



How to collect migration statistics using surveys

Regional workshop on Strengthening the collection and use of international migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Bangkok 31 January-3 February 2017

Why collect data on migrants through surveys?

- More in-depth information than what can be collected through census or administrative sources
- Can collect information about the migrant prior to migration
- In-depth characteristics of the person/household

Type of surveys

- Inclusion in **existing surveys** such as surveys on labour market, income & expenditure, health, living conditions, other social topics or multi-purposes
- Surveys specifically developed to focus on migrants –**migration specialised surveys**
- **Key issues: cost, sampling frame and how much information is needed (policy concerns)**

General household surveys

- **Main conditions for using migration modules**
 - Migration profile of the country
 - Needs of information
 - Degree of understanding of the usefulness of evidence-based policy-making by the governmental services
 - Existing availability of operations and data/statistics
 - Distinction between quantitative and qualitative measurements
 - Inter-institutional collaboration
 - Technical capabilities and financial resources

Key issues to consider for selecting general household survey

- What is the **size of the sample**, and its geographic distribution? (ideally a large general sample)
- What is the **prevalence of international migration** in the country? (high prevalence rates improve the usefulness)
- Does the survey collect data on place of birth, place of previous residence, and/or country of citizenship?
- What other questions does the survey contain on international migrants? Does it include retrospective questions, notably on the situation of the migrant in the previous as well as the current country of residence? Subjective questions on perceived reasons for changing residence, or intentions for the future?

ILO migration module

- series of migration-related questions
- can be added to existing household and labour force surveys.
- Tool for gathering reliable data on labour migration; the socio-demographic composition of labour migrants, including their educational attainment and areas of training before departure; as well as their economic activities, working conditions, and the frequency and duration of their travel.
- special attention is given to the employment situation of current and former migrants and to international remittances

Migration-specialised household surveys

- Most suitable to inform about the migratory histories (the *why*, *when* and *how* of migration), the complete profiles, ways of life, attitudes as well as future the plans of individuals and households, i.e. the determinants, modalities and consequences of migration.
- Flexible, may focus on specific components or aspects of migration such as the immigration of foreigners or selected groups of them into the country, the emigration of nationals abroad, the return migration or the intention of people towards emigrating abroad, separately or at same time.
- May apply to individuals as well as households as such.
- Generally also focus on 'control groups' (e.g., non-migrants, non-migrant households).

Migration-specialised household surveys

- A possible classification

- Immigration surveys
- Emigration surveys
 - ✓ One-way surveys (i.e. surveys carried out in the countries of origin O or destination D)
 - ✓ Both-way surveys (i.e., surveys carried out in countries O and D – *'linked origin/destination country surveys'*)
- Surveys on immigration and emigration (e.g., MED-HIMS)
- Surveys on specific migrant categories or topics (e.g., remittances, family reunification)
- Longitudinal surveys

Sampling issues

■ Possible sampling frames

- Questions in census, for emigration this is likely to exclude complete households that have migrated
- Population register (if it includes sufficient information and has good coverage), although undocumented migrants and certain population groups might be excluded
- Border/admission statistics (but overstayers and individuals who change their status may be excluded, also depends on level of border control)
- For detailed discussion on sampling issues see 2007 EGM report from UNSD (on reference list)

Examples of Migration-specialised household surveys from Europe, Africa and Middle East

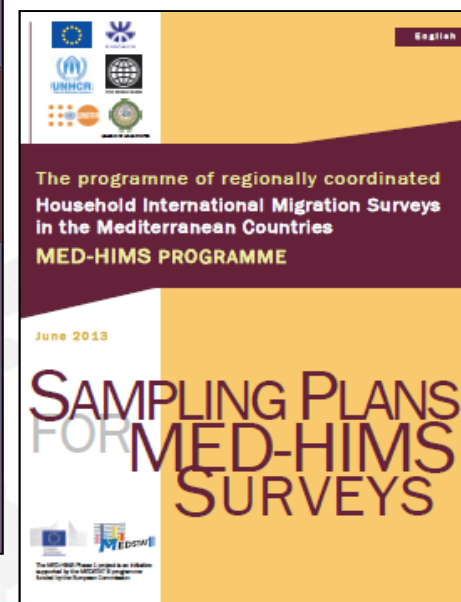
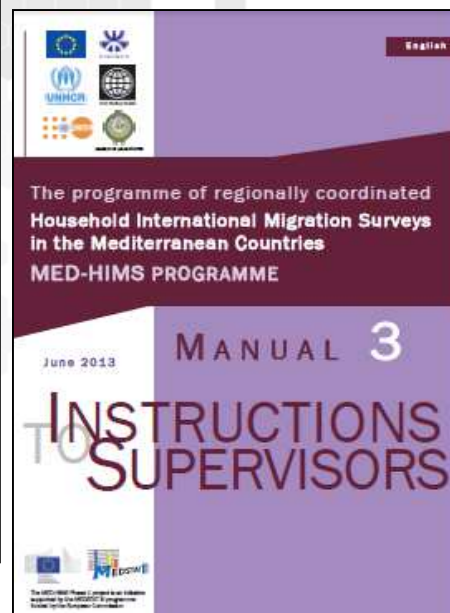
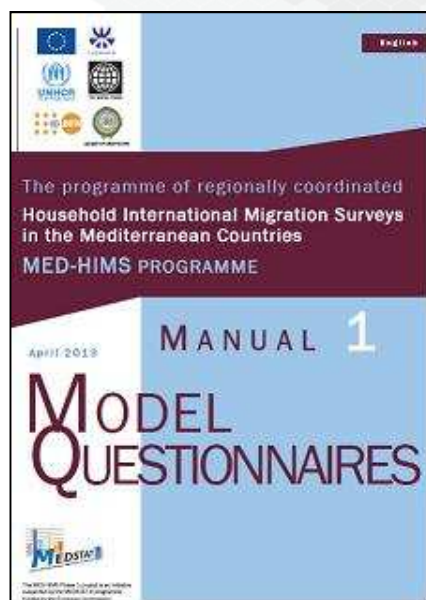
- REMUAO – *Réseau d'Enquêtes sur les Migrations et Urbanisation en Afrique de l'Ouest*
- EUROSTAT/NIDI Project *Push & Pull Factors*
- RDT – *Return Migration and Development Platform* (under EUI, including CRIS and MIREM)
- *Africa Migration and Remittances* Project (under the World Bank)
- *Patterns of Migration and Human Resources Development* (under ETF)
- MED-HIMS – *Mediterranean Household International Migration Surveys*
- Migration surveys of Armenia and Ukraine
- MAFE – *Migration between Africa and Europe*
- TEMPER – *Temporary vs Permanent Migration*
- Immigration surveys of Spain, France, Italy and Israel

Further resources

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) / UN Population Fund, Statistics on International Migration for Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (2011)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM) Guide to Enhancing Migration Data in West and Central Africa (2011)
- UNSD, Report on the Expert Group Meeting on the Use of Censuses and Surveys to Measure International Migration, 2007
(http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/egm/migrationegmsep07/TECHREP3_Part%20Three.pdf)
- ILO, ESCAP, EU and UNDP: International Labour Migration Statistics – A Guide for Policy makers and Statistics organizations in the Pacific

Households International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean countries (MED-HIMS)

- Selected tools, descriptions and first results
(<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-neighbourhood-policy/enp-south/med-hims>)



Conclusion

- Surveys can provide much richer data on migrants –but are potentially costly
 - Decisions on whether to add to existing surveys (questions or complete modules) or new specialised survey
 - Sampling can be particularly difficult
 - Many resources and previous examples available