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Migration flows and globalization

Algirdas ŠEMETA
Director General, Statistics Lithuania Author

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Globalization formulates a challenging task for statisticians to develop and improve international migration statistics and provide users with good quality information reflecting international migration and contribute to the analysis of the migration phenomenon in the 21st century context, when mobility of population and temporary irregular migration are becoming more and more customary.

The paper reviews the efforts and work undertaken by Statistics Lithuania on improving and developing international migration statistics in current globalization world. Statistics Lithuania carried out an Undeclared Emigration survey, which enabled to assess a number of residents of the country, who unofficially departed from the country during the period of 2001–2006. The survey results show that only every second-third resident of Lithuania declares his/her departure when emigrating. Complexity of the issue and a variety of solutions to be addressed stimulate Statistics Lithuania to proceed with the improvement actions of international migration statistics and its integration into demographic statistics and consider it as one of the priorities for the coming years.

The paper also addresses possible instruments and measures to be introduced on the ESS level in order to bear tangible results in improving international migration statistics.

1.   Globalization and mobility of population

International migration is a growing phenomenon and a fundamental characteristic of modern, globalising society. Worldwide economic and social disparities continued and gave an impetus for spreading migration within the world. Tremendous changes in communication, technologies and transportation facilitated population movements across the borders for a variety of reasons.

Migration being one of the basic factors of globalisation weakens boundaries both between the countries as well as languages, cultures, ethnical groups. Trans- nationalism is another important aspect of globalization; more and more people continually move from one country to another or live outside the borders of his/her native country. Immigrants form diasporas, which in some countries merge into communities having an impact on the social and, in some cases, economical development of the particular country, also influence cultural life and induce on forming relations between the countries, which in their turn endeavour to create favourable conditions for immigrants to integrate them into the country's society.

Under the impact of globalization, demographic situation undergoes rapid changes. A birth rate indicator in economically well developed countries has a tendency of continuous decrease, the population is ageing, a number of the dependants grow and a number of population diminishes. Responses to a question on "Whether increasing number of

immigrants would adequately and appropriately compensate the decreasing number of population and deficiency of population?" need to be sought and thoroughly analysed.

Politicians, researchers and experts engaged in the analysis of demographic developments and, in particular, migration phenomenon are not satisfied with the amount and, in particular, the quality of the current statistical information published by the official statistics. Statisticians in Europe and all over the world are looking for solutions to develop comprehensive tools to measure migration processes, and assess the impact of the international migration on the world and every country specifically. One of the important tasks for every NSI is to reflect the international migrants' stocks and flows, their demographic and socio-economic characteristics, the change of structure and composition of the population, situation in the labour market, etc.

Member states of the European Union can be distributed into two groups in terms of the migration processes, i.e. countries of immigrants and those of emigrants.

Immigrants' countries are referred to the so called „old" member states of the EU with well developed economy as well as high living standards, e.g. Ireland and Spain are known as countries having the highest crude net immigration rates. As for statistics, flows of immigrants or immigrants residing in a country as well as a number of the country's residents could be relatively easily assessed using traditional statistical methods, i.e. using administrative records, basing on the population censuses results, conducting sample surveys of households, etc. However, it is important and urgent for such countries to assess the socio-economic consequences of immigration, such as integration of immigrants and their descendants into the labour market, social life of the country.

New EU member states are the countries of emigrants. In 2006, according to the Eurostat's database, the crude net emigration rates, among the new MSs in 2006 were in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Bulgaria. Emigrants' countries like countries of immigrants encounter similar problem estimating negative and positive sides of emigration consequences. Negative aspects refer to the decrease of the number of population; changing structure of age and sex of population; lack of labour force and skilled workers; incomplete families, etc., whereas the positive ones cover lower unemployment rate; higher employment rate; higher wages and salaries; financial benefits for families; cultural exchange, etc. The consequences of emigration, such as gender misbalance, ageing of population, brain-drain, and misbalance of labour force and its deficiency, etc., can already be observed today and may deepen in the future. Differently from immigrants' countries, the countries with the large emigration face serious problems even with the estimation of

emigration flows. Significant share of emigrants doesn't declare their emigration and this undeclared emigration is much more difficult to estimate, if compared with the flows of immigrants.

Lithuania is the country of emigrants with the net migration rate nowadays being one of the highest in the European Union. Due to the intensity of emigration, Lithuania has tremendous losses in population and in the labour force. Therefore, improvement of the availability and quality of statistics on emigration in order to reflect the real situation, impact of emigration on the demographic structure of the population, changes due to emigration in the country's social and economic situation is one of the main priorities of Statistics Lithuania.

2.   New development of emigration statistics in Lithuania

Statistics on international migration of population produced by Statistics Lithuania is based on the data of the central database of the Population Register which includes personal data on the Lithuanian residents, their departures and arrivals as indicated in the declarations, i.e. data on migrants, who declare their departure / arrival. Official statistics covers persons who leave Lithuania or arrive to Lithuania with the intention of permanent residence or for a period longer than 6 months (foreigners, who have temporary residence permits for 1 year and longer) and declare that.

However, even if the Lithuania's legislation requires, not all Lithuanian residents declare their departure when they leave the country for more than 6 months. Therefore, it is not enough to rely on the Population Register as the only data source. Other administrative data sources (such as the State Social Insurance data base, tax records etc.) have to be used in order to improve quality of migration flows and stocks assessments. Statistics Lithuania has the right to use different administrative data sources for statistical purposes and actively uses it. However, even the combination of the administrative data sources doesn't allow achieving sufficient quality of emigration statistics due to deficiencies in them. Other ways and tools have to be introduced.

To this end, Statistics Lithuania decided to launch a survey on undeclared emigration in 2005. A methodology on estimation of non-official emigration flows was elaborated. The methodology was aimed at determining the method of data collection and assessing the number of non-official emigrants and their socio-economic characteristics. It was based on a simple assumption that personal records of the emigrants who had not declared their

departure were not changed in the Population Register. Therefore, such persons could be sampled for the households' surveys. It has been decided to use a framework of the Labour Force survey by supplementing it with a module on emigration and including questions about persons who emigrated, their main demographic and social characteristics (new country of the residence, how many years/months ago she/he left Lithuania; age, sex, education attainment and occupation before leaving, current status (worker, student, other)). The number of employed, unemployed, inactive persons and non-official emigrants had to be estimated using auxiliary information from the Statistics Lithuania demographic statistics database (population number by municipalities, intersection of the total population by sex, age group and urban/rural areas) according to the following assumption:

Residents of Lithuania = employed population + unemployed population + inactive population + non-official emigrants.

The survey was carried out in the first quarter of 2006. The questions were formulated in such a way that allowed estimation of the undeclared emigration in the period of 2001-2005 (undeclared emigration before 2001 was assessed earlier based on the results of Population Census 2001).

The questionnaires were filled in by a face-to-face interview method. Data on the household's members who left Lithuania without declaring were collected from the interviewed persons. If no one lived at the sampled address, an interviewer (if there were possibilities) asked the neighbours to indicate the reason for non-response to the questionnaire. One of the non-response reasons was "Left Lithuania (to work, live abroad)". In case of such an answer, the supplemented module was filled in by interviewing the neighbour of a sampled person.

After the field work, the data base of the Emigration survey was coded and prepared, a sampling method (calibration) was used for the evaluation of those who left Lithuania in the period of 2001–2005. In order to ensure better quality of the survey, the data obtained were compared (at personal level preserving confidentiality rules) with the administrative data sources: Population Register and the State Social Insurance Fund Board's central database.

Accuracy of the survey results is sufficient for the estimation of a number of non-official emigrants over five years; however, coefficients of variation of indicator's estimates for each year of 2001, 2002, and 2003 are quite high. The reason for that might be related with
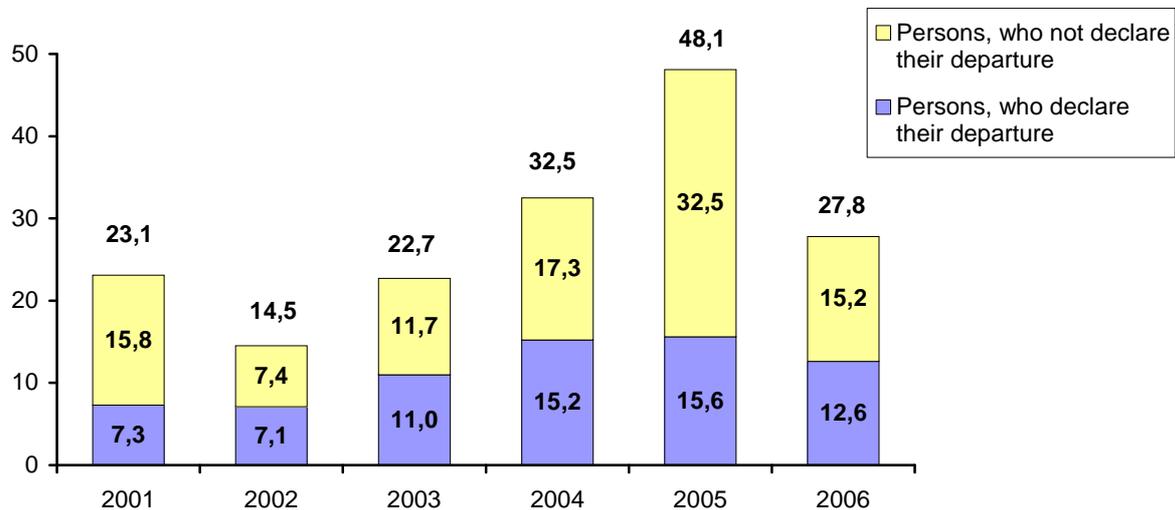
difficulties for an interviewed person to remember the exact year of departure of the household member or a neighbour.

The survey on non-official emigrants was repeated in the year 2007. The methodology of the survey was further developed reflecting the users' needs. More attention was paid to the causes and consequences of the emigration as well as the questions on emigrants. Their socio-economic characteristics were included in the survey questionnaire and these kinds of evaluations were more exhaustive for different needs of social statistics (new questions concerning the reason of emigration: to study, to work, for business, for family reunion, and other reasons). New questions concerning family behaviour (whether the whole family left or whether children went abroad with one of the parents, if both parents emigrated for 6 months and over, who takes care of the children (grandparents, other relatives, etc.) were added. The sample of the survey was increased as well. The results of the 2007 emigration survey were of better quality if compared with the previous one; however there is still room for improvement.

The results of both surveys revealed that only every second-third resident of Lithuania declares his /her departure when emigrating.

Emigration flows from Lithuania 2001–2006 [1]

Population, thousand

[1] Evaluation based on the emigration sample survey and the data of the declaration of the place of the residence.

Linking different administrative data sources with the results of the surveys allowed estimating main socio-economic characteristics of emigrants (reason of emigration, employment status, education attainment, occupation before the emigration, etc.).

The results of the surveys were published: a press release prepared, a detailed survey report and estimation of errors of the results were placed on the website of Statistics Lithuania. Society at large, especially politicians were active users of the Undeclared Emigration survey results.

3.   Pilot studies on remittances

Remittances from migrants to their families in native communities might have quite significant impact on the quality of balance of payments statistics in sending countries. The Bank of Lithuania compiling the country's balance of payment, apart from other indicators includes into the accountancy the amounts on remittances, which private residents (country's residents) receive from non-residents and pay or remit free to non-residents. Aggregated data about the cash remittances of private persons performed by the country's banks and posts as well as the data on the purchase and sales of foreign currency are the basic information sources to assess such information. Nonetheless, a share of cash received by private persons from abroad does not get into the statistical accountancy since such kind of data are not compiled or otherwise estimated. After Lithuania became a member of the EU, increased emigration from Lithuania adequately gave a growth to all kinds of money flows between Lithuania's and EU countries' private persons. Considering the importance of these flows for the compilation of the country's balance of payment as well as impact on the country's economy, more complete assessment of these flows is urgent necessity.

In co-operation of Statistics Lithuania with the Bank of Lithuania pilot studies on the development of quality and completeness of the statistical information on remittances started since 2007. It has been decided to select one of the households' surveys conducted by Statistics Lithuania as an additional data source for obtaining the above said information. The pilot survey was conducted by supplementing the ICT survey with an additional module. The reason for choosing the ICT statistical survey was twofold. Firstly, the ICT survey has the biggest sample, and secondly it is not overloaded by other modules. The survey questionnaire includes few additional questions about the cash received from the family members residing abroad or cash remittances to those living in foreign countries or residing there on a temporary basis. The examples of the questions asked follow below:

"Did your household receive money from relatives, friends, or other persons residing (lived earlier) abroad including money earned by you or your family members abroad ,

which have been taken to Lithuania in cash in 2006? Can you indicate the amount of money received in such a way during the year?"

"Did in the year 2006 your household give (transmit) to your relatives, friends, other persons residing abroad money which were brought from Lithuania in cash including money your family members took when they left to work or study in foreign countries? Can you indicate the amount of cash you received during the year 2006?"

Currently, the survey has already been completed and the obtained information is being processed. In the near future, the specialists from Statistics Lithuania and the Bank of Lithuania will start analysis of the quality of results obtained. Then it will be possible to estimate whether the pilot survey served the purpose and, based on that, the decision will be adopted on how the data on remittances will be used for improvement of quality of balance of payments as well as international migration statistics.

4. Future endeavour

Currently, Statistics Lithuania is finalising its work on a new strategic document for the period 2008-2012. Improvement of quality of international migration statistics remains a top priority which will be displayed in a number of concrete improvement actions:

- To continue undeclared emigration surveys for the evaluation of undeclared emigration flows in future. For the year 2008 the sample will be increased to 7 thousand households (0.7 percent of the total population). This will allow achieving better quality of variables related with socio-economic characteristics of unofficial emigrants (age, sex, education attainment, occupation, etc.).

- It is planned to conduct the surveys which will enable to assess undeclared immigration, in particular focusing on the assessment of undeclared re-immigration flows since more and more emigrants who haven't declared their departure come back to Lithuania.

  A pilot survey will be conducted in the first quarter of 2008, in connection with the Labour Force survey, as this is a usual practise. The survey results will enable to estimate re-immigrants who haven't declared their arrival (and those who haven't declared their departure previously), their demographic, socio-economic characteristics as well as the main reasons for returning back to Lithuania.

- One of the biggest challenges demographic specialists of Statistics Lithuania faces is to integrate assessments on undeclared migration flows into the common migration flows (declared and undeclared departures and arrivals) as well as

demographic statistics (to recalculate the number of population, composition by age, sex and territorial administrative units). Currently, the discussions are undergoing with the demography experts, researchers whether this task should be implemented before or after the 2011 Population and housing census. In any case, the surveys on undeclared migration flows will serve for making the population number between the 2001 and 2011 censuses more accurate.

- Statistics Lithuania considers a possibility to create the Statistical Population (Individuals) Register, to be maintained by Statistics Lithuania (currently Legal Population Register is administrated by the institution accountable to the Ministry of Interior).

- Further collaboration between Statistics Lithuania and the Bank of Lithuania on the measuring remittances foreseen. After the joint work on the evaluation of pilot survey data on remittances, the possibility to carry out a regular survey will be discussed, since a complex analysis of the migration processes as well as improvements in balance of payments statistics require good quality data on remittances.

5. Improving quality of international migration statistics – the challenge for the whole European Statistical System

In the era of globalization international migration statistics has been a complex issue in demographic statistics. Therefore, the newly passed Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community Statistics on Migration and International protection in July 2007 constitutes a major collective achievement of the European Statistical System. The legal basis is a good tool to harmonise the definitions of international migration statistics across the EU countries; define the data sources and quality standards. It also provides for an enabling clause that other appropriate data sources which may be used as part of the statistics process: "scientifically based and well documented statistical methods may be used as the data source for international migration statistics". This stimulates NSI's and gives an impetus for the whole ESS to look for best solutions aimed at further development of international migration statistics. However, we should not limit ourselves purely to the implementation of the requirements imposed by the Regulation and go beyond that introducing other appropriate instruments aimed at achieving better quality of international migration statistics. A number of them are reflected below:

- Continuous dialogues on the improving quality of international migration statistics should better serve for sharing experience and best practices in the countries. Different surveys on migration processes are conducted in the European countries, in particular EU member states and in the world. The problem is that such surveys usually are tailored to the national interest, and therefore not known to other countries and the results of the surveys are not comparable or even they contain different content of information, definitions, etc. However, this experience should be spread around in the form of the European and international conferences, workshops, seminars for statisticians, involving also users. There might be very useful to use other means like creation of special websites which would contain all possible information on practises, experiences, achievements as well as problems encountered and solutions found. European Commission website with concrete links to migration statistics (data and methodology) of NSI's of MSs, OECD, UN Statistical Commission, etc. could serve that purpose perfectly well and has to be considered.

- The forthcoming round of the 2011 Population and housing censuses will challenge the NSI's to obtain comparable information on the number of the population, its structure, and distribution. The time span until the next Censuses round is very tight and the countries are already in the preparation stage; however among other issues discussions should be initiated on the possibility to exchange the primary information on the micro level between the countries before the validation of the final results. Such a possibility will help the member states to produce high quality data of the population in every country as well as migration stocks.

- Migration processes have a huge impact on the number of the countries' population and might also influence the harmonised population projections, currently produced by Eurostat. To this end, and in order to improve quality of the projections, it would be worthwhile to establish structured co-operation between Eurostat and NSIs, in particular involving NSIs in early stage of the preparation of harmonised population projections. NSIs could, e.g. provide consultations on the basic trends of national migration processes; additional estimations or any other relevant information which would help to improve reliability of the harmonised population projections.

- Another important issue in order to achieve better quality of international migration statistics should be addressed within the ESS. It is related to the exchange of the individual records on migrants between the countries. This is not a simple task and

needs to be considered seriously in order to avoid violation of confidentiality regime and also mistrust in statistics. Current action on the revision of the Basic legal framework of statistics could serve that purpose.

- Due to the long-lasting decision making process on the development of the ESS, a temporary solution on exchanging the identifiable data on international migration statistics has to be searched for. One of the ways could be strengthening bilateral collaboration between the countries Bilateral agreements might be a tool for exchange of identifiable data on the migration with the countries to which the flows are of considerable amounts, e.g. Lithuania would be interested to exchange the data with Ireland, United Kingdom, and Spain since these countries are the main destination points for the Lithuania's emigrants.

- To provide users with timely, comparable statistical information, there is a great need to establish continuous monitoring of international migration processes. Special harmonised households' surveys or ad hoc modules on migration could be considered and introduced, if appropriate.

- Such instruments, like handbooks concerning the detailed input information on the international migration issues, etc. might be useful. Moreover, some projects have already been initiated and, presumably, their continuation could be considered. The THESIM (Towards Harmonised European Statistics on International Migration) project, the 6th Framework Research Programme by DG Research (EU) could be mentioned as an example.

- Establishment of ESSnet on international migration statistics could be considered.

5. Conclusions

In the context of globalization as well as free movement of persons within the EU, international migration processes become especially complex and impact much more than previously on the structure, economy and social development of the world's and European countries population. Users' needs for migration statistics and its quality in particular are growing continuously, therefore common efforts of the ESS members directed towards meeting those needs adequately are of the utmost importance.

Due to the increased migration flows, quality of administrative data sources is often insufficient to meet statisticians' needs. In such cases, while estimating migration flows it is necessary to combine the data obtained from these sources with the data of the households'

surveys. This practise has been already introduced in Lithuania for few recent years. It would be expedient to harmonise methodologies of such surveys within the ESS so that individual efforts of some countries would not become vainly if there is no possibility to collate results of the surveys conducted by different countries.

The Regulation on migration and international protection statistics provides for a framework for further development of migration statistics. However, it is not sufficient to limit ourselves to the implementation of the requirements of the Regulation. Legislation on exchange of individual data on migrants between the countries and, and in the meanwhile, bilateral agreements in relation to this question, websites on the best practises, establishment of ESS net, closer co-operation between Eurostat and the member states on the population projections and other migration issues could meaningly contribute to the improvement of quality of international migration statistics and satisfy increasing users' needs.

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