Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Statistik BFS
Office fédéral de la statistique OFS
Ufficio federale di statistica UST
Uffizi federal da statistica UST

Data sources vis a vis the conceptual framework for statistics on international migration and related phenomena

The Experience of Switzerland

Marcel Heiniger, Federal Statistical Office

Meeting on International Migration Statistics: Concepts, Definitions, Data and Indicators

4 - 5 & 8 - 9 June 2020

1

Marcel Heiniger FSO | Data Sources & Operationalization | UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics | 9 June 2020

Revision of the 1998 UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration

One of the objectives of TF2:

discuss how to operationalize the recommended concepts and definitions

2

Marcel Heiniger FSO | Data Sources & Operationalization | UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics | 9 June 2020

Data Sources for Migration Statistics

- administrative data (e.g. population register, border crossing records, register of nationals abroad etc.)

- exhaustive surveys (e.g. census)

- household (sample) surveys

- big data

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Statistik BFS
Office fédéral de la statistique OFS
Ufficio federale di statistica UST
Uffizi federal da statistica UST

The Swiss Framework for Migration Statistics

part of population statistics -> in the context of the annual demographic balance

main data sources: administrative registers (at federal and municipal level)

+ household surveys to collect socio-demographic variables not available in registers

4

Marcel Heiniger FSO | Data Sources & Operationalization | UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics | 9 June 2020

Principles of International Recommendations and Their Application in Swiss Migration Statistics

(1) coherence between migration stock and flow data

(2) distinction between migration and international mobility

(3) use of different concepts to define stock of migrants:
- citizenship
- country of birth
- migratory status

Operationalization of Key Definitions and Concepts (1)

Definition of population

distinction between resident/temporary (non-resident) population based on minimum residence requirement (duration of stay or absence)

crucial: threshold, method used for calculation/determination of duration

- legal population / duration of at least 12 months: based on validity of permit or actual length of stay for non-nationals, no duration criteria for nationals

Operationalization of Key Definitions and Concepts (2)

Immigration and emigration

Persons entering the country and becoming part of the resident population are considered immigrants. Residents leaving the country to become part of another country's resident population are emigrants.

The criterion for defining an [im]migrant… should be the duration required in order to be considered part of the resident population.
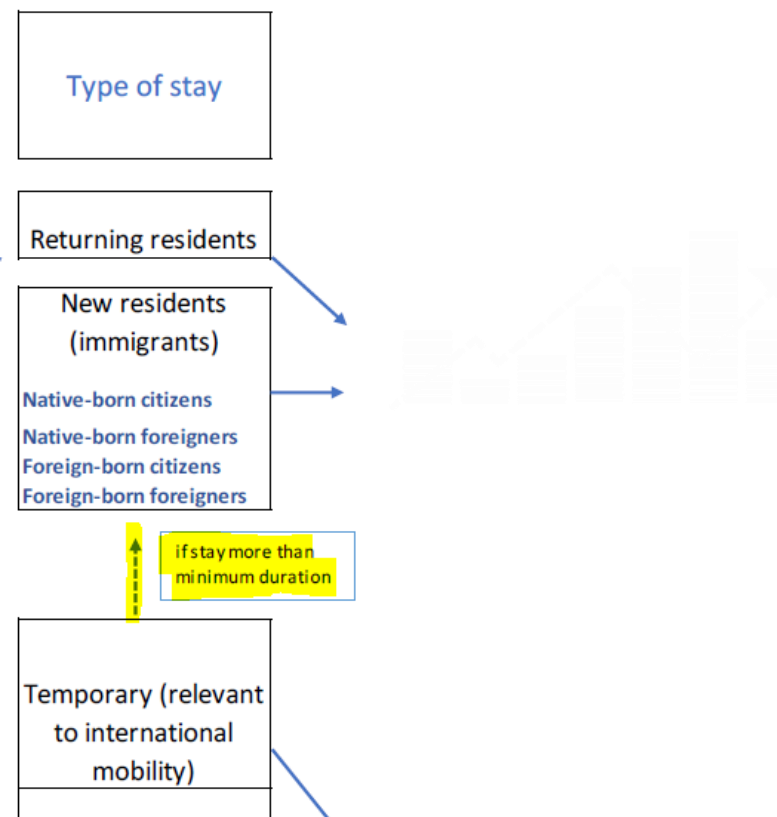
Persons need to be away and stay in another country long enough based on minimum residence requirement to be considered part of another country's resident population.

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Statistik BFS
Office fédéral de la statistique OFS
Ufficio federale di statistica UST
Uffizi federal da statistica UST

Operationalization of Key Definitions and Concepts (3)

Transition from temporary population to resident population

for people who stay more than minimum duration criteria while they are still present in the country

Type of stay

Returning residents

New residents (immigrants)

Native-born citizens
Native-born foreigners
Foreign-born citizens
Foreign-born foreigners

if stay more than minimum duration

Temporary (relevant to international mobility)

8

Marcel Heiniger FSO | Data Sources & Operationalization | UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics | 9 June 2020

Operationalization of Key Definitions and Concepts (4)

Non-resident arrivals and departures

Within the non-resident population, we distinguish flows related to family, education/training, labor, forced displacement and tourism/business.

Conclusions

- pragmatic choices and decisions based on available data sources are necessary when operationalizing concepts and definitions

- "reality check": are those choices/decisions in line with the intentions of the recommendations?

- do not neglect/underestimate the importance of the national framework for migration statistics:
  data needs for specific user groups, do data respond to key policy questions?

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Statistik BFS
Office fédéral de la statistique OFS
Ufficio federale di statistica UST
Uffizi federal da statistica UST

Thank you for your attention

Additional information:

Federal Statistical Office, Demography and Migration Section

e-Mail: info.dem@bfs.admin.ch

11

Marcel Heiniger FSO | Data Sources & Operationalization | UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics | 9 June 2020