



Migration data: Strengths and challenges

Béla Hovy, Chief
Migration Section
Population Division/DESA
United Nations, New York

Key migration concepts

1. International migrants
2. Refugees
3. Asylum-seekers
4. Internally displaced (IDPs)
5. Stateless
6. Irregular migrants
7. Transnational communities
8. Trafficking / smuggling
9. Circular migration
10. Transit migration

1. International migrant stock

1) Criterion

- country of birth or citizenship

2) Source

- Population censuses, registers

3) Advantages

- Global, comparable

4) Disadvantages

- Infrequent, life time migration

1. Immigrants / emigrants ("flow")

1) Criterion

- Country of previous/next residence, citizenship or birth

2) Source

- Administrative records (residence permits, immigration permits)

3) Advantages

- Annual data by immigration category and citizens/non-citizens

4) Disadvantages

- Difficult to compare, limited coverage (15-20 countries world wide)

2. Refugee stock

1) Criterion

- 1951 UN Convention, 1967 OAU Convention, UNHCR mandate

2) Source

- Registers

3) Advantages

- Annual, detailed, global, comparable

4) Disadvantages

- Coverage (UNRWA, unregistered refugees), nomenclatura for 'refugee-like' situations

2. Refugee flows

1) New arrivals (inflows)

Durable solutions

1) Voluntary repatriation

2) Resettlement

- Arrivals

3) Local integration

- Naturalization

3. Asylum-seekers

1) Criterion

- Individual applications for asylum or refugee status

2) Source

- Administrative (asylum, refugee status determination procedure) (Gvt, HCR)

3) Advantages

- Annual, detailed, harmonized

4) Disadvantages

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4. Internally displaced (IDPs)

1) Criterion

- Refugee-related reasons plus natural causes

2) Source

- Administrative records, guestimates
(Governments, UN agencies, NGOs)

3) Advantages

- A measure of internal displacement

4) Disadvantages

- Many (inaccuracies, use of “cumulative flows”, discrepancies between sources, unreliable, no sources)

5. Stateless persons

1) Criterion

- A person without effective citizenship (2 UN Conventions)

2) Source

- Population census, register

3) Advantages

- Some reliable data on individual countries

4) Disadvantages

- No global picture, guestimates for some countries, no data in many cases

➤ *Stateless persons may or may not be migrants*

6. Irregular migrants

1) Criterion

- Multiple (entry, stay, work violation)

2) Source

- Combination, surveys, amnesties

3) Advantages

- Some reliable data on individual countries

4) Disadvantages

- No global picture, guestimates for some countries, no data in many cases

7. Transnational / expatriate communities (“diaspora”)

1) Criterion

- Practice: National, varied concepts
- Proposal: country of citizenship (birth)

2) Source

- Practice: consulate registration
- Proposal: population census, register of country of enumeration

3) Advantages

- Population census, register is accurate source

4) Disadvantages

- No single definition; definitions unclear

8. Victims of trafficking / smuggled migrants

1) Criterion

- Two protocols of United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

2) Source

- IC Registration, surveys

3) Advantages

- ...

4) Disadvantages

- No global picture, guestimates for some countries, no data in many cases

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1. Circular migration

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2. Transit migration

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