

DATA SOURCE AND METODOLOGY

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International migrant stock: The basic data to estimate the international migrant stock were obtained mostly from population censuses held during the decennial rounds of censuses. Some of the data used were obtained from population registers and nationally representative surveys.

In the majority of cases, the sources available had gathered information on the place of birth of the enumerated population, thus allowing for the identification of the foreign-born population. In estimating the international migrant stock, international migrants have been equated with the foreign-born whenever possible. In most countries lacking data on place of birth, information on the country of citizenship of those enumerated was available and was used as the basis for the identification of international migrants, thus effectively equating international migrants with foreign citizens.

Among the 230 countries or areas that constituted the world in 2008, 221, representing 91 per cent of the total, had at least one data source on the international migrant stock. For 179 of them (78 per cent), the data used as the basis for estimation were the number of foreign-born persons. For another 42 (18 per cent), the number of international migrants was based on data regarding foreign citizens. The nine countries with no information include China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea and Somalia, which have not been major destinations for international migrants other than refugees, as well as some small island States and city States.

Given the nature of the data available and the extent of their coverage, a straightforward method of estimation was used. For the 195 countries having information on the international migrant stock for at least two points in time, interpolation or extrapolation using an exponential growth rate was used to estimate the international migrant stock on 1 July of the reference years, namely, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010. In some instances, the estimates were adjusted on the basis of other relevant information, including the size of the total population in the country, to ensure that the proportion of migrants in small populations did not increase to unacceptable levels.

Only one source of data was available for 26 countries, including seven of the 15 successor States of the former USSR. In the case of these seven successor States, estimates were derived by considering the number of persons enumerated by the 1989 census of the former USSR and taking into account the migration flows that have occurred between 1990 and 2005. The trend estimated was maintained constant in extrapolating to 2010. For all other countries with only one data source, estimates for the reference years were derived by assuming growth rates of the migrant stock in the years preceding or following the only data source available. For the nine countries or areas for which no information was available on the international migrant stock, a model, based on the general observation that the proportion of international migrants tends to be inversely related to the size of the total population, was used.

Information by sex was available for 211 countries or areas, constituting 95 per cent of the countries or areas with at least one source of information on the number of international migrants. Among them, data by sex and country of birth were available for 169 countries or areas, while data classified by sex and country of citizenship were available for 42 countries or areas. In the 19 countries with no information by sex, the proportion of female migrants was assumed to equal the regional average. In the five successor States of the former USSR lacking data classified by sex, the proportion of female migrants among all migrants was assumed to equal the average proportion

calculated from the 10 successor States having data classified by sex. For three countries in Western Asia hosting a significant number of Palestinian refugees, the proportion of female migrants among all migrants was assumed to equal that derived from UNRWA data.

Refugees. The coverage of refugees in population censuses is uneven. In countries where refugees have been resettled, granted refugee status and allowed to integrate, they are normally covered by the population census as any other migrant. In such cases, there is no reason to make a special provision for the consideration of refugees in estimating the international migrant stock. However, in many places, refugees are required to reside in camps and other designated areas. In most countries in which refugees are maintained segregated from the rest of the population, it is unlikely that population censuses cover them. Furthermore, when refugee flows occur rapidly in situations of conflict, it is uncommon for a population census to take place soon after and to reflect the newly arrived refugee population. Consequently, for many countries hosting large refugee populations, the refugee statistics reported by UNHCR are the only source of information on persons who are recognized as refugees or find themselves in refugee-like situations. In order to ensure that the estimates of the international migrant stock reflect properly the numbers of refugees, the refugee figures reported by UNHCR and UNWRA were added to the estimates of the international migrant stock for most developing countries. In doing so, care was taken to estimate refugee stocks at mid-year (1 July) from the UNHCR data, which usually refer to the end of the year.

For developed countries, where most refugees have been admitted for resettlement and are routinely included in population counts, be it by censuses or population registers, no such adjustment was made. Nor was any adjustment made to reflect the number of asylum-seekers.