HOW COUNTRIES MANAGE MIGRATION DATA

Evidence from six countries

IOM
UN MIGRATION

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IOM UN MIGRATION

GMDAC
IOM Global Migration
Data Analysis Centre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Frank Laczko and Elisa Mosler Vidal[1]

There have been many calls in recent years for countries to do more to improve the way in which they collect, analyse, share and use data on migration. The first objective of the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration calls upon States to improve the collection, analysis and use of data on migration to inform migration policy and practice. More than a decade ago, the Commission on International Migration Data for Development Research and Policy produced a detailed report entitled *Migrants Count*, which also highlighted the lack of data on key questions relating to international migration (CGD, 2009). IOM's new report on Global Migration Indicators highlights how many of these data gaps still exist today (IOM, 2021a).

Within the United Nations System, there is growing recognition that more needs to be done to harness the potential of using data to inform policy and practice, while protecting migrants against the misuse of data. In 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General launched a United Nations System–wide data strategy, and in the same year, IOM published its own *Migration Data Strategy*. This begins by noting the following:

> " Data are the lifeblood of decision-making. The importance of quality, accessible, disaggregated, reliable and timely data to inform policies, action and public opinion is well recognized and highlighted in multiple international frameworks. (IOM, 2021b)

Countries' participation in international frameworks has increased reporting requirements and the demand for migration data. For example, countries are now asked to report on the progress that they are making in achieving migration targets linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes specific calls for improved data collection and capacity relating to several migration targets – and for the disaggregation of SDG indicators by migratory status. Today, the United Nations recommendations on migration statistics are being revised. In 2021, a revised conceptual framework was presented at the United Nations Statistical Commission which will form the basis for these recommendations, providing guidance to countries on how they should define and measure migration and mobility (UNSD, 2021).

The global pandemic has, however, made it more difficult for many countries to collect migration data as many censuses and surveys, especially in developing countries, were postponed or cancelled (United Nations and World Bank, 2020). At the same time, the pandemic underlined the potential of learning more about global mobility by leveraging data arising from the use of new technologies. IOM's Data Innovation Directory, for example, provides a range of examples of how countries have been developing new ways to leverage these new data sources (IOM, n.d.). It is also evident that the challenge that countries face is by no means simply a lack of data. In fact, in many cases, more data are being produced than ever before, but the challenge is how to manage these data in a way that they can be used to inform policy while protecting migrants' rights.

Given this context of growing international interest in ways to improve the collection, analysis and use of migration data, IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) considered it would be useful to conduct an in-depth analysis of how a sample of countries are currently managing their

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[1] Frank Laczko is the Director of IOM GMDAC in Berlin. Elisa Mosler Vidal is Data and Policy Officer at GMDAC.

international migration data. Typically, countries are contacted by international agencies and asked to provide responses to a questionnaire on migration topics. This study takes a different approach.

The study aims to explore how countries collect, share and use their data through a series of in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. Another goal is to go beyond the now well-understood and accepted statement that migration data is often patchy and needs to improve – to understand better why this may be the case and how the situation could change.

The project is based on interviews with key informants who are responsible for managing the collection, analysis or use of migration data in six case study countries. The countries which participated were selected to provide examples of very different migration contexts across the globe. These are Canada, Djibouti, Ireland, Jamaica, Nigeria and the Republic of Moldova. Given time and resource constraints, the study focuses primarily on international migration statistics, and not all types of mobility data, and does not explore the perspectives of private-sector actors who collect mobility data. The latter topic would merit a separate research in itself.

The study aims to provide an insight into how countries manage their migration data across the whole of government. It is well recognized that migration is a cross-cutting issue relevant to many different policy domains, such as employment, health, development, social welfare, the environment and border control. This means that data on migration are often collected for different purposes and data management may be fragmented, with few countries fully integrating data from disparate sources (IOM and McKinsey & Company, 2018).

IOM and the research team, in addition to conducting in-depth interviews with individual stakeholders, organized national consultations in each country with a wider group of actors representing different ministries, international agencies and civil society, to discuss the findings of each data assessment. The study has therefore benefited from the inputs and perspectives of a wide range of different actors in each country.

The study shows that there is a tremendous variety of approaches to the ways in which countries collect and manage international migration statistics. Nonetheless, it was possible to identify a set of common data challenges across most of the case study countries. Many stakeholders recognize that there is a considerable amount of migration data being collected but the value of such data for policymaking purposes is often limited because of the lack of data integration. Related to this, many of those interviewed noted the abundance of administrative data and the low use of such data to inform migration policy and practice. Countries tended to have diverse and more specific data gaps relating to migration policy needs, often on methodologically more complex topics, such as emigration.

Another common challenge was the lack of formalized migration data governance. Managing migration data is a complex task involving actors from a range of policy domains. Few countries have an explicit migration data strategy or road map which spells out how they plan to improve the collection, analysis, sharing and use of migration statistics over the next five years. The interviews revealed that it was often unclear what the overall migration data priorities are at the national level and how the country plans to address these. Access to different types of migration data, which are crucial for policymakers, is often limited. Many individual government agencies publish statistics based on the operational or statistical data they collect; however, integrated databases or even publications featuring diverse data on migration are rare.

From an international perspective, the study reveals that many countries continue to define and measure migration in different ways, which are not always aligned with United Nations recommendations in this area. There remain, for example, substantial variations in national approaches to which questions on migration to include in national censuses. Censuses in all countries collected information on country of birth; however, not all did on country of citizenship, which is officially recommended. This is a reminder to those who draft international recommendations on migration statistics that they need to look carefully at national experiences and approaches and how far it is practicable for

countries to adapt their data systems to international standards. All countries are engaged in various global processes such as the 2030 Agenda or the Global Compact for Migration, though it is not clear how far migration data is mainstreamed in relevant national activities or how far these processes have had a concrete impact on their migration data. This suggests that while these important frameworks have placed greater attention on migration data at the global level, this has yet to be translated to the national level.

The study also aims to provide some examples of innovative data practices addressing a number of the above challenges, which could be of interest to other countries. Some countries have dedicated migration units within their national statistical offices (NSOs), such as the Migration Study Unit (CEM) in the National Institute of Statistics of Djibouti (INSD). Others have established interministerial groups on migration data – for example, the Working Group on Migration Data Management (WGMDM) in Nigeria. In Jamaica, the population census collects United Nations–compliant data on migration flows, while most other countries do not. In the Republic of Moldova, administrative data was successfully used by the National Bureau of Statistics to produce migration statistics; and similarly in Ireland, several administrative data sources are already linked, including those related to border crossing and social protection. In Canada, the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) connects migration data with longitudinal data on socioeconomic outcomes – in collaboration with different ministries and authorities from the provinces – and makes microdata files available to over 30 universities across the country.

Further, the project aims to explore what are the capacity development data needs and priorities in the case study countries. The national consultations focused on ways to build capacities to improve data collection and management in the future. In all countries, many ideas and in some cases concrete plans exist to improve migration data, but these are often held back by a lack of resources. There was also some discussion on how migration could be mainstreamed into broader efforts to improve data on development or the SDG indicators. While the countries operate in very different contexts, the challenges, potential solutions and ideas discussed in the interviews were often very similar. This underlines that practical knowledge-sharing between countries is a key element of migration data capacity development. In addition, the Data Needs Assessment Tool developed by the research team for this study provides a potential framework for assessing migration data capacity-building needs across other countries.

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GLOBAL COMPARATIVE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Michel Poulain and Giambattista Cantisani

This report is part of the Global Comparative Study on Migration Data project of IOM GMDAC, which aims at better understanding how countries worldwide are meeting a range of different migration data challenges. With migration data in the global spotlight, thanks to processes such as the Global Compact for Migration and others, the project aims to provide a comprehensive picture of how migration data systems work in practice at the national level. The objective is to explore how far countries are making progress in improving migration data and to understand the practical challenges facing national statistical offices (NSOs) and other national stakeholders, the impact of frameworks such as the Global Compact for Migration and the 2030 Agenda, and more.

The project involved six countries which were selected on the basis of geographical and contextual criteria linked to migration. Due to travel restrictions, the methodology used was based on a series of virtual interviews and email exchanges with relevant national stakeholders, research centres, IOM country offices and other international organizations' offices represented in these countries. The mapping of the institutions dealing with international migration and related statistical data collected, produced, analysed and/or disseminated was done through information gathered through the interviews and desktop research of documents and publications available at the national and international levels. The methodology followed is innovative, with a total of more than 60 in-depth interviews involving more than 100 stakeholders in the six countries selected. These discussions made it possible to assess the way each country collects migration data and what the opportunities, issues and challenges faced were.

This comparative report aims to help national authorities and international stakeholders better identify needs and opportunities related to migration data – and capacity development linked to these. It can help national authorities wishing to develop migration data strategies in line with their own policy priorities. The report also presents a key opportunity to showcase good practices developed by countries to produce reliable and comparable data alongside the international recommendations currently under revision. In turn, it aims to strengthen IOM's role in developing and providing data capacity-building programmes to its Member States, which are tailored to their needs. In addition, the report is a contribution to ongoing discussions regarding how best to ensure that international recommendations on migration statistics developed by the United Nations are implemented.

The first section of the report presents the general context and status of migration data collection at the global level. The following sections present synthesized findings and key messages from the six country reports. There are sections on governance of migration data by considering the many institutions dealing with migration-related matters and their corresponding databases, followed by key migration data sources across the countries. Furthermore, there are sections that explore the impact of global processes such as the SDGs and the Global Compact for Migration on migration data, migration data capacity-building and international cooperation, as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration data. Finally, a set of broad recommendations are put forward based on findings from the six countries, intended to improve international migration data collection and use.

2. CONTEXT

2.1. Demand for international migration data

As reflected in the Global Compact for Migration, international migration has become both a key policy challenge and opportunity at the national, regional and international levels. In the last decades, international migration and related issues such as international protection, displacement and internal migration have increased in relevance around the world. Meanwhile new information needs have emerged related to migration. These range from better capturing the size and composition of migrant populations to understanding migration's overall determinants and consequences, or specific information needs such as the impacts of emigration on countries of origin, integration of immigrants in countries of destination and dynamics of return migration.

"Migration data" in this report refers to all types of data that support the development of comprehensive, coherent and forward-looking migration policies and programming, as well as informed public discourse on migration, in line with IOM's *Migration Data Strategy* (2021). This report focuses mainly on data on cross-border movement (rather than internal movement). Migration data are crucial to support the development, implementation and monitoring of evidence-based policies in any domain, and States have consistently identified availability of timely, accessible, reliable, disaggregated and comparable data as key for good migration governance (ibid.) at the national, regional and international levels.

2.2. Key developments in international migration data

Understanding international migration calls for harmonized statistics based on shared concepts and definitions. Efforts in this direction by international organizations and several countries started in 1954, and in 1998 the United Nations' *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration*[2] was developed. These recommendations on migration statistics were the first of their kind, and countries were asked to formulate strategies to comply with them. This document offered a detailed framework for the compilation of statistics on inflows and outflows, including codes for data sources, time or duration, and availability of statistics. It made a taxonomy of inflows and outflows by entry status and citizenship, along with the concepts underpinning said framework. The recommendations considered migration as a change of the country of usual residence, distinguishing between short- and long-term migration.

International migration statistics should respond to national needs as well as internationally recognized standards and requirements. There is a need to balance national data priorities and practices with statistical comparability and overall adherence to international standards. Since 1998, there have been various standard-setting exercises, global processes and other key developments relating to migration data. This section explains a selection of these, although non-exhaustively.

Several actors began publishing specialized reports and recommendations relating to migration data. For example, the 2009 recommendations from the Center for Global Development (CGD) were key in this regard. This report concluded that data on international migration collected and published by countries around the world are so limited that it was difficult to answer some of the most basic questions about the movement of people, how this interacts with the development process, and other important questions. The report stated that without better data, migration policies cannot be developed

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[2] This is available in English, French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese. See: UN DESA, 1998.

on a sound evidence base. Then it concluded that significant progress on migration data collection can be made through the following steps:

1. Ask three basic questions on every population census – about country of citizenship, country of birth and country of previous residence – then publish cross-tabulations of this information by age and sex.

2. Exploit existing administrative data sources that often contain rich and poorly utilized information on international movements.

3. Compile existing data from the Labour Force Surveys (LFSs) of countries around the world into a single harmonized, frequently updated database.

4. Provide public access to anonymous individual records of international migrants from surveys and administrative data sources to allow major improvements in the quality of research while maintaining strict confidentiality.

5. Increase the systematic use of standardized modules of migration-related questions in ongoing household survey programmes, particularly those in developing countries. (Santo Tomas et al., 2009)

The report also encouraged building institutional capacity relating to migration data, including by convening national taskforces on the topic and bringing together national policymakers, statisticians, researchers and migration specialists.

International organizations have developed practical guidance on migration data for countries and helped compile and showcase relevant information. For example, Migration Profiles were created in response to the Council Conclusions of 2007 on extending and enhancing the Global Approach to Migration, by the European Union in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), IOM, the World Bank, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and other international organizations. Since 2010, standardized profiles have been developed across the world, containing detailed statistical information and aiming to evaluate the overall migration situation in a given country. In 2011, IOM published a guide[3] explaining in detail what a profile can entail and how governments and implementing partners can develop and conduct such an exercise. Since then, many more profiles have been prepared, with several of these being regularly updated.

At the regional level, key migration data guidance was also developed. For example, the European Union's Regulation on the collection of community statistics on migration and international protection was published in 2007.[4] This was drafted by the European Commission with inputs from NSOs and ministries of interior of the Member States, as well as international experts. The definitions cited are as close as possible to those found in the 1998 United Nations' *Recommendations*. In addition, new data-collection topics were introduced – for instance, on residence permits, asylum and irregular migration, for the first time involving the Ministry of Interior from each Member State in migration data provision to Eurostat. The Regulation allows Member States to use their own data sources and methods, but it requires detailed metadata such as sources, indicators of quality, estimation methods and any revisions to past figures.

Several high-level global processes and frameworks in recent years have referenced migration data for the first time, and included calls to improve this. As a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals, in 2015 the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda.[5] The SDGs are composed of 17 goals covering poverty, education, health, environment, decent work and many other topics, divided into 169 targets. Over 232 indicators to monitor these at the global level were developed

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[3] See: IOM, 2011.

[4] This set is represented first by Regulation (EC) No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No. 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers (often referred to by its short form EU Regulation on Migration Statistics) (European Union, 2007). It is available in all European Union languages. Other relevant regulations adopted more or less in parallel covered demographic statistics and population census. Furthermore, in 2020 there was another regulation amending Regulation No. 862/2007 (see on page 11).

[5] See: UNGA, 2015.

(IAEG-SDGs, n.d.).[6] The 2030 Agenda marked the first time migration was fully integrated into a high-level international development framework, as it calls on States to work towards ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration; makes reference to the positive contribution of migrants for development; and emphasizes its overall motto to "leave no one behind". Several SDG indicators are directly relevant for migration (for example, focusing on measurement of human trafficking) or indirectly (for example, as it is recommended that they are disaggregated by migratory status). International organizations such as the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and IOM have developed some analysis and guidance for countries to improve migration-related SDG data provision,[7] and several manage methodologies for some key relevant SDG indicators. For example, in 2020 indicator 10.7.3 was introduced to monitor the numbers of dead or missing migrants, using an IOM methodology.

The first global frameworks dedicated to issues related to migrants and refugees were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018 and include the Global Compact for Migration[8] and the Global Compact for Refugees.[9]

The Global Compact for Migration aims to support international cooperation on the governance of international migration, to provide comprehensive solutions for national policies addressing the most pressing issues relating to migration, and to give States the space and flexibility to pursue implementation based on their own migration realities and capacities. The commitment of Member States to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration as defined by the Global Compact for Migration is consistent with Target 10.7 of the SDGs, and intends to build on this. Crucially, Objective 1 of the Global Compact for Migration calls for countries to collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as basis for evidence-based policies.

The Global Compact for Refugees intends to strengthen the international response to existing and future large movements of refugees and protracted refugee situations, building on existing international law and standards on international protection and human rights treaties, and seeking to better define cooperation to share responsibilities. Appropriate data collection and evidence-based policy are fundamental for effective burden- and responsibility-sharing in this context.

In the last few years, several of the above and other developments led to the identification of new opportunities and challenges in migration data, and this created the conditions for the **revision of existing recommendations, as well as the establishment of new statistical guidance**. Therefore, under the supervision of international organizations and national institutions, a number of tools have been produced. For examples:

(a) *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* (UN DESA, 2017).

(b) *Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics – International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* (European Union and the United Nations, 2018).[10]

(c) Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration (ILO, 2018).

(d) Standard questions on international migration: Guidance note for the use in population censuses and household surveys (United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, 2018).

(e) *International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (IRIS)* (European Union and the United Nations, 2020).

(f) Regulation (EU) 2020/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 amending Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection (European Union, 2020).[11]

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[6] This was revised in summer 2020.
[7] The main cases are reported in the following publications: IOM, 2018; Go, 2019.
[8] See: UNGA, 2018.
[9] See: UNHCR, 2018.
[10] Furthermore, new recommendations are being defined for forced displacement and statelessness statistics under the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (EGRIS).
[11] This is available in all European Union languages.

The Expert Group on Migration Statistics is currently embarking on an exercise to revise the 1998 recommendations on migration data. As a first step, in 2019 UNSD undertook a global consultation to assess national migration data practices and needs. A total of 103 national agencies from 79 countries took part. The consultation found that the majority of countries that responded produced a set of figures or more on migrant stocks based on different criteria to meet the needs of a range of users. In the case of migration flows, the main criterion used by countries was "duration of stay", but with varying cut-off periods for duration/thresholds, ranging from 4 to 12 months, sometimes overlapping with other criteria such as "intention to stay" or "legal permission to stay". Other countries used the criterion of duration over a longer period – for instance, 12 out of 16 months or 9 out of 12 months. In many cases, the definitions varied depending on the data sources used. Countries were more likely to produce statistics on labour migration and long-term migration (more than half of the countries) than statistics on return migrants (30 out of 79 countries). Results showed common sources of migration data were household surveys – in particular, the LFS – and only few countries reported that administrative sources were key national sources of migration data. Responses also showed that data availability tended to dictate the migration indicators reported nationally, regardless of their relevance to specific policy needs. The consultation then revealed key data gaps and needs, as many countries referred to some areas of policy interest for which there were no or few statistics – for instance, irregular migration and citizens living abroad. Considering the high number of countries answering the questionnaire, the report suggests that despite efforts to improve migration statistics since 1954, there is still considerable scope for improvement of the quality and availability of migration data worldwide (ECOSOC, 2021).

The Expert Group on Migration Statistics developed a draft report on conceptual frameworks and concepts and definitions on international migration,[12] validated by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in March 2021. This new conceptual framework will form the basis of the revised recommendations. The Expert Group on Migration Statistics recognized a need to improve the quality of migration data at the national level as well as its comparability at the international level, and that this may be derived from the alignment of data on flows and stocks. The Group also recognized a need to improve the quality and availability of statistics on migration flows and temporary population movements, although the latter may vary by country and location. The framework includes the following features:

(a) Defining international migration as an important part of the wider concept of international mobility;

(b) Making a clear linkage between migration flows and population stocks;

(c) Distinguishing four population groups based on country of birth and country of citizenship, which are relevant to migration policy and data: native-born citizens, foreign-born citizens, native-born foreign citizens, foreign-born foreign citizens;

(d) Considering statistics on temporary international movements and their effects on the temporary population;

(e) Defining the resident population as those who reside or intend to reside in a country within a given year for at least 6 months and 1 day or 12 months.[13]

The translation of this new conceptual framework into concrete recommendations and practical guidance for migration data is under way. The findings of this report, as they are based on realities on the ground of migration data collection in different countries, may prove relevant when considering how to do it.

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[12] See: United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, 2021.

[13] This is as defined in the latest principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses.

Figure 1. Migration data in the global spotlight over the years

A timeline of key dates

1998

1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006

2007

Revision 1 of the United Nations' *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration* published

Migration Profiles created

2017   **2015**   **2011**   **2009**

2016   2014 2013 2012   2010   2008

Revision 3 of the United Nations' *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* published

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted

IOM guide on **Migration Profile data-collection process**

Migration data recommendations from the **Center for Global Developement (CGD)**

2018   **2019**   **2020**   **2021**

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration adopted, particularly Objective 1 on migration data

The *Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics – International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics* published; further, new recommendations on forced displacement and statelessness under development

The International Labour Organization's guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration

The Expert Group on Migration Statistics developed standard questions on international migration in a guidance note for use in population censuses and household surveys

Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) No. 862/2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection

The Expert Group on Migration Statistics developed a draft report on conceptual frameworks and concepts and definitions on international migration

Key standards and/or capacity-building tools and processes relating to migration data

Key migration data frameworks

2.3. Methodology

The six countries selected for the study were chosen based on geographical location within three continents (Europe, Africa and the Americas),[14] along with their varying political structures, demographic characteristics and international migration dynamics (for example, they experience immigration, emigration and transit migration).

Two project countries, **Canada** and **Ireland**, are particularly significant immigration countries, including for highly skilled workers and refugees. Both countries experience significant levels of emigration of nationals too. Migrant integration, irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling are key topics for policymakers. Three countries, **Jamaica**, **Nigeria** and the **Republic of Moldova**, experience strong emigration abroad, mainly for labour. This results in a large diaspora population, which has a strong impact on national development. Related policy topics include children and other dependants left behind by emigrants, the sending of remittances and their possible use towards national development, and the return of migrants and their reintegration. These countries are also concerned with irregular migration, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. The sixth country, **Djibouti**, has significant immigration and emigration flows, and it faces issues linked to transit migrants, including the protection of unaccompanied migrant children. Further, all six countries have demonstrated policy interest in a few migration issues such as assistance to migrants, resettlement, integration of migrants, leveraging migration for development, the return of nationals, facilitated or free movement of people within regional economic organizations or groups of countries, irregular migration, human trafficking, migrant smuggling and migration intentions, among others.

Qualitative data for this study were collected via virtual interviews with a range of migration data stakeholders in each country. These included representatives from NSOs, line ministries, civil society, academia and international organizations. These were carried out by a consultant team of migration data experts (Michel Poulain, Giambattista Cantisani and Anna Taeko Casals Fernandez), under the supervision of Frank Laczko and Elisa Mosler Vidal of GMDAC. In total, across the six countries, 55 interviews were conducted involving 56 different institutions and 117 individuals, between September 2020 and February 2021. In addition to this, the consultant team conducted desk-based research using publicly available resources as well as documents shared by interviewees and IOM – and where necessary, clarified information in follow-up email exchanges with interviewees.

Note that it was not possible for this study to include interviews with every migration data stakeholder in each country. Interviews focused mainly on government actors, and it was not possible to interview a number of civil society and academic actors in the countries, who may also have been key migration data producers or users. Further, while the study includes an in-depth examination of migration data available in each country, this was not exhaustive, and there may be other sources or activities relating to migration data that have not been mentioned here.

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[14] For logistical reasons, the study did not extend to Asia, though at a later date, assessments from the continent could be added.

Figure 2. The countries

The six countries in the study were selected based on geographical representation (two countries from each of the following continents: Europe, Africa and the Americas) as well as their varying political structures, demographic characteristics and international migration dynamics.

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

3. GOVERNANCE OF MIGRATION DATA

3.1. Key institutions

Across the six countries, many actors are usually involved in migration data, and its governance is overall fragmented. In each of the six countries studied, several key institutions and ministries are involved in the management of international migration and related matters. In all of them, some general and similar legislations were enacted, and concrete procedures have been implemented with respect to the arrival, immigration, staying and working of foreigners in their territories (with any necessary specificities applying to citizens of countries belonging to regional frameworks or markets). Nevertheless, different provisions exist in respect of the departure and definitive emigration of nationals or foreigners. In addition, each country held and further developed different policies, strategies and laws on particular migration topics, depending on the specificity of the migration phenomena.

In most of the countries studied, there is a single main institution or ministry leading national migration governance. This manages diverse migration topics and services, often with different parts of the government, which include the following:

(a) Visa procedures

(b) Residence permit procedures

(c) Work permit procedures

(d) Border control, including registration of entries and exits of travellers

(e) Asylum requests and refugee status determination process

(f) Integration and social protection of migrants

(g) Irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and assisted return

(h) Registration systems, including migrant populations

(i) Nationals living abroad and their return

(j) Remittances

Many of these topics are managed by a single institution. For examples:

(a) Canada – **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)**.

(b) Djibouti – **Ministère de l'Intérieur (MOI)**.

(c) Ireland – **Immigration Service Delivery (ISD), under the Department of Justice (DOJ)**.

(d) Jamaica – **Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA), under the Ministry of National Security (MNS)**.

(e) Nigeria – **Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), under the Federal Ministry of Interior (FMI)**.

(f) Republic of Moldova – **Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA)**.

These institutions collect a variety of policy-relevant migration data. Additionally, the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** in each country is usually the central authority mandated to collect, harmonize and disseminate national statistics, including on migration. Some of these NSOs have specialized migration units. For example, the NSO in Djibouti (National Institute of Statistics of Djibouti, INSD) established a Migration Study Unit (*Centro de Estudios Migratorios*, CEM) to focus on migration statistics.

Further, several other government institutions in each country collect selected migration data as relevant to their specific roles in migration governance, often through administrative systems. For example, ministries of foreign affairs on emigrants and diaspora populations, ministries of labour on labour migrants, and dedicated agencies for human trafficking, refugees and other topics. Given the many migration policy stakeholders in most countries, there is often a high degree of fragmentation in migration data governance nationally.

Figure 3. Migration data governance

Many different institutions and actors are usually involved in migration data.

National Statistical Office (NSO)

The **National Statistical Office (NSO)** in each country is usually the central authority mandated to collect, harmonize and disseminate national statistics, including on migration. This can include data collection on migrant stocks. Some NSOs have **specialized migration units**.

Main migration institution

Often there is a **single main institution leading national migration governance**. This manages a variety of migration services and topics, and collects migration data relating to these. For example, on visa, residence and work permit procedures, border control, migrant integration and many others.

Other institutions

Several other institutions or other dedicated bodies in each country collect selected migration data as relevant to their specific roles in migration governance, often through administrative systems. For example, some ministries of foreign affairs collect data on emigrants and diaspora populations, ministries of labour on labour migrants, and dedicated agencies for human trafficking, refugees and other topics.

Most countries have an interministerial committee, working group or another mechanism to help coordinate migration policy or other migration matters.
As part of these or separately, **some countries have dedicated groups for migration data efforts. For example, a technical working group on migration data.**

3.2. Coordination and cooperation

Each country has established an interministerial committee, a working group or another mechanism aiming at enhancing the coordination between institutions in migration-related matters. In some countries, these directly manage migration data topics, while in others there are similar, specialized and separate mechanisms to address the improvement of migration data collection and encourage cooperation between NSOs and different ministries collecting or using migration data.

(a) In Canada, the IRCC – STC Inter-departmental Committee aims at improving cooperation between involved institutions.

(b) In Djibouti, INSD launched in December 2020, with the support of IOM, the **Technical Working Group on Migration Statistics (GTT)**,[15] a collaboration mechanism to discuss sharing of responsibilities for collecting, harmonizing and publishing migration data at the national level. The GTT works in cooperation with the National Coordination Committee on Migration (CNCM).[16]

(c) The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), an independent research institute in Ireland, recently established the **Migrant Integration Strategy Data Group (MISDG)** to improve collaboration among agencies on migration data. The Central Statistics Office is involved in this.

(d) In Jamaica, the National Working Group on International Migration and Development (NWGIMD), an interministerial mechanism, coordinates inter-agency and non-governmental actions in relation to migration and development. It also involves the private sector, civil society and academia. The NWGIMD has a migration data subcommittee, the **Data, Research and Information Systems Sub-Committee (DRISSC)** chaired by the NSO.

(e) In Nigeria, the National Population Commission (NPC), with the support of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), coordinates the **Working Group on Migration Data Management (WGMDM)**, which is responsible for harmonizing and making migration data available across relevant national institutions and services.

(f) In the Republic of Moldova, the Commission for Coordination of Migration Activities is a government advisory body that coordinates different activities regarding migration and ensures close cooperation between national institutions.

In most countries involved in the study, IOM also plays a key role in encouraging migration data collection. Jointly with other international organizations like the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IOM supports collaborative work developed by the different national institutions aiming at providing more accurate and timely migration data.

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[15] In the original language, this is *Groupe Technique de Travail sur les données migratoires.*
[16] In the original language, this is *Bureau de Coordination Nationale pour la Migration.*

4. DATA SOURCES AND TOOLS

4.1. Statistical data sources

Censuses

In all countries surveyed, the NSO has the mandate, by statistical law, to conduct statistical operations and collect and disseminate official statistics. However, some variations are observed between countries. The population census is the responsibility of the NSOs in all countries except Nigeria, where the NPC is responsible for this, with the technical support of the NSO (NBS). In Canada and Ireland, in the absence of a continuous population registration system, census data play a major role, contributing to the relative importance of NSOs in those countries in terms of policy development. In Jamaica, close cooperation between the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) and the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) ensures that the census operation is effective. In the Republic of Moldova, the population registration system managed by the Public Services Agency (PSA) might be seen as a valuable alternative in order to continuously monitor the evolution of the country's population in the territory.

Among the main statistical operations relevant for international migration, the **population census** plays a major role in all countries. Censuses capture useful information on migration, though with some challenges. For example, census data are often disseminated relatively late after data collection, which usually takes place only every 10 years, and thus may not reflect the rapidly changing migration dynamics in a country.

Table 1 displays the migration-related questions included in the last census of each country in this study. A question on respondents' country of birth is the only one consistently asked in all of them. The answers to this question are generally reliable and very useful in learning more about migrants in a country, even if in some cases the historical change in national borders might provide methodological difficulties. A question on respondents' country of citizenship is asked only in four countries out of six. The existence of dual citizenship is yet to be considered attentively in censuses; a question on country of citizenship at birth could also be useful. Censuses in the six countries usually do not include questions on individuals' previous place of residence or the place of residence at a given time in the past, which can help identify migration events as well.

Censuses tend to capture only limited information on emigration. They can collect data on emigrated individuals by asking questions to the members of the household still in the country. This approach is used in the Republic of Moldova and Jamaica, two important emigration countries.

Table 1. Migration-related questions included in the last census of each country

Country	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Last census year	2016	2009	2016	2011	2006	2014
United Nations–recommended core questions related to international migration						
Country of birth	X	X	X	X	X	X
Country of citizenship	X		X		X	X
Duration of residence*					X	
Place of previous residence*		X			X	X
Place of residence at a given time in the past	1 and 5 years ago		1 year ago			
Year of first arrival in the country	X			X		
Other questions related to international migration						
Immigration status	X					
Country of birth of parents	X					
Reason for last change of residence*		X				
Continuous residence outside the country for more than one year			X	X		X
Previous country of residence				X		
Number of years lived in the country						X
Member of household who emigrated				Who emigrated in the past year		X
Time of emigration						X
Reason for living abroad for recent emigrants						X
Year of permanent return migration for nationals				X		

*Note: If the last change of residence occurred within the country, these questions cannot capture a preceding change of country of residence (i.e. international migration).

A Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) is carried out only on a usual basis in Canada. Some other countries check census population estimates for accuracy, often showing an underestimation of migrant populations. Such exercises are useful for countries and should be encouraged. For the intercensal period, several statistical agencies produce annual population estimates that consider births and deaths as well as international migration. The latter data is difficult to estimate annually, as statistical agencies rely mainly on census results with large differences in migration data availability, as shown in the table above.

Surveys

As shown in Table 2, NSOs and other institutions in the six countries collect additional migration-related data through household surveys, with a shorter periodicity compared to the censuses. Most countries in the study conduct **household surveys which may be on other topics, but include some questions related to migration**. The LFS is the most common among such surveys and most regularly conducted. In some cases, this can provide rich information on labour migrants, collecting data on both labour immigrants and emigrants. Further, some countries such as the Republic of Moldova have attached a dedicated migration module to these surveys in the past. Canada, Ireland and the Republic of Moldova have the most regular household surveys, many producing annual figures. In Canada and Ireland, migration data obtained through various household surveys are used to update annual population estimates.

Some countries conduct **dedicated migration surveys**, mainly on an ad hoc basis. For example, Djibouti occasionally implements surveys on topics such as unaccompanied migrant children and the impact of COVID-19 on migrants in the country.[17] Nigeria conducted a survey on youth migration in 2014, and two Nigerian statistical institutions are planning, with the support of IOM, a survey targeting the awareness and perceptions of intending and returned migrants with regard to the risks of irregular migration. In the Republic of Moldova, national and international organizations conducted a survey to identify specific needs of the children and elderly left behind by labour emigrants. Finally, various exercises on the mapping of nationals abroad, many including specialized diaspora surveys, have been planned or implemented in Jamaica, the Republic of Moldova, Nigeria and Canada. These are often conducted in cooperation with or directly by international organizations.

Many of the dedicated migration surveys mentioned above are undertaken with financial or other forms of support from international organizations. NSOs and other ministries often face resource constraints or other limited capacities. Some interviewees stated that the questions included in these surveys are not necessarily adapted to the national context, and their results are not always relevant for concrete national policy development.

Table 2. Migration-related questions included in selected surveys conducted by the National Statistical Office of each country[18]

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Labour Force Survey (LFS)	Yearly, migration-related questions included, but not on country of citizenship nor emigrants.		Yearly, migration-related questions included in third-quarter questionnaire on both immigrants and emigrants.		Quarterly, no migration-related questions. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) is developing a migration module to be added in the near future.	Yearly, with one question on recent emigration within the last 12 months. A special migration module was added in 2008 and 2012.

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[17] Furthermore, key Djiboutian institutions would like to undertake a survey to identify and assess the socioeconomic characteristics of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their impact on host communities.

[18] Note that due to limitations of this study, it was not possible to complete an exhaustive examination of household surveys in each country, and there may be other surveys in the countries relating directly or indirectly to migration.

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Other selected surveys	The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) and the General Social Survey (GSS) yearly include migration-related questions, but not on country of citizenship nor emigrants.	Several recent social surveys included some migration questions, but results were not used as they were not nationally representative.		STATIN social surveys do not include migration-related questions.	The Living Standards Survey includes questions on labour emigration and remittances. The Central Bank of Nigeria conducted remittance surveys in 2019 and 2020, with support from NBS.	The Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) includes questions on migration, including about intention to emigrate. The Household Budget Survey (HBS) includes questions on household members temporarily or permanently abroad who contribute to the household budget.

4.2. Administrative data sources

The use of **administrative databases** for the provision of migration statistics is quite limited, despite the clear recommendations of international agencies to promote this. In most countries, as shown in tables below, much statistical data related to international migration are usually collected by bodies managing related administrative procedures. However, the data are rarely systematically used to generate migration statistics to support national migration policy development.

Various migration policy topics and the administrative procedures that collect data on these are presented below. Table 3 displays the main agencies responsible for each topic and the related databases that are potential data sources for producing migration-related statistics on these. In most of the six countries, there is a key institution responsible for gathering migration-related data, which could extract them from various administrative data sources. These are IRCC in Canada, MOI in Djibouti, DOJ/ISD in Ireland, MNS/PICA in Jamaica, MOIA/Bureau for Migration and Asylum (BMA) in the Republic of Moldova, and FMI/NIS in Nigeria. Despite key initiatives and progress in some of the countries, administrative databases are still relatively underutilized overall.

Table 3. Main institutions involved in collecting administrative migration data in the countries

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Visa procedures	Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)	General Directorate of National Police (*Direction Générale de la Police Nationale*, DGPN)/Directorate of General Information (*Direction des Renseignements Généraux*, DRG)	ISD/Visa Division	PICA	NIS	BMA
Border control	CBSA	GDNP/Border Police and Immigration Unit (BPIU)	ISD/Border Management Unit (BMU)	PICA	NIS	General Inspectorate of Border Police (GIBP)
Residence permit procedures	IRCC	GDNP/DGR	ISD/Residence Division	PICA	NIS	BMA
Work permit procedures	IRCC	Ministry of Labor (MOL)/ National Agency for Employment, Training and Vocational Integration (ANEFIP)	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE)/ Economic Migration Policy Unit (EMPU)	Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS)/Work Permit Section (WPS)	NIS	BMA
Integration and social protection of migrants	IRCC, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), and provincial agencies	National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims (ONARS)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)		FMLE/International Labour Migration Desk (ILMD)	Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MHLSP)/ National Employment Agency (NEA)
Asylum requests and refugee status determination	IRCC and provincial agencies	ONARS	ISD/International Protection Office (IPO)	PICA	National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and partially NIS	BMA

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling	Several entities	Several entities	Different services of DOJ and the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)	National Taskforce Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP)	NIS and Nigeria Police Force (NPF)	Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (CCTHB) and other services
Registration systems, including migrant populations	Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)		Department of Social Protection (DSP)/Client Identity Services (CIS)			PSA
Nationals living abroad and return migration	Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC)	Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Nigerian National Volunteer Service (NNVS)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI)
Remittances	Bank of Canada	Central Bank of Djibouti	Central Bank of Ireland	Bank of Jamaica	Central Bank of Nigeria	National Bank of Moldova

Visa procedures

Except for citizens of countries for which visa-free agreements exist, most regular immigration is preceded by an entry visa or another document of authorization. In most countries, this task is managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and consulates, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and other institutions involved in migration management. A visa management information system can help a country link data on visas issued with data on border crossings, as well as information on the issuance of residence and work permits. Among the six countries covered by the study, most countries have such a system.

Border control including registration of entries and exits of travellers

In the six countries, a specific border police monitors the passports and travel documents of all entering individuals. These data, collected via landing cards (Nigeria) or by electronic reading of passports (five other countries), are stored in databases that are used to count entries and key characteristics of individuals. Exits are similarly registered in most of the countries.

Individual linkage of entries and exits would help determine the duration of stay in the country or absence abroad. This information would also allow identification of international migrants, both immigrants and emigrants, following the United Nations–recommended definition of short- and long-term migrants. However, such linkages and the identification of international migrants based on border crossings are operational only in the Republic of Moldova, where an innovative methodology is used via cooperation between GIBP and NBS. Some countries' border-crossing system is supported by international organizations – for example, Djibouti uses the IOM-provided Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS), and Nigeria is in the process of introducing this.

Residence permit procedures

Citizens of countries without free-movement agreements usually need to obtain a residence permit to live on a regular basis in another country for longer than a short period (generally fixed at 90 days). The issuance of these permits is usually the responsibility of any key single institution for migration management, or else a division of the Ministry of Interior. Data collected on the issuance of these residence permits are usually centralized in a database that allows the production of migration-related statistics. Every foreigner receiving a first residence permit for a duration of at least one year can be considered an international immigrant, while a person who is not requesting the renewal of a residence permit that had previously been issued (for at least a year in duration) may be considered an international emigrant. Moreover, the stock of valid residence permit holders at a given time will give the number and some characteristics of the foreign population living in a country, though only for regular migrants.

Work permit procedures

Work permits may be granted under foreign worker programmes or otherwise either on a permanent or temporary basis. The management of any national work permit database is traditionally the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. As work permits concern only a subgroup of migrants, statistics produced on this are mostly useful to characterize foreign workers in a country, along with their skills, occupations and other attributes.

Asylum requests and refugee status determination

The follow-up of asylum requests and recognition of refugee status are normally the responsibility of a specific national agency that is included in the main institution for migration management (which is

the case in Canada, Ireland and the Republic of Moldova). As these agencies manage related registration procedures of individuals, they tend to collect and share operational or other data on these.

Irregular migration, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants

Each country has a dedicated body or task force addressing irregular migration, either at borders or inside the country. Countering human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants is also under consideration by these agencies, and annual or more frequent reports are often disseminated that include aggregated data on this.

Registration systems including populations with foreign origins

Population registration systems are among the most useful administrative data sources for providing statistics related to international migration. These can provide information on migrant stocks residing in a country, as well as on flows of international immigration and emigration. As information in some such systems rely on self-declaration by individuals (i.e. when moving from or to a new locality), some problems of reliability exist in practice.

Among the six countries, only the Republic of Moldova manages a continuous registration of the population, through its State Register of Population (SRP). While there is no such population register in Canada and Ireland, both countries manage useful databases that integrate administrative sources of migration data. In Canada, the Longitudinal Tax files (T1FF) include information on so-called landed or regular migrants and their characteristics. In Ireland, the DSP/CIS's Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) database includes information on all newborns in the country and persons arriving from abroad.[19]

Nationals living abroad and their return

The policy interest of countries in their citizens living abroad and the diaspora is linked to their migration history and emigration flows. For example, Jamaica, Nigeria and the Republic of Moldova show strong political interest in collecting data on their respective diasporas, while Canada, Djibouti and Ireland are less interested in this. In the three countries first mentioned, there is interest in leveraging the skills and financial support of the diaspora to boost national development. In the other three countries, citizens abroad are most often engaged in relation to emergency situations where they should be assisted. None of the six countries has a single comprehensive or reliable database on their diaspora, though many have disparate administrative and/or statistical data-collection initiatives on the topic. In the three countries that have a large diaspora, several agencies support the return of emigrants and their reintegration in society and the labour market. In some cases, they may collect relevant administrative diaspora data.

Remittances

In countries with a large diaspora (Jamaica, Nigeria and the Republic of Moldova), the national bank collects data on migrants' remittances, using information from commercial banks on financial transfers sent from abroad. Some countries also conduct surveys examining how remittances received may contribute to households' incomes and the development of local communities.

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[19] These are registered to facilitate interaction with different services offered by Irish authorities.

4.3. Data integration

Considering that most individual information concerning foreign immigrants or national emigrants are linked, the development of integrated data systems is very helpful for migration governance. Moreover, the development of integrated databases represents the most appropriate tool for the provision of statistical data on migration and migrants.

In this study, most countries involved have not yet fully developed integrated migration databases. Canada is the exception, where the comprehensive Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) connects immigration and citizenship data with longitudinal data on socioeconomic outcomes, facilitating broad and detailed analysis and research.

In Jamaica and the Republic of Moldova, selected data from different administrative sources within the country are compiled, including statistics on immigrants from destination countries. These integrated databases for the most part aggregate selected migration data, and only in some cases directly link individual data. Interviewees from NSOs of the six countries expressed wishes to better compile migration data from diverse databases to produce timely, disaggregated statistics on international migration (as well as on non-migrant population and internal population movements) at the local and national levels.

5. DATA DISSEMINATION AND USE FOR POLICY

In the six countries studied, some dissemination of key migration data is managed by the NSO as part of its mandate. As shown in Table 4, some migration data are accessible on their websites, where aggregated statistics and, in some cases, databases may be found. In some countries, innovative web-based data-visualization tools are used, or anonymized microdata is made available open-access. Other selected migration data are included in printed reports or volumes by the NSO, which are usually downloadable in electronic format.

Table 4. Main features of migration data dissemination by national statistical offices in the countries

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Website	www. statcan.gc.ca	www. instad.dj	www.cso.ie	https:// statinja.gov. jm	NBS: www. nigerianstat. gov.ng NPC: www. national population. gov.ng	https:// statistica.gov. md
Online databases	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, though limited coverage	No	Yes
Open data and anonymized individual data	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Key contents of statistical data	Census and yearly migration data disaggregated by several variables	Some data available from the 2009 census	Census and yearly migration data disaggregated by several variables	Migration is featured as a component of yearly population growth in online database Relevant migration statistics reported by other countries 2011 census results on birthplace, residence and migration	NBS recently produced *Immigration Statistics 2018*, including data on residence of foreigners, irregular migration and human trafficking	Resident population and demographic indicators mainly by administrative sources Usual resident population and revised demographic indicators, also including migration flows based on border-crossing data 2014 census results relevant for migration
Metadata/ methodological documents and publications made available through the website	Yes (e.g. census profiles on key indicators)	Yes, but only occasionally for migration-relevant operations	Yes	Yes (e.g. Demographic Statistics Yearbook)	Yes, for the limited documents produced	Yes
Customized services to data users	Yes, online	No	Yes, upon request	No	No	No

In addition, several selected institutions, ministries, agencies or committees that are responsible for the collection of specific migration data have made some of these publicly available. See Table 5 for a non-exhaustive summary.

Table 5. Selected migration data dissemination by national institutions in the countries, by topics

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Border crossing	CBSA does not disseminate border-crossing data.	DGPN/DRG publishes an annual report with just some information on border crossings.	ISD/BMU does not issue data on border crossings.	Based on the current border control system, for the moment PICA releases statistics on border crossings by origin or destination only.	NIS publishes some data on arrivals and departures in its annual report and transfers to NPC more detailed data on this.	GIBP disseminates basic data and statistical reports to national and international partners and some individual data records to NBS.
Residence permits	IRCC releases monthly, quarterly and annual reports on different categories of migrants, also online.	DGR publishes an annual report including some tables on residence permits.	ISD publishes data through an annual immigration report disseminated in hard copy and online.	PICA releases data on residence permit holders and foreigners under special status (excluding those with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Skills Certificates – see below).	NIS publishes some data on different permits issued to migrants in its annual report.	BMA publishes these statistics annually, mainly through the Extended Migration Profile (EMP).
Work permits	IRCC releases monthly, quarterly and annual reports on different categories of migrants, online.	ANEFIP publishes the Statistical Employment Yearbook, not regularly.	EMPU publishes statistics on its website and provides data for an annual bulletin on the Irish labour market at the occupational level.	WPS publishes an annual report with statistics on work permits, work permit exemptions and CARICOM Skills Certificates, with the latter more limited in terms of coverage and details.	NIS publishes some data on the different working permissions for foreigners in its annual report.	BMA publishes statistics on an annual basis mainly through the EMP.
Integration and social protection of foreign immigrants	IRCC, ESDC and the provincial agencies publish regular reports, answer ad hoc requests and release data cubes on settlement services provided to foreigners.	ONARS, other national agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) issue relevant data, with varying coverage and frequency.	DCEDIY issues some data on the integration of migrants and the provision of assistance to refugees and other groups.		FMLE issues some statistics on services provided to foreign workers through labour-matching systems and government services located in Nigeria.	NEA regularly issues some bulletins including data on migrants who seek or obtain employment, receive accommodation from authorities or use selected social protection systems.

	Canada	Djibouti	Ireland	Jamaica	Nigeria	Republic of Moldova
Asylum seekers and refugees	IRCC releases monthly, quarterly and annual outputs on different categories, online.	ONARS publishes data in collaboration with UNHCR.	ISD publishes data through an annual immigration report disseminated in hard copy and online, while ISD/IPO also publishes data on a monthly basis.	PICA releases asylum statistics, while UNHCR releases refugee statistics, in both cases including data on several variables.	NCFRMI annually publishes statistics and analysis on asylum seekers and refugees, disaggregated by several variables. These outputs are also published in the UNHCR Nigeria website.	BMA publishes statistics on an annual basis mainly through the EMP.
Irregular migration, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants	Occasional dissemination of selected data to the public.	ONARS, other national agencies and NGOs disseminate relevant data with varying coverage and frequency.	Different services of DOJ and GNIB ensure regular data dissemination for European Union data collection.	NATFATIP, MOI and PIOJ publish some data on these topics.	The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) regularly produces statistics and quarterly/yearly reports on these topics, with outputs online.	Statistics on irregular migration are disseminated by BMA. Reports on human trafficking, including data gathered by several national services, are issued mainly by the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking (NCCHT).
Other registration systems for populations with foreign origin	The dissemination of income data from CRA is integrated with other outputs on migration.		DSP/CIS elaborates statistics based on the PPSNs for use only within national services.			PSA publishes statistics on persons residing in the Republic of Moldova going abroad for permanent residence, online.
Nationals living abroad and return migration	Occasional dissemination of selected data available through MFA.	Occasional dissemination of selected data available through MFAIC.	Dissemination of selected statistics on Jamaicans abroad available by main countries of destination, through DFA.	Occasional dissemination of selected data available through MFAFT, MLSS and other institutions.	Occasional dissemination of selected data from MFA and NNVS.	Occasional dissemination of selected data on citizens and workers abroad and workers returning from abroad, available through MFAEI, PSA, the Bureau for Diaspora Relations (BDR) and NEA.

Interviewees in Djibouti, Jamaica, Nigeria and the Republic of Moldova mentioned the Migration Profile process as an opportunity to **use migration data for policy development**. In Canada in particular, the combination of administrative and statistical data available offers a wide variety of migration data with potential to inform policy development in different migration topics. In Ireland, recently the Government funded several studies focusing, in particular, on the integration of migrants in the labour market and their living conditions, in order to support national strategies and policies on these topics.

6. MIGRATION DATA FOR GLOBAL PROCESSES

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Various institutions in each country are responsible for coordinating the process of producing data relevant for the SDG indicators. The NSO in each country is involved in the production and sharing of SDG data, and Statistics Canada (STC) and the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in Ireland have established dedicated internal divisions or units for this.

Overall, the six countries report relatively little data on the global migration–related SDG indicators, and generally do not disaggregate other reported SDG data by migratory status. Data are available for some of the migration-related SDG indicators in the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) database, most frequently on well-managed migration policies (10.7.2), the number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population (8.7.1, 16.2.1) and remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted (10.c.1), although in some cases with no recent data. Interviewees from NSOs expressed wishes to improve migration-related SDG data availability. In several countries, there seems to be limited awareness among some national stakeholders of the direct relevance of the SDGs at the national level and their links to migration, and the related data frameworks are, to an extent, seen as an international duty.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

The implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Migration in the six countries follow different modalities, often with the strong general involvement of international organizations or in the implementation of specific objectives. Some interviewees revealed a lack of understanding of the purpose and use of international efforts such as the Global Compact for Migration for migration policies, plans and operations at the national level.

7. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Four of the six countries under study (Djibouti, Jamaica, Nigeria and the Republic of Moldova) engage in capacity-building activities with international organizations to improve the registration/elaboration, collection and use of migration data with respect to national needs. The four countries mentioned above participate in regional and international training courses and workshops that contribute to building migration data capacity, primarily through the initiatives of the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) for Jamaica; IOM, UNFPA, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS STAT) and Eurostat for the Republic of Moldova; and AUC, ECOWAS and IOM for the African countries – although the two Nigerian statistical institutions referred to an occasional participation. Additional support could help to buy new technical infrastructure and software, and to hire new specialized staff and international experts. It would help to apply more strictly the internationally agreed-upon requirements for migration data, as well as new and improved ad hoc data-collection procedures to better support migration policy.

Canada supports migration data capacity-building mainly through the IRCC's International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP), until now with projects increasing access to migration data. STC relies on its own expertise and means to further develop its own migration data systems, mostly in terms of linkage of data sources and in cooperation with other national institutions. ESDC is undergoing a large restructuring exercise and is looking to improve internal data linkage and coordination, including through data capacity-building measures. In Ireland, the attempt to use administrative registers for alternative estimates of migration data could require new technical capabilities and an increase of specialized staff in the CSO and partner institutions.

Activities and contributions of international organizations and other countries to migration data collection in the six countries are significant. These normally aim to support national institutions, though they can also include cases of data collection with direct involvement of international entities. United Nations and European Union agencies, the World Bank, regional organizations, bilateral cooperation agencies, and private foundations assist in the definition and implementation of statistical operations as well as the development of administrative systems relevant for international migration. In terms of direct data collection, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) activities in Djibouti and Nigeria are significant.

In terms of cooperation on migration data with other countries, all six countries have established bilateral dialogues with other countries on shared migratory flows or with respect to fighting human trafficking or the smuggling of migrants. The six countries take part in selected regional or international data-collection exercises – for example, on labour migration statistics in Africa (with the African Union and other partners). Canada and Nigeria participated in the development of recommendations on refugee statistics and IDP statistics respectively, under the EGRIS initiative, while Canada and the Republic of Moldova are members of the Expert Group on Migration Statistics.

8. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MIGRATION DATA

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, several changes were observed in the six countries in terms of international migration flows, migration data collection and statistical needs to inform policy.

Data on international migration flows for 2020 are not yet available, but several interviewees stated that international migration flows had decreased in some cases, partly due to the closure of borders. Both numbers of foreign immigrants and national emigrants are considered to be lower in 2020 in all six countries, while the number of returning citizens might have increased, as observed in the Republic of Moldova. The number of asylum seekers and transit migrants in Djibouti had also decreased. In Nigeria, an increase in the exploitation of victims of trafficking, especially child labour, had been observed due to the pandemic, according to NAPTIP. Furthermore, the pandemic may have affected remittances. In the case of Jamaica, PIOJ was expecting a fall in inflows of remittances due to the impact of the virus on key destination economies where the Jamaican diaspora resides. Nevertheless, the figures released by the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) showed a significant increase, which might be partly explained by more official transfers and government support to financial shocks related to the pandemic. In the Republic of Moldova, IOM, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and other international organizations supported the emergency response of national institutions through the production of up-to-date data and analysis of the numbers and profiles of returning migrants and families affected by the loss of remittances, using rapid surveying methods.

In terms of migration data collection, an adaptation of work modalities and the workload of the services involved in migration management (for instance, the checking and tracing procedures at border points) occurred in most countries. Many traditional statistical operations were postponed or adapted – for example, censuses planned for 2021 were delayed to 2022 in Jamaica and Ireland. In the Republic of Moldova, there was some delay in the calculation of annual estimates of international migration by NBS, and the postponement of the implementation of the first GGS, in order to include a new module of questions related to the impact of COVID-19. In Canada, STC adjusted estimates of permanent and temporary emigration by relying on demographic models based on administrative data from previous years, and it analysed the impact of COVID-19 on recent and long-term migrants and migrant women in the workforce, using LFS data disaggregated by migratory status.

New data requests emerged in relation to the impact of the pandemic on migrants. Djibouti launched a survey to assess this, with support from international organizations. In Ireland, the CSO received new demands for migration data, particularly for migrants in an irregular situation who might be facing significant vulnerabilities in the context of the pandemic, and it developed a hub to provide residents in the country with specific insights about COVID-19 based on statistics derived from a broad range of sources. DCEDIY, ESRI and IOM conducted several studies on COVID-19 in Ireland, including one examining relevant migration policy. In Nigeria, NBS conducted the COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey throughout 2020 to understand how households were affected by the pandemic and how to help design policies to mitigate its effects on the population – however, without relevance for migration.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

This concluding section presents a set of concrete recommendations based on an in-depth analysis of the situation of migration data in the six countries in this study. These are general and not specific to the six countries. These are suggested with the aim to improve migration data in all countries as well as support the revision of international recommendations on international migration statistics.

A. Increase awareness of stakeholders on migration governance

1. Leverage Objective 1 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Concretely, all countries have recently developed initiatives to discuss and implement the Global Compact for Migration, and these initiatives should be strongly supported by international organizations. Nevertheless, much work lies ahead to improve the collection, sharing and use of migration data. In this context, the recommendations of the Global Compact for Migration should be integrated into national strategies to address national migration policy topics with an international perspective, including on data.

2. Generate SDG indicators related to international migration and migrants

More awareness should be built among national stakeholders about the implementation of the SDGs, and more guidance could be provided to help NSOs prioritize and/or operationalize the migration-related indicators. Further, more efforts should be made to show countries where and how SDG indicators are relevant for national policymaking, and how to use this data for effective support of migration policies.

3. Develop national strategies for migration data collection

Even if migration is considered a key priority by most governments, the first objective of the Global Compact for Migration and the need for migration data are often not given adequate focus by national authorities. In general, they do not seem to be attentive enough to the use and importance of migration data for policy development. Migration data should be more deeply embedded in policymaking, and more political focus should go to data collection aiming to support evidence-based migration policy. Therefore, a national strategy for migration data should be elaborated in each country. This may be more effective following the development of an overall national strategy on international migration. Only when objectives are clearly identified at the national level will the need for migration data become more evident and a national strategy for migration data collection may be established, including a close follow-up of improvements and an assessment of the efficiency of actions taken.

How migration is perceived by main stakeholders and public opinion is a key question, and the answers should be the starting point for reflection on the positive and negative aspects of international migration flows, migrant stocks living in the country, and the diaspora. The situations of countries differ strongly in terms of migration context and interest related to migration. Broadly speaking, countries might be classified as mainly immigration or emigration countries, but the level of immigration or emigration might vary a lot. For immigration countries, irregular migration might also be of strong concern in parallel to regular migration. For emigration countries, the role of the diaspora and the return of

emigrants are key topics in the framework of the national development policy. In many countries, transit migrants may need policy attention as well as topics linked to human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. Moreover, at the international level, it is crucial to keep in mind the diversity of migration-related sensibilities worldwide.

B. Improve data collection and diversify data sources

4. Adhere to international recommendations on international migration

Not all migration statistics produced worldwide comply with the United Nations' *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration* of 1998 and other international standards. The current revision of these recommendations should consider the reasons why countries do not always comply. These reasons are diverse. For example, first, often traditional statistical tools are inadequate for providing the data requested. Second, the use of administrative data sources, which is strongly internationally recommended, faces numerous obstacles linked to the lack of cooperation and low interest of some institutions to share individual information. Third, national authorities express limited interest in data collection that is not compulsory but only based on informal agreements and perceived to be not sufficiently linked to national migration matters. Also, the landscape of international migration has deeply changed during the two last decades. Traditional statistical tools, censuses and surveys became in some contexts less suitable to capture today's situation, keeping in mind that statistical figures should be reliable, produced timely and internationally comparable. Today, national migration definitions and concepts are often based on administrative and legal aspects that are country-specific and not necessarily internationally comparable. Accordingly, besides aiming for a comparative data collection to be adopted and followed at the international level, each country should be encouraged to extend this data collection to meet the objective of a national migration strategy, for effective support to its specific migration policy development.

5. Mainstream migration into traditional statistical sources

Censuses still play an important role in providing statistical figures on international migration and characterizing international migrants. Therefore, well-structured questions on these are internationally recommended to capture migration-related data. Wide coverage is necessary to capture migrant populations, and information on the migratory status of respondents should be collected. A post-enumeration survey might help to ensure high level of coverage of migrants, including those who are irregular. An extended set of migration-related questions, including questions on recent emigrants living abroad, should also be included in LFSs and other household surveys. The shorter periodicity of these surveys would allow for the collection of more timely data on international migration, which are needed to produce reliable intercensus population estimates. Through coordinated efforts, many international entities provide guidance in these areas. In this context, the importance of relevant guidance developed under the Expert Group on Migration Statistics is emphasized.

6. Make better use of administrative data sources

For the provision of comprehensive migration-related statistics, the use of diverse administrative databases is necessary. Therefore, closer cooperation between NSOs and different agencies managing migration is essential. Ideally, NSOs should have access to individual data extracted from different administrative databases and link this information to produce reliable figures and describe trends. Willingness to cooperate, cleaning of databases, avoiding double counts and missing information, and the identification of a unique key to link the individual data are all necessary steps towards this.

Several administrative data sources allow identifying international immigrants.

(a) Visa issuance is the first step of a regular immigration for foreign citizens who are not covered by a visa-free convention. However, even if visa issuance is a prerequisite to enter the territory of a foreign country, it does not confirm that every delivered visa effectively results in a new immigration. Accordingly, the corresponding database cannot be used for exhaustive identification of international migrants, but it might include some qualitative information for describing potential foreign immigrants.

(b) Border-crossing control is the next step allowing to identify potential immigrants and some basic information collected by reading the passports of travellers. An integrated border-crossing database is an excellent tool for identifying international migrants if three conditions are fulfilled: (i) all entries and exits are registered; (ii) the data is centralized at the national level, covering all border gates; and (iii) all successive border crossings of a given person are linked, allowing to calculate the duration of stay in the country or the duration of absence. An ad hoc methodology has been developed for analysing data extracted for the border-crossing database.

(c) The residence permits issued for diverse reasons give the possibility of identifying an international immigrant as being a foreigner receiving a residence permit for at least 12 months. There also exists the possibility of identifying emigrants as being residence permit holders who did not renew their permit at the end of the period of validity, which is at least one year.

(d) The work permits issued are a complementary tool for identifying labour migrants more specifically.

In some countries, the facilitation of entry, stay and work for some categories of migrants may limit or complicate the situation for data collection. Therefore, these countries are invited to integrate various sources and sort out in each case the variables that are useful for harmonizing and maximizing information for data users. The combination of these administrative procedures through integrated systems is highly recommended as being an ideal condition for following up on regular international migrants (see also Recommendation No. 13).

7. Collect more data on irregular migration, asylum seekers, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants

A crucial challenge in migration data collection is the registration of all migrants living in the country, including those in irregular situations and who may not be interested in registering. Improving data on this as well as asylum seekers, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants is recommended, to support the global management of international migration.

8. Use innovative methods to estimate the emigration rate of nationals, the size of the diaspora and the volume of remittances

Emigration statistics are the most difficult to produce, mainly because emigrants are not living within the country and NSOs cannot conduct data collection abroad. It is difficult to estimate the number of citizens living abroad and know the characterization of the diaspora. The compilation of diverse data based on emigration questions in censuses or surveys, registration in consular registers, or the origin and volume of remittances, produced by receiving countries, might be the best way to come up with reliable estimates. Close collaboration between governmental institutions and diaspora associations would be important. Reliable data on the diaspora could support the return of emigrants and facilitate their reintegration to help the development of their country of origin.

9. Rely on the population registration system where possible

In a large number of countries, there is some kind of global population registration system where individual administrative data are continuously updated – including the place of residence, marital status and household composition, in addition to gender, date and place of birth, and country of citizenship. Generally, such continuous registration systems include migrant residents of a country. Such systems can enable the production of statistics on both international migration flows and the characteristics of migrant stocks. In the absence of such continuous population registration systems, other specific administrative tools are often developed to include information on the whole population, including migrants. For example, issuance of ID documents, access to public services and various allowances, access to government-funded health-care services or to education, taxation, and electoral purposes are generally managed through databases that might be used to generate statistical data related to migration. Therefore, population registration systems and similar tools are among the strongest administrative databases, and these should be leveraged to produce migration statistics.

10. Use innovative methods to capture migration data

To ensure more efficient and reliable migration data collection, innovative tools should be developed, and the potential of big data should be investigated. Newly available online data and satellite imagery are offering new possibilities for analysing international migration and mobility. Bilateral and multinational cooperation should promote the exchange of such migration data and the development of related good practices. IOM and other international agencies should continue promoting and, in most cases, leading such initiatives with the aim to improve migration data collection in a rapidly changing technological context.

C. Improve migration data governance

11. Confirm the key role of the statistical institution

In most countries, the NSO is, by mandate, the agency responsible for producing migration statistics. Despite the fact that most of them are exploring the possibility of greater use of administrative or other data, there can often be reluctance to change traditional ways of working and use of statistical tools. Accordingly, more efforts should be devoted to encouraging NSOs to turn their interest to administrative databases to generate migration statistics. IOM and other international organizations should directly support this effort by providing relevant capacity-building.

12. Enhance data dissemination and metadata provision

In most countries worldwide, the dissemination of statistics is under the responsibility of the NSO according to its mandate. Nevertheless, in the field of migration, there are more and more statistics based on administrative databases that are directly disseminated by the institution managing these. This may be linked to a lack of data accessibility or integration, or to cooperation issues. For general public use and to inform policy, greater dissemination of migration statistics, mainly by NSOs, should be encouraged. These have the capacity to compile and validate migration data from different data sources and offer metadata to assist data interpretation.

13. Develop integrated statistical databases related to migration as support for Migration Profiles

Greater coverage for the dissemination of migration statistics is highly recommended. The development of a national integrated migration data portal under the leadership of the NSO could be a promising way forward. In addition to distributing consistent migration-related statistical figures, it could promote and facilitate investigations and scientific research on several topics linked to international migration. Such a national portal should avoid the duplication of databases and solve incompatibility problems.

Innovative initiatives in data collection and investments in new data sets resulting from linkage of different administrative data sources would be welcome. More concretely, closer cooperation and data exchange are required to develop and update a detailed Migration Profile on a regular and frequent basis. In fact, existing Migration Profiles often confirm the weak role of pertinent statistical data for the development of the migration policy, or the limited use of administrative data sources for compiling migration statistics. New intensive efforts for using administrative data sources as concrete support for the development of a detailed and reliable Migration Profile, under the responsibility of the main partners and with the support of IOM, would be the best way to achieve future cooperation.

14. Ensure close cooperation between the NSO and other government actors

The compilation of migration statistics based on administrative sources faces multiple methodological challenges, such as addressing double counts, partial coverage of databases, limited panel of variables included, a lack of data harmonization, and difficulty in linking different data sources at the individual level. Moreover, administrative data are generally generated routinely or continuously, and relatively infrequent data-exchange procedures with NSOs may not allow for timely data to be produced. As administrative data are not collected with the primary purpose of generating migration statistics, they sometimes need adapting in order to do so effectively. To address this, statisticians could be integrated into relevant government agencies to optimize data collection in a harmonious way and ensure easier transfer of data to the NSO.

15. Favour the emergence of an integrated migration management system

In some countries, relatively limited cooperation exists between different departments or administrative services dealing with migration management, and respective databases are not connected. Fortunately, interest and plans exist to address this and develop integrated migration management systems in the near future. The linkage of diverse information collected for a given individual is crucial to this end, and several public administrations require more efficient and quicker data linkage to ensure timely data sets to support more policy. Nevertheless, the issue of data linkage is not the one to overcome in creating integrated migration management systems. Sharing data may reveal inconsistencies between the different databases involved, or the different approaches to data privacy and ownership.

16. Boost cooperation between policymakers and academia

In general, while policymakers see migration studies as useful, these have little impact on policymaking. There should be an improvement of the relationships between key migration government actors and academia, in particular concerning the use of migration statistics for policy development. According to academic researchers, it is often difficult to make effective policy recommendations considering low availability of migration data. Closer partnerships between university research centres, NSOs and administrative agencies should facilitate the use of anonymized microdata, and academics and researchers in independent research centres could play a big role in integrating migration data into their investigations with the support of external organizations such as IOM. Therefore, academics need to build better relationships with policymakers in order to truly impact migration policies.

17. Provide capacity-building and financial support aiming to improve migration data collection

As recommended by several international and regional organizations, establishing and maintaining effective systems for the collection, management and analysis of migration data is crucial to support the development and implementation of realistic and achievable migration policy. Therefore, it is important to strengthen the capacities of all migration data producers and to consolidate cooperation and relations between countries on this. It will be essential to engage key national agencies at the highest levels to ensure the implementation of capacity-building measures useful for the collection, management and dissemination of migration data.

Building data capacity is urgently needed, not only for the development of traditional statistical tools such as censuses and surveys, but also for the different national administrative agencies involved in migration data collection. Most institutions need help to integrate the collection of migration data into administrative and statistical tools and elaborate policy-oriented recommendations. Additional training courses and workshops focused on migration data collection and analysis might be helpful in parallel to capacity-building measures and funding for modern technical equipment and international expertise.

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NATIONAL MIGRATION
DATA PROFILES

CANADA

NATIONAL MIGRATION DATA PROFILE: CANADA

1. Introduction

One of the countries in the Americas with the largest immigrant stocks, Canada has numerous stakeholders involved with migration data collection, analysis and dissemination, reflecting the strong interest in migration policymaking among government authorities. Canada collects a large amount of quality data on international migration, most notably through its comprehensive Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) and population census, containing information on a wide range of migrant characteristics and other details. Migration data–sharing between Canadian institutions is relatively strong, and various stakeholders work together to produce quality migration statistics. Canada is a champion country for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration under the United Nations Network on Migration. Overall, while migration data in the country is strong, there are various migration data gaps – for example, on emigration of Canadian citizens.

2. Migration data governance

Migration data collection, analysis and dissemination in Canada is mainly managed by a few key stakeholders. These include Statistics Canada (STC), the national statistical office (NSO) responsible for collecting and disseminating population and migration statistics; and the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), which manages immigration, citizenship, settlement programmes and the issuance of travel documents to Canadians. IRCC also manages several key administrative data systems on immigration. Other key stakeholders include delegations of federal departments in provinces, as well as provincial/territorial governments that develop their own migration projects and initiatives that collect or use migration data.

There is frequent collaboration and sharing of selected migration data between Canadian institutions. STC and IRCC have the most extensive cooperation, with an IRCC-STC Interdepartmental Committee responsible for planning and implementing joint activities, including the sharing of monthly estimates of migration flows. IRCC also started establishing data partnerships with provinces that will facilitate the sharing of microdata between federal and provincial levels (see below for more).

3. Key migration data sources

STC, with the support of other institutions, manages several key statistical tools relevant for international migration. The systematic integration of specific questions on migration and related aspects into STC's statistical operations – such as on country of birth, citizenship and acquisition of citizenship – has allowed Canada to collect a relatively high amount of quality representative data on international migration.

Key statistical data sources include the following:

(a) The Population and Housing Census (PHC) is a cross-sectional population snapshot conducted every five years. Census coverage is measured using coverage studies, which use administrative data. However, published census counts are not adjusted for coverage for various reasons (for example, it is impossible to adjust all characteristics). Demographic estimates use census data adjusted for coverage for the purposes of estimating the size of the Canadian population. The census itself

does not ask questions about migratory status, though this information is obtained through the integration of IRCC administrative data.[1]

(b)   Additional sources include the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS), which provides estimates on employment and unemployment rates relevant to understanding the work status of permanent and temporary workers, and the IMDB detailed below. The Canadian Community Health Survey provides information on migrants' health, social and economic outcomes.

(c)   Most household surveys include migration-related questions such as respondents' place of birth, immigrant status and year of immigration. However, not all collect data on the country of citizenship. The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) was a comprehensive immigration panel survey covering migrants arriving in Canada in 2000–2001, which included questions on housing, education, foreign credential recognition, language proficiency, employment, health, values and attitudes, the development and use of social networks, income, and perceptions of settlement in Canada. The LSIC's objective was to provide information on how newly arrived migrants integrate into Canada's society and labour market, and to better understand any factors that may help or hinder such integration.

Canada leverages several key administrative data sources to help manage migration as well as generate migration statistics. The following are some examples:

(a)   The Global Case Management System (GCMS) is a single integrated system used to internally process applications for various migration-related and citizenship services. The system also gathers data from the Canadian Border Services Agency and contains information on permanent resident (PR) and temporary resident (TR) files.

(b)   The Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE) database, used by IRCC, includes data from provinces about services provided to migrants. Within IRCC, iCARE data is integrated with additional data on migration status, international protection, acquisition of citizenship and/or the outcomes of migratory processes.

(c)   Several other administrative systems also collect migration-related data, such as the Canadian Revenue Agency's (CRA) longitudinal tax files, which offers a way to confirm the presence and labour market activities of migrants or citizens with an immigrant background; as well as through databases at the provincial level, which contain data on diverse topics, including migrants' and refugees' access to health, education and social services. IRCC (through the Chief Data Office (CDO)) cleans and repurposes much administrative data related to migration so this can be used for linkage, research and other purposes.

The Canadian Government has relatively high levels of migration data–sharing, enabling effective data integration in some areas. For example, the largest national integrated database and foundation of national migration data integration, the IMDB, was developed by STC on behalf of IRCC, with the support and participation of the provinces. This connects migration and citizenship data with longitudinal data on socioeconomic outcomes, used for analysis and research. It contains information on all Canadian permanent residents (PRs) since 1952 and all temporary residents (TRs) since 1980, with information on migration and several movements, demographic characteristics, ethnicity, education, training and skills, labour market status, income, and fiscal details. The IMDB also measures the performance and impact of immigration programmes. Further, through various information-sharing agreements, selected IRCC data sets are integrated with administrative or survey data, in collaboration with STC and provincial partners. Data integration in the system is high; the overall linkage rate between IRCC immigration files and STC operations is around 97.4 per cent.

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[1]   The 2021 census data on migration will be released in October 2022.

Other integrated data sources include the Social Data Linkage Environment (SDLE), which links data related to various topics such as income, migration, labour, agriculture, veteran issues and others. Through the data partnerships between provinces and IRCC, new data linkages have also led to several policy-relevant studies in areas such as epidemiology and migrant health outcomes. While there are some challenges to data integration, such as different agencies having different data-sharing protocols, overall there is a great deal of cooperation and collaboration among migration data actors in this area. Generally, many relevant Canadian authorities successfully link and share their migration data through secure data entities such as STC and provincial data repositories. The combination of administrative and survey data made available through integrated data sources enables a wide variety of migration data and related information products to be made available. Much of this data integration is conducted via partnerships – for example, between IRCC and provincial data partners or networks such as the Health Data Research Network (HDRN) Canada.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

Many Canadian government actors disseminate and publish a range of migration statistics and reports for policy-relevant and research purposes. Much migration data is accessible through websites, and this is often disaggregated and visualized using different tools. Through interactive applications, STC's website presents data from the census, as well as migration statistics from the first IMDB and several research publications. Other key migration data dissemination mechanisms include IRCC's website and especially the Government of Canada's Open Data Portal,[2] which publishes monthly, quarterly and yearly statistics about IRCC's operations, including the number of new citizens, and permanent and temporary residents – for labour, study and humanitarian reasons. IRCC also makes available regular online reports and "data cubes" on settlement services provided to foreigners, taken from the iCARE database. Further, STC's Research Data Centres (RDCs) are a key example of an effective partnership between the Government and academia for migration data-sharing and dissemination. The RDCs form a network designed to facilitate research on several topics, including migration. STC makes available full national microdata files on migration from different government agencies to over 30 universities across the country, where students and researchers can access these databases, in partnership with the Canadian Research Data Centre Network (CRDCN). After 2022, census microdata files will be linked with the IMDB, as part of the implementation of the Longitudinal Immigration Statistical Environment (LISE), making it possible to run advanced statistical analyses using all census variables and linked migration and tax administrative data.

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and IRCC are involved in the implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Canada. Canada will be its champion country under the United Nations Network on Migration and has expressed its continued commitment to upholding the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration in the spirit of supporting safe, orderly and regular migration.

Canada is engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is the main national institution responsible for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) data collection and reporting, and with the support of STC it developed the Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF). While the CIF does not include indicators specific to migrants, data collected on the indicators identified in the CIF will be disaggregated by various dimensions, including migratory status. Canada also reports on several migration-relevant SDG indicators, including 3.c.1 (health worker density and distribution), 16.2.2 (number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and/or form of exploitation) and 17.3.2 (volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP).

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2   IRCC's data is available at https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?_organization_limit=0&organization=cic.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

Canada supports international migration data capacity-building efforts around the world as well as international cooperation on the topic. This is done through IRCC's International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP), which promotes open, evidence-based discourse on migration and refugee issues. To date, the IMCBP has funded projects that increase access to migration-related data – for example, supporting the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Global Virtual Summit on Digital Identity for Refugees. Canada is a member of the Expert Group on Migration Statistics and thus actively involved in ongoing efforts to set international standards for international migration statistics. Canada also chaired the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) for 2019–2020, which was primarily focused on the exchange of good practices, policy, and data on issues related to the global governance of migration. Furthermore, IRCC/CDO works with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in collaboration with STC to enhance the collection and sharing of migration data.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic did not hugely disrupt the collection and dissemination of migration data in Canada. The 2021 PHC did not face any delays as it was mainly carried out electronically, with paper questionnaires available by request. At the federal level, STC adjusted Canada's estimates of emigration and return migration in the context of COVID-19 using visa data of the United States of America, flight data, and data from Registration of Canadians Abroad.

Several initiatives and studies to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on the migrant population in the country were undertaken. For example, STC examined how COVID-19 disrupted the employment situation of migrants and the Canadian-born population, and whether and how certain socioeconomic factors and other characteristics played a role in this. Results showed that in March and April 2020, recent migrants were more likely to move out of employment than Canadian-born workers, mainly because of shorter job tenure and relative overrepresentation in lower-wage jobs. STC also conducted another analysis to assess the impact of COVID-19 on migrant women in the workforce, using LFS data disaggregated by migratory status. At the provincial level, Ontario carried out a migration-related survey on the impact of COVID-19 by focusing on patterns of testing and test results for migrants and refugees in Ontario. This linked IRCC data with health data from Ontario, to measure vaccination rates and rates of positive testing differences for immigrant populations. This has shed significant light on the often-discriminatory impacts of COVID-19 on migrants.

7. Concluding remarks

Several Canadian government stakeholders collect, process, analyse and disseminate a wide range of migration data to support the development of evidence-based migration policy in the country. Canada's extensive data partnerships with migration data actors from provinces enable extensive use of administrative data and data-sharing, as well as specific demand-driven analysis and research initiatives to use migration data for policy. Canada should continue to support integrated data-sharing among institutions and utilize its rich migration databases from both administrative and statistical operations. In the future, additional attention could be paid to addressing specific data gaps, such as emigration of Canadian citizens, and continuing to support migration data capacity-building and standard-setting around the world.
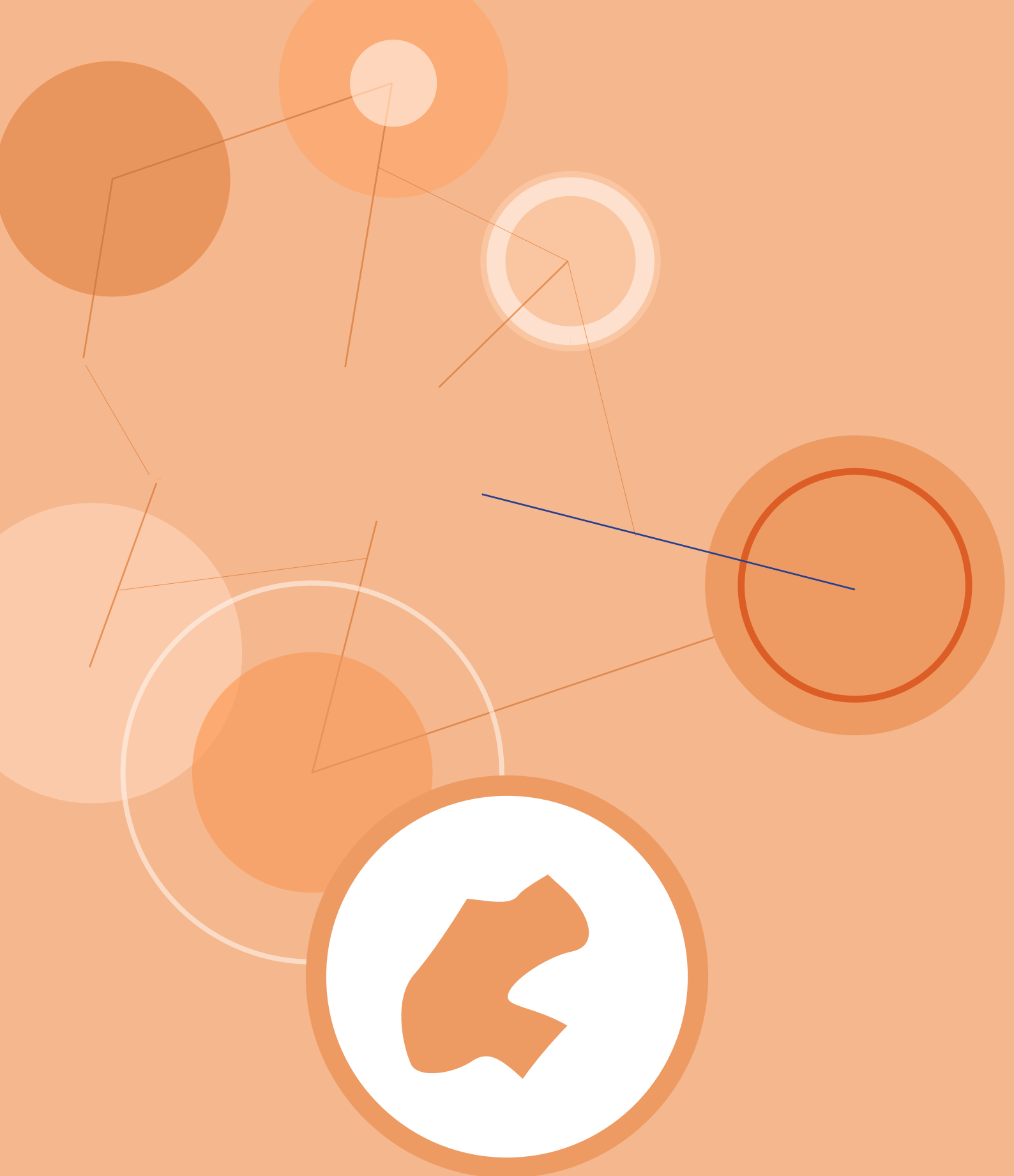
DJIBOUTI

NATIONAL MIGRATION DATA PROFILE: DJIBOUTI[1]

1. Introduction

Different types of migration data are collected by a variety of stakeholders within Djibouti, with much of the country's key migration statistics generated through surveys conducted by the National Institute of Statistics of Djibouti (INSD), in collaboration with other institutions and international organizations. Djibouti authorities also collect a range of migration-relevant data through various administrative sources, though these data are not always utilized fully towards statistics. A dedicated interministerial mechanism exists to govern migration and migration data; in 2020, the Government created the **National Coordination Office for Migration**[2] to coordinate migration management within the country, and there is a national Technical Working Group on Migration Statistics (GTT). While there is interest in migration data, progress is often hindered by limited resources and/or a lack of data-sharing among government actors.

2. Migration data governance

Multiple Djiboutian institutions are involved in the collection, analysis and dissemination of migration data. INSD is the central authority in charge of collecting, harmonizing and disseminating statistics, including migration statistics. It established the Migration Study Unit (CEM) mainly for collecting migration data and conducting an in-depth analysis based on the results. Subsequently, the CEM launched the GTT, an interministerial collaborative mechanism used to discuss roles in collecting and harmonizing migration data at the national level. International organizations such as IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as academia, also take part in the monthly meetings. Several other government institutions collect selected migration data as relevant to their specific roles in migration governance. For example, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) collects data on border management, and on refugees and disaster and humanitarian relief coordination, through its National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims (ONARS). Additional institutions involved in migration data include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) and the Ministry of Labour. Given the high number of migration policy stakeholders, there is a high degree of fragmentation in migration data in Djibouti – this is similar to the situation in many other countries. For this reason, initiatives such as the GTT present welcome steps forward.

3. Key migration data sources

Different actors in Djibouti manage several statistical sources of migration data. Key statistical data sources include the following:

(a) The General Census of Population and Housing (RGPH) was conducted by INSD for the second time in 2009. This operation included a limited number of variables related to migration. However, results were only partially disseminated, without any reference to migration. The next census was scheduled for 2021 but has been postponed to 2022, and it will collect information on selected new migration variables to enable an analysis of the country's migration situation.

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[1]   For this profile, seven interviews were conducted with seven different national government institutions.
[2]   In French, this is the Bureau de Coordination Nationale pour la Migration.

(b) The 2017 Household Survey for Social Indicators (EDAM) included migration variables such as the country of nationality of household members, length of residence and previous place of residence, place of birth, and reason for migration.

(c) The 2015 Survey on Employment, Informal Sector and Household Consumption (EDESIC) included information on migration relating to household members, as well as reason for migration to the region or locality where the person was interviewed.

(d) Additional ad hoc statistical tools, such as the Ministry of Women and Family's (MFF) survey on the socioeconomic situation of migrant women with irregular status in Djibouti City, and a MFAIC initiative mapping the Djiboutian diaspora, have also provided further statistical information on aspects of migration in Djibouti.

Additionally, Djibouti collects a range of administrative and other data related to migration. However, most of these data are not fully utilized for migration statistics. The following are some examples:

(a) ONARS primarily collects data on asylum seekers and refugees, working in close cooperation with UNHCR. The institution also collects data and produces operational statistics on returning and transit migrants that pass through their offices and a COVID-19 quarantine site in Ar-Aoussa.

(b) The Border Police and Immigration Unit manages the Migration Information and Data Analysis System in Djibouti, developed in coordination with IOM. This stores individual data from passengers entering/exiting at border crossings, disaggregated by several dimensions including sex, place of birth and citizenship.

(c) Several other administrative systems collect migration data, such as those for issuing travel and residence documents, and the National Agency for Employment, Training and Vocational Integration (ANEFIP).

(d) Some international organizations also collect migration data in the country. For example, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) collects data on border crossings, particularly covering crossing points that irregular migrants frequently use and disaggregating these data by sex, age, citizenship and point of arrival.

While much migration data is collected across Djibouti, several factors hinder its effective compilation and use towards statistics. Much migration data is not linked as there are low levels of data integration in Djibouti, making it difficult to compile data for integrated statistics as well as to use it for migration policymaking. Two key strategic migration initiatives mentioned above – the National Bureau of Coordination on Migration and the GTT – may in the near future require formal migration data-sharing protocols and agreements, which could improve the utilization of migration data. Interviewees also cited needs to harmonize migration data methodologies, meet relevant resource needs, and boost high-level political buy-in and cross-ministerial collaboration to improve the overall national migration data evidence base.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

While much valuable migration data is collected, this is not always regularly disseminated. While there is some dissemination of migration data online and in other formats, this tends not to be systematic or is often on particular aspects of migration only. For example, the Directorate of Statistics and Demographic Studies (DISED) published a preliminary analysis of the 2009 census results, which indirectly included some references to migration, and the 2018 Report on street children living in Djibouti was published with key findings on unaccompanied migrant children. Many national institutions collecting data related to migration – such as the Border Police and Immigration Unit, the Service for Issuing Travel and Residence Documents, and ONARS – produce statistics that are used mainly for internal purposes, with very limited dissemination of these data to the public.

Djibouti is actively involved in several global processes related to migration, such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, though to date the impact of these on migration data seems to be limited. While Djibouti welcomed the Global Compact for Migration in 2018, to date no strategy has been developed to implement its objectives; and overall, interviews showed a lack of understanding among national institutions of the purpose and use of the Global Compact for Migration for national plans and its relevance to migration data. Meanwhile, the Government of Djibouti, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), developed the UNDP Country Programme 2018–2022 to align with the Sustainable Development Goals, including two indicators related to migration. However, it is not clear if the 2030 Agenda has had any concrete impact on improving national migration data.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

The Government of Djibouti receives regular support from several international organizations relating to migration data. Several international organizations regularly support Djibouti in strengthening its national statistical systems, often including migration data collection. For example, the World Bank has supported an INSD upgrade of technical infrastructure and is currently supporting the planning and implementation of the next population census. It is also supporting the country's first economic census and a wider programme of economic and household surveys. Relating to migration, Djibouti participates in data-collection exercises on labour migration and irregular migration led by the African Union Institute for Statistics (STATAFRIC), IOM and UNHCR.

Specific government authorities in Djibouti would benefit from further migration data capacity-building support, as well as additional funding related to migration data. In particular, INSD would benefit from support in designing and incorporating migration-related questions into the forthcoming census and several household surveys, and in gathering and analysing migration data from different administrative databases.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

There have been some efforts to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants and migration data in Djibouti, including through partnerships with international organizations. INSD has conducted three surveys to understand the impact of the pandemic on the country, with two of them specifically focused on migrants. With the support of the World Bank, INSD designed and implemented the Survey on the Socio-economic Impacts of COVID-19 on Djiboutian Households. INSD also conducted two additional surveys to assess the impact of COVID-19 on migrants and refugees, with support from IOM and UNHCR respectively.

7. Concluding remarks

Many government stakeholders in Djibouti collect, process and use different types of migration data through statistical and administrative systems. Given the large amount of data collected, there is scope to improve the sharing, compilation and use of migration data for integrated statistics and towards the development of evidence-based migration policies. Djibouti could benefit from an extended Migration Profile exercise to further map available migration data across the country, as well as stronger data-sharing protocols and collaboration between institutions. Also, there are opportunities to leverage momentum from the Global Compact for Migration and the 2030 Agenda to improve national migration data.
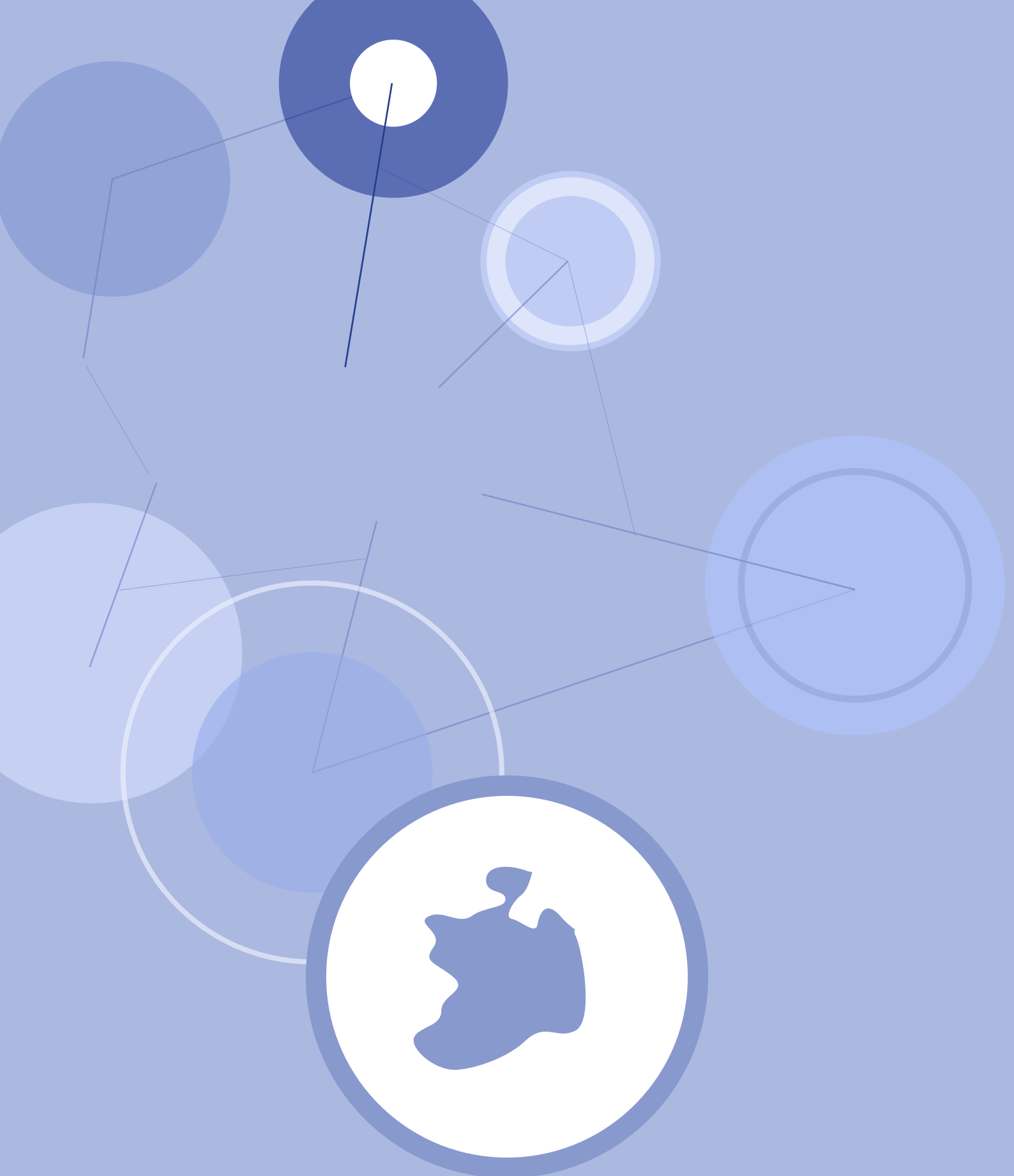
IRELAND

NATIONAL MIGRATION DATA PROFILE: IRELAND

1. Introduction

Migration policymaking is of continued priority to the Government of Ireland, and many government stakeholders collect diverse migration data through statistical and administrative systems. Ireland has begun to better utilize administrative data to conclude migrant population estimates, and efforts have been made to integrate migration data to further data-sharing and collaboration among institutions. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted migration data collection while highlighting the urgent need to improve data to understand the repercussions of the pandemic on migrants, many of whom are vulnerable. Ireland is involved in various global processes related to migration, including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, though the impact of these on migration data seems to be limited.

2. Migration data governance

Many different government stakeholders in Ireland are involved in some capacity with the collection or use of migration data. Primary stakeholders include the Central Statistics Office (CSO), which is responsible for collecting, analysing and publishing official statistics on international migration, as well as several units/divisions of the Department of Justice (DOJ) – specifically the Migration Policy Unit, Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) including the Border Management Unit (BMU), the Visa Division, the Residence Division, and Research and Data Analytics (RDA), among others. Several other government entities also collect or use migration data, such as the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and various refugee protection services; the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB); the Economic Migration Policy Unit (EMPU) within the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE); and various entities within the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). This situation reflects the fairly high degree of fragmentation in migration policymaking in Ireland, similar to that in other countries.

Collaboration among many of the above-mentioned stakeholders specifically on migration data is often limited. Many of them work together in some capacity, but there is little systematic migration data–sharing and other forms of regularized collaboration. This is partially explained by the absence of a memorandum of understanding or data-sharing mechanism between agencies, or a dedicated coordination body on migration and/or migration data. There have been some recent initiatives designed to improve data collaboration, such as the Migrant Integration Strategy Data Group created in May 2018 by the Economic and Social Research Institute, an independent research institute.

3. Key migration data sources

Ireland manages several regular, high-quality statistical sources of migration data which comply with international standards. The following are some examples:

(a) The CSO's Population and Housing Census is the main tool used to count the de facto resident population, including the migrant population. The last census in 2016 included six migration questions in compliance with Eurostat requirements (under Census Regulation 763/2008 and Migration Statistics Regulation 862/2007).

(b) The Labour Force Survey helps estimate the annual population count in the intercensal period and includes migration questions, in compliance with requirements of the 1998 United Nations Recommendations for International Migration Statistics and Eurostat (Regulation 862/2007). This includes questions to measure emigration (of Irish and non-Irish citizens who intend to reside abroad), which can be considered a positive practice as this can pose methodological challenges. However, there are some limitations. For example, it is not possible to distinguish between short- and long-term emigrants or identify whole households that have emigrated.

Ireland also collects migration-relevant data through various administrative databases used for other purposes, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. The following are some examples:

(a) The Border Management Unit within the DOJ manages the border crossings database. This is a key large-scale data-collection tool with comprehensive information. Nevertheless, exits from Ireland or movements between Ireland and Northern Ireland are not recorded.

(b) The Department of Social Protection Client Identity Services' (DSP/CIS) Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) database is a central repository of basic personal data on individuals born in Ireland or any persons arriving from abroad to reside in the country. This very comprehensive database could be further leveraged to produce migration statistics, and the CSO is investigating the possibility of using PPSN-linked data from various administrative systems to measure population and migration flows in the future.

(c) Many other administrative systems collect migration data, such as the civil registration systems of the DSP General Register Office (GRO), the ISD Visa Division's online application database and the ISD Residence Division's residence permit database, among others.

In the last years, the CSO has focused on better leveraging administrative data towards population and migration estimates. This has included the launch of the Administrative Population/Migration Project, aiming at better using such sources. The CSO is also examining the possibility of developing experimental population and migration estimates based on administrative data, including by measuring activities between individuals and the State (a "sign of life" approach).

There have been efforts towards data integration and linkage across statistical systems. Some administrative sources are already linked in order to enable specific government operations (for example, the PPSN database and the BMU border-crossing data), and the CSO can access several administrative data sources under the terms of the Statistics Act. Nevertheless, there is scope for increased data-sharing across the Government in order to address specific migration information needs for policy, and the linkage of certain databases within and between specific departments could be useful.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

A range of migration statistics from different areas of the Government are made publicly available in different formats. Key examples of dissemination of migration data include CSO-issued annual population and migration estimates and, within the DOJ, ISD-published annual immigration reports and several statistical tables on ISD services related to asylum, citizenship and residence permits by different variables (also presented online). Much migration data is in the public domain; however, often not all variables are made available, and only aggregate statistics are published. It should be noted that the DSP/CIS does not disseminate data from the PPSN database, which is used predominantly for operational purposes.

Different actors within the Government have funded several significant migration data/research projects – for example, on integration of migrants. The topics of such projects indicate where more data may be needed to support policymaking. Studies on labour market integration of migrants or migrants' living conditions may be useful in the future to support relevant national strategies.

Ireland is involved in several global processes related to migration, such as the Global Compact for Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but the impact of these on national migration data seems limited. In 2020, the Government of Ireland submitted a Global Compact for Migration Voluntary Contribution, sharing insights into implementation and coordination efforts to date. However, this does not explicitly mention any migration data–centred projects. Ireland's Sustainable Development Goals data hub tracks national indicators related to the 2030 Agenda, yet few indicators are available relating to migration – and indicators on other topics are rarely disaggregated by migratory status.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

The CSO regularly engages with regional and international stakeholders to improve migration data and for knowledge-exchange purposes. For example, IOM is in regular contact with the CSO to share good practices on migration statistics, including initiatives within the United Nations taskforce on using mobile phone data and the Big Data for Migration Alliance (BD4M), a joint initiative of IOM GMDAC and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). Ireland collaborates on the collection and development of migration statistics with the United Kingdom, the European Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), including through participation in dedicated task forces and working groups. National stakeholders did not report any bilateral migration data-sharing with any other States apart from the United Kingdom.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted migration data collection in Ireland, most notably through the postponement of the 2021 census, rescheduled for 2022. A Eurostat audit on migration statistics was also rescheduled due to the pandemic.

There are data gaps related to migration and the pandemic in Ireland, and related regular data collection often does not identify migrants. The CSO developed an online hub providing national news and research on COVID-19. However, this features data mainly from sample surveys, which cannot accurately provide data on the impact of COVID-19 on migrants due to their small sample size. Meanwhile, administrative data-collection efforts related to the pandemic often do not collect data on migratory status of individuals, making it impossible to use this data to understand the impact on migrants. For example, it is not obligatory to declare citizenship or country of birth to obtain a COVID-19 test, and these are also optional variables in death registration — meaning that the COVID-19 caseload and mortality figures are not disaggregated by migratory status. There have been some efforts to address data gaps related to migrants and the pandemic; in May 2020, IOM Ireland carried out a survey to understand national migration-related policy measures taken in response to the pandemic. Given that many migrants have been more vulnerable to the health, social, economic and other impacts of the pandemic, and that their needs must be factored into recovery planning, more information is needed on the situation of migrant groups across Ireland.

7. Concluding remarks

Several government stakeholders in Ireland collect and use migration data through statistical and administrative systems. Given the rich variety of data collected, there is scope to improve the use of administrative data on migration. This could be done through increasing data integration in the country across the Government. With increased collaboration among stakeholders, Ireland can strengthen and consolidate existing statistical data on migration. Such cooperation can include more formal agreements or protocols related to administrative data, as well as a task force to plan, coordinate and lead cross-ministerial efforts to strengthen the use of migration data. Due to COVID-19 disrupting migration data collection in Ireland, future data could also be collected to address the gaps in understanding the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on migrants.

Another area of future potential includes leveraging the Global Compact for Migration and/or the 2030 Agenda to boost migration data and data disaggregation. This could be kick-started by carrying out an awareness-raising campaign across ministries, outlining the importance of the Global Compact for Migration and the 2030 Agenda in relation to migration data – and their possible positive effects on data availability for national policy development and wider development strategies.
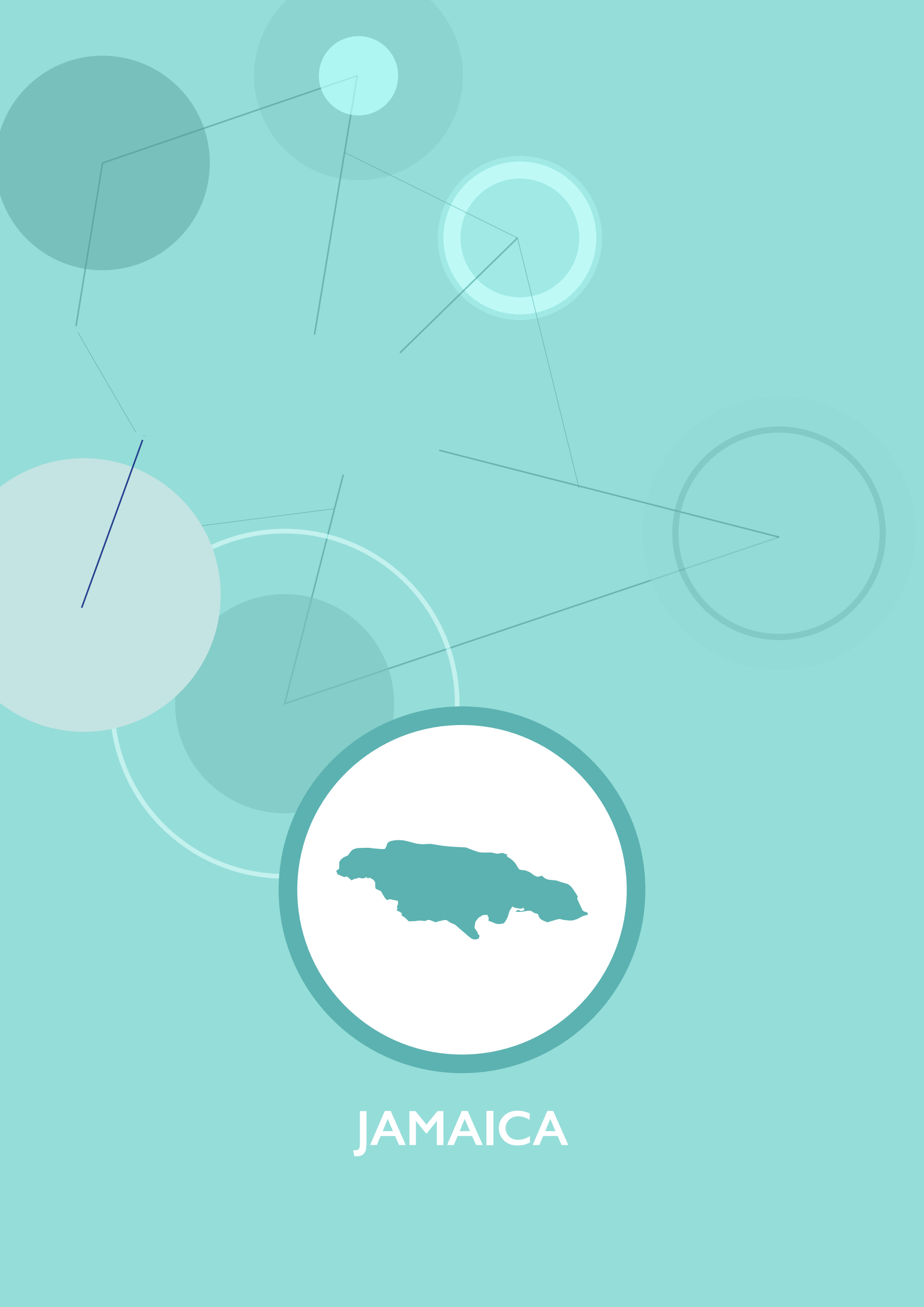
JAMAICA

1. Introduction

A range of valuable migration data is collected by a variety of stakeholders in Jamaica through both statistical and administrative systems. Further, there have been many successful initiatives to integrate both statistical and administrative migration data to generate statistics on specific topics – for example, on Jamaica's diaspora. Jamaica has several migration governance frameworks and mechanisms that also help coordinate migration initiatives, including a National Working Group on International Migration and Development (NWGIMD) which has a subcommittee on migration data. The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted national migration data collection, and there is a need for data on the effects of the pandemic on migrants in the country. Jamaica is involved in various global processes related to migration, including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, though the concrete impact of these on national migration data seems to be limited to date.

2. Migration data governance

Many government actors in Jamaica are involved in the production, collection, analysis and reporting of international migration data. Three key government stakeholders are the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), responsible for providing official migration statistics and overseeing coordination among statistical users and producers; the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), responsible for coordinating the implementation of the National Policy on International Migration and Development; and the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA), which manages passport applications and other migration and citizenship processes.

Other key stakeholders that produce or use migration data include the Ministry of National Security (MNS), the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS), and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI). There are also several working groups and coordination bodies involved in migration in Jamaica, including the NWGIMD, an interministerial mechanism that coordinates governmental and non-governmental activities in relation to migration. The working group includes a dedicated subcommittee for migration data – the Data, Research and Information Systems Sub-Committee (DRISSC), which works towards the improvement of national migration data through various initiatives.

There is some collaboration and sharing of migration data among Jamaican institutions. For example, STATIN, PIOJ and PICA cooperate on data collection on international arrivals and departures, return migrants, and deportations. The institutions have also in the past managed the provision of migration data for specialized publications, such as the Migration Profile. Nevertheless, given the large number of migration policy stakeholders in the country, there is a fairly high degree of fragmentation in migration data governance in Jamaica, similar to that in other countries for similar reasons.

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[1] For this profile, eight interviews were conducted with eight different national government institutions.

3. Key migration data sources

Jamaica manages several statistical sources of migration data. Key statistical data sources include the following:

(a) The Population and Housing Census (PHC) is conducted by STATIN every 10 years. The 2011 PHC collected information on several migration variables, including usual residence, residence in the past, place of birth, year of arrival in Jamaica, parish of enumeration, if the person ever lived outside Jamaica for one year or more, which country if so and year of return to Jamaica – this allowed for exemplary data collection on migration flows in Jamaica that follows United Nations recommendations. However, information on country of citizenship was not collected.

   In addition, the census collected information on household members who have moved abroad permanently since 2010.[2] STATIN is undertaking consultations with diverse stakeholders to discuss adding further migration-related questions to the next census in 2022.

(b) STATIN calculates intercensal estimates for migration, including estimates based on statistics on regular migration flows to and from key selected countries for which data are available – for example, the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom.

(c) Several household surveys have been conducted by the Social Development Commission (SDC) at the community level, on different topics, including demography, employment and political engagement, among others. Much of the SDC's survey data is disaggregated by country of citizenship (showing national versus foreign citizenship), rendering migrants visible in the results.

Additionally, Jamaica collects administrative data related to migration. The following are some examples:

(a) The Border Management System (BMS), which will shortly be replaced, collects electronic records of all national entries and exits, linking an individual's passport number with their date of birth and sex. BMS releases regular statistics on border crossings by country of origin and destination.

(b) The Residence Permit System (RPS) includes foreigners' personal data, contact information, passport details and reason for stay in Jamaica.

(c) Jamaica's Work Permit System stores data on long- and short-term foreign residents holding work permits, disaggregated by occupation and other variables; this database is used to generate reliable statistics on labour migration in the country. A second administrative database on labour migration – the register of nationals from the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) holding Skills Certificates (Certificates of Recognition of Caribbean Community Skills Qualification)[3] – also stores related data. However, this is not as comprehensive because data is not recorded electronically and does not include information on many key variables.

(d) Moreover, several institutions collect data relevant to specific migration topics through individual administrative systems. For example, the JCF, MNS, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) collect data on Jamaican return migrants, deportations and more, while the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) collects data on migrants' remittances.

(e) There are also several ad hoc migration data–collection initiatives on specific topics, conducted by international organizations. For example, IOM conducted an online survey on the Jamaican diaspora in 2014–2015. This focused on the composition of the diaspora by sex, location, skills and education level, and explored their willingness to contribute to the country's development in different ways. The results of this survey were published in 2017.

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[2] Though this does not capture entire households that migrated.
[3] CSME nationals may acquire Skills Certificates for 12 categories of workers, mainly skilled workers, before leaving the country of origin or when arriving in another CSME country. These Skill Certificates may be used instead of work permits and automatically serve as residence permits.

There have been some efforts towards increased migration data linkage across statistical systems in Jamaica. The Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ) compiles data from administrative forms and statistical sources used to track emigration and immigration, and STATIN also produces national population estimates every year by linking data from different sources, such as work permits, border crossings, and immigration statistics from receiving countries. Estimates and other information on the Jamaican diaspora are derived using data from national statistical agencies and embassies of foreign countries where Jamaican nationals reside (compiled and processed by PIOJ and STATIN), combined with data registered by Jamaican consulates abroad. There are many diverse initiatives to collect better data on Jamaica's diaspora; however, data coverage is not comprehensive, and many of these projects are not linked.

The National Migration Database (NMD) managed by DRISSC is a key national migration data integration effort. The database, coordinated by DRISCC with technical support from PIOJ and STATIN, aims to combine migration data from across several agencies – including from PICA and others. The database will enable a set of migration indicators to be measured at the national level. While the NMD is to date operational, its population has been slow, and there is further work ahead to boost data-sharing and source data from different government actors. Improving data storage (including moving from paper-based to digital records of some information) and harmonization among some actors – in particular of migration data from administrative sources, so that they can be more easily integrated into the database – is first necessary.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

Various high-level migration data and statistics in Jamaica are disseminated. For example, after the 2011 PHC, STATIN published a report focused on birthplace, residence and migration, and included several tables on stocks and flows of migrants disaggregated by age and sex. STATIN also publishes the annual Demographic Statistics report, which includes migration data retrieved from the United States' Department of Homeland Security website, the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRRC) Open Data Portal, and the United Kingdom Home Office website on Jamaicans in those countries. PIOJ's ESSJ Annual Report is another key tool to disseminate migration-related statistics available from different sources, and it is primarily used for planning and policy. Other government institutions publish high-level statistics on specific migration topics, such as human trafficking or remittances; however, these tend not to be detailed or disaggregated by key dimensions.

Jamaica is involved in several global processes related to migration, such as the Global Compact for Migration and the 2030 Agenda. PIOJ and MFAFT are leading the national implementation of the Global Compact for Migration with support from IOM, encouraging other government actors to take a data-driven approach to national migration policymaking in line with the Global Compact's Objective 1. PIOJ, as the national focal point for Vision 2030 Jamaica, leads the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national development planning. Currently Jamaica monitors three migration-related SDG indicators; STATIN will examine existing data (including from household surveys) to examine how best to leverage these towards SDG monitoring, including for migration-related indicators. Greater use of Jamaican administrative data could be pointed towards migration-related SDG monitoring, given their high frequency and the relatively low costs of collecting and storing them. Interviewees cited several challenges related to leveraging the Global Compact for Migration and SDG frameworks to improve migration data, including a lack of understanding among some actors of the relevance of migration to the SDGs, and generally of such processes for national-level policymaking.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

Jamaica frequently cooperates with regional and international bodies or organizations on initiatives related to migration data. For example, Jamaica is a member of the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) group and has attended regional workshops aimed at strengthening coordination and collaboration on migration data collection and analysis in the region. There is frequent cooperation with IOM on various topics as well, such as mainstreaming migration into national development and assisting return and vulnerable migrants, often with activities involving a data component. IOM was also involved in mapping the Jamaican diaspora as mentioned above. Further, Jamaica is a member of the Expert Group on Migration Statistics, working with other countries and organizations to set standards and improve statistics on international migration.

Jamaica could benefit from greater capacity-building, technical assistance and resources related to migration data. In particular, assistance related to improvements and maintenance of the NMD would greatly improve national migration data overall, given that the initiative has already been comprehensively designed and involves many government actors. Additionally, several Jamaican governmental institutions could benefit from attending different migration data capacity-building workshops, including on how best to improve data quality and using the broad range of Jamaican data collected from statistical and administrative sources. Such support could strengthen national migration data collection and analysis, and ultimately promote the more systematic use of migration data for strategic planning and policy development in Jamaica.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted migration data collection in Jamaica, and there have been limited efforts to understand the impact of the pandemic on migrants. STATIN decided to postpone the next census as a result of the pandemic, from 2021 to 2022. It is difficult to fully understand the impact of the pandemic on Jamaican immigrants and emigrants or the wider migration dynamics, as there has not been a dedicated data collection on this. Contrary to initial projections, the Bank of Jamaica showed a strong increase in remittances sent during the pandemic, possibly due to more official money transfer mechanisms and in order to buffer household financial shocks due to the pandemic. A specialized survey focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on migrants could help address these data gaps to help inform a migrant-inclusive pandemic recovery policy in Jamaica.

7. Concluding remarks

Given the high policy interest in international migration in Jamaica and the diverse range of data already collected, there is high potential to improve national migration data collection and use. Active interministerial mechanisms for migration and migration data, as well as impressive existing plans for migration data collection and utilization such as the NMD, should be supported to this end. Greater coordination between migration data actors could help harmonize and improve the quality of migration data. There are also opportunities to build on or link existing projects to address specific migration data gaps, such as in relation to the diaspora, and further to improve migration data in the context of the Global Compact for Migration and the SDGs.
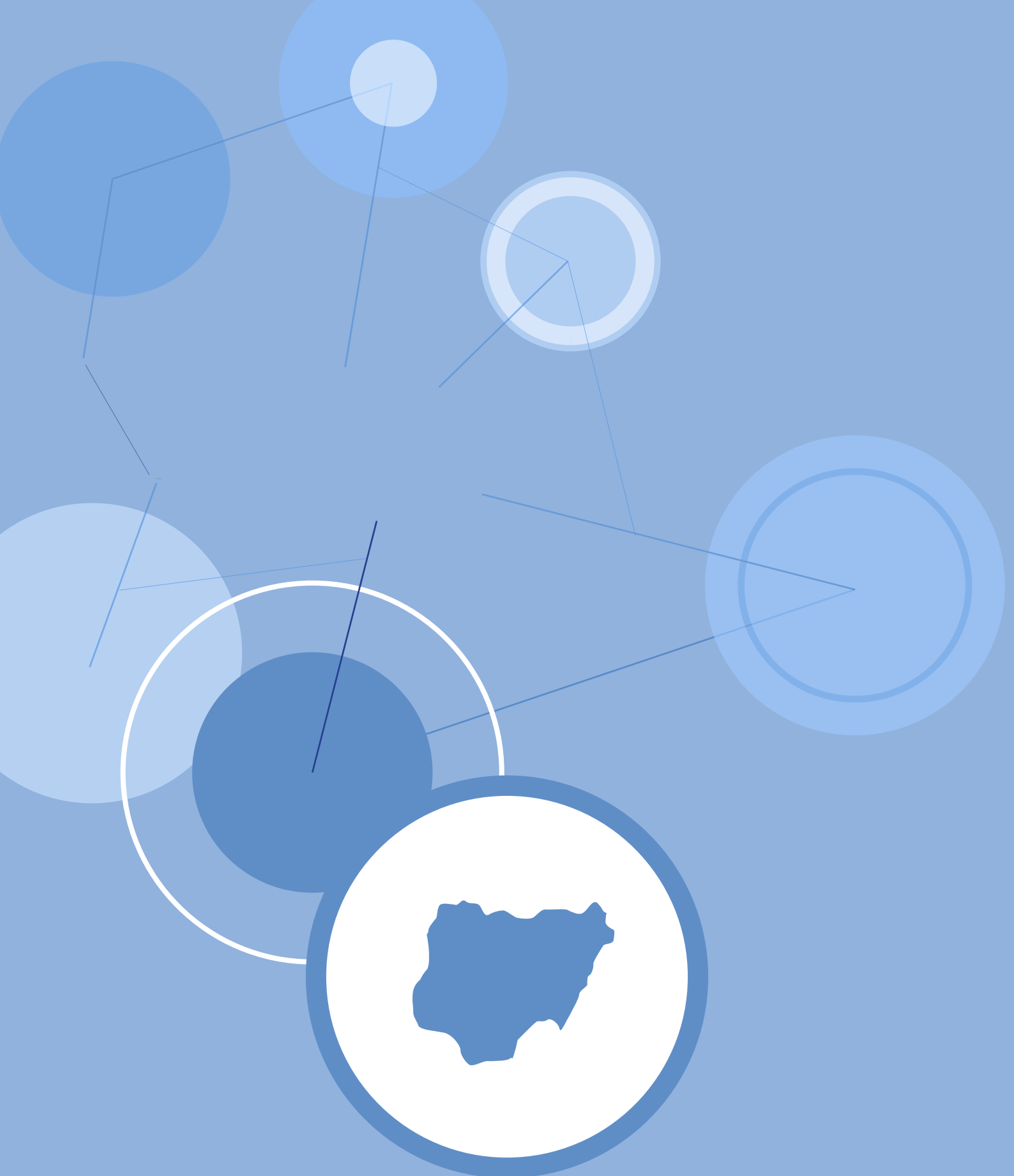
NIGERIA

1. Introduction

Migration is a topic of key political interest in Nigeria, with its high international immigration and emigration rates. The country's National Migration Policy (NMP), adopted in 2015, provides a legal and policy framework for governing international migration, and to an extent for collecting and using migration data. Nigeria has several relevant interministerial mechanisms that help migration data collaboration. A range of migration data is collected by a variety of Nigerian government actors, including through selected statistical and administrative tools. Nigeria also uses some innovative statistical methodologies around migration data – for example, a gridded population sampling design for household surveys and frameworks; and the 2019 National Migration Profile, which provides a detailed explanation of the state of migration to, from and within Nigeria. While there is interest in collecting, reporting and publishing more data on migration in Nigeria, there are often insufficient resources and a lack of data-sharing among government entities, which impedes concrete progress. Nigeria is a champion country of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, but it is unclear whether this has had a key impact on migration data in the country.

2. Migration data governance

Multiple government stakeholders are engaged in the collection and governance of national migration data. The main governmental institutions relevant for migration data collection include the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), which carries out large socioeconomic surveys and acts as a focal point with international organizations for statistical activities. The National Population Commission (NPC) also carries out censuses, surveys, and registration of live births and deaths, and is responsible for collecting, reporting and publishing several types of data on international migration. Additionally, the National Commission for Refugee, Migrant and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) are two key data-producing agencies involved with cross-border mobility and migration governance in Nigeria.

There is some collaboration and sharing of migration data among Nigerian institutions, though most data from different agencies are not linked or triangulated. Notably NPC, with the support of NBS, coordinates the Working Group on Migration Data Management (WGMDM) which is responsible for harmonizing available migration data across relevant national institutions and boosting data-sharing. Nevertheless, harmonization and exchange of Nigerian migration data is still limited in some areas, often due to low levels of practical collaboration on the topic. Various institutions have set up bilateral exchanges of migration data, such as NIS and NPC sharing border-crossing data.

3. Key migration data sources

Data actors in Nigeria manage a variety of statistical data sources for migration. Key statistical data sources include the following:

(a) NPC's Population and Housing Census collects data on labour migrants and other migrants residing in Nigeria, disaggregated by key demographic and other characteristics. However, Nigeria faces

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[1] For this profile, eight interviews were conducted with seven different national government institutions.

several ongoing operational challenges in implementing its census, given the population size and extension policy of the country.[1]

(b) The National Living Standard Surveys of 2004 and 2009 collected by NBS feature data on internal migration, labour migration and household members' remittances. These data were shared with other Nigerian government actors, though no dedicated dissemination or communication of migration-related results was possible due to resource constraints.

(c) NBS conducts migration-specific surveys, often with the collaboration of NPC and support of IOM. For example, these focus on awareness and perceptions among intending and return migrants of the risks of irregular migration outside Nigeria. In addition, NPC has conducted several migration surveys focusing on youth migration, remittances and the Nigerian diaspora.

Despite interest from institutions such as NBS and NPC in improving migration data collection and several encouraging new initiatives, information on migration collected through statistical sources is relatively limited. This is partly due to a lack of sufficient dedicated staff and resources needed to include more migration-related variables in statistical data collection, develop relevant sampling methodologies, and focus on migration data dissemination and analysis more generally. Many statistical tools that NBS and NPC conducted, including the census, have been largely linked to external funding, and the results of these are rarely widely disseminated or used for national policy development. Nevertheless, there are some encouraging examples of good practice in this area. For example, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) developed a labour migration module to be attached to NBS's quarterly Labour Force Survey, which does not usually include migration-related variables or questions.[2] Further, NBS and NPC became the first national agencies to use an innovative gridded population sampling methodology for household survey design and implementation. The methodology is based on satellite imagery and a geo-sampling tool that will improve the reliability of surveys and the representativeness of migration-related findings.

Nigeria collects relatively large amounts of administrative data related to migration, mainly through eight federal institutions. The following are some examples:

(a) NIS collects data on border crossings at all ports of entry/exit. The border-crossing data collected is disaggregated by a variety of dimensions, including age, sex, nationality and purpose of arrival or departure. Some of this data is analysed and included in NIS annual reports for public dissemination. NIS also collects data on visa applications, migration into the country, emigration of nationals and trafficking in persons.

(b) FMLE primarily collects data on flows of Nigerian and migrant workers. Some statistics are disaggregated by different variables such as sex, age, country of origin and reason for migration. This is a reliable source of migration data. However, the prevalence of the informal labour market in Nigeria and neighbouring countries makes overall coverage of labour migrants incomplete.

(c) NCFRMI collects data in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on asylum seekers and refugees in Nigeria, and uses data on internally displaced persons (IDPs) from IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). Data is analysed and published annually through NCFRMI's reports and on the UNHCR website.

(d) Several other national administrative entities also collect migration data, such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Nigerian National Volunteer Service (NNVS), and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) which collects data on the Nigerian diaspora's remittances.

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[2] The national census in some contexts can be politically sensitive, mostly due to ethnoreligious dimensions of counting different population groups. Further, the 2021 census in particular may face several complications such as inaccessibility to some parts of the country (for example, due to violence in the Niger Delta and the Boko Haram insurgency) and general difficulties accessing the camps for IDPs.

[2] Note that as of spring 2021, the module is in development, and FMLE is seeking additional international funding for its implementation.

While there is a large quantity of administrative data collected, there is a need to more effectively leverage this for evidence-based migration policies. As with statistical data sources, a lack of sufficient resources and funding has impeded Nigeria's ability to fully utilize its administrative data on migration-related issues. Better systems integrating such data are necessary for migration statistics to be more accurate – and useful for Nigeria's institutions.

Currently, there is little integration between different migration data sources in Nigeria. However, there have been some efforts to address this challenge. IOM supported the development of the National Migration Database in 2019 with funding support from the European Union. The objective of the database is to provide an interface for migration data collection, collation and analysis for policy use. The database is managed by NPC and NBS as the chair and co-chair of the WGMDM respectively. There is still a need to continue to build the capacity of the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) gathering migration data in Nigeria, to maximize the use of the National Migration Database and link it with other pre-existing databases or platforms. For example, NIS is currently developing a database to store all data on migration procedures and movements. Further, a large-scale migration data integration exercise is under way. In 2019 IOM, funded by Germany, provided NIS with two pilot sites for a Foreigners Registration System (FRS), and authorities have since invested in rolling out this system to all 36 states in the country. In the coming years, FRS will be fully integrated into the Migration Information and Data Analysis System, a software provided by IOM to digitalize border-crossing systems, enabling NIS to automatically and electronically monitor and control the legal status of foreign nationals in Nigeria.

Finally, there is extensive operational data related to migration in Nigeria. For example, IOM's migration and displacement data collection since 2014 through the DTM, in collaboration with government institutions and local partners, has generated much data on mobility in, out and within the country. DTM collects data on migration flows and trends, individual profiles, migration journeys and intentions of migrants in Nigeria, also enabling the identification of key migrant transit areas in the country.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

Migration data in Nigeria is often published by the agencies which are responsible for its collection; however, publications can be ad hoc. The most recent and comprehensive publication on international migration is the NIS Annual Report, published in 2017 and 2018 on the NIS website. This report presented almost all types of migration data collected by NIS and partner institutions, such as the diplomatic missions of MFA. Other examples of migration data dissemination include NBS's publication on Immigration Statistics. The latest version of this was published in 2019, sharing data on the issuance of passports, travel certificates and residence cards in the country, as well as key information on topics of policy interest such as irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling. However, the overall number of publications on migration data in Nigeria has decreased in past decades, partly due to lack of capacity. For example, NPC used to issue an annual report on international migration statistics but has only done so occasionally since 1991, due to a lack of regular resources for this. While NPC plans to analyse and publish additional migration data collected in recent years, this depends on capacity and availability of resources. Some institutions analyse and disseminate data internally, such as FMLE's Research and Statistics Department. However, much of this is based on operational data that are not comprehensive or necessarily representative of the country, so they cannot be easily leveraged towards national migration statistics. Greater data integration could help boost data dissemination if, for example, such operational data from different agencies are consolidated or triangulated with other data and published alongside them. Overall, greater migration data–sharing among agencies, and upgraded information and communications technology (ICT) equipment and general capacity would help boost migration data dissemination in Nigeria.

Nigeria is involved in several global processes related to migration, including the Global Compact for Migration. The Nigerian Government hosted national consultations and held a forum in 2017 focused on its six thematic areas. Since then, Nigeria has developed a set of recommendations

to implement the Global Compact for Migration, though to date none of them include improving data related to international migration, and the recommendations have yet to be implemented due to a lack of capacity.

Nigeria is also engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. NBS currently assists the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals (OSSAP-SDGs) which coordinates the efforts and collects data for the SDG indicators. NAPTIP provides data on human trafficking in this context, while FMLE contributes data on migrants' occupation, decent work, health and safety.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

Nigeria receives support from several international organizations on migration data capacity-building and is involved in several international initiatives surrounding migration data. Nigerian institutions often collaborate and exchange data with United Nations agencies, regional agencies, the European Union and foreign embassies. Nigeria also takes part in bilateral efforts to improve migration data collection with the Niger and recently strengthened cooperation with this country on human trafficking identification.

The Government of Nigeria would benefit from greater data capacity-building and foreign assistance related to migration data. In project interviews, several Nigerian government actors mentioned a need for greater assistance in the collection, integration and dissemination of migration data. Many would benefit from attending training courses on how to best utilize the broad range of Nigerian migration data collected from both statistical and administrative sources. Overall, more sustainable and predictable funding as well as ICT support would strengthen Nigerian migration data collection, analysis and use.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic aggravated several existing socioeconomic issues in Nigeria and in some cases made migration governance and migration programming more challenging. The virus negatively impacted the work of Nigerian public administration institutions, as in many cases, officers working remotely had to use their own resources. In the case of FMLE, however, despite the closure of its six job centres, most services for migrants and employers were made available online. According to NAPTIP, during the pandemic there was an increase in the exploitation of victims of trafficking, especially relating to child labour.

There are significant data gaps regarding migration data and the pandemic, as relevant data collection often does not identify migrants. NBS conducted the COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey (NLPS) throughout 2020 to understand how households in Nigeria were affected and responding to COVID-19 – and how to help design policies to mitigate its effects on the population. However, this generated limited information on migration as no information on the migratory status of respondents was collected. To date, no other survey or data-collection project has been conducted to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on migrants in Nigeria, the Nigerian diaspora or other migrant groups relevant to the country.

7. Concluding remarks

There is much quality migration data collected in Nigeria, and in particular, relevant data are collected through national administrative systems. Given the large amount of data collected by different government actors, there is scope to boost data integration to better leverage several data sets for migration policy development in the country. An in-depth mapping of available migration data could be helpful in this regard, as would increased resources and methodological training related to migration data collection, analysis and dissemination.
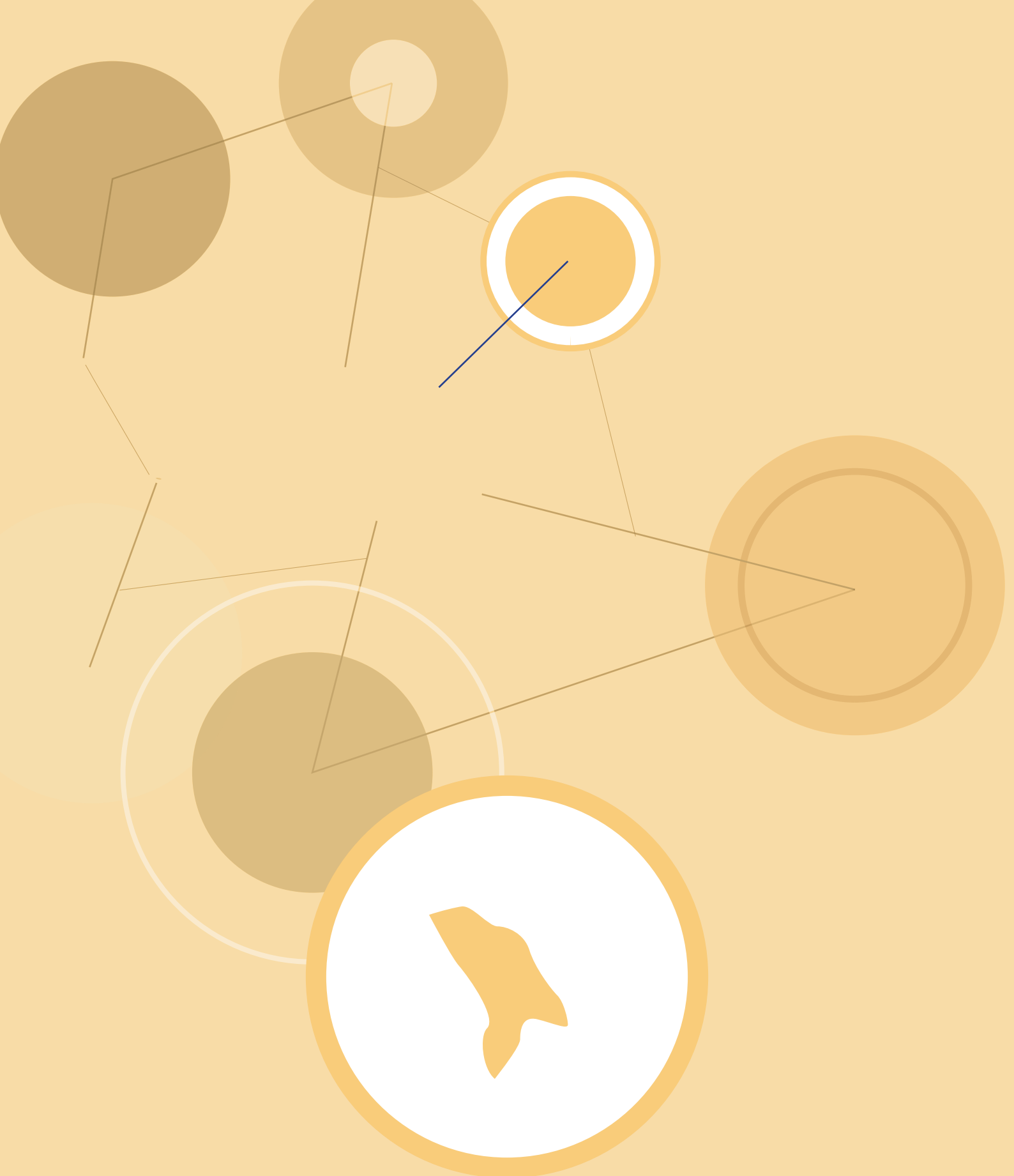
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

NATIONAL MIGRATION DATA PROFILE: REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

1. Introduction

The Government of the Republic of Moldova undertakes extensive migration data collection and management, and a great deal of valuable migration data across policy-relevant topics is collected by numerous ministries and agencies. Much of the country's migration statistics is produced through statistical data sources, including population censuses and household surveys. Additionally, the Republic of Moldova collects much migration-relevant data through various administrative sources, though this is not always fully leveraged to generate migration statistics. The Republic of Moldova has made efforts towards migration data integration through two key initiatives and disseminates relatively high amounts of migration data collected. The Republic of Moldova is involved in various global processes related to migration, including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, though it is not clear how far data is mainstreamed into relevant activities. The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted migration data, mostly delaying data collection, though there have been some efforts to address related data gaps.

2. Migration data governance

Many stakeholders within the Government of the Republic of Moldova are involved in the production, collection, analysis and reporting of international migration data. The central authority for planning, coordinating and managing national statistical activities is the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Several departments within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA) develop and coordinate migration-related policies – including the Department for Migration and Asylum Policy, the General Inspectorate of Border Police (GIBP), the Bureau for Migration and Asylum (BMA), and the General Inspectorate of Police (GIP). Various entities within the State Chancellery also assist in the collection or use of migration data, along with several other ministries such as the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MHLSP) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MECR). The large number of different migration data stakeholders reflects the high degree of fragmentation in migration policymaking in the country, where different areas of the Government address different migration-related issues.

3. Key migration data sources

Different migration data actors in the Republic of Moldova manage several statistical sources of migration data. In particular, NBS's Population and Migration Statistics Division produces statistics on international migration based on several of its own statistical operations and administrative data received from three institutions: GIBP, BMA and the Public Services Agency (PSA).

Key statistical data sources include the following:

(a) The Population and Housing Census (PHC) is the only source of data in the Republic of Moldova used to count the de jure resident population, including the migrant population. The last census in 2014 collected information on eight questions relating to migration.

(b) NBS's Labour Force Survey (LFS) covers household members with habitual residence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova for a period of 12 months, and it collects information on recent emigration of household members, who have moved abroad within the last 12 months for work or

employment. In 2008 and 2012, specific information was collected to better understand the extent and nature of labour migration in the country, including reasons and methods for migrating.

(c) The Household Budget Survey (HBS) monitors the population's living standards through collecting data on their incomes, expenses, consumption, living conditions, and other indicators from a multidimensional perspective. The HBS, like the LFS, targets household members who are abroad permanently or temporarily, asking questions about their absence and contributions to the household budget.

(d) Diverse additional statistical tools – such as the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) – and sample surveys conducted by research centres, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations have provided further information on other aspects of migration in the country. Some examples are individuals' intentions to migrate and the specific needs of children and the elderly left behind by labour emigrants.

Additionally, the Republic of Moldova collects migration-relevant data through various administrative sources. The following are some examples:

(a) The Integrated Information System of the Border Police (IISBP) collects, processes, updates and analyses data on individuals' border crossings and their means of transportation. IISBP allows for an efficient and effective integrated national border management system, as it also monitors events happening in parts of the borders outside of official crossing points ("green points").

(b) BMA has several separate databases covering permanent and temporary migrants and visitors, asylum seekers, refugees and other beneficiaries of humanitarian protection, irregular migrants, and Moldovan returnees and repatriates. These data are disaggregated by several categories, such as country of origin, citizenship and sex. The databases, however, are not centralized.

(c) PSA holds the State Register of Population (SRP), which contains data on citizens of the Republic of Moldova (including those living in the country and those who have emigrated), foreigners residing in the country, and those who have been granted the status of stateless persons, refugees or another form of international protection.

(d) Several other administrative systems also collect migration data, such as the National Employment Agency (NEA) which manages a database called the Automated Information System Workforce Migration Records (with data on Moldovans employed abroad), the Bureau for Diaspora Relations (BDR) database, the Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (CCTHB) and the National Bank of Moldova (NBM)'s remittance database, among others.

Overall, there is a large quantity of administrative data collected; however, they are not always used effectively or compiled in reporting. Increased cooperation between relevant actors – for example, between NBS, BMA, GIBP and PSA – could allow for data integration efforts and overall more efficient use of available administrative data. There have been some efforts to address this challenge. For example, NBS introduced new practices to better leverage administrative data and estimate migrant stocks. In 2018, NBS produced and disseminated migration statistics based on administrative sources, only using data provided by the authorities responsible for the official registration of immigrants and emigrants. Using anonymized data from GIBP, NBS also started estimating yearly flow statistics on immigrants and emigrants, disaggregated by sex and age, complying with international definitions and standards.

The Republic of Moldova has two key initiatives relating to the integration of migration data collected from different institutions. BMA's Integrated Automated Information System "Migration and Asylum" (SIIAMA) is a system conceived for centralizing data on international migration from different governmental institutions, to pool information resources, monitor migration flows and stocks, and prepare statistical outputs – all with a view to enable public authorities to make evidence-based decisions. In 2020, NBS also initiated the development of an Integrated Information System on Population and Migration (IISPM), which will provide timely statistical data on internal and international migration at the local and national levels, disaggregated by several dimensions.

4. Data dissemination and use for global processes

Moldovan government actors disseminate a range of migration statistics publicly, in different formats. Much collected migration data is aggregated and put in the public domain, accessible through various governmental websites, or disseminated by media, NGOs or others. One key example of regular dissemination of migration data is BMA's published statistics on immigration, asylum, irregular migration, and repatriation in the Republic of Moldova. The revamped, nationally owned and regularly produced Extended Migration Profile provides both statistical data on migration – made available by many national entities – and a detailed analysis of migratory trends, the impact of migration, overall migration governance framework and recommendations. NBS also publishes yearly tables online on some categories of citizens and foreigners, international migration flows, and population stocks disaggregated by several dimensions, based on statistical and administrative systems. Data collected by CCTHB is used by the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB) in biannual and yearly reports on the implementation of policy for preventing and combating human trafficking. Not all Moldovan institutions publish flagship migration reports on specific topics on a regular basis in this manner, but this could be a good way to disseminate more targeted migration data.

The Republic of Moldova is involved in global processes related to migration, including the Global Compact for Migration. The Moldovan Government conducted its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) report on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration for January 2019 to June 2020. The Department for Migration and Asylum Policy, BMA of MOIA, and other national services, with the support of IOM Moldova, developed the Global Compact for Migration VNR report which contained information on the implementation of migration policies by national institutions, and the inclusion of their own objectives to achieve the Global Compact for Migration targets related to their mandate. For example, BMA mentioned the possibility of implementing 10 Global Compact for Migration objectives and submitted, as its own objectives, data collection and use of accurate and disaggregated data for evidence-based policies – and improving the availability and flexibility of routes for regular migration is one of these.

The Republic of Moldova is also engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, though it is not clear how far migration data is mainstreamed in relevant activities. With the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), it adopted a national policy agenda aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The State Chancellery under the Prime Minister is responsible for ensuring strategic coordination and cooperation among agencies for reporting on the SDGs, with NBS assigned to lead, collect and clean data from other agencies for the SDG indicators. The Republic of Moldova currently reports on some of the 10 migration-relevant SDG indicators, with indicator 10.7.1 on recruitment costs the only target that it does not monitor. The United Nations Country Team Migration Task Force (UNCT MTF) operates in the Republic of Moldova, serving as a platform for the engagement of international and national institutions and NGOs, with a goal of better data collection, sharing and integration for use towards migration governance.

5. Building data capacity and international cooperation

The Government of the Republic of Moldova receives regular technical assistance related to migration data. Over the last 10 years, several projects related to development and/or migration data have been implemented with foreign support. For example, the India–UN Development Partnership Fund and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Moldova will provide the necessary support to align national statistics with international practices and improve the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. IOM, UNFPA, other international organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies operating in the Republic of Moldova are also committed to supporting NBS and other national partners in strengthening their capacities to collect, analyse and disseminate relevant population and migration data. Further, the Republic of Moldova is a member of the United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, whose aim is to improve statistics on international migration.

The Republic of Moldova could benefit from more frequent and timely data exchange with other countries, as well as more targeted international technical assistance on migration data. Concluding bilateral agreements with other countries would help improve the collection, analysis and use of migration data on certain topics – in particular, to better understand the emigrant population. It would also be useful to receive methodological support in training and implementing how to best use and collect migration statistics and advance innovative instruments in particular.

6. Migration data and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted key Moldovan migration data stakeholders differently, mostly delaying data collection. For example, COVID-19 delayed NBS's annual data production on international migration, primarily because it received GIBP individual data necessary for the reports almost three months later than scheduled. The pandemic mainly affected the first GGS as the survey consortium launched fieldwork in January 2020; however, following a suspension period, the survey was resumed in August 2020 with a new data-collection process following COVID-19 protection measures and recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO).

There have been some efforts to address the effects of COVID-19 on migrants and migration data, including with international organizations. IOM, in partnership with other organizations such as UNDP and the World Bank, supported the emergency response of Moldovan institutions through the production of up-to-date data and analysis of the numbers and profiles of returning migrants and families affected by COVID-19. Initiatives included the rapid field assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on Moldovan migrants' well-being in 10 destination countries, a study on the mobility-related impacts of COVID-19 for a better look at the profiles of return migrants and their vulnerabilities, and an assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on returnees and remittance-dependent families in the Republic of Moldova.

7. Concluding remarks

Many government stakeholders in the Republic of Moldova collect, process and use many different types of migration data through statistical and administrative systems. To build on its migration strengths, the Republic of Moldova would benefit from a national coordination mechanism for the production of migration statistics and greater data-sharing among ministries. Further, there are opportunities to improve migration data and its use for policymaking in the context of the Global Compact for Migration and the SDGs, and to continue monitoring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.