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Migration statistics**International migration statistics in Azerbaijan****Prepared by the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan***Summary*

The paper considers the use of different data sources in improving the quality of migration statistics, such as registers, other administrative sources, population and housing censuses and surveys. The paper also introduces the legal framework and producers of migration data in Azerbaijan as well as the plans for closer collaboration and streamlined work among those involved. The purpose of development work is to ensure high quality of migration statistics as it is important for effective policy making.

The paper is presented for discussion to the Conference of European Statisticians seminar on migration statistics.

I. International migration statistics in Azerbaijan

1. The growing mobility of population underlines the challenges of international migration statistics. Currently data sources of migration flows include registration of migration, administrative data, sample surveys and population censuses. At present, registering migration with respect to permanent residence and/or temporary labor is the most important data source for statistics in Azerbaijan.

2. The main indicators that describe migration are the numbers of arrivals and departures. The difference of these indicators reflects mechanically the growth or decline in the population. A certain change in the dynamics of population migration has been seen during the recent years, namely the negative balance of migration that lasted for many years was replaced by positive migration net since 2008. For the moment, its size is insignificant, but the existence of the favorable trend in Azerbaijan allows assuming that the tendency of positive net migration would remain. In this regard, Azerbaijan has moved to the group of countries in which natural increase of population is combined with migration inflow.

3. In order to implement an effective migration policy adequate migration statistics are needed. The accelerated economic development of the country (GDP in 2000-2014 increased by 11.9 per cent per year) and the creation of new jobs are prerequisites of constantly increasing the flow of foreign labor to the country. Since 2010, labor migration quotas are established annually by a government decision.

II. Legal framework of migration statistics

4. The following legal frameworks regulate the processes that accumulate migration data in Azerbaijan, namely Laws on:

- (a) «Passports, departure and arrival to the country», 14.06.1994;
- (b) «Legal status of foreign citizens and individuals without citizenship», 13.03.1996;
- (c) «About registration in the residence and the place of stay», 04.04.1996;
- (d) «Special documents of the persons without citizenship and foreigners residing permanently in the Azerbaijan Republic more than 30 days», 30.12.1997;
- (e) «Citizenship of the Republic of Azerbaijan», 30.09.1998;
- (f) «Immigration», 22.12.1998;
- (g) «Status of refugees and internally displaced persons», 21.05.1999;
- (h) «Labor migration», 28.10.1999;
- (i) «Migration Code», 02.07.2013.

III. Main producers of migration statistics

5. Migration statistics are produced in Azerbaijan by the national statistical authority (the State Statistical Committee of the Azerbaijan Republic (SSC)). Data on the number of the persons born in other countries as well as data on number of foreigners living in the country are based on the data of population censuses that the SSC carries out once in 10 years.

6. Recently, administrative statistics have proven to be valuable for migration statistics. These are data collected by the State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan which was created in 2007. The State Migration Program has been approved by the President on 25 July 2006. The formation of a unique databank and a modern automated monitoring system for migration became one of the lines of work of Migration Service. The Unique Migratory and Information System (UMIS) reflects information on categories of migrants and the events connected with migration. It includes data acquired in the process of granting a permanent or temporary living status, solving problems of nationality, preventing illegal migration etc.

7. There is an official statistical form "About the number of the citizens arrived to Azerbaijan and left the country" which is provided to statistical agencies by the State Border Service. SSC obtains semi-annual and annual data on migrants and publishes these data annually in the statistical compilation "Tourism in Azerbaijan". These statistical observations on arrivals to and departures from the country are used in the calculation of general population as well.

8. One of the producers of migration statistics is the Head passport, registration and migration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The primary document used as a data source for statistical compilation in this context is the form used to account for arrival and departure of citizens.

IV. Migration flow statistics

9. Flow data on migrants arriving for permanent residence are formed by the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan based on information from the form of statistical accounting of arrivals and departures of citizens. These are compiled on registration of citizens for new permanent residence or removal from the registration account.

10. Data on population migration is compiled according to specialized questionnaires: quarterly data are based on the short form and data from the long form is available once a year. The short form provides data about the number of arrivals, departures and balance of migration in regions, and covers information on adults as well as children under 15 years old. The long form gives possibility to receive data on directions of migration, age and sexual structure of migrants, migration volumes within and across territories.

11. Together with Migration Service the SSC developed a new statistical form on "foreigners getting residence permit, and persons without citizenship". This helps to improve accounting of international migration through providing quarterly information on migrants by gender and age since 2002 and data on short-term migration (from 3 to 12 months), including the reasons of stay.

12. Moreover, the process of creation of the population register by the Ministry of Justice of Azerbaijan has been finalised.

13. The population censuses carried out in Azerbaijan in 1999 and 2009 contained a number of questions on migration. According to United Nations recommendations the 2009 questionnaire included additional questions on temporarily absent, as well as questions on the duration of stay in a present place and for arrivals from other countries – about the previous place of residence and the purpose of arrival to Azerbaijan (Table 1).

Table 1
Sample of questions included in the population census questionnaire

1999	2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place of birth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place of birth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other languages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding temporary absence (till 12 months), please specify a place (country) of stay, duration of absence (in months) and the purpose of departure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the place of census a permanent residence of the respondent? If no, please specify, the place of permanent residence • For persons replaced a residence, please specify, whether they are refugees or displaced persons • Please specify, since what year do they live in this place and place of arrival (a place of the previous residence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the person live in this place since birth / not since birth continuously • For those not living in this place since birth, please specify from what year • Did the person live in the territory of Azerbaijan or abroad • Indicate the country and purpose of arrival to Azerbaijan (work, study and reasons related to marital status, return to previous residence and etc.)

V. Sample surveys

14. In line with the State Program on the improvement of official statistics, SSC conducted sample statistical surveys in 1999 and 2009 on "studying of migration processes in Azerbaijan". The main purposes were to study in-depth the situation of migration processes in the country, validate statistical data on migration flows and trends and identify the purposes and reasons of migration.

15. The 2009 questionnaire included the following questions:

- (a) Country of arrival and departure;
- (b) Main purpose of arrival (departure);
- (c) Availability of permission for labor activity;
- (d) Period of staying (departure);
- (e) Age, sex, birthplace, nationality, citizenship;
- (f) Occupation in the last place of residence;
- (g) Branch of economy in the last place of residence;
- (h) Education, marital status, accompanied persons under 15 years old (0–14 years);
- (i) Plans to work in Azerbaijan;
- (j) Whether the person lived earlier in Azerbaijan (abroad) more than 12 months;

(k) Main reason for leaving of the country.

16. The survey was conducted at the airports, railway stations and border-entry points.

17. During the survey, about 15,000 respondents were interviewed and the analysis of results showed that the most active migration exchange took place between Azerbaijan and the nearby countries. Generally, migrants arrive from foreign countries to look for a job, in particular, those coming for long-term migration. The share of migrants who arrived for a period of one year and more was higher among arrivals from India and Pakistan. The sample surveys helped to obtain relevant information and thus to meet user requirements. Moreover, sample surveys are less expensive than full coverage and capable of providing detailed data which are not available from the population census or current migrant registration processes.

18. Yet another positive aspect of sample surveys on migration is the wider opportunity for comparison of data with similar indicators of other countries.

VI. Registration of foreign labor migration

19. In the modern world, where interdependence of national economies becomes closer, the importance of labor migration steadily increases. Successful and dynamic development of Azerbaijan has made the country more attractive for foreigners. However, accounting of external labor migration is problematic because of hidden employment. The data obtained by statistical agencies from employers do not cover all foreigners employed in Azerbaijan. As a rule, information provided by employers coincides with the labor migration figures for approved labor migrants by the government. According to estimates, the real number of foreigners employed in the country is higher.

20. "Migrant laborer" is a concept that entered the local discussion recently. If earlier this term was used with respect to citizens of Azerbaijan leaving for earnings to abroad, now, on the contrary, it refers to those coming to Azerbaijan.

21. Series of activities and reforms directed to improvement of the legislation on migration are carried out in Azerbaijan, and a "one-stop-shop principle" is applied since labor migrants are in all cases directed to the State Migration Service that resolves all issues with the state agencies concerning migration.

22. It should be noted that reforms of migration policy in the republic are not limited to the "one-stop-shop principle". For example, quotas have been entered into force for employment of foreign citizens. The needs of the labor markets are considered when establishing these quotas. These quotas can be introduced as Azerbaijan does experience a high demand for labor. There is no demographic crisis. Measuring the number of labor migrants, to define the extent of their influence in the domestic labor markets, is of high importance.

23. The labor migration quota is allocated for 12,000 people in 2014, while in 2010 it was for 10,700 people. The quotas are estimated based on the labor market situation. So, in connection with the construction boom, there has been a need for more labor force in the construction sector during the recent years. In fact, the majority of registered labor migrants are engaged in construction.

24. The other branch of interest of migrants is Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Azerbaijan requires also highly skilled specialists. The leading sector of economy in Azerbaijan, oil and gas production and oil processing, needs highly skilled specialists. Tourism, hotels and education are also sectors in which labor migrants are often engaged.

25. From total number of officially employed foreigners about 5,000 were Turkish citizens and about 1,500 were citizens of Great Britain. There are also migrants from China, India, Georgia, Iran and the Russian Federation.

26. For the purposes of improving accounting of labor migrants four statistical reporting forms have been developed and introduced by SSC as reflected in Table 2.

Table 2

Contents of statistical report forms on population migration

Report form	Indicators
1- immigration	Number of foreigners getting residence permit in AR, and persons without citizenship: - by age and sex - by sex and citizenship - by sex and country of birth
2-immigration	Composition of labor migrants by sex and age ; Number of labor migrants: - by country of origin - by types of activity - by organizational-legal forms of enterprises in which they are engaged
1-emigration	Number of persons assigned to foreign countries for implementing of labor activity: - by profession, specialty, educational attainment, sex and age - by duration of labor activity
1-border	Number of citizens arrived to Azerbaijan and departure from the country: - by countries - by types of transport, entry/departure

VII. Publication

27. Information on internal and external migration is reflected in statistical press releases, express releases, and also in yearbooks, such as "Tourism in Azerbaijan", "Demographic indicators of Azerbaijan", etc. Data on migration are systematically submitted to the state authorities, ministries, and public organizations and are used to respond to requests of both international organizations and individuals.

VIII. Future development of the international migration statistics

28. International migration statistics in Azerbaijan will be developed in the near future in two main areas – the area related to the change of residence and that of external labor migration. Development will be promoted by connecting all interested authorized departments to using the Unique Migration and Information System that will considerably improve coordination of accounting for international migration of the population.

29. SSC plans to revise existing statistical forms (1-immigration, 2 - immigration and 1-emigration) together with the appropriate state authorities to improve the data content.

30. With regard to future population censuses, the list of questions concerning migration is planned to be expanded in order to acquire more detailed data on migration and to increase the number of available migration indicators.