by reason of departure and destination country

<i>Destination country</i>	<i>Country 1</i>			
<i>Reasons of departure</i>	<i>Work</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Family circumstances</i>	<i>Other (including participation in the state program)</i>
Gender				
<i>Men</i>				
<i>Women</i>				
Age				
<i>15-19</i>				
<i>20-29</i>				
<i>30-39</i>				
<i>40-49</i>				
<i>50-59</i>				
<i>60+</i>				
Education level*				
<i>Elementary</i>				
<i>General secondary</i>				
<i>Secondary vocational</i>				
<i>Academic degree</i>				
Duration of stay				
<i>Over three months but less than a year</i>				
<i>One year or longer</i>				

* List the educational levels set by the national educational legislation of the country

PE1. Distribution of long-term emigrants by destination country, gender, age and education level

	<i>Destination country 1</i>		<i>Destination country 2</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Age				
<i>15-19</i>				
<i>20-29</i>				
<i>30-39</i>				
<i>40-49</i>				
<i>50-59</i>				
<i>60+</i>				
Education level*				
<i>Elementary</i>				
<i>General secondary</i>				
<i>Secondary vocational</i>				
<i>Academic degree</i>				

* List the educational levels set by the national educational legislation of the country

IR1. Differences in the income structure of households in the country of origin depending on the presence of emigrants

Income structure, %	Households with temporary emigrant	Households with permanent emigrant	Households without emigrants
<i>Employment</i>			
<i>Self-employment</i>			
<i>Agricultural activity</i>			
<i>Rents</i>			
<i>Properties</i>			
<i>Current transfers received:</i>			
<i>Pensions</i>			
<i>Benefits (including social insurance)</i>			
<i>Social transfers in -kind</i>			
<i>Other sources of income:</i>			
<i>Transfers from the other household</i>			
<i>Cross-border remittances</i>			

IR2. Household expenditures structure depending on incoming cross-border remittances

	Households that receive cross-border remittances	Households that do not receive cross-border remittances
<i>Healthcare expenses, % in relation to consumer expenses</i>		
<i>Education expenses, % in relation to consumer expenses</i>		

50. These tables are just examples of what data is expected to be obtained using a harmonized module. HBS surveys have a great potential for measuring the impact of remittances and migration on the well-being of households. Some countries of the region have already taken a step in this direction, particularly the Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan and Armenia. At this stage, it is important to learn from their experience, standardize the approach and disseminate the practice of regularly assessing the impact of migration and remittances on poverty reduction on the rest of the region.