Official international migration statistics in the EU – data availability and comparability

Dorota Kupiszewska¹ and Beata Nowok²

¹ Central European Forum For Migration Research (CEFMR)
² CEFMR, NIDI fellow, European Doctoral School of Demography at MPIDR

European Population Conference 2006
Liverpool, 21-24 June 2006
Contents

1. Data availability (theoretical and practical)
2. Comparability of data presented in various sources
3. International comparability of data
4. Conclusions

Focus on flow data
### Data availability (theoretical) according to THESIM and JMQs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th></th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Nationals</td>
<td>Foreigners</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data availability (practical)

Main problems:
• No data published (although theoretically available)
• Lack of disaggregated data
• Data published in various sources differ
• Data are not well documented (or not documented at all)
• Lack of international comparability
Comparability of data presented in various sources (for one country)

• Results of the comparison of figures on annual total immigration and emigration in the period 1999-2002 (websites of NSIs and publications from various international organisations):
  – Only for seven EU countries the figures on total flows were consistent across the inspected sources:
    the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden
  – For all other EU countries some discrepancies have been identified, sometimes significant
Comparability of data presented in various sources (for one country)

Differences between the sources most often due to differences in:

- **coverage** (nationals and foreigners / foreigners only)
- provisional and final figures
- estimation method
  - with/without administrative corrections
- reference period
In **Lithuania**, the differences result from the post-census revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emigration from Lithuania</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eurostat Population Yearbook 2004</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>21 816</td>
<td>7 253</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurostat Migration Yearbook 2002</td>
<td>1 369</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoE</td>
<td>1 369</td>
<td>2 616</td>
<td>7 253</td>
<td>7 086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG JLS</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>2 616</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOPEMI 2004</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSI (yearbook)</td>
<td>23 418</td>
<td>21 816</td>
<td>7 253</td>
<td>7 086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Central European Forum for Migration Research

International comparability of flow data

- International migration statistics are generally NOT comparable

\[
\text{Country of origin} \quad S \quad \text{ending} \quad \text{EMIGRATION} \quad S = R \quad \text{IMMIGRATION} \quad \text{Country of destination} \quad R \quad \text{receiving}
\]
Comparability of data is possible!

- red line – data from the sending country
- blue line – data from the receiving country

- **Inter-Nordic Migration agreement:** DK, FI, SE, NO, IS
  - inter-Nordic relocation certificate is required to be registered in the destination country
  - registration of emigration to another Nordic country follows the rules for registration of immigration in the destination country
Incomparability of flows reported by Germany and Poland

Germany → Poland

Poland → Germany
• **Data incomparability**: due to differences in the definitions, reliability and coverage

**Definition** = the rules applied in the migration measurement process (at all stages) to decide who is included in the statistics

• **Differences in the rules**
  – between the countries
  – nationals/foreigners
  – immigration/emigration
  – within one country over time
Definitions (cont.)

• The main differences concern **time criteria**
  – Minimum duration of stay in the destination country required for the change of residence to be counted as international migration

• Very few countries comply with the UN recommendations and use the one year duration of stay criterion (CY, SE, UK, partially FI)
Definitions - Duration of stay options

• **Duration of stay not taken into account**

• **A minimum period of stay applies that might be 3, 6 or 12 months**
  – The meaning of time limits:
    • Period of stay related with the obligation to register
    • Duration of validity of residence permits
    • Selection rules applied when producing statistics
  – NL – 4 out of 6 for immi, 8 out of 12 for emi

• **The concept of „permanent migration”**
  – Temporary changes of residence not counted, only those declared as permanent are included

• **Permit of stay expiry**
## The time criterion in international migration definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>3 months</th>
<th>6 months</th>
<th>Other below one year</th>
<th>One year</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Permit expiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LV</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>FOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jump in the flows reported by the Czech Republic

- Czech Republic – change of definition of flows of foreigners: until 2000 – changes of permanent residence; from 2001 – changes of usual residence
Final remarks

- A good comparability of data will be difficult to achieve, if at all possible
- Modelling techniques are needed
- The disseminating bodies should pay more attention to the proper description of the data
- Data should be used with great care (inspect various sources, check definitions)
- Incomparability of statistics on international migration flows is strictly linked with that of statistics on population stocks, so both problems should be solved simultaneously.
More information:

- **THESIM book**
  
  „**THESIM. Towards Harmonised European Statistics on International Migration**”, UCL Presses Universitaires de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006

  Chapter 8 – „Statistics on international migration flows”

- **CEFMR Working Papers**
  
  www.cefmr.pan.pl

Thank you