



# Data Collection on Migration and Development: Towards a Global Consensus

Bela Hovy, Chief  
Migration Section  
Population Division  
UN/DESA

# Overview

- 1) Concepts, definitions, sources
- 2) GMFD I: Helsinki meeting
- 3) GMFD II: Ad hoc working group
- 4) Commission on International Migration Data for Development Research
- 5) Way forward

# Concepts, definitions, sources

1. International migrants
2. Transnational/expatriate communities ('diaspora')
3. Refugees and asylum-seekers
4. Stateless
5. Internally displaced (IDPs)
6. Irregular migrants

# 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

## 5) UN/DESA

# Immigration flows

## 1) Criterion

- ❑ Country of previous 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)

## 5) OECD, UN/DESA

# 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

## 5) UN/DESA

# Refugee stock

## 1) Criterion

- ❑ 1951 UN Convention, 1967 OAU Convention

## 2) Source

- ❑ Registers

## 3) Advantages

- ❑ Annual, detailed, global, comparable

## 4) Disadvantages

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

## 5) UNHCR, UNRWA

# Refugee flows

## 1) Inflows

- ❑ Spontaneous (individual, group)
- ❑ Resettlement

## 2) Outflows

- ❑ Voluntary repatriation
- ❑ Resettlement departures

## 3) UNHCR

# Asylum-seekers

## 1) Criterion

- ❑ Individual applications for asylum or refugee status

## 2) Source

- ❑ Administrative (asylum, refugee status determination procedure) (Govt, HCR)

## 3) Advantages

- ❑ Annual, detailed, harmonized

## 4) Disadvantages: ...

## 5) UNHCR

# 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

## 5) UNHCR

- Stateless persons may or may not be migrants

# 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) NRC, OCHA, UN (“cluster approach”)

# 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

## 5) [OECD]

# GMFD I - Helsinki meeting

## ■ Priority areas for research

- Impacts of migration on development
- Future of migration
- Assessment of policy impacts
- South-South migration
- Diaspora communities

## ■ Priority areas for data

- Seize 2010 round of national censuses
- Use administrative data
- Standardize survey questionnaires
- Build capacities in data collection
- Enhance cooperation in data exchange

# GFMD II -

## RT 3.1 Data and research

- Why?
  - ...
- What?
  - Children, families, gender, South-South, diaspora, etc.
- How?
  - Data and research working group
  - 2010 round of censuses
  - Capacity building

# Commission on International Migration Data for Development Research

*Rays of hope: Tabulations*





Ask basic census questions,  
and tabulate the answers



National statistical offices  
UNStat, UNFPA, World Bank

1

2

3

4

5

Exploit administrative  
data sources



Ministries in charge of migration  
+ stats offices

1

2

3

4

5

Leverage existing surveys



OECD, World Bank, DHS

1

2

3

4

5

Provide access to microdata



Ministries in charge of migration  
+ stats offices



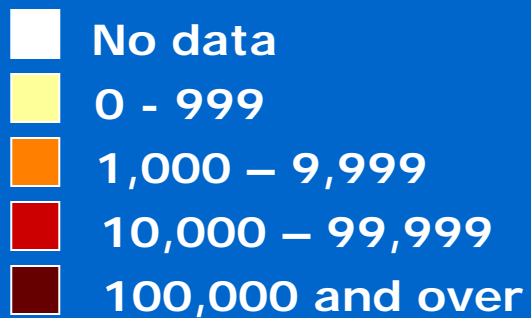
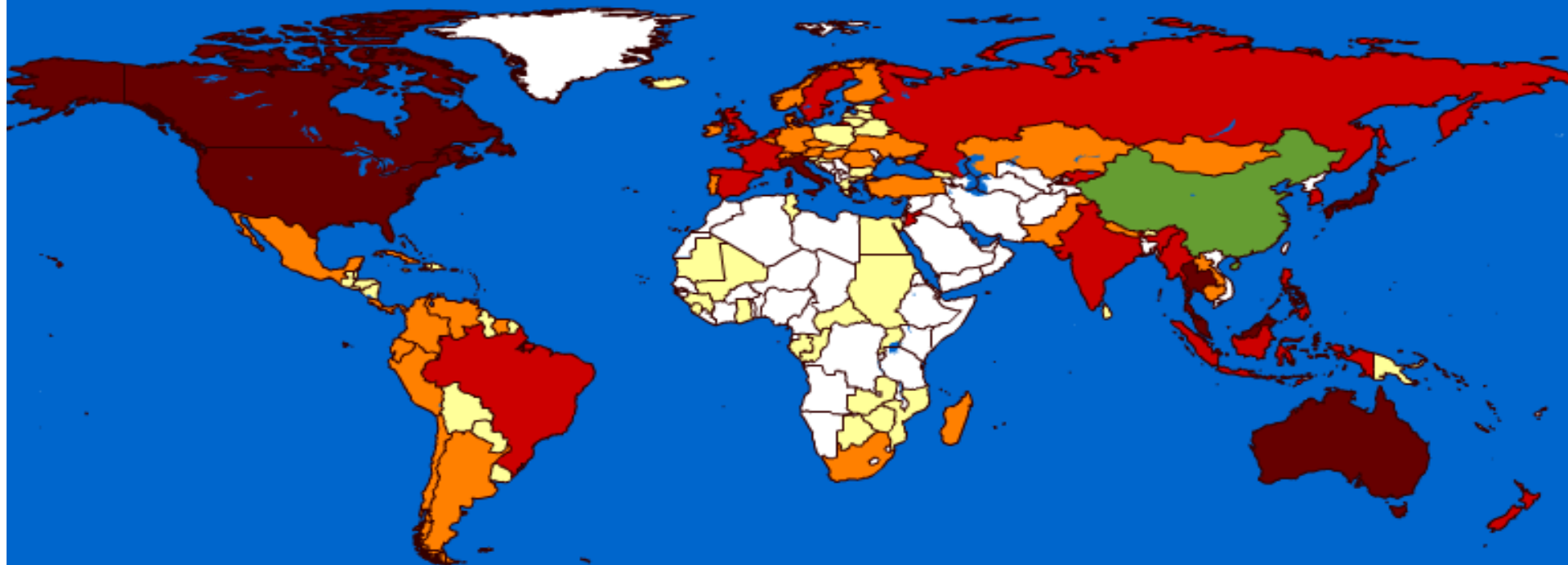
Build capacity for collection  
and dissemination



IOM, World Bank, UNFPA

# International migrant stock from China

by country of birth or citizenship, latest available data



Thank you

Unmigration.org

<http://esa.un.org/unmigration>