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Migration behaviour, intention, and indicators of integration

Similarities and differences between intentions and behaviour of immigrants

Note by the Statistics Netherlands *

Abstract

In this paper we present an overview of reasons for immigration on the basis of registrations of the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service on the one hand and deduced migration motives, based on the actual behaviour of immigrants on the other hand. Our data show that registered migration motives do not always match actual behaviour. Immigrants may have several reasons to settle in the Netherlands. Many immigrants coming to the Netherlands to join their family not only live together with their partners but find a job as well. These immigrants have two migration motives: family reunion and labour.

With the ongoing extension of the European Union and the subsequent free movement of more and more people, who do not need a residence permit to stay in the Netherlands, information on migration motives, as registered by the Immigration Service, is far from complete. In 2011, for instance, for more than half of immigrants coming to the Netherlands information on migration motives was lacking, mainly due to missing information on motives for citizens coming from EU and EFTA-countries.

According to the most recent population forecast of Statistics Netherlands substantial migration flows from EU- and EFTA-countries will continue to come to the Netherlands in the future. In the long run (up to 2060), more than 50 thousand immigrants from EU-countries will immigrate to the Netherlands each year, almost half of the total annual non-Dutch immigration inflow. This means no information on migration motives will be available for a substantial share of future immigration flows. Therefore, Statistics Netherlands has analysed the possibility to find an alternative to derive information on migration motives. Based on several demographic and socioeconomic indicators, like

*Prepared by Jeroen Ooijevaar and Han Nicolaas.

income, having a job, studying, and living together with a partner already staying in the Netherlands, Statistics Netherlands is able to determine a so-called deduced migration motive, based on actual behaviour of immigrants.

However, for some reasons of migration like asylum, highly-skilled migrants and au-pairs, information of the Immigration Service will remain of vital importance. The combined information on migration motives, as registered by the Immigration Service, together with information on actual behaviour of immigrants enables Statistics Netherlands to map out future migration flows as good as possible, even within the EU, and to monitor socioeconomic integration of migrants.

This article gives an overview of migration motives that can be drawn up on the basis of the records of the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and migration purposes that are derived from actual behavior. Migration motives as registered by the INS do not always match the derived migration purposes. Besides migration purposes often overlap. For instance many immigrants who come for reasons of family reunification not only live together with their partner, but also go to work right away. In this situation two migration purposes exist: family reunification and labour migration.

1. Background

Migration flows change over time, partly due to globalisation. Enlargement of the European Union and free movement of persons in Europe induce an increase in the number of labour migrants and students. On the other hand, family and asylum migration tend to decline. In this article we analyse whether the socioeconomic activities of immigrants match the migration motives as registered by the INS.

The migration motive as registered by the INS is a key variable in many tables on integration of immigrants: it provides a starting point of their stay in the Netherlands. To provide information on the starting point of socioeconomic integration actual information on socioeconomic behaviour is important as well. This would serve as an improvement of the statistical information on (civic) integration of immigrants.

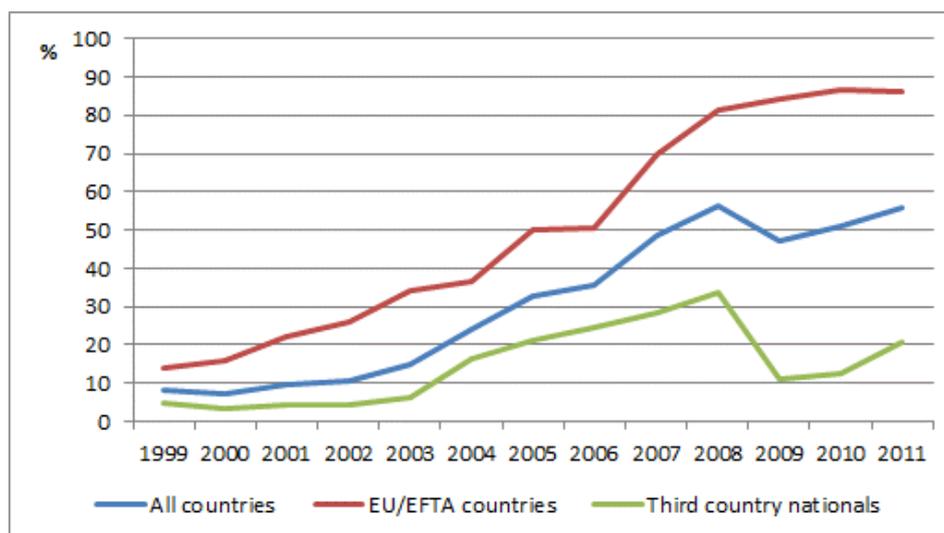
According to the standard procedure migration motives of (non-Dutch) immigrants are being registered by the INS. The INS is also the formal authority who is responsible for issuing residence permits. Although every non-Dutch national who wants to stay in the Netherlands for a period that exceeds three months should check in to the INS, more and more people don't do this because they no longer need a residence permit. Since May 2006, this applies to immigrants from other EU Member States and immigrants from the EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). As a result, migration motives of these immigrants are unknown.

Officially both groups still have to report themselves to the INS, and they have to prove the reason of their stay in the Netherlands with appropriate documents. Although registration is compulsory no sanctions are imposed for those who do not do this. According to legislation of the European Union inhabitants of EU and EFTA countries may reside on a legal basis in the Netherlands without reporting themselves to the INS (INS, 2013). Because no sanctions are imposed, more and more immigrants from EU and EFTA countries do not check in to the INS. As a result, no migration motives are known for a large group of immigrants coming to the Netherlands. For almost 25 percent of EU immigrants coming to the Netherlands between 1995 and 2004 no migration motives

were known. In 2005 and 2006 this share had increased to almost 50 percent and in 2011 it was about 85 percent.

Immigrants from outside EU and EFTA countries (third country nationals) still need a residence permit and should always report themselves to the INS. In spite of this the share of unknown migration motives among third country nationals increased as well, but is still much smaller than among citizens of EU and EFTA countries.

Figure 1 Unknown migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants, 1999–2011



Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service, calculation by Statistics Netherlands

The high share of unknown migration motives among third country nationals in 2008 and the sharp decline in 2009 may be explained by the fact that for many immigrants from asylum countries in 2008 it was not known (yet) what kind of residence permit they would get. The procedures for these immigrants were still pending and as a result no motives or unknown motives were registered in the files of the INS. However, in 2009 many asylum seekers were registered in municipal population registers who in that year (or in 2008) received a residence permit on the basis of the so-called protection policy for special categories of asylum seekers. As a result, many procedures were completed and the share of unknown migration motives was reduced.

The most recent population forecast (Van Duin, Nicolaas and Van der Gaag, 2013) shows on-going and substantial numbers of immigrants from the EU countries coming to the Netherlands, especially for reasons of labour and family migration. In the long run (to 2060) 54 thousand immigrants from EU countries are expected to come to the Netherlands each year, accounting for about 45 percent of the total annual flow of non-Dutch immigrants. This implies that for a substantial share of immigrants who will come to the Netherlands in the future no migration motives will be available. The aim of this research is to construct a so-called derived migration purpose that has been deduced from actual behaviour of immigrants and to determine the differences and similarities with the migration motives as registered by the INS.

2. Data and method

Information on migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants is provided by the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the Ministry of Security and Justice.

For Dutch citizens no information on migration motives is available as they do not have to report themselves to the INS. Migration motives of emigrants, persons who leave the Netherlands, are not available as well. Detailed information on the data of the INS has been published in Nicolaas et al. (2003).

As described in the previous section, information on migration motives as registered by the INS is not always complete. For some non-Dutch immigrants no migration motives are known (yet) or have not been registered. Statistics Netherlands make estimations of these 'unknown motives' on the basis of the distribution of the motives that are known. These estimates are based on variables that are strongly related to the migration motive: gender, age, marital status, year of arrival in the Netherlands and country of birth. In this article information on migration motives of the INS relates to migration motives including the estimates of Statistics Netherlands.

Derived migration purposes are determined on the basis of data from the system of Social Statistical Databases. In our research a selection has been made of non-Dutch immigrants who registered themselves in a Dutch municipality in the period 1999 – 2011. Among other things information on origin, generation (first or second generation), date of immigration to the Netherlands, date of immigration of the parents, date of immigration of the partner and the date a person starts to work or study have been used. Using this information migration purposes have been determined on the basis of the following rules:

Table 1 Rules to determine derived migration purposes

| Derived migration purpose | Rule to determine migration purpose |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Family | Immigrated within 120 days after immigration of the partner or within 120 days after immigration of the father or the mother (family reunion). Married or cohabiting at the moment of immigration or within 120 days after immigration (family formation) |
| Labour | Working within 120 days after immigration |
| Asylum | Migration motive 'asylum' (according to INS data): including estimates of Statistics Netherlands |
| Study | Studying within one year after immigration |
| Other purpose | None of the above-mentioned rules apply to the immigrant |

Source: Statistics Netherlands

Immigrants who intend to stay in the Netherlands for a period longer than four months are obliged to register themselves in the population register of the municipality where they live. That is the reason that deducing the migration purposes family and labour a period of 120 days has been used. An exception has been made for students and asylum seekers. (Higher) education mostly starts in September each year, so starting a study is not always possible within four months after registration in the Netherlands. Therefore a one-year period has been used for deriving students. Asylum seekers always have to report themselves to the INS so this information has been taken straightforwardly from the INS data.

Using these decision rules it is possible for immigrants to have more than one migration purpose at the same time. Someone who is immigrating for family reasons can have a job within 120 days. Both derived migration purposes are equally legitimate.

In deriving migration purposes ‘labour’ and ‘study’ the main daily activity determines which migration purpose will be derived. These two activities cannot occur at the same time. It is, however, possible they occur one after another. For instance, an immigrant may find a job after 60 days and goes to college after 100 days.

Because immigrants may have more than one migration purpose, the order of migration purposes has been determined as well. For immigrants who come to the Netherlands with their partners and who find a job within a month ‘labour’ will be the second derived migration purpose. In case asylum seekers have more than one migration purpose ‘asylum’ will always be the first derived migration purpose as asylum seekers are always registered upon arrival (by the INS).

3. Results

From 1999 till 2011 almost 1.1 million non-Dutch immigrants came to the Netherlands.

Table 2 Share of derived migration purposes (in %)

| Derived migration purpose | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Family | 44.7 |
| Labour | 30.3 |
| Asylum | 12.8 |
| Study | 24.4 |
| Other purposes | 17.3 |

Source: Statistics Netherlands

Almost half of the immigrants who come to the Netherlands immigrate for family reasons (derived purpose). One third of the immigrants have a job within 120 days after immigration whereas one quarter start studying within a year. One in eight immigrants are registered as asylum seekers by the INS. Seventeen percent of the immigrants have no family ties, do not go to work or study and are not registered as asylum seekers. These immigrants cannot be classified to one of the main four derived migration purposes.

Because more than one migration purpose can occur at the same time the sum of the percentages in table 2 sum up to over 100 percent. Table 3 shows how often more than one derived migration purpose has been determined.

Table 3 Number of derived migration purposes per immigrant (in %)

| Number of derived migration purposes | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 0 derived migration purposes | 17.3 |
| 1 derived migration purpose | 55.4 |
| 2 derived migration purposes | 25.0 |
| 3 derived migration purposes | 2.3 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: Statistics Netherlands

To more than half of the immigrants only one derived migration purpose has been assigned: the decision rules are adequate for these immigrants. One quarter of the immigrants have two derived migration purposes, often a combination of family and labour. Only a mere two percent of the immigrants have three or more derived motives. In theory a combination of all four migration motives (asylum, labour, study and family) is possible but is rare. Asylum seekers are allowed to study during their asylum procedure but are restricted in terms of labour. Moreover labour and study cannot occur at the same time, as mentioned, but in the time period used may occur one after another.

Table 4 shows that labour occurs most frequently as second derived migration purpose. In this situation asylum, family or study has taken place before the moment someone finds a job (within 120 days).

Table 4 Sequence of derived migration purposes (in %)

| | Family | Asylum | Labour | Study |
|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Derived as first migration purpose | 85,9 | 100,0 | 54,0 | 61,8 |
| Derived as second migration purpose | 13,6 | | 44,9 | 31,0 |
| Derived as third or fourth migration purpose | 0,5 | | 1,1 | 7,1 |
| Total | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Source: Statistics Netherlands

It is interesting to confront both concepts of migration motives and purposes with one another: to what extent do derived migration purposes match migration motives as registered (and partially estimated) by the INS.

Table 5 Derived migration purpose versus migration motive according to INS (in %)

| INS-motive | Derived migration purpose | | | | |
|------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Family | Asylum | Labour | Study | Other |
| Family | 61.1 | 0.0 | 18.2 | 34.2 | 9.4 |
| Asylum | 33.1 | 100.0 | 9.5 | 30.7 | 0.0 |
| Labour | 41.8 | 0.0 | 64.2 | 5.4 | 19.4 |
| Study | 26.1 | 0.0 | 13.8 | 41.1 | 35.3 |
| Other | 29.7 | 0.0 | 26.6 | 17.2 | 39.0 |
| Unknown | 44.6 | 0.0 | 26.7 | 19.2 | 26.8 |

Sources: Immigration and Naturalization Service and Statistics Netherlands

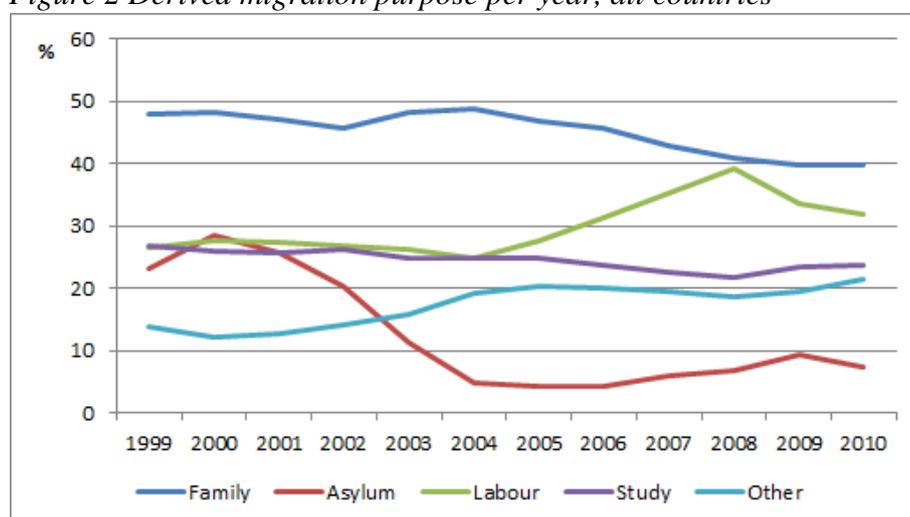
For over 60% of the immigrants who are registered as family migrants by the INS ‘family’ has been assigned as derived migration purpose. In addition, about one third of the family migrants (INS) go to school or start (higher) education within a year after their immigration. This is especially true for family migrants who are obliged to go to school: these migrants are being registered as family migrants in INS data but due to the fact they have to go to school they are labelled as ‘study’ as well. Asylum migrants (registered as such by the INS) often have ‘family’ as derived migration purpose. This is not surprising: asylum migrants who immigrate with their families are being assigned with two derived migration purposes, asylum and family.

Third country nationals and (up to 1 January 2014) citizens from Bulgaria and Romania who are looking for a job in the Netherlands need a working permit. It is therefore rather remarkable that only 64 percent of the labour migrants (according to INS data) actually have a job within 120 days after immigration. The same applies to students: despite the fact that being registered as a student by the INS need quite some paperwork, only 41 percent of ‘INS-students’ are being labelled as ‘student’ after immigration. More analysis needs to be done to get a better grip on the differences between INS-motives and actual behaviour of immigrants.

In particular immigrants with INS motives ‘other’ and ‘unknown’ are difficult to classify. About one third of the immigrants with these motives cannot be derived using the decision rules for the four main migration purposes.

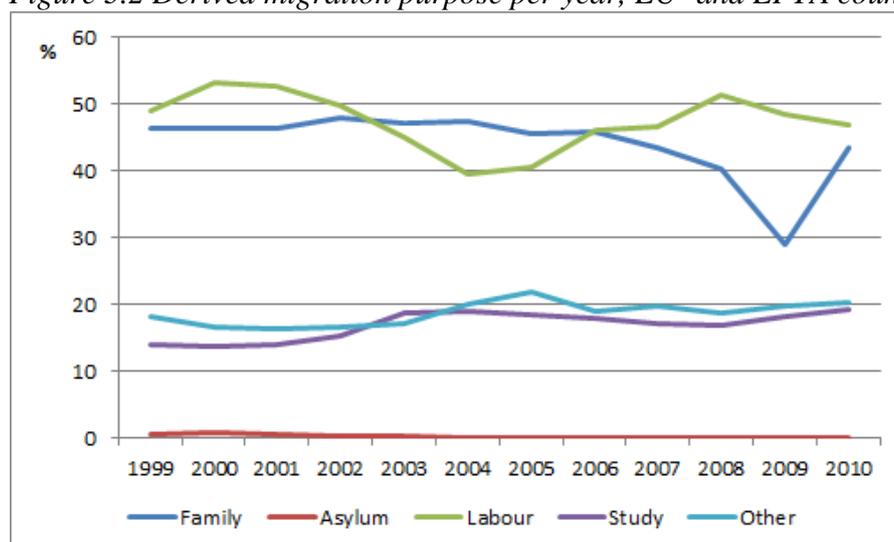
The figures 2 and 3 show the derived migration goals for the years 1999 – 2010.

Figure 2 Derived migration purpose per year, all countries



Source: Statistics Netherlands

Figure 3.2 Derived migration purpose per year, EU- and EFTA countries



Source: Statistics Netherlands

Figure 2 shows that 21% of the migration purposes in 2010 could not be derived in one of the four main purposes: they were labelled 'other'. The share of unknown migration motives according to INS data in that year was more than 50 percent. Broken down by broad country groups it turns out that 20 percent of the immigrants from EU and EFTA countries could not be derived whereas the share of unknown migration motives according to INS for these countries was more than 85 percent in that year. So it is quite obvious not to use the INS migration motives for citizens of EU and EFTA countries and to derive migration purposes for these groups.

4. Conclusion and discussion

With the enlargement of the European Union there is more and more freedom of movement within Europe. More and more immigrants are no longer obliged to report themselves to the local authorities. For more than half of the immigrants coming to the Netherlands in 2011 no migration motive could be registered by the INS, to a large extent due to missing information on migration motives of immigrants from EU and EFTA countries. In 2011 more than 85 percent of the immigrants from those countries did not check in to the INS: as a consequence no migration motives could be registered for these immigrants. Therefore a strong need arose for an alternative tool in order to determine migration motives of non-Dutch nationals. This article initiates the construction of a so-called derived migration purpose.

Using the system of Social Statistical Databases it is possible, on the basis of demographic and socioeconomic indicators, to derive migration purposes of immigrants. On the basis of this derived migration purpose Statistics Netherlands has a tool to record migration flows as good as possible and to monitor the socioeconomic integration in the future.

Comparing migration motives as registered by the INS to derived migration motives it turns out that more than one third of the immigrants are classified with more than one derived migration purpose. Most of the time this occurs to family migrants: they find a job or their children go to school as well.

In addition it turns out that migration motives according to the INS do not always match with the derived migration purposes. Only six out of ten labour migrants (as registered by the INS) actually go to work within 120 days after immigration. Moreover, only four out of ten students (according to INS) actually go to school or college. Some of them are classified as labour migrants, but an even bigger part cannot be classified in one of the derived migration purposes.

The same applies to INS migration motives 'other' and 'unknown'. A large share of these migration motives cannot be assigned to one of the four main derived migration purposes. Possible explanations might be that these persons live off their investments, are retired or have unregistered jobs, studies or partners. Moreover the estimates made by Statistics Netherlands can play a role: it is possible that due to the growing share of unknown migration motives the estimates of these unknown motives have become less reliable in recent years. Follow-up research will have to shed light on it.

The enlargement of the European Union, subsequent free movement of more and more people and on-going globalisation will lead to increasing numbers of immigrants in the future. Migration motives as registered by the INS are very valuable, but are barely registered within the EU. Derived migration purposes offer an alternative to provide useful information on migration motives of

citizens of EU and EFTA countries as well. For specific immigrant groups such as asylum seekers, highly-skilled labour migrants and au pairs INS data remain essential. Combined information of migration motives as registered by the INS and derived migration purposes allows Statistics Netherlands to give insight in future migration flows and their relation to socioeconomic integration.

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