

**Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and major
data sources in Bulgaria**

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

NSI - National Statistical Institute

MI - Ministry of Interior

SAR - State Agency for Refugees

MRDPW - Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works

NRA - National Revenue Agency

PR - Population Register

ISD - Information System Demography

PIN - Personal Identification Number

LFS - Labour Force Survey

Content

Executive summary – in English	1
1. Introduction	4
2. Data sources and responsible authorities	6
2.1. Administrative data sources	6
2.1.1. Registers on Bulgarian citizenship	6
2.1.2. Information on refugees, asylum and humanitarian status	7
2.1.3. Register on Foreigners	8
2.1.4. Register of EU citizens residing in the Republic of Bulgaria	10
2.1.5 Unified System for Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population (Population Register)	11
2.1.6. Information on persons who have declared interruption of payment of health insurance contributions	14
2.2. Statistical data sources, sample surveys	15
2.2.1. Information System Demography	15
2.2.2. Specialised sample surveys	18
2.2.2.1. Territorial mobility of the population (2001) and Migration and migratory behaviour of the population (2011)	18
2.2.2.2. Sample survey on Bulgarian and Foreign Citizens, Departing from Bulgaria	20
2.2.2.3. Labour force survey	20
2.3. Census databases	21
2.3.1. Population and housing census	21
4. Conclusions and recommendations	23

Executive summary

The present analysis aims to present a detailed picture of the sources of information on international migration existing in Bulgaria.

The analysis examines the administrative and statistical data sources on international migration with respect to their interaction in providing reliable and accurate information, satisfying the information needs not only on national, but on international level also and compliant to the international requirements in the field.

The analysis is conducted by experts from the National Statistical Institute (NSI) of the Republic of Bulgaria. According to the country legislation, the NSI is the institution responsible for production and dissemination of statistical data on the country's social and economic development, including migration data. The analysis covers the period since 2001, but the accent is put on the years after 2007 i.e. the period after the accession to the European Union.

The legislative frame, regulation the international migration processes includes:

- Law on Bulgarian Citizenship;
- Law on the Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population;
- Law for the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Law on the Asylum and the Refugees;
- Law on Entering, Residing and Leaving the Republic of Bulgaria of European Union Citizens and Members of Their Families.

The above mentioned laws regulate not only the rights and obligations of persons, subject to the respective regulations, but also the rights and obligations of the institutions responsible in a respective area, as well as the functioning of the main information systems.

In order to produce qualitative migration data, to answer the international requirements in the field and to ensure information on the intensive migration processes, that started after the political changes in 1989, a number of agreements on exchange of information on migration were signed between the National Statistical Institute, as an official provider of statistical data in the country and providers of administrative data like the Ministry of Interior (dealing with data on foreigners), the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (maintaining the Population Register), the National Revenue Agency (collecting limited data on Bulgarian citizens leaving the country), State Agency for Refugees.

Within the period from the accession of Bulgaria to the EU up to now, all these laws have undergone a number of changes aiming transposition of the EU legislation into the national one. At present, the legislation in the country is fully compliant to the European requirements regarding regulation and provision of information on international migration.

Changes in the legislation demanded and imposed a number of changes with respect to the provision of information on migration processes. Within the period after 2001, a number of information channels were changed or new ones were created for exchange of information in the field between the respective institutions. For instance, resulting from Regulation 862/2007, a number of new data has to be collected and processed that required resumption of the agreement signed earlier between the NSI and Ministry of Interior; some changes were introduced with respect to usually resident population; new demands for migration data appeared.

Institutions engaged with provision of migration data are as follows:

- Ministry of Justice;
- Ministry of Interior;
- Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works;
- State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers.
- National Revenue Agency

Apart from the ones mentioned above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Employment Agency, Ministry of Justice, State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad and other institutions also have competences in the field.

The National Statistical Institute (NSI) of Bulgaria, fulfilling its legal obligations for provision of statistical data, acts as institution integrating the information flows from all the institutions having competences in the field of migration. In this connection, the NSI compiles, processes and disseminates to national and international users data on all migration categories – in the country and outside it.

Fulfilling its obligations to provide information, the NSI applies the adopted and recommended definitions on the different migrant categories, regarding the provisions of Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Apart from the information provided by the different administrative data sources, the NSI conducts specialised statistical surveys in the field of migration and migratory behaviour of population also.

The most significant, not only due to its coverage, but also due to the amount of information gathered is the Population Census. Based on the questions on migration included in the census questionnaire it is possible to produce detailed analysis of migration between the two censuses, thus creating possibility to elaborate adequate and active politics in this sphere. Migration data received through the censuses were used not only to produce estimates on the migration size and structures, but also for estimation of the changes in population number between the censuses.

In addition to the census information, the NSI also conducts specialised migration surveys. . The last two surveys *“Territorial mobility of the population” (2001)* and *“Migration and migratory behaviour of the population”* are not used to determine the volume of migration flows and the number of migrants, but to investigate the persons attitude to the migration and in order to create migrants *“profile”*.

Despite the efforts made by the experts dealing with migration issues from different institutions, there are problems still existing in the field, connected mainly with the data coverage and especially the coverage of separate migrant categories.

The problem connected to under coverage of Bulgarian citizens emigrating from the country is of a primary importance. The problem is caused by the absence of a legal obligation for Bulgarian citizens to “de-register” themselves from the Population Register in case of leaving the country for more than a one year period. Nevertheless, the institutions having competences in the field of migration and the NSI in particular made a lot of efforts in order to improve the coverage of emigrants. A good step in this direction is the usage of the National Revenue Agency information on persons who have declared to leave the country for more than 183 days per year (connected to release of payment of health insurance contributions for the period of absence). Additional alternative on the number of emigrants is the use of so called “mirror statistics” – data on Bulgarian citizens who have changed their usual residence in Bulgaria with a residence abroad (based on destination countries data on immigrants).

In conclusion it should be noted that no matter the great amount of work done till the moment with respect to transposition of the European legislation in the field of migration into the national one, the establishment of the respective national institutions and provision of the necessary information on migration processes, considerable efforts are to be put in order to improve mainly the coverage of migration statistics.

Basic conclusions that can be done based on the analysis are as follows:

- The European legislation is transposed in the national one, which is the basic prerequisite for the production of internationally comparable data;
- The institutions engaged with production of migration data have built up the information systems necessary for the purpose;
- Agreements are signed between the respective institutions, regulating the exchange of migration data;
- Bulgaria has created the conditions necessary for the production and presentation of the required migration data to Eurostat.

Despite the achievements, there are still areas that need additional efforts to be made in order to improve the quality of data and better coverage of different migrant categories.

For solving the problems still existing, the main efforts should be directed mainly to finding of new sources of information, thus improving coverage and respectively the quality of statistics on migration.

1. INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this analysis is to present an overview of the existing migration data production systems in the Republic of Bulgaria, to review the legislation in the field of international migration and the cooperation between the institutions involved in production of migration data.

The exchange of information between the existing data sources also will be presented and analysed, the problems connected to the data coverage and quality, as well as the weakness of different data sources and the activities undertaken or planned for future improvements.

The present analysis focuses on the legislative changes done in the field of migration before and after the accession of EU and the respective changes imposed in the information channels and flows, the problems faced, the data gaps observed, data quality issues, as well as the activities undertaken to overcome the existing data shortages and to improve the quality of data provided at national and international level.

The analysis covers the period 2001-2012, but the accent is put on the years after 2007, when Bulgaria became a member of the EC.

The present report is prepared by experts from the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute. The NSI is the institution responsible for production of official statistical data, including migration data. “The National Statistical Institute is a central institution responsible for collection and analysis of statistical data on migration. The institute is the Bulgarian contact point in respect presentation of migration data to Eurostat. The official statistical information – product of NSI – is intended for analyses and scientific researches, for planning, prognostication and decision making at micro and macro level. The NSI analyses are the basic instrument for management of the migration processes”¹.

A specialised institutional system and administration is built in the country for implementation of the state policy in the field of migration, asylum and integration. The main data sources and administrations engaged with provision of migration data are:

- Immigration data - Ministry of Interior
 - DG “Border Police” - responsible for the border control and providing information on the illegal migration;
 - Directorate “Migration” – coordination of migration processes, regulation and control of the third country nationals migration, administrative service of EU and EEA citizens residing in Bulgaria.
 - Refugees and asylum data - State Agency for Refugees and Asylum at the Council of Ministers
 - Data on citizenship and foreigners issued long-term and permanent residence permits - Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
 - DG “Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population”
 - Emigration data - DG “Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population”, National Revenue Agency

Competences in the field of migration and asylum have also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Employment Agency, Ministry of Justice, State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad and others.

In addition, the statistical data sources are examined in respect availability of information on international migration, definitions used, compliance with the EU requirements in the field of migration and usually resident population, as well as exchange of information between the different data providers and between the institution having competences in the field of migration.

Some suggestions are made in respect the possible sources of information that can be used in order to improve coverage and quality of migration data.

The present analysis might help solving some of data provision problems at national level, but also will contribute to better understanding of problems faced by the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Interior, and the State Agency for Refugees and Asylum, the institutions having competences in the field of migration, in production on internationally comparative population and migration data.

The analysis is prepared based on the real situation existing in respect provision on migration data and namely:

- provisions of the country legislation in respect migration, citizenship and asylum;
- the interrelations established between the institutions having competences in the field of migration;
- agreements signed between the institutions responsible for data collection and provision;
- EU requirements on migration data and usually resident population estimates;
- Activities undertaken by the NSI as an official provider of migration data.

2. DATA SOURCES AND RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

2.1. Administrative data sources

2.1.1. Registers on Bulgarian citizenship, maintained by the Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice is in charge of handling all matters linked with acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship, revocation of naturalization, reinstatement, release from and deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship. The conditions and procedure of acquisition, loss and reinstatement of Bulgarian citizenship are provided in the Law on the Bulgarian Citizenship². According to the Law, a dual citizenship is allowed. Bulgarian citizenship may be acquired:

- by origin;
- by naturalisation (after 5 years continued residence);
- as a consequence of marriage with a Bulgarian citizen;
- due to a special service to the country.

Law on the Bulgarian citizenship provides maintenance of 3 types of registers on the citizenship:

- Register on persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship by naturalisation;
- Register on persons who have lost their Bulgarian citizenship;
- Register on persons who have had their Bulgarian citizenship reinstated.

In addition, a record-book of applications and proposals for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship, revocation of naturalization, reinstatement, release from and deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship is kept.

Data available in the three registers is used for administrative purposes mainly.

The acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalisation, the restoration of Bulgarian citizenship, the release and deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship and the revoking of the naturalisation are carried out by an edict of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria. Upon receipt of the President edict, the Ministry of Justice inform:

- Municipal authorities where the permanent address of person is – it is done in order the respective changes of citizenship to be included in the Population Register;
- Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - for issuance or withdrawal of Bulgarian identification documents.

Persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship are included in the Population Register and those who are realised or deprived from Bulgarian citizenship are excluded. Data transferred to and included in the Population Register and respectively the Information System Demography of the NSI is used for statistical purposes (for more details see 2.2.1. “Information System Demography” below).

2.1.2. Information on refugees, asylum and humanitarian status, collected by the State Agency for Refugees

State Agency for Refugees (SAR) at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria is an institution with headquarters in Sofia and territorial divisions in the country. Regulation of its work is provided in the Law for the Asylum and the Refugees³. The Law settles also the conditions and the order of providing special protection to foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as their rights and obligations.

The special protection provided by the Republic of Bulgaria to foreigners according to the Law for the Asylum and the Refugees includes asylum, refugee status, humanitarian status and temporary protection.

- **Asylum protection** is granted by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria to foreigners who are victimised for reasons of their convictions or activity in defence of internationally recognised rights and freedoms.

- **Refugee status** is granted by the Chairman of the State Agency for Refugees to a foreigner who reasonably fears from victimisation due to his race, religion, nationality, belonging to a definite social group or political opinion and/or conviction and who cannot or does not want to use the protection of the country whose citizen is or to return there. As refugees are considered the spouse of a foreigner with conceded statute of refugee and their minor and under-aged not married children as far as this is compatible with their individual statute.

- **Humanitarian status** is granted by the Chairman of the State Agency for Refugees to a foreigner compelled to leave or remain outside the country of origin or residence for reason of threat for his life, security or freedom due to violence occurring in situations, such as an armed conflict, as well as when he is exposed to a danger of torture or other form of inhuman or humiliating attitude or punishment, and for these reasons he cannot or does not want to return to his country of origin or residence. Humanitarian status can also be provided for other reasons of humanitarian nature or on other grounds stipulated by the Bulgarian legislation, as well as for reasons stipulated by the conclusions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner of the United Nations Organisation for the refugees.

- **Temporary protection** is granted by the Council of Ministers in case of massive entry of foreigners compelled to leave their country of origin or residence due to an armed conflict, civil war, foreign aggression, violation of the human rights or violence in large proportion on the territory of the respective country or in an individual region of it, and for these reasons they cannot return there.

The applications for asylum, refugee status and humanitarian status are granted on the basis of individual examination. As regards temporary protection, every member of the group is considered prima facie as a refugee.

A recognised refugee acquires the rights and obligations of a Bulgarian national with the exception of: the right to participate in general and municipal elections, in national and regional referenda, as well as to participate in the establishment of political parties and be a member of such parties; to hold positions for which Bulgarian nationality is required by law; to be a member of the armed forces; other restrictions explicitly laid down by law.

A recognised refugee has a right to request family reunification on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. Permission for family reunification is granted by the Chairman of SAR.

SAR collects data on the foreigners seeking protection with the purpose of establishing the identity and clarification of the circumstances related to the filled application. As provided by the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria, foreigners are considered persons who are not Bulgarian citizens, or are not citizens of any other country according to its legislation. Source of the data are the foreigners themselves and Bulgarian and foreign individuals or corporate bodies.

According to article 63 (4) of the Law for the Asylum and the Refugees, SAR collects and stores information in compliance with the legislation on protection of personal data and maintains a database, containing administrative data - all documents and data related to the identity of asylum seekers which have become known during the procedure. The last are confidential and are solely used for the needs of proceedings under the Law for the Asylum and the Refugees or for the needs of international co-operation of the countries - parties to the Convention for the refugee status of 1951.

SAR produces statistical data also on the asylum seekers who applied for international protection and the different types of temporary, humanitarian or refugee status granted to aliens. SAR is currently reporting to EUROSTAT the statistical data under Regulation (EC) 862/2007, Article 4 “Statistics on International Protection”. Statistics produced are available for use under a user request. The definitions used for statistical data collection are fully compliant to Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

Foreigners granted refugee or humanitarian status are obliged, within 14 days from the receipt of a respective status permit to appear at the municipality authorities in order to be registered in the Population Register. In case of termination on withdrawal of the permit, the SAR informs in writing the Population Register authorities in order the concerned persons to be excluded from it.

Based on the Population Register data, transferred on a monthly basis to the NSI, the foreigners granted refugee or humanitarian status are included in the country usually resident population number (for details see 2.2.1. “Information System Demography” below).

2.1.3. Register on Foreigners, maintained by the Ministry of Interior

Ministry of Interior, through its Directorates “Migration” and “Coordination and Information Analysis”, is the institution having competences in the field of issuance of residence permits to foreigners, registration of foreigners residing in the country and maintenance of a Unified Register of Foreigners. The Ministry work in the field is regulated by the Law for the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria⁴.

Foreigner in the sense of the Law is considered a person who is not a Bulgarian citizen or is not a citizen of another Member State of the European Union, of a state, party to the Agreement on European Economic Area, or of the Swiss Confederation.

According to the Law provisions, foreigners reside in Bulgaria:

- on a short-term basis - up to 90 days from the date of entry. This term can be prolonged once by the administrative control services (for reasons of a humanitarian nature);
- on a prolonged (continuous) basis - the period of stay authorised is up to one year;
- on a long-term basis - the initial period of stay authorised is 5 years, with a possibility existing for renewal after the submission of an application;
- on a permanent basis - the period of stay authorised is unlimited.

The terms mentioned above do not concern foreign citizens issued residence permits according to the Law for the Asylum and the Refugees.

The term for stay of foreigners who have entered the country on one ground cannot be prolonged on another one, except the cases where this is required by state interest and in the event of extraordinary circumstances.

Foreigners, who have obtained a long-term residence permit in another Member State of the European Union, may acquire long-term residence permit in the Republic of Bulgaria also.

There was a period of changes in the country legislation so that to be in accordance to the EU requirements in the field. At present, all EU requirements provided in the Regulations (EO) N 539/2001 and (EO) N 1030/2002 are transposed in the national legislation.

Since 2011, foreigners (third - country nationals) who are highly qualified workers within the meaning of the Employment Promotion Act may obtain a residence and work permit "EU Blue Card" type. Holder of "EU Blue Card" may obtain a long-term residence permit in Bulgaria. Holder of "EU Blue Card" who has obtained a long-term residence permit in Bulgaria is issued a residence permit according to Regulation (EO) N 1030/2002.

Ministry of Interior maintains a Unified Register of Foreigners, containing data on foreigners residing in Bulgaria on prolonged, long-term and permanent basis. Data from the Register are communicated to government institutions and organisations on the grounds of a law or an act of the judicial authority, Bulgarian citizens and foreigners - only if the data regard them, Bulgarian and foreign corporate bodies on the grounds of a law or an act of the judicial authority, as well as to other countries services in compliance with the international contracts party to which is the Republic of Bulgaria.

The following data on foreigners is included in the Register:

- names in Cyrillic and Roman alphabet;
- date of birth, place of birth, sex, citizenship;
- PIN and/or personal number of a foreigner (composition of PIN is explained in 2.1.5. below);
- permanent address in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- present address in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- purpose of stay in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- visa (type, number, date and place of issuance, validity and term of stay);
- grounds of permitting the stay in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- applications for permitting long-term stay (number, date, decision);
- permits for acquiring special protection on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria;
- term of stay in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- marital status, spouse, children under 18 years of age;
- other information (permanent address in the country whose citizen the person is; edict of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for change of the citizenship; entries and exits to and from the Republic of Bulgaria; imposed compulsory administrative measures; biometric data – photos and 10-finger prints; other data stipulated by a law).

Data concerning foreigners granted permission for long-term and for permanent stay in the Republic of Bulgaria is submitted to the Population Register in order to be included there and respectively in the number of usually resident population, produced by NSI (for details see 2.2.1 "Information System Demography" below).

No matter the good coverage of foreigners granted permission for long-term and for permanent stay in the country, a problem still exists concerning the coverage of EU citizens residing in the country (who are not obliged to register) and third country nationals, issued permission for prolonged stay (the period of stay authorised is up to one year). The last two categories are not included in the Population Register and respectively in the Information System Demography, which worsen the quality of data on immigrants. At the same time, the application of statistical criteria for classification of different emigrants/immigrants categories, as well as calculation the length of stay using the Ministry of Interior information system was not possible (due to different design of the system, nomenclatures and classifications used).

In order to improve the quality of immigration data, cooperation was established between the Ministry of Interior and the NSI for exchange of information on the international migration. The idea was, the information provided by the Ministry to be processed by the NSI in order to produce accurate data on the number of immigrants and usually resident population respectively, applying the statistical criteria in the field. Exchange of data on the foreign citizens issued different types of residence permits distributed by age, sex, citizenship and country of birth was agreed.

Unfortunately, due to legal restrictions, the information provided to the NSI did not include person's identification and thus did not allow linkage of individual records, which having in mind the production process at the NSI information system is crucial for production of reliable and correct statistics on the number migrants and usually resident population.

The problems were faced to:

- distinguish foreigners issued permissions for long-term and permanent stay (already included in the PR and ISD respectively) from the rest;
- apply the statistical criteria on duration of stay at the country territory for foreigners issued a prolonged residence permit (up to one year) in case of prolongation.

That is why, up to 2011, the information received from the Ministry of Interior was used for production of revised estimates of the total number of population, required by Eurostat, and not for production of statistics on international migration and migrants.

In order to improve the data quality, a new agreement was signed between the Ministry of Interior and the NSI. According to it, starting from 2013, the Ministry will submit to the NSI data on immigrants based on person's identification (authorisation is granted by the Commission for protection of personal data). So, the matching of records (files) received from the Ministry of Interior and the PR will be done using the Information System maintained by the NSI. Data will be provided on all the foreigners issued residence permits during the year, on the dates of entering and leaving the country. Thus, applying the international statistical criteria on migration and calculating the length of stay in case of prolonged residence permits, the NSI will produce more reliable and correct data on the number of immigrants and usually resident population.

2.1.4. Register of EU citizens residing in the Republic of Bulgaria, maintained by the Ministry of Interior

Ministry of Interior is the institution having competences in the field of residence of EU citizens in the country and maintenance of Register of EU citizens. The Ministry work in the field is regulated by the

Law on Entering, Residing and Leaving the Republic of Bulgaria of European Union Citizens and Members of Their Families⁵.

EU citizen in the sense of the Law is considered a person who is a citizen of a Member State of the European Union. The Law is also applied to the citizens of countries - parties to the European Economic Area Agreement, the citizens of confederation Switzerland and the members of their families, who are not citizens of the European Union, the European Economic Area and confederation Switzerland, who, by virtue of international agreements concluded with the European Union, are entitled to free movement.

EU citizens may reside in Bulgaria on a prolonged (up to five years) and permanent basis (unlimited period). EU citizens could obtain a prolonged or permanent certificate depending on the period of their stay in Bulgaria. Family members of the EU citizens, who are not EU citizens, may stay in the country on a prolonged basis.

A family member of the European Union citizen, who is not an European Union citizen, may reside in the Republic of Bulgaria on a prolonged (up to five years) and permanent basis (unlimited period). The term of residence of a family member of the European Union citizen, who is not a European Union citizen is fixed according to the term residence of the European Union citizen.

According to the legislation, the EU citizens are not obliged to register themselves in the Population Register and respectively up to 2011 (the census year) they were not included in the number of usually resident population and in the immigrants' number.

Statistical data on EU citizens residing in Bulgaria were not prepared and published till now. Irrespective their small number, this is a segment not covered by the Population Register and respectively by the official statistical data on immigrants.

Starting from 2013, the Ministry of Interior will submit to the NSI data on EU citizens residing in Bulgaria based on person's identification (authorisation is granted by the Commission for protection of personal data). Data will be provided on all EU citizens who have register themselves in the country due to any reason, on the dates of entering and leaving the country. Thus, applying the international statistical criteria on migration and namely calculating the length of stay, the NSI will produce more reliable and correct data on the number of immigrants and international migration as a whole.

2.1.5 Unified System for Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population (Population Register), maintained by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works

The Unified System for Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population (Population Register) in the Republic of Bulgaria is operating for more than 30 years. The register is under the responsibility of Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Directorate General "Civil Registration and Administrative Service of Population".

The Population Register (PR) is operating according to the Law on Civil Registration⁶. According to the Law provisions (art. 3) the following are subject of registration:

- Bulgarian citizens;
- Foreign citizens (third country nationals) granted permission for long-term stay (the initial period of stay authorised is 5 years, with a possibility existing for renewal after the submission of an application);
- Foreign citizens (third country nationals) granted permission for permanent stay in the Republic of Bulgaria (the period of stay authorised is unlimited);
- Persons granted refugee or humanitarian status or asylum.

Foreign citizens granted permission for long-term or permanent stay in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as persons granted refugee or humanitarian status or asylum are registered based on decision issued by the respective authorities for granting the residence permit or residence status, accompanied by documents certifying their civil status, application for permanent address and registration of a present (current) address in the country. Electronic “personal registration card” is created in the Population Register and PIN of a foreigner is assigned to the persons concerned.

Persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship are also included in the Population Register. Those of them who are **residing in the country on a permanent basis** (i.e. have not only a permanent, but also a present (current) address registered in the country) are included in the country usually resident population number or excluded, in case of release or deprivation (for details see 2.2.1 “Information System Demography” below).

The following are not subject of registration in the Population Register:

- Foreigners and members of their families issued temporary (short-term) residence permit (up to 3 months);
- EU citizens and members of their families (no matter EU citizens or not) residing in the country, no matter the duration of stay.

Personal Identification Number (Bulgarian acronym – EGN) is given to each individual in order to link all the events associated with the same person. PIN is the unique administrative identifier of a person.

Persons PIN consist of 10-digits and contain the following information:

- First two digits – year of birth (the last two figures);
- Third and fourth digits – month of birth;
- Fifth and sixth digits – day of birth;
- Ninth digit – sex (odd numbers for female, even – for male);
- The combination of the seventh, eight and ninth digits – consecutive number of the birth within the day;
- Tenth digit – module 11 control digit.

PINs are widely used in the country not only by the government authorities and institutions, but by private companies also. PINs are used at the social security system, tax administration, for health insurance purposes, at employment agencies, election lists, banks, mobile operators, etc. The PINs are printed at identity documents of Bulgarian citizens.

The registration in the Population Register is based on the persons **permanent address**.

According to the article 91 of the Law on Civil Registration each person has two addresses:

- **Permanent address** – the address of registration in the Population Register. This address is declared by the person himself/herself. The permanent address is always on the territory of Bulgaria and each person has a permanent address (art. 93). This address is used for administrative purposes and correspondence with the public authorities (issuance of ID card, voting, etc.). The permanent address may coincide with the present one.
- **Present (current) address** - defined as the place where the person lives. Each person has only one present address and it can be abroad. In case, the person present address is abroad, only the country of residence is registered into the register (art. 94).

The following is the basic information on the persons civil status:

- name;
- date of birth;
- sex;
- citizenship and residence status;
- Personal Identification Number.

The Population Register is maintained electronically and it represents the “National Database Population”. Data is updated by the Civil Registration Offices of 264 municipalities (the Municipal Population Registers) based on notifications issued on the vital events occurred, notifications for change of address, change of citizenship and other documents, certifying change of the civil status.

In addition, the following information is stored into the Population Register”:

- place of birth (in case of persons born abroad – the country of birth);
- permanent address;
- present (current) address;
- marital status;
- spouse – PIN, name, sex, permanent address, citizenship and number of death certificate (for dead spouse);
- court decision on divorce;
- children - PIN, name, sex, permanent address, citizenship and number of death certificate (for dead child);
- mother/father - PIN, name, sex, permanent address, citizenship and number of death certificate (for dead parent);
- brothers/sisters (including step- and half-brothers and sisters);
- identity card issued – type, number and date of issuance;
- legal restrictions (type);
- remarks.

The Population Register receives information from number of institutions having competences in the field of civil registration of population and vice versa, provides data to different institutions according to their competences. Such are the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National Social Insurance Institute, National Health Insurance Fund, National Revenue Agency, National Statistical Institute. Exchange of information between the institutions is mostly based on exchange of records linked by the PIN. Transfer of data is regulated by legal acts, providing the description of information that is to be exchanged, authorities involved in the process according to their competences and type of information.

Thus, based on an agreement between the National Statistical Institute and the Population Register, the NSI, as an official producer of population and demographic data, works in close cooperation with the Population Register. The both systems use one and the same notifications for birth, death, marriage, divorce and change of present (current) address. Design of the different notification is respecting the needs of both institutions, thus allowing production of the necessary information not for the administrative purposes only, but also for statistical ones.

Registration of the vital events is done according to the NSI requirements and regarding the international recommendations. All the notifications included peoples both addresses – permanent and present (current), thus allowing administrative service of population by the respective authorities (based on the permanent address), as well as production of the official statistics (based on the persons present address).

Data are transmitted from the PR to the NSI on a monthly basis. Computer cryptogram data files are exchanged, containing individual records on the demographic events and migrations occurred during the reference period. Also information is provided on persons included into the register based on different grounds (such as persons granted permits for long-term or permanent stay, refugee, asylum or humanitarian status, and citizenship).

The main problem in respect the Population Register data is connected to persons leaving the country for a long period. There is no a legal provision existing, which oblige people who leave the country to inform the PR authorities. Thus, the information on emigrants is underestimated. Only information on persons who have officially declared at the respective authorities that are leaving the country is provided by the PR to NSI, on which basis the last are excluded from the number of usually resident population of the country for the reference period (for details see 2.2.1 "Information System Demography" below).

The second problem is connected to the registration of EU citizens. The last are not included in the Register due to the absence of legal obligation to register in case of residence in another member state. Up to 2011, the EU citizens were not covered by the statistics on immigrants and were not included in the usually resident population number. During the 2011 Population census, the EU citizens residing in the country were counted and included in the ISD respectively. Since 2013, the information on EU citizens residing in Bulgaria will be produced by the NSI based on the Ministry of Interior data (for details see 2.2.1 "Information System Demography" below).

The Population Register produces number of statistics, mainly used for administrative purposes by the central government institutions and local authorities. In addition, since 1991, based on the PR data, the electoral lists are produced for national and local elections and different tables are prepared for sociological surveys on a regular basis.

As the PR contains information on all Bulgarian citizens (no matter living in the country or not), the production of information on the usually resident population in the country is done by the NSI (for details see 2.2.1 "Information System Demography" below).

2.1.6. Information on persons who have declared interruption of payment of health insurance contributions, maintained by the National Revenue Agency

National Revenue Agency (NRA) does not have particular responsibilities in respect the statistical data collection and the international migration respectively. Nevertheless, taking into account the under-coverage of emigrants and searching additional information channels aiming improvement the

coverage of migration data, since the beginning of 2010, the NSI uses the NRA data on persons who have declared interruption of payment of health insurance contributions for production of more precise data on usually resident population number and namely to improve the coverage of persons emigrating from the country.

According to the Law on Health Insurance, the Bulgarian citizens who reside out of the country for more than 183 days during one calendar year are exempted from the obligation to pay health insurance contributions if they do not use medical aid paid by the National Health Insurance Fund. In order to be exempt from this obligation, people have to declare officially at the NRA the fact and the date of departure. The resumption of health insurance rights is also done based on declaration, where the date of return is to be pointed.

Basic information from the declarations on interruption of health insurance rights due to absence from the country for more than 183 days is transmitted to NSI and used as an additional data source on Bulgarians leaving the country. Records containing persons PIN and date of departure are exchanged, thus allowing calculation of length of stay/absence for each person to be done at the NSI, applying the statistical criteria for usually resident population. In addition, information on Bulgarian citizens who would like to resume payment of health insurance contributions due to return to the country is also collected from NRA and transmitted to NSI. Weakness of the data provided to NSI is the lack of information on country of destination, which imposes an application of weighting procedures to be done at NSI (for details see 2.2.1 "Information System Demography" below).

NRA data is transmitted to NSI on annual basis since 2010. Calculations concerning the emigration and usually resident population are done by NSI based on persons PIN.

2.2. Statistical data sources, sample surveys

2.2.1. Information System Demography, maintained by the National Statistical Institute

Information System Demography (ISD), maintained by the NSI, is the main source of statistical data on population, demographic events and migration in the Republic of Bulgaria. The System operates since the beginning of 2007. The System purpose is to automate the NSI activities on processing the demographic data and production of demographic statistics. The system has the following functions:

- Data collection – activities on statistical data gathering and entering and building up of Registers of observations, containing micro data;
- Data editing – activities on statistical data editing and building up of Final registers of observation, containing final (cleared) micro data;
- Data processing – building up and maintenance of data bases and their integration in Data Warehouse for statistical data and products dissemination. The final statistical products (references, publications, etc.) are produced through calculations and analyses by application of On-Line Analytical Processing – OLAP.

ISD contains data on population stocks, demographic events and changes of citizenship and country of birth. In addition there are data on 1992, 2001 and 2011 censuses.

In the Population census years, the ISD is updated through the census data i.e. the census information is used as a basis, updated afterwards with the demographic events occurred during the years between the censuses.

The main identifier used by the ISD is the Personal Identification Number (the same used in the PR and the censuses). The source of data on vital events and migration is the Population Register. Data from the PR are received monthly in a format of computer cryptogram file containing individual records on the demographic events and migrations occurred during the respective period (including persons granted permission for long-term and permanent stay, refugee or humanitarian status, as well as persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship). The last are distributed in regional aspect by person's present (current) address. The following demographic events are registered:

- Births;
- Deaths;
- Marriages;
- Divorces;
- Change of present (current) address;
- Change of citizenship.

The main category used in the current demographic statistics is "**permanent resident population**". This category includes people usually living at the country territory and who have not left it officially as of 31.12 of the reference year for a period more than one year. The population is defined at a given reference moment. The reference moment applied in the current demographic statistics is 31.12 of the reference year.

The population number and structures are calculated and distributed in regional aspect according to person's **present address**. The present address is used as a criterion in defining population of separate settlements. It satisfies best the internationally accepted definition on "**usually resident population**".

The population number and structures at the end of each year are calculated based on the population data for the preceding year and the data for natural growth and migration during the reference year. In the census years, recalculations of the population are made as of the end of the reference and the previous year. The recalculations are based on the census results and the respective calculations of the natural and migration increase, received from the current demographic statistics for the reference year.

The age of the population at the end of the year is calculated as of 31.12 in completed years. The population at the age of 0 includes live births occurred during the respective reference year only. Live births occurred during the previous years, but registered in the reference year, are included in the total number of live births and distributed by the respective population ages.

The age of parents at birth is calculated in completed years, based on the date of birth of parents and the date of birth.

The age of persons at death is calculated in completed years, based on the date of birth and the date of death.

The age of migrants is calculated in completed years, based on the date of birth and the date of migration.

As an institution responsible for production of the official statistics in the country, the NSI produces migration data also. The following definitions are applied in production of migration data:

- Internal migration - means change of the present (current) address within the country;
- International migration – means change of the present address in Bulgaria with an address abroad or an address abroad with an address in Bulgaria;
- Net migration – means the difference between the number of registered emigrants and the number of immigrants within the reference year;

- Emigration – means the action by which a person, having previously been usually resident in the territory of Bulgaria, ceases to have his or her usual residence in the country for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months;
- Immigration - means the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of Bulgaria for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another country.;
- Citizenship – means the particular legal bond between an individual and his or her State, acquired by birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means, according to the national legislation.
- Country of birth – means the country of residence of the mother at the time of the birth or, in default, the country in which the birth took place;

Based on the Population Register data, transferred on a monthly basis to the NSI, the following are included in ISD:

- persons **who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship** and who are residing in the country on a **permanent basis** (i.e. have not only a permanent, but also a present (current) address registered in the country). Thus, the Regulation 862/2007 provisions are respected to collect and present statistical data on “persons having their usual residence in the territory of the Member State ;
- persons granted refugee and humanitarian status;
- persons granted permission for long-term and permanent stay.

NSI does not produce data on emigrant and immigrant flows. Data on emigrant and immigrant stocks only are produced. Data on international migration covers the period since 2008. Till that moment, the estimates of international migration are done only based on the census results.

Apart of the period covered, there are problems connected to the data coverage mainly.

The first one is connected to coverage of immigrants and especially immigration of EU citizens. At present their number is not included in data on immigration due to absence of legal obligation for EU citizens to register themselves at the other MS territory. Irrespective of small number of EU citizens residing in Bulgaria, activities are undertaken to include them in the number of immigrants.

Starting from 2013, the Ministry of Interior will submit to the NSI data on EU citizens who have registered their residence in Bulgaria due to any reason. Data will be based on people’s identification, thus allowing creation of new records or closure of such in case of leaving the country. Data will be provided on EU citizens residing in the country, on the dates of entering and leaving the country. Thus, applying the international statistical criteria on migration and namely calculating the length of stay, the NSI will produce more reliable and correct data on the number of immigrants and international migration as a whole.

Apart of data on EU citizens, information will be provided by the Ministry of Interior on all the foreigners issued residence permits during the year, on the dates of entering and leaving the country. Thereby, through matching of records (files) received from the Ministry of Interior and from the PR, the entire number of foreigners, third country nationals, will be covered (including foreigners issued prolongation of the residence permit during the year). Thus, applying the international statistical criteria on migration and namely on the length of stay, the NSI will produce more reliable and correct data on the international migration.

The second problem is connected to coverage of emigrants. As there is no existing legal obligation for “deregistration” from the Population Register in case of leaving the country for a period of 12

months or more, up to 2010, the data on international migration included only persons who have declared to the administrative authorities the change of their present address in the country with a new one in another country and the change of the address abroad with a new one in Bulgaria. Thus, the emigrants' number was strongly underestimated.

In order to improve the data coverage and especially the emigration data, since 2010 the NSI uses the National Revenue Agency information on persons who have declared interruption of payment of health insurance contributions due to leaving the country for more than 183 days during one calendar year. Individual data is received, based on persons PIN. Data received from the NRA contains also dates of departure/return from/to the country. Data is processed in order to identify the length of stay abroad. Persons, who have left the country, did not return and whose stay abroad is more than 12 months are "excluded" from ISD (records become closed with a possibility to be opened in case of return to the country).

Besides the activities undertaken in the last 2-3 years, aiming improvement the quality of migration data, and the improvements already achieved, there is still a lot of work to be done in respect full coverage of emigrants. Possible solution, that has to be investigated in depth, is usage of so called "mirror statistics". At present, mirror statistics could be used only as a reference data on accuracy of emigration data produced based on the national data sources. The reason is that the ISD, maintained by the NSI, is a system based on official documents and in order to include or exclude people in/from it, the respective notifications (certificates) or administrative records containing officially registered information are needed. That's why, the NSI efforts are mainly directed to searching new data sources and establishing of cooperation with other national institutions, officially collecting personal data.

International migration data is distributed by age, sex, country of birth, citizenship, destination country. In respect the destination country, some estimated are done due to lack of such information in the data on emigrants, received from the NRA. For the purpose, information from the sample survey on Bulgarian and Foreign Citizens, Departing from Bulgaria is used.

Population and demographic data produced based on ISD are annually published in a specialised publication "Population and Demographic Processes" (since 2009 - electronic version only). Main population and demographic data are also published in "Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Bulgaria" and "Statistical Reference Book of the Republic of Bulgaria" (printed and electronic versions). Data, methodology, press releases and analysis are also available for use at the NSI web site, under heading "Population". More detailed data is provided to users under a written request.

2.2.2. Specialised sample surveys, conducted by the NSI

2.2.2.1. Territorial mobility of the population (2001) and Migration and migratory behaviour of the population (2011)

Traditionally, the NSI of Bulgaria conducts sample surveys on migration and migratory behaviour of population between the censuses. The aim of these surveys is not only to study in details the migration processes, but also to discover the perspectives and reasons for a given migratory attitude. The surveys purposes are to find out:

- The size, intensity and directions of internal and international migration;
- The social-demographic characteristics of migrants;
- Changes in the character and the tendencies in development of internal and international migration;

- Factors predefining the migratory behaviour of population;
- Expectations in respect internal and international migration.

The last two migration surveys were conducted in 2001 and 2011, the years of conduction of the population censuses. The surveys were included in the Census Programme, financed by the census budget and conducted in parallel to the census.

The 2011 Migration survey covered persons aged 15 years and more, no matter migrated or not during the previous years. Only persons classified as usually resident population were surveyed. Self-observation and personal interview conducted by an interviewer were applied as survey methods. Two-stage cluster sample was used, based on the territorial distribution of population. The census units were sampled at the first stage and the dwellings – at the second. All persons aged 15 and more in the dwellings were interviewed. The sample was stratified by residence – urban/rural. The sample size was 28 thousand persons, but due to refusals the final number of interviewed persons was 17,586, or the response rate of 62.8% was achieved. Survey results are weighted.

In order to distinguish better the migrants depending on their predisposition and readiness for migration the following 5 groups were created in respect the potential emigrants:

- Potential emigrants – persons who are likely to migrate abroad;
- Labour emigrants – persons who are likely to migrate abroad in order to find a job/to study for more than 1 year;
- Short-term migrants - persons who are likely to migrate abroad in order to find a job/to study for a period no longer than 1 year;
- Tourists and visitors - persons who are likely to go abroad as tourist, to visit friends or relatives;
- Not travelling abroad – persons who would like to go abroad, but consider these intentions as unlikely during the next years.

The first two groups were considered as long-term potential emigrants.

Based on persons PIN (used both in the census questionnaire and in the migration one), a possibility was provided to link the data gathered during the survey with the data available in the ISD, thus allowing in depth analysis of the socio-demographic profile of migrants.

Analysis of the results achieved was based on use of multi-dimension tables with leading indicators – the created secondary indicators. The results were distributed by respondents' residence (total for the country, urban, rural), by age, sex, education, marital status, economic activity, ethnic group and others.

Based on the survey's results, the positive and negative influence of the migration on the development of the society were estimated and analysed, on different population categories, on the future demographic situation in the country, on the labour force and labour market, on the economy as a whole.

The surveys methodology, questionnaires used and basic results are published in the census specialised volumes⁷.

2.2.2.2. Sample survey on Bulgarian and Foreign Citizens, Departing from Bulgaria, conducted by the NSI

A specialised study on Bulgarian and foreign citizens, departing/arriving from/to Bulgaria is carried out on a monthly basis by the NSI. The study is conducted following the provisions of the Regulation (EC) 862/2007 on migration and Regulation (EC) 692/2011 on tourism statistics for providing data on external migration and international tourism. The survey is included in the National Statistical Programme.

The survey ensures statistical data on the trips of Bulgarian citizens travelling abroad and visits of foreigners in Bulgaria, obtained based on monthly information received from the Ministry of Interior and the sample survey carried out by the NSI among Bulgarian and foreign citizens passing the border check points.

Three main airports and 5 land border check-points with the neighboring countries (Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Turkey) are included in the sample, where about 80% of the passengers flow is concentrated. The monthly number of persons surveyed varies between 5 200 in February to 7 200 in August. Face-to-face interviews are conducted.

Data on the number of the trips of the European Union citizens are estimated based on information obtained from the Ministry of Interior and the airport authorities. Data on the number of citizens of “third countries” are obtained directly from the Ministry of Interior.

The survey data is used for production of more precise emigration estimates and especially for production of estimates on Bulgarian citizens emigrating from the country. Specific groups of respondents are chosen, according to their answers to questions on the purpose of trip and length of intended stay. In particular, the NRA data on persons who declare interruption of payment of health insurance contributions due to departure for a period longer than 183 days are weighted in order to produce distribution of emigrants by destination countries or if necessary some other characteristics of migrants.

Survey methodology and basic results (in English) are available at the following address: <http://www.nsi.bg/otrasal-eventen.php?n=1858&otr=57>

2.2.2.3. Labour force survey

LFS is conducted in Bulgaria since 1993. Starting from 2003, LFS is a quarterly continuous survey. There is data included on citizenship and country of birth of foreigners living or planning to live in the country more than 1 year. Nevertheless, LFS is not used as source of data on immigration. The main problem connected to non-nationals in the Bulgarian LFS results from the small number of non-nationals in the sampling frame (Population Census). Due to the last, the non-nationals could not be well represented in the LFS sample and consequently LFS does not provide reliable data on immigrants' number and characteristics. According to the 2001 Population Census (base for the 2001 - 2011 LFS samples) their number was 25.6 thousand, representing 0.3% of the total population.

2.3. Census databases

2.3.1. Population and housing census

Population and housing censuses in Bulgaria have a long tradition. The first population census is conducted during the 19th century. There are 17 censuses conducted since then, the last one - in 2011. Censuses conducted in the country are traditional ones – paper questionnaires and interviewers are used. The 2011 census was the first, in which new technologies were used, and namely the e-census was conducted in parallel to the traditional one. Moreover, for the first time, administrative registers data was used for checking the coverage and accuracy of census results.

A specialised Census laws are prepared and adopted for the censuses conducted. Institution responsible for the censuses preparation and conduction is the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria.

The 2011 Population and housing census in Bulgaria was conducted from 1st until 28th February 2011. The census reference day was 1 February 2011. For the first time Bulgaria conducted a census as a Member state of the European Union, complying with the requirements of the Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of Council on population and housing censuses, as well as the related European regulations on technical format and data quality.

The 2011 Population Census was conducted applying two methods for collecting of information:

- electronic (1 - 9 February 2011) - on-line by Internet, and
- traditional (10 - 28 February 2011).

The categories surveyed during the census are fully compliant to the EU requirements. It refers to the definitions used for place of usual residence, households and family composition, citizenship, country of birth, education, economic activity status, sector of employment, migration issues, previous place of usual residence and date of arrival in the current place.

Persons were counted based on their usual residence. The usual residence was considered the place where the person spends most of his/her daily night-rest, no matter the temporary absence due to vacation, holidays, visits to relatives and friends, medical treatment, religious visits, etc.

Resident population includes Bulgarian citizens and foreigners living in the country or planning to spend there a period of 12 months or more. It also includes people who live in the country but are staying abroad for a period not exceeding 12 months. Thus the following were included:

- Bulgarian citizens living at the country territory who have not leave the country for more than one year;
- Bulgarian diplomatic and military personnel on mission abroad;
- Foreign citizens granted permission for long-term stay in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Foreign citizens granted permission for permanent stay in the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Persons granted refugee or humanitarian status or asylum;
- EU citizens living at the country territory for more than one year.

The following were not included in the population number:

- Bulgarian citizens who leave the country one year prior to the census;
- Bulgarian citizens who leave the country within one year prior to the census, but with intention to stay abroad for more than one year;

- Students at tertiary education studying abroad;
- Foreign diplomatic and military personnel on mission in Bulgaria;
- Foreigners and members of their families issued temporary (short-term) residence permit;

Migration related questions included in the 2011 census questionnaire were as follows:

- Have you changed your usual place of residence within the period 2001-2011?
 - In the country
 - From abroad to Bulgaria
 - Year of change
- Have you live abroad within the period 1980-2011 for more than one year?
 - Year of latest departure from Bulgaria
 - Year of latest arrival in Bulgaria
 - Latest country of residence
- Where did you live one year prior to the census?
 - In Bulgaria
 - Abroad
 - Country of residence abroad
- Country of birth;
- Citizenship.

Based on persons PIN included in the census questionnaire, the data gathered during the census was linked to the information stored into ISD.

Quality of data gathered during the census is estimated as good. There were problems existing concerning the address information gathered through the e-census and due to some weaknesses of the Classifier of addresses (the official data base including all addresses registered in the country and their unique identification), maintained by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works. Coordinated work of experts from the MRDPW and NSI has already started, aiming solving of this problem.

First census results were released less than two months after the census – at the beginning of April and final ones – in July 2011.

Census results were widely disseminated and can be easily accessed. A specialised web application was developed, allowing on-line use of the main census results – distribution of population by residence (up to NUTS 5 level), by age, sex, marital status, education, economic activity, ethnic group, mother tongue, religion, etc. Census data can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/index.php>.

In addition, paper publications were prepared and printed. There are 8 publications, containing detailed census results on different topics – demographic characteristics of population, households, families, dwellings and housing conditions, economic characteristics, migration, fertility, etc.

Apart of them, 28 regional paper publications were prepared, containing detailed data at district level (NUTS 3), as well as 28 regional reference books, containing basic census results at the same level.

Census publications are available (in Bulgarian) at the following address: <http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/pagebg2.php?p2=175&sp2=218>

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Production of reliable, accurate, internationally comparative and timely information on the migration processes is a basic prerequisite for the elaboration of adequate policies on migration and demographic development of the country, regulation of the migration processes, and elaboration of strategies in the field.

Within the period after the accession of Bulgaria to the European Union a number of activities were undertaken in order to produce qualitative and comparable information on migration, the main of which are:

- Transposition of the European legislation in the field into the national one;
- Establishment and/or improvement of the institutional structures necessary to work in this direction;
- Building up of information systems, allowing production of data meeting the requirements of Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- Defining responsibilities of the institutions having competences in the field of migration;
- Creating conditions for exchange of information between the respective institutions.

Despite the activities undertaken, there are still gaps in the provision of information and quality of data in certain areas in not sufficient. The reasons can be summarized as follows:

- the information available in administrative data sources is designed for administrative purposes mainly and cannot be always fully used for statistical ones;
- the nomenclatures and definitions used in administrative information systems do not fully correspond to ones recommended by the international organisations for statistical purposes;
- the interaction between the institutions having competences in the field of migration was not effective enough or was quite delayed;
- the lack of comparability between the information systems of different institutions raises issues connected to the use of information available and/or necessity of additional processing in order to produce comparable data.

Based on the review of sources of information on migration existing in Bulgaria and particularly on international migration, taking into consideration availability of information in the separate information systems and exchange of data between the institutions involved, the following conclusions can be drawn with respect to the availability and quality of data on migration:

- In general, the European legislation was transposed in the national one, which was the basic condition for production of comparable data;
- The responsibilities and duties of all actors in the process of production of the necessary data were defined;
- The institutions involved in the production process of data on migration have built up the information systems necessary for the purpose;
- Agreements were signed between the respective institutions, regulating the exchange of information.

Despite the achievements, there are still areas that need additional efforts to be put in order to improve the coverage mainly, but the quality of information as well. These are:

- under-coverage of Bulgarian citizens leaving the country for more than one year period (emigrants);
- under-coverage of EU citizens and members of their families residing in Bulgaria for long-term period (to a certain extent this will be solved since 2013 when information on EU citizens who have registered their residence in the country due to any reason will be provided to NSI by the Ministry of Interior).

Numbers of activities were undertaken for solving the above mentioned problems namely:

- additional sources of information were investigated in order to improve the coverage and accuracy of data on emigrants. An example is the use of the NRA data on persons released from payment of health insurance contributions due to prolonged absence from the country. Even though a small number of persons are concerned, the data is used for production of more precise estimates on number of emigrants, thus contributing to improvement of data coverage and accuracy;
- an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Interior and the NSI, according to which starting from 2013, the Ministry will provide to the NSI data on the number and characteristics of the EU citizens and members of their families residing in Bulgaria on a prolonged basis. Thus, another gap will be filled, namely data on immigrants will be improved.

Based on the country's obligations proceeding from Regulation (EC) 862/2007 on migration and international protection, Bulgaria has created the needed conditions and presents data to Eurostat in accordance with:

- article 4 – statistics on international protection;
- article 5 – statistics on the prevention of illegal entry and stay;
- article 6 – statistics on residence permits and residence of third-country nationals;
- article 7 – statistics on returns.

There are problems with respect to the country's obligations to present data under article 3, 1b and 1c – "statistics on international migration, usually resident population and acquisition of citizenship". The last are connected to the under coverage of emigrants moving from the territory of the Member State (1b) and respectively, inaccuracy of estimates of the usually resident population at the end of reference period (1c). The data required under article 3, 1a (immigrants moving to the territory of the Member State) will be provided up to 2013 and under 1d (persons having their usual residence in the territory of the Member State and having acquired during the reference year the citizenship of the Member State) are already provided.

5. REFERENCES

- ¹ National Migration, Asylum and Integration Strategy (2011-2020)
- ² State Gazette 136, 18 November 1998, last amended SG 16, 19 February 2013
- ³ State Gazette 54, 31 May 2002, amended State Gazette 31, 8 April 2005
- ⁴ State Gazette 153, 23 December 1998, last amended State Gazette 44, 12 June 2012
- ⁵ State Gazette 80, 3 October 2006
- ⁶ Last amended State Gazette 42, 5 June 2012
- ⁷ 2001 Census, Volume 6 – Sample surveys, book 3 – Territorial mobility of the population, NSI 2002
2011 Census, Volume 4 – Sample surveys, book 2 – Migration and migratory behaviour of the population, NSI 2012