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Producing migration data using household surveys and other sources

Measuring Hard-to-Count Migrant Populations: Importance, Definitions, and Categories

Note by UNECE¹

I. Introduction

1. Improving the measurement of international migration continues to be a challenging area for the international statistical community, and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Particularly challenging is the collection of data about migrant groups who fall outside the regular typology of migrants: such as *short-term* and *circular migrants*, *refugees* and *asylum seekers*, *irregular* and *transit migrants* and *trafficked persons*. Although these groups are often at the center of political debate, their number is often difficult to accurately assess via regular data sources, either because the procedures concerning them differ from ordinary ones (refugees, asylum seekers), or because their records are less formalized (short-term), or for the reason that their very presence represents or entails a legal violation (irregular, trafficked). In addition, partly due to the reasons outlined above, these groups often suffer from higher non-response to regular data collection methods.

2. Some time ago, the Suitland Working Group Task Force was established to investigate the use of household surveys to improve the measurement of international migration. One of the projects evolving from this Task Force included work on categorizing, defining, and evaluating the importance of so-called hard-to-count migrant populations. As such, this project assesses the relevance of different categories of hard-to-count migrants in different countries, compares definitions of hard-to-count migrants at the national and international level, and examines factors that influence the data collection of hard-to-count migrant populations. Most of this information was collected via a

¹ Prepared by Jason Schachter.

comprehensive survey sent out by UNECE to member countries in the fall of 2008. The paper will also briefly address some additional questions concerning the extent to which household surveys can help measure these “hard-to-find” populations, what sorts of questions are needed to measure these groups, and to what extent countries currently use surveys to identify these types of migrants

II. Who are Hard-to-count Migrants?

3. The project addressed the following groups of hard-to-count migrants: short-term migrants, circular migrants, irregular migrants, transit migrants, trafficked persons, refugees, and asylum seekers. As with many migrant typology classifications, not all of these categories are mutually exclusive, thus they can overlap with one another. In general terms, they consist of moves of short duration and/or high frequency, residence without legal status, or movement under the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). While it could be argued that groups like refugees or asylum seekers should not be considered hard-to-count, given their status is based on legal administrative procedures, thus easily counted, given the potential of mass refugee movements from areas of conflict, and the uncertainty surrounding their number, we have included them as such a population. Other groups of hard-to-count migrants were not covered by this project, such as environmental migrants, return migrants, or emigrants.

4. In 2008, UNECE sent to the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of its member States, as well as a few other countries, a questionnaire which included questions on how national institutes handled the issue of estimating difficult-to-measure (or hard-to-count) migrants. These questions concerned the relevance NSOs attributed to various hard-to-count population groups, which groups were an issue for measurement (i.e. data are not available or data are not sufficiently accurate), whether the NSO was responsible for producing estimates on these populations, the methodology, data sources, and definitions used for these estimations, and information on other institutions/agencies providing estimates for these populations (other governmental agencies, research institutions, universities, NGOs, etc.). Of the 56 UNECE member states, 42 responded to this section of the questionnaire and additional responses were received from seven other countries.²

5. In the following section, for each hard-to-count migrant group, definitions issued by international organizations are provided, when available, followed by a description of national variants as defined in response to the questionnaire.

A. Short-term migrants

6. Short-term migrants include those who only stay, or intend to stay, in a country for a brief period of time. Per the 1998 United Nations Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration they are defined as follows: *“A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months), except in cases where the movement to that country is for purpose of*

² The following countries and authorities responded to the UNECE survey: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palestinian Authority, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, and UNMI Kosovo.

recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. For purposes of international migration statistics, the country of usual residence of short-term migrants is considered to be the country of destination during the period they spend in it.” Note that this definition includes some seasonal workers, as well as some other forms of temporary migration, though there is a 3-month actual or intended duration of move criterion.

7. Based on survey responses, twenty countries produce estimates for short-term migrants, but there is a fair amount of deviation from the international definition. Only in a few cases was a *minimum length of stay* (in and/or out of the country) specified as a necessary criterion to be counted as a short-term migrant, and when it was, it sometimes did not coincide with the international threshold (3 months), for example two weeks being the minimum allotted time in the case of Finland. Countries adhered better to *maximum duration of stay* which always corresponded to 12 months. However, some countries consider *intended* residence (e.g. Cyprus, Finland, Portugal, Slovakia, and New Zealand), while others use *actual* residence measured post-hoc (e.g. Australia, Denmark, and the Netherlands).

8. The UN definition states that the inclusion of a person as a “short-term migrant” depends on the *purpose* of his or her movement. Based on survey responses, only Canada, Kyrgyzstan, Cyprus, and the United Kingdom explicitly mention the reason of a visit as a relevant criterion. Typically, these countries speak about visits for the purpose of work or study, though Canada also includes “humanitarian population,” i.e., “refugee claimants and temporary residents allowed to remain in Canada on humanitarian grounds and who are not categorized as either foreign workers or foreign students.”

9. As will be seen, despite the variation in definitions among countries, short-term migrants are one of the “hard-to-count” migrant categories most frequently collected by NSOs.

B. Circular migrants

10. While there is no internationally accepted definition for circular migration, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (2007) provided the following working definition: “*Circular Migration is the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or more permanent movement which, when it occurs voluntarily and is linked to the labour needs of countries of origin and destination, can be beneficial to all involved.*” Other definitions specify circular migrants as being irregular in nature, “*an irregular migrant presenting high mobility who frequently leave the country to return days, weeks, months or years later*” (Themis 2006) or restricted to legal migrations, “*a repetition of legal migrations by the same person between two or more countries*” (European Migration Network 2011).

11. No NSOs (as of 2008) measured or provided a definition used to identify circular migrants. By its nature, circular migration is particularly difficult to measure as short-term residence may be subject to little or no administrative recording, particularly if permission to reside has already been granted in the context of a previous stay. Operationalization of this concept, at a minimum, would include purpose of migration, duration of stay in destination country, and frequency of movements. For producing quality statistics on circular migration, the definition, time period, standards, and sources for its measurement still need to be established.

C. Irregular migrants

12. Irregular migration is one of the most salient global policy issues and it is also one of the most difficult to measure. ILO (1997) defined irregular migrants as “*persons in a state other than their own who have not fully satisfied the conditions and requirements set forth by that State to enter, stay, or work in that State's territory.*” A similar, more detailed, definition was set forth by IOM (2004), *someone who, owing to illegal entry or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The term applies to migrants who infringe a country's admission rules and any other person not authorized to remain in the host country (also called clandestine/illegal/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation).*”

13. Only four countries provided information on an operational definition for irregular migration. Romania referred to EC Regulation no. 862/2007, which speaks about “*third-country nationals refused entry to the Member State's territory at the external border*” and “*third-country nationals found to be illegally present in the Member State's territory under national laws relating to immigration.*” The definitions adopted by Slovakia, Israel and Kyrgyzstan are similar to the international standards, though in the case of Israel, employment is a necessary condition for irregular status.

D. Transit migrants

14. Transit migration is often considered to be a sub-category of irregular migration, and is another concept for which there is no universally accepted definition. An older definition set forth by UNECE (1993) defined a transit migrant as “*a person who migrates in one country with the intention of seeking the possibility there to emigrate to another country as the country of final destination.*”

15. No countries responding to the survey provided a definition of transit migration, nor did any attempt to measure this form of migration. While it certainly has a repetition of migration component (through one or more countries to reach a final destination), it is predicated upon intention to move (which does not necessarily correspond to an actual move), and often becomes permanent in transit countries. Though there is still disagreement over how to define transit migration, and how to apply the concept to policy (or if it is even a useful concept within the purview of migration statistics), it has become a phenomenon of increasing frequency, particularly in relation to migration from Africa.

E. Trafficked migrants

16. Trafficked migrants are another group who are often considered to be a sub-category of irregular migrants. The UN (2000) defines trafficking in persons as “*the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by the means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.*” While this definition is not necessarily specific to migrants, many of those in trafficking situations also meet the migration criteria.

17. More specific to migrants is the UN definition (2000) on migrant smuggling: “*The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a state of which he/she is not a national or a permanent resident. Illegal entry means the crossing of borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State.*”

18. While it is often difficult to separate the two concepts, trafficking is restricted to situations in which people are deceived, threatened, or coerced in situations of exploitation,

while smuggling implies a migrant voluntarily uses services to circumvent immigration restrictions, without necessarily being a victim of deception or exploitation.

19. Among countries surveyed, only three countries indicated a national definition for trafficked migrants. Among them, Romania again refers to EC Regulation No. 862/2007, while Kyrgyzstan reports a definition very close to the international standard. On the other hand, Slovakia counts both foreigners and nationals who declare themselves to be victims of trafficking, either inside the country or abroad (for nationals).

F. Asylum seekers

20. Asylum-seekers are individuals who have sought international protection in a foreign country and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined. The terms asylum-seeker and refugee are often confused: an asylum-seeker is someone who says he or she is a refugee, but whose claim has not yet been definitively evaluated (UNHCR 2012).

21. Per the UN (1998), asylum seekers are *“persons who file an application for asylum in a country other than their own. They remain in the status of asylum-seeker until their application is considered and adjudicated.”* A longer definition is presented by IOM (2004), which states asylum seekers are *“persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.”*

22. Eleven countries provided information on definitions used to measure asylum seekers. In most cases, as per the international definition, asylum seekers are foreigners who have applied for refugee status and are awaiting a response. However, four countries (Canada, Russia, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom) include persons who do not fulfil the requirements of the Geneva Convention or the national law on refugees, but for whom an expulsion would constitute a serious threat to life or personal safety and/or freedom. Specifically, Canada mentions the Convention against Torture and the need to protect people who are at risk of being subjected to such treatment, Slovenia cites its own Law on International Protection (2008), while the United Kingdom indicates a definition which is a *“combination of asylum seekers who have applied for asylum, those returned, refused, and withdrawn appeals against asylum.”*

G. Refugees

23. Refugees are normally identified as those who have been granted status according to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. They are defined as *“a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it”* (UNHCR, 1967).

24. In addition to asylum seekers granted refugee status, mass movements of refugees (usually as a result of conflicts or generalized violence as opposed to individual persecution) can be declared refugees en masse, called "prima facie" refugees. Technically the term “refugee” only refers to those asylum seekers who have been granted the Convention status reported above, but it is commonly used to refer to all asylum applicants who receive any form of international protection. Almost all countries responding to the

question on this migrant group reported a definition in-line with UNHCR, though some utilize the broader interpretation to include asylum applicants under international protection. Croatia additionally points out that it counts refugees as part of its usual resident population, while the Palestinian Authority focuses on national refugees living abroad.

25. Overall, there is quite a bit of variation regarding countries' utilization of internationally agreed upon definitions for these "hard-to-count" migrant groups. On the one hand, country definitions for concepts like asylum seekers, refugees, and irregular migrants generally follow international standards, even though irregular migration data are collected by few NSOs. On the other side of the spectrum, less well defined concepts like circular and transit migration are neither defined nor measured by almost all countries, while data on trafficked persons are only collected by a few countries, with some variation from international standards. Finally, while data on short-term migrants are collected by many countries, there was wide variation in the minimum duration of stay to be included (if this was considered at all), as well as whether intended or actual duration of stay was used, which was particularly dependent on the type of data source used for data collection.

III. Data Sources

26. A wide variety of data sources are used to measure these hard-to-count migrant populations (see Table 1), including censuses and population registers, visa and border control data, as well as some household and passenger surveys. The hard-to-count migrant group for which data were most frequently collected were short-term migrants, as well as refugees, while the least frequently collected were circular and transit migrants (almost no cases of either). Among countries that collected data on short-term migrants, the largest proportion (40%) came from population or administrative registers, while other less frequently used sources included censuses, border data, visa information, and surveys. In the few cases where estimates were produced for irregular migrants and/or trafficked persons, this information came from border control information, police reports, and NGOs. The next section looks at the relevance each of these migrant groups hold for each country, as well as their ability to provide accurate estimates for these populations.

Table 1
Number of countries and sources used to provide counts or estimates of hard-to-count migrant groups

		<i>Migrant Category</i>						
		Short-term	Refugees	Asylum	Irregular	Trafficked	Circular	Transit
Sources	Administrative	2	1	2				
	Asylum department		1	1				
	Asylum register			3				
	Border card	2			1			
	Border police	1						
	Census	3	4	1				
	Emigration survey	1						
	Federal report		1	1				
	Foreigners' register	3	3	1	1		1	
	Home office			1				
	Immigration service		1	1				
	International passenger survey	1						
	Labour force survey	1						

Migrants' Register		1					
Ministry of Foreign Affairs						1	
Ministry of Interior	3	4	4	3	3		
Non-governmental agencies					1	1	
Police headquarters						1	
Population register	4	2					
Refugee office		3	3				
Register	1	1	1				
Statistical service	1						
Total	23	22	19	6	6	1	0

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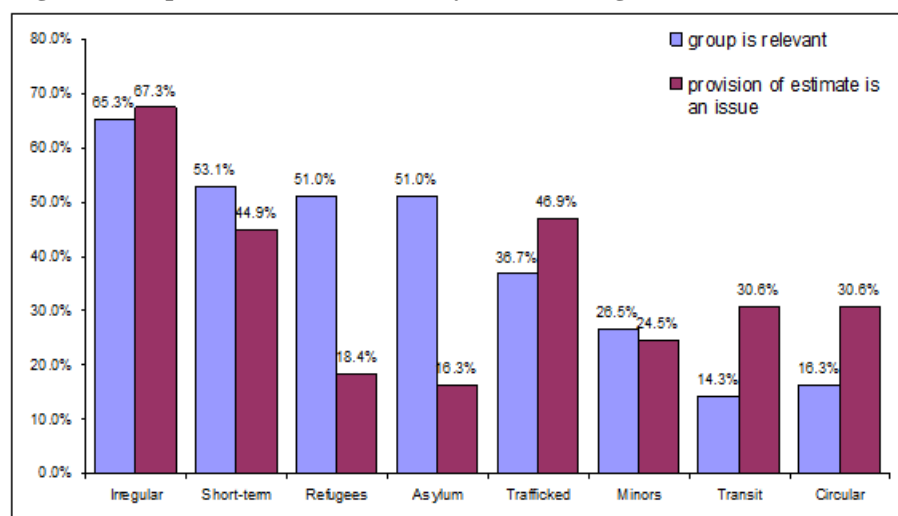
Note: Countries could provide more than one source per migrant group

IV. Relevance of “Hard-to-Count” Migrant Groups and Measurement Issues

27. In lieu of other agencies producing estimates for various hard-to-count migrants groups, the desire of NSOs to produce estimates should correlate with the degree of relevance these groups hold for individual countries. According to UNECE's 2008 survey results, almost two-thirds of countries indicated irregular/undocumented migrants were relevant within the context of their country (see Figure 1). Other important groups included short-term migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, who were relevant to about half of the countries. Least relevant groups were circular migrants (16%) and transit migrants (14%). In general, the groups which provided the fewest problems in estimation were refugees and asylum seekers, most likely due to the fact that these groups are defined based on legal administrative procedures. The group that proved most difficult to estimate, as well as being most policy relevant, was irregular migrants, while trafficked persons (form of irregular migrants) and short-term migrants were also problems for about half of the countries. Transit and circular migration were deemed problematic by only about one-third of countries, which is most likely due to the fact these groups are not deemed relevant by most countries, thus no estimates are required. However, it is possible, five years later, that some of these groups might be deemed more relevant if the survey was repeated today.

Figure 1

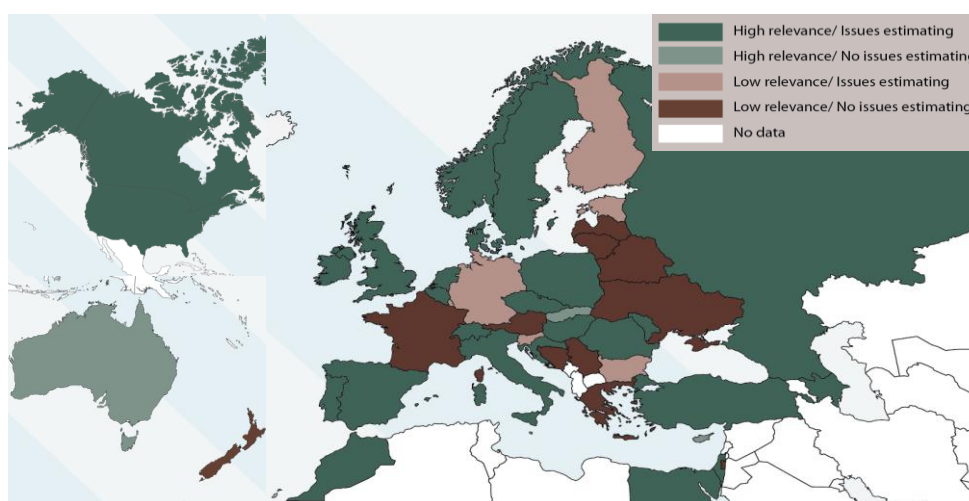
Migrant Group Relevance and Difficulty for Providing an Estimate



28. As seen in Figure 2, the region that showed the least interest in irregular migration was southeast Europe, which included Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Serbia, and Slovenia, all of whom did not view irregular migration as policy relevant. A similar point of view was expressed by the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The lack of policy relevance reported by Greece and Bulgaria was surprising, but the results might be different if the survey was conducted today. Finally, most of Western Europe and North America were concerned with irregular migration, though France and Germany were notable exceptions.

29. More than half (57%) of countries felt irregular migration was both policy relevant and difficult to measure, and this view was found across a wide array of geographic areas. These included countries from most regions included in this survey, including Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan), Eastern Europe (e.g. Czech Republic, Russian Federation), Northern Africa (Egypt, Morocco), Northern America (e.g. Canada, United States), Northern Europe (e.g. Sweden, United Kingdom), South America (Brazil), Southern Europe (e.g. Italy, Spain), Western Asia (e.g. Azerbaijan, Turkey), and Western Europe (e.g. Netherlands, Switzerland).

Figure 2. Relevance and Estimation Issues for Irregular Migration



30. On the other end of the spectrum, circular migration was seen as an area of importance and difficult to measure by only four countries: Brazil, Canada, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom. Nine other countries, who did not see circular migration as an area of relevance, did still find it difficult to measure, including Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Morocco, Slovakia, and Switzerland. While other countries would probably admit that it is difficult to produce data on circular migration, given the low relevance of this topic for their country, measurement (or lack thereof) of this group would not represent an issue for them.

V. Factors that Influence the Difficulty of Measuring Hard-to-Count Migrant Populations

31. While factors that limit the measurement of these hard-to-count migrant groups by NSOs were not specifically addressed by the UNECE survey, one could conjecture that they are due to a number of possible reasons. First, as discussed previously, a major reason for the difficulty of measuring these groups is lack of data due to the very nature of their migration, which includes fewer formalized administrative records (e.g. short-term

migration) and in some cases illegal residence (e.g. irregular or trafficked persons). In addition, data sources may lack specific information needed to measure these relevant migration groups (e.g. migration history information for transit migration or circular migration, duration of stay for short-term or circular migrants). Also, within data sources, lack of coverage/response from these populations of interest could also present a problem for measurement (e.g. population registers are accounts of only legal residents, thus exclude irregular migrants; irregular migrants tend to have higher survey non-response rates).

32. Another possible factor for lack of data on these groups is lack of relevance for a country (both in terms of magnitude and policy), in that if there are very few migrants in one of these groups, then there is no need to collect data on them or to utilize alternative data sources for their measurement (e.g. transit migration in some places). Also, an NSO might have difficulty accessing required administrative data from other national organizations, which could be necessary for producing estimates on these populations (e.g. access to individual level data, border apprehension records). Finally, the lack of production of estimates could be due to the fact that these data are already produced by another organization (e.g. refugees/asylum seekers or trafficked persons), so there is no need for NSOs to produce this information.

VI. Use of Sample Surveys to Measure Hard-to-Count Migrants

33. As described earlier, very few countries use sample surveys to derive estimates of hard-to-count migrant populations. Surveys are only used for the estimation of short-term migrants, as done by Moldova's labor force survey, Portugal's emigration survey, and the United Kingdom's International Passenger Survey (though this is not a household survey).

34. Despite the lack of surveys to produce estimates for these hard-to-count groups, there are a number of advantages to using household sample surveys to measure migration, especially in countries which lack alternative data sources. In particular, household surveys have more flexibility with regards to which questions can be asked, thus one can measure specific migration-related topics. Though there are limits to the number of questions which can be asked (depending on many factors, such as cost and respondent burden), questions can be tailored to specific research needs or policy concerns. There are also other advantages when compared to a decennial Census, in that using a representative sample of the population reduces expense and increases frequency of data collection. However, household surveys are faced with their own limitations, including cost of conducting household surveys, need for large sample sizes to measure flows, difficulty finding migrants using regular sampling frames (coverage and non-response), question sensitivity (particularly if money-related, e.g. remittances), respondent recall and respondent burden, and other data quality concerns exacerbated by use of proxy respondents.

35. Migrants, of all types, are a relatively difficult group to measure using household surveys of a general population, given they are relatively scarce in nature. However, though much work has been done on how to use surveys to measure rare populations (via complex sampling methods), this project focuses not on how to measure migrants in general, but rather specific sub-groups of migrants, who are an even rarer group of the migrant population. As such, it is most likely unfeasible to implement household surveys that are able to provide estimates for these sub-groups, though surveys could still be used to identify these types of migrants, and conduct comparative analysis of their characteristics vis-à-vis other types of migrants and/or the non-migrant population.

VII. Sampling Rare and Elusive Populations

36. There are a number of advanced sampling techniques which can be used to target rare and elusive populations, such as hard-to-count migrant populations, in household surveys. While it is beyond the scope of this project to provide an in-depth evaluation of these methods, many of these sampling techniques are effective when utilizing a combination of both probability and non-probability sampling methods, though these are only briefly discussed below.

37. The quality of sample survey data is directly related to the quality of its sampling design. If the sample is large enough and drawn from a representative group of the population, inferences applicable to the entire population can be made. Sample size is important since a larger sample size usually reduces the standard error associated with the sample mean (from which estimates are derived), though the actual size needed depends on the amount of variance in the population (for example, if all persons were identical, then a sample of “1” would be sufficient). The need for quality sampling design is perhaps even more important for measuring migration, since it is a relatively rare event compared to other characteristics of the population.

38. There are a number of sophisticated sampling techniques which can be used to capture rare populations, including probability and non-probability methods. In broad terms, probability samples mean that each sampling unit has an equal chance of being selected (e.g. simple random sampling). Other examples of more complicated methods of simple random sampling include stratified sampling (random samples are taken from different strata), cluster sampling (where clusters are defined geographically), and multistage sampling (which combines different sampling techniques). One example of a probability based design to locate rare populations is to use a dual-sampling (disproportionate) technique, locating sampling units with a high proportion of migrants (either by using pre-existing data, like a census, or via sampling areas to discover them), then oversampling in these units. This method works because migrants tend to concentrate in specific geographic areas. Non-probability sampling methods include adaptative or snowball techniques, where respondents are asked if they know any other people with characteristics similar to themselves, which are very useful for finding rare elements of the population, but can suffer from lack of generalizability due to their non-random nature. When non-probability methods are combined with probability methods (e.g. initial sample is selected randomly, and then asked for references), it is possible to obtain good estimates of rare populations.

39. However, even if sampled in survey instruments, there are still other data quality concerns connected to these hard-to-count migrant groups. Some examples of these data quality concerns could include lower response rates, higher levels of item non-response (particularly to more sensitive question like legal status or income), potentially differing response rates by mode of survey (e.g. lower response of hard-to-count migrant groups to internet-based surveys), impact of language ability on response rates and answers given, retention rates in longitudinal surveys, and their corresponding imputation rates. A more in-depth study would be needed to examine these issues in greater detail.

40. Given NSOs are less likely to conduct specialized surveys to measure migration, and more likely to utilize pre-existing regularly conducted household surveys, these specialized sampling techniques are less practical. Given that specialized surveys sampling hard-to-count migrant groups are unlikely to be conducted, what can be done with general household surveys with regard to this population? Could hard-to-count migrant groups still be identified on survey instruments, and if so, what sort of questions need to be asked on surveys to identify these groups?

VIII. Examples of Survey Questions used to Identify Hard-to-Count Migrant Populations

41. With varying degrees of difficulty, surveys can be used to collect information needed to identify the various hard-to-count migrant populations discussed in this paper. These questions would be in addition to basic questions on country of birth and/or citizenship, place of previous usual residence, etc. And then, if sample size is sufficient, analysis of different migrant groups could be conducted with these data.

42. For short-term migrants, at a minimum, information on exact duration of stay (in country of residence) or date of entry would be needed. Additional information on intent of duration of stay and purpose of movement could also be useful. Typical recall issues associated with “date of move” questions should be less problematic for those who have moved within the past year. Also, if the survey excludes those living in a household for less than 12 months, or excludes foreigners, it would obviously not be possible to use it to measure short-term migrants. Below are examples of some questions which have been used to measure components of short-term migration. On their own, they are insufficient to capture short-term migrants (Italy’s comes closest, but does not include information on purpose of move), but show the types of questions which are needed to make these distinctions.

Duration of Stay: Italian LFS (2011)

SG18B. In what year did you come to live in Italy the first time?

SG18D. Do you remember the month?

SG18E. Since that time, have you always been living in Italy? Please exclude travels or holidays away from Italy of a period of time shorter than one year

SG18F. Since when have you been living in Italy without leaving the Country for one year or more?

SG18G. Do you remember the month?

Intended Duration of Stay: UK International Passenger Survey (2012)

How long do you intend to stay in the UK?

- Under 12 months 1
- Up to 2 years 2
- Up to 4 years 3
- Permanently > 4 years 4
- Not sure how many years 6
- DK, possibly 12 months

Purpose of Move: Russian Federation 2010 Census

What is the purpose of your arrival to Russia?

- работа (work)
- учеба (study)
- служебная или деловая поездка (official or business trip)
- лечение (medical treatment)
- туризм, отдых (tourism, recreation)
- транзитная миграция (transit migration)
- другая цель → (other purpose)
- Запишите какая Specify*

43. For the measurement of circular migration, collection of migration history information is critical (for at least the last two international moves), as well as information on duration of stay and purpose of movement (as shown above for short-term migrants). Below is an example of migration history questions from Turkey's 2008 Demographic and Health Survey. Though the major intent here is to measure internal migration, it is applicable to international migration as well.

Migration History: Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (2008)

SECTION 1B. MIGRATION HISTORY

119E After you have completed age 12, have you ever changed your place of residence at least for 6 months? (Yes, No)

119F Now I wish to talk about all the different places of residences you have lived in for at least 6 months after you have completed age 12. Can you tell me the places you have lived in since then, starting from the one you were living at the age of 12?

119G In which province were you living?

119H When you were living there was this place a province centre, a district centre, a sub-district or village? Or was it abroad?

119I For how long did you live in? (*RECORD IN MONTHS IF LESS THAN 2 YEARS*)

119J At which month and year did you migrate from to ?

119K What was the main reason of migration from?

44. The measurement of irregular migration on a survey instrument is the most difficult of the groups we are discussing. A direct question on legal status could be asked, but this is a highly sensitive question, for which data quality could be poor. An example of this sort of questions is provided below.

Legal Status: OSCE/UNESCO Migrant Survey in Kazakhstan (2006-7)

Q78. At the moment, do you work in Kazakhstan legally or not?

- Legally
- Illegally
- Do not know/No answer

45. Asking the question in such a way as to reduce threat (e.g. ask respondent if they have any of the following legal statuses, and then infer illegal status from lack of legal status) could improve data quality, but measurement of this still remains problematic. Residual methods to estimate irregular migration sometimes use survey results to match characteristics of legal foreign (born) populations to Census data, in order to subtract this number from the overall migrant population and come to an irregular total, but these survey questions do not specifically identify the irregular population. Transit migration is also difficult to measure, but a combination of migration history (at least two moves) and intent to move onwards to another country would be required pieces of information.

46. Even more difficult to measure in surveys are persons who were the victim of trafficking. Specific questions tailored to measure this could be asked, but would be highly sensitive. ILO pilot tested surveys to measure forced labour (ad hoc surveys in Armenia (2009) and Georgia (2008), and as a migration module on Moldova's 2008 LFS), which included questions on trafficking, targeting people of working age who had recently returned from working abroad. A series of questions were asked to measure deception, exploitation, and coercion/coercion through threat. Below are the questions (but not the

response categories) used by Moldova to identify trafficked persons and other forms on forced labour.

Trafficking: Moldova LFS Migration Module (2008)

Q31. Have you ever been exploited in any of the following ways while working for someone else abroad?

Q32. Did this situation happen at the last job?

Q33. What was the sector in which you had to work under exploitation conditions?

Q34. When were you exploited?

Q35. In what country did this happened

Q36. For how long were you in this situation?

Q37. What was different at the working place as compared to what was previously promised to you?

Q38. Have you ever had to work against your own will under one of the following conditions?

Q39. By what means did the owner force you to work?

47. Finally, though refugees and asylum seekers are normally counted through administrative sources, several countries use surveys (or census questions) to identify these groups as well. These groups are primarily measured via a reason for move question, though the wording and response categories for these questions vary greatly. Below are three examples of this, which greatly depend on the respondent's ability to know their international status.

Refugee/Asylum Seekers: Romanian 2011 Census

REASON FOR SETTLING IN THE ENUMERATION LOCALITY

- 1 Work
- 2 Job search
- 3 Studies
- 4 Business
- 5 Family reasons (marriage, family reunification, inheritance, etc.)
- 6 Visit / Tourism
- 7 Asylum seeker
- 8 Refugee
- 9 Beneficiary of subsidiary protection
- 10 Other reasons

Armenian 2011 Census

13.4. Main reason of changing the residence:

- From other countries as a consequence of war actions
- From other countries because of fear to be exposed to persecution for racial, national, religious belong, membership to any social group or for political convictions
- Family
- Repatriation
- Other

If "reason for move" questions are asked on a survey, it is beneficial to allow for more than one response, though as an alternative "main" reason for moving is often asked.

2008 Eurostat ad hoc LFS module (Labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants)

Reason the person **mostly** had for migrating (last migration)

1	Employment, intra corporate transfer
2	Employment, job found before migrating other than code
3	Employment, no job found before migrating
4	Study
5	International protection
6	Accompanying family/family reunification
7	Family formation
8	Other

48. These questions, from a variety of different sources, serve as examples of ways to identify hard-to-count migrant groups. Certainly, a more comprehensive study could be conducted looking at the multitude of questions which exist to measure these topics, and could then result in a set of “best practice” questions for countries to follow. With this type of information from sample surveys, if sample size were large enough, one would be able to analyze the experiences and characteristics of these migrant groups, as opposed to other hard-to-count migrants, migrants in general, or the non-migrant resident population in the country of origin or destination. Interesting results might be found regarding geographic concentration, the socioeconomic adaptation of these migrant groups, economic activity, educational attainment, or remittances patterns, to name but a few examples.

IX. Conclusion

49. The original intent of this project was to identify different categories of hard-to-count migrants, compare definitions both national and international, and look at what factors adversely impacted the measurement of these populations. Additional questions took a cursory look at the relationship between sample surveys and hard-to-count migrants, including both sampling methodology and question design.

50. In summary, some of these hard-to-count migrant groups were much more relevant to countries than others, which directly impacted efforts to measure these phenomena. More relevant migrants groups included irregular, short-term, refugees, and asylum seekers, while transit and circular migrants were deemed least relevant. Overall, a paucity of data were reported on these topics, and when data were collected, there were often a wide array of definitions used, particularly in the case of short-term migration. The use of household surveys to estimate these populations is extremely rare, perhaps due to the difficulties involved with sampling a sub-group of an already rare population (migrants in general).

51. However, there is still a potential place for the use of household surveys, not for an estimation of size for these sub-groups, but as a means of identifying hard-to-count migrants, and looking at their outcomes and characteristics in comparison to other migrant and non-migrant groups. Even for this, it is likely that specialized sampling techniques (and surveys) would still be necessary, given their scarce presence in the general population, and as such, data quality concerns could still be an issue. As this was just a cursory investigation of these issues, more work could be devoted to investigating the data quality issues discussed in the report, the sampling methodology needed to capture these hard-to-count groups, and a more comprehensive examination of questions asked to identify these groups and recommend best practices.

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