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List of abbreviations

CES	Conference of European Statisticians
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EECA	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
EECCA	Eastern Europe Caucasus and Central Asia
FMS	Federal Migration Service (Russian Federation)
IDP	Internally displaced persons
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NSI	National Statistical Institutes
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WB	World Bank

Introduction

This report provides a general overview of the existing or potentially available systems of migration data collection and of data quality assessment where statistics are available.

It includes the following:

- a review of previous assessments of migration data produced,
- a review of the statistical system for migration and of strategies in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan,
- a brief but detailed specification of the existing quality of statistics and its characteristic features, in order to contribute towards the development of national capacities,
- a list of notes on availability and usage, and specific recommendations concerning administrative data, border statistics, consular data and sample surveys, including large-scale surveys,
- ongoing and recent migration policy initiatives, including key institutional actors involved in migration statistics.

Statistics on international migration in the former Soviet countries and a review of data sources and agencies responsible for data collection had been a subject of research initiated by international organizations. In 2007 the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) organized a comparative study of data in 11 CIS countries, which incorporated data collection as well as its sharing and analysis. Several other agencies of the United Nations (UN) family and international organizations have expressed interest in the development of this research topic.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has for several years been involved in research of data pertaining to the region. In 2006 it published a book² which contains a description of the institutional organization of statistics collection in several countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Ukraine, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Republic of Moldova). Under a large-scale regional project on labour migration (2008), IOM initiated research into the situation concerning labour migration statistics in the Russian Federation and four Central Asian countries (CALM).

In 2010, IOM and OSCE started a project which focuses on the inventory of available statistics in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and on the technical aspects of data collection. It involves collecting detailed information on existing databases, variables and availability of statistics on migration. Simultaneous efforts had been undertaken by the International Labour Organization which resulted in a series of reports and seminars (See Khakimov P. 2011, Jamangulov K. 2010). It is expected that consultations undertaken by team leaders and experts involved in these projects will help avoid overlapping and synergize the joint efforts to make migration statistics of in the region more available and readily comparable.

This report incorporates the results of the previous research conducted under the UNECE project in 2007 and refers to publications dealing with systems of migration data collection and production in the five countries of the CIS region. It involved the collection of series of data (both stocks and flows) for several years between 2000 and 2006. For some countries, the time series were extended up to 2008-2009 (if data were available). Data on stocks of foreign-born and foreign population are mainly based in population censuses of the previous round (2000).

² IOM, 2006, *Sharing Data: Where to Start*.

All five countries have conducted the censuses of the current round and the data are expected to be processed in 2011 or later³.

Updated information on the most significant and most recent changes (if any) was provided by specialists at the national statistical institutes in the five countries. More detailed information on data sources and peculiarities of data collection, as well as on the quality of statistics, could only be obtained through in-depth interviews with experts from different agencies (mostly administrative ones) in the countries covered by the report.

Due to better availability of information, the most detailed description of sources and quality of data on international migration is provided for the Russian Federation. It could be a model for describing the situation in the other states when information becomes more available.

The five selected countries have different trends and scales of migration, as well as different priorities in migration management. Therefore national interests in statistics are focused on different types of migration. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are largely migrant-sending countries, both from the perspective of outflows of temporary labour migration and long-term emigration for residence, resulting in chronic net emigration. Countries that have rich natural resources (mainly oil and gas), such as the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, receive migrants from other CIS countries (Kazakhstan joined the Russian Federation recently). In Azerbaijan, economic reforms have slightly changed the migration trends. Since 2008, the country has had net immigration and a relatively significant inflow of migrant-workers.

Table 1
Net migration in the five selected countries in 2000-2008

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Azerbaijan	-5.6	-4.7	-3.1	-1.3	-0.4	-0.9	-0.4	-1.1	1.1
Kazakhstan	-108.3	-88.2	-62.0	-8.3	2.8	22.7	33.0	10.9	1.1
Kyrgyzstan	-22.5	-26.6	-27.8	-16.7	-19.3	-27.0	-31.0	-50.6	-37.8
Russian Federation	213.6	72.3	77.9	35.1	39.4	107.4	132.3	239.9	242.1
Tajikistan	-12.8	-11.6	-10.5	-8.8	-6.8	-6.1	-7.3	-10.1	-9.0

Source: Data provided by the National Statistical Institutes

Most of both immigrants to and emigrants from the countries are involved in migration within the CIS area. In 2000-2007 about 92% of all immigrants and 72% of emigrants arrived from or moved to another CIS country. For Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan these figures were even higher (over 95% for both immigration and emigration), while a considerable part of emigrants from the Russian Federation (about 42% in 2000-2005 and only 35% since 2006) and Kazakhstan (26% on average in 2000-2006⁴) move to other countries.

Although statistical and administrative sources are becoming more available, there are still limitations in data access, mainly caused by traditional (and unmotivated) secrecy of information. It is not always easy to persuade the persons in charge that statistics needs aggregated data, not individual records containing personal information. Difficulties in data access could be encountered even at the national level; centralized data collection by the national statistical agency does not compensate for the shortage of administrative statistics such as data on naturalization and on residence permits and visas issued. A lack of cooperation is also observed at the international level – the countries, as a rule, do not have data exchange at a bilateral or

³ Kazakhstan supplied provisional information on foreign population in 2009.

⁴ This was mainly due to emigration of ethnic Germans and their family members.

multilateral level. Information collected by the Statistical Committee of the CIS is very limited in terms of categories of migration and variables. The general lack of accurate statistics of immigration and emigration for residence is a big problem faced by the CIS states, but not the only one. The countries of the region experience a considerable movement of short-term and long-term labour migration, which tends to be dramatically underestimated both in the receiving and in the sending countries. Among the five countries reviewed in the report there are states of the sending and the receiving type, as well as a “mixed” type. To fill the gap in statistics on other types of migration, administrative sources should be used more extensively, although the quality of administrative data is sometimes poor. The development of different data sources and the availability of statistics are limited by financial and technical resources and sometimes by the capacity of the staff involved in data collection and migration management.

The scale of migration movement in the post-Soviet space (several million temporary labour migrants and about half a million migrants annually changing their place of usual (permanent) residence) has dramatically increased the role played by the CIS countries in the global migration processes. However, efficient migration management and investigation appears to be hampered by a lack of statistical data. Towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, several influential international organizations – ILO, IOM, OSCE and the World Bank – almost simultaneously launched projects focused on describing available sources and harmonizing statistics in the CIS².

Migration policies in the region focus mainly on the situation within the borders of the CIS. A large number of bilateral and multilateral international agreements as well as national legislation are devoted to the regulation of migrant entry (mainly on the basis of a visa-free regime), stay and access to the labour market. Most migrant stocks and flows come from the countries of the former USSR.

There are certain similarities in the countries' migration policies, although the same programmes show varying degrees of efficiency. Some of the states developed repatriation programmes for population belonging to the titular ethnicity (“Oralmans” in Kazakhstan, “Kairylmans” in Kyrgyzstan) or to a broader category of “compatriots” (Russian Federation). These target groups of migrants are a subject to special registration in some cases, not overlapping with immigration statistics. Where there are considerable inflows of special categories of migrants, these figures should be taken into account in estimating immigration. Each country of the region has a diversified legislation on migration issues. Some of the laws and bylaws directly deal with data collection. However, a lack of control and coordination between agencies, insufficient correspondence between different legal acts, as well as financial and other considerations, have a strong negative impact on the quality and availability of data. One of the main problems in all of the countries is a traditionally frequent restructuring of administrative agencies involved in migration management, delegation of functions and responsibilities from one agency to another, and considerable staff turnover.

² Mainly in its Asian sub-region