

**TWELFTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Secretariat

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**ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE OUTCOME OF THE 2013 HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT¹**

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¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

A. INTRODUCTION

The activities of the UNECE Statistical Division continue to contribute towards the outcome of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, in particular towards the need for reliable and valid statistical data on international migration. UNECE works towards improving the quality and availability of statistics on international migration by developing common definitions, methods and practices, and promoting them across the UNECE region. A number of expert group meetings, task forces and workshops have been organized to achieve these goals. Particular focus is spent on developing the capacities of countries in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia to improve their migration statistics.

At the most recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development member states unanimously adopted a Declaration recognizing international migration's relevance for the development of origin, transit and destination countries. Among the Declaration were many areas relevant to current and future work conducted by UNECE, including the need for reliable statistical data on international migration, the better understanding of migration patterns across and within regions, the need to consider migration of highly skilled person and circular migration, promotion of the well-being of migrants and their integration into societies, and recognition that human mobility is a key factor for sustainable development which should be adequately considered in the post-2015 development agenda. The following report is structured along these aspects of the Declaration.

B. EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR RELIABLE STATISTICAL DATA ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) selected the topic of "Migration Statistics" to be discussed at its upcoming 2014 CES plenary session.² This seminar will bring together the heads of National Statistical Offices to discuss changing migration patterns resulting from the recent economic crisis and data sources used to measure these patterns, with particular focus on recent Censuses and administrative data. The seminar will also investigate different ways to improve the collection of migration data, as well as measurement of the migration phenomena. The ideas generated from this meeting should stimulate future methodological work in migration statistics.

In addition to the upcoming CES seminar on migration statistics, biennial work sessions of migration statistics experts provide a platform for exchange of experience. The upcoming 2014 Work Session on Migration Statistics will include many of the topics relevant to the declaration of the 2013 HLD on International Migration and Development, including the measurement of the integration of migrants, gender and youth, return and circular migration, as well as other impacts of migration on countries of origin and destination.³

² See: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.04.ces.html/>

³ See <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.10.migration2.html>

C. MIGRATION AS A FACTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Related to the important contribution of migration and development, and its contribution to the post-2015 development agenda, UNECE organized, with EFTA and IOM, a capacity-building workshop for countries in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.⁴ This workshop was held in November 2013 in Almaty, Kazakhstan and brought together data producers and policy makers to discuss migration and development data-related issues, from both the perspective of the recent High-level Dialogue and the post-2015 UN development agenda. Countries were introduced to migration and development concepts and methods to measure the impact of migration on individuals, as well as countries of origin and destination. As a result of this workshop, representatives from countries increased their capacity to produce statistics related to migration and development in national statistical offices and other agencies producing migration statistics, as well as increasing their awareness of how to develop migration-related indicators for monitoring the post-2015 development agenda.

D. TO PROMOTE THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS INTO SOCIETIES

Two methodological task forces work on topics relevant to the outcomes of the High-level Dialogue, including the measurement of the promotion of integration of migrants into societies and the need to consider circular migration as a development strategy.

The task force on the measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants was set up to help fill the need for statistical information to better understand the phenomenon of the socio-economic conditions of migrants and the impact of international migration on sending and receiving countries, particularly from a longitudinal perspective. The task force will identify the dimensions that are most relevant to the understanding of migrant situations, especially the longitudinal aspect of socio-economic conditions, as well as developing indicators for each of these dimensions. It will also provide guidelines and share experiences in the production of indicators using existing census, surveys and administrative data sources.

E. EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO CONSIDER CIRCULAR MIGRATION

The other on-going task force is developing a common statistical definition for circular migration. Circular migration is often seen as a win-win-win proposition, providing gains to both host and origin countries, as well as to the migrants themselves. Circular migration can alleviate host countries' labour needs and increase their economic production. In countries of origin, it can provide unemployment relief and both financial and human capital (in terms of skills and resources brought back to the country), as well as mitigate population loss due to outmigration. Individual migrants also benefit via increased income, greater work experience, and the development of their human capital. However, migrants who move back and forth between countries are very difficult to measure using current statistical definitions. For producing quality statistics on circular migration, the definition, time period, standards, and sources for its measurement need to be established. After assessing current user needs, methodology and data sources available to measure

⁴ See: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2013.11.migration.html>

circular migration, as well as the impact of using different definitions for circular migration, the task force will propose a common international statistical definition of circular migration.

F. TOWARDS BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF REGIONAL MIGRATION PATTERNS

Finally, to better understand and monitor the complexity of migration flows within and between regions, UNECE continues to support the development of its Clearing House on Migration Statistics. Established in 2010, this initiative aims to facilitate the collection, dissemination and sharing of basic migration data from twelve countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.⁵ The establishment of this data repository increases the potential of regionally comparable migration data, as well as potentially improving estimates of emigration for these countries by utilizing immigration data from other countries in the region. Data were collected according to a set of tables agreed with the participating countries and international organizations and are available on the UNECE website. The Clearing House was recently updated in 2013 to include data from 2011 and 2012. UNECE will continue to update and improve it in the future.

G. CONCLUSION

All of these current and future UNECE activities serve to help improve the quality of international migration statistics, as well as improve the measurement of different migration and development issues, thus contributing to the implementation of the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. Highlighting the measurement aspects of migration can help to promote the integration of migration into the post-2015 development agenda.

⁵ See: http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/database/STAT/89-MCH/01-MCH_1/?lang=1