

## **High-level Seminar on Population Censuses and Migration Statistics in CIS Countries**

### **Challenges of migration statistics in the CIS region**

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In recent years issues of migration statistics in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia have increasingly attracted attention of major international organizations and discussed at a national level. In the era of globalization and the rise of migration between countries, the lack of adequate data significantly limits the ability to properly assess the impact of migration. It's not possible to regulate migration or carry out social policies related to migration, if the data on the quantities and composition of flows or stocks of migrants are inaccurate or missing.

The CIS region is the scene of large-scale migration processes; annually, more than 10 million people participate in the temporary labor migration, no less than 300-400 thousand people move to other countries seeking permanent residence.

In an effort to statistically reflect the current and long-term processes that support the countries of the region and develop data collection national systems, among which the main source of information on the number of international migrants born abroad, remains the census, as flow data are drawn from the population registration systems in the community.

Among the positive developments of the last decades are the following: in eight out of eleven CIS countries, the census of 2010 showed the development of "migration" blocks in the questionnaires, which allowed obtaining new information on migration. All countries for the census purposes are guided by the recommendations of the UN and ECE (CES), which relatively guarantees the uniformity of census methodology, question wording and, in the future, data comparability.

Currently, each of the CIS countries have almost all data acquisition systems: as purely statistical (for censuses and surveys), and administrative, mostly belonging to migration services, the Interior Ministry or the specialized agencies of registration of the population.

As there have been widening financial and technical capacities of the state, the scope of statistical sources and types of provided statistics has been dramatically increased: the countries, which previously were mainly focused on administrative data begin to use the surveys potential, and, on the contrary, the states, for which the survey was probably the main source of information starts to increasingly apply to the administrative sources.

Almost everywhere, there is a transition to a more open policy of data publication, including microdata. Besides, there is a growing variety of published statistics. National Statistics Agencies of some countries are beginning to accumulate information from administrative sources and publish them in their yearbooks.

However, we note a number of problems inherent in both individual countries and the region as a whole. In most cases, they are inextricably linked to the same phenomena regarding which the progress take place.

As the level of development of different data sources in the CIS countries is not the same, there exist unique priorities with respect to the use and citation of sources in publications. Different methodologies that are used in different migrant registration systems drastically impede international comparability of data.

Availability of administrative data is still inadequate.

Currently the registration of migration flows, with the exception of Moldova, is on paper; and in terms of developing informational technologies it seems irrational.

Problems still remain in the area of immigration registration. In some countries the net positive migration simultaneously recorded in the mutual exchange with other countries. These data are not subject to refinement, and are used in calculation of the population balance.

A number of problems can be solved by developing cooperation in the region in the field of migration statistics. It's necessary to consolidate the efforts of the national statistical authorities with the purposes of harmonizing existing data collection systems, of engaging certain types of administrative statistics that can shed light on many aspects of international migration. In addition to the goodwill of specialists and national executive authorities, a considerable part in proper addressing these issues can play the strengthening power capacity as well as active position taken by an international coordinating body in the field of statistics at the regional level.

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