

CARIM EAST – CONSORTIUM FOR APPLIED RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

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Statistical data collection on migration in Moldova

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Introduction

Currently, at least 10 Moldovan ministries and institutions deal with various international migration issues. In addition most of the local delegations of international institutions, numerous NGOs and several foreign embassies are involved in programs which involve international migration.

List of sources of international migration in Moldova

Type of migration	Source	Type of source	Population	Definition of migrants
Outward migration	Population Census (October 2004)	Stock	<i>De jure</i>	Persons who live permanently in households residing in Moldova, but who were temporarily abroad at the moment of the interview.
	Labour Force Survey (continuous)	Stock	<i>De jure</i>	
	Labour Force Migration Survey (second quarter of 2008)	Stock	<i>De jure</i>	Persons who live permanently in households residing in Moldova, and who were abroad working or searching for work in the 12 months, preceding the interview.
	State Register of Population (continuous)	Stock/Flow	<i>De jure – de facto</i>	Citizens of Moldova who went abroad for permanent or temporary residence (over 3 months).
Inward migration	Population Census (October 2004)	Stock	<i>De jure</i>	Persons who live permanently in households residing in Moldova, but who were not born in Moldova.
	Population Register (State Register of Population – SRP) (continuous)	Stock/Flow	<i>De jure – de facto</i>	Persons, who are permanently residing (over 5 years) or have been temporarily staying (up to 5 years) on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) develops and implements the main data collection sources: census, labour force and household budget surveys. International institutions (International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Bank (WB), European Commissions, etc.) finance surveys targeting emigration and remittances. In addition, there are several administrative sources, developed and maintained by ministries that are directly or indirectly involved in regulating the migration process, collecting data on persons crossing national borders.

Flow and stock data sources

Most of these administrative databases are managed using computerized data management systems and some statistical data are disseminated, being publicly accessible. To make use of the great potential of these administrative data sources and in order to increase the cooperation between ministries working with international migration, an integrated automated information system (**SIAMA**) has been developed.

In addition, the information system developed by the State Information Resources Centre (**SIRC**) “Registru” and the Ministry of Information Technology and Communication, have allowed the linking of several **individual databases** for operational investigations in order to increase the cooperation between ministries. The SIRC “Registru” also collects data, produces and updates 24 statistical tables designed to summarize the data produced by each ministry involved in SIAMA. Tables produced by SIAMA should allow a direct benchmarking of the different aspects of the migration policy in Moldova. Data offered by the SIAMA system are integrated in the State Register of Population (SRP), managed by the SIRC “Registru”, complementing the main component of the SRP: “Physical Persons Records”. The SRP offers stock and flow numbers of the population, comprised of persons, who are permanently residing or temporarily staying in the Republic of Moldova.

A foreign national can stay in Moldova for up to 5 years, with a temporary stay permit. After staying continuously in Moldova for 5 years (3 years for foreign nationals married to a Moldovan citizen), the foreign national can obtain a permit to permanently reside in Moldova, if all legal requirements are met. Moldovan citizens, temporarily staying abroad, but having a permanent residence in Moldova (i.e. they did not de-register themselves) are also counted among the *de jure* population. At present, researchers studying migration in Moldova are particularly interested in the problem of developing a universal definition for the “migrant” (emigrant) that could be used in different surveys/administrative sources to produce comparable data.

Conclusion

Although complex, with several interacting data sources, the migration data collection system in Moldova has its weak points. The SRP cannot yet be considered a fully reliable source for international migration. Major limitations affecting the coverage of the SRP include:

- The main problem is the low level of de-registration for citizens leaving the country. Persons leaving for 12 months and more still keep their permanent residence in Moldova. Consequently, the number of international emigrants and the repatriation of Moldovan citizens is largely under-estimated;
- Two age groups are temporarily but significantly underrepresented: 1. Children currently between 8 and 14 years old, born before the application of the system of documentation at birth in 2002, and not yet documented as citizen at 14 years old, the age required by the law; 2. Persons around 62 to 67 due to the fact that some persons were not documented through the “Pensioners Project” as they were still working at the time this project was implemented;
- Not all the citizens who live in the Transnistria region have requested their documents and, therefore, these are not present in the register;
- More than 60,000 persons are registered in the State Registry of Population without having a registered address of place of residence;
- The changes in permanent residence do not correspond to the international definition of change for at least 12 months;
- There is no specific operation to measure the coverage of the population register. The Registru Centre proposed to include the ID number in the questionnaire of the Census 2013 to check and update the population register;

- Entities contributing to and managing the SIIAMA system do not have the skills to make the data meet the international requirements for international migration statistics and so to support policy development. Stronger cooperation with the NBS is needed;
- Surveys conducted by the NBS are limited in sample size and, therefore, do not always capture immigration in said surveys;
- Most important data sources offer data on labour emigration as this is the main problem faced by Moldova and many policies have been developed to find ways to manage the problem.

Data sources and providers

Several ministries and institutions in Moldova possess information that is related to international migration or is relevant to migration policies:

- National Bureau of Statistics – central statistical authority that manages and organizes statistical activity in Moldova.
- Ministry of Information Technology and Communications, “SIRC “Registru” - is responsible for providing statistical data that are part of the SIIAMA. “SIRC “Registru” is also the owner of the State Register of Population.
- Border Guard Service – provides information on state border crossing (entry/exit)
- Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family - Prevention of Violence and Insurance of Gender Equality Policy Department, Protection of Family and Children’s Rights Department, Migration Policy Section, National Coordination Unit of the National Referral System for Assistance and Protection of Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking (NRS) and the National Employment Agency
- Ministry of Internal Affairs - Bureau for Migration and Asylum in charge of the SIIAMA and the Centre for Combating Trafficking of Persons
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- National Company for Health Insurance
- National Social Insurance House
- National Bank of Moldova – Balance of Payments Department

However, only a few of these institutions disseminate statistical data. In addition other institutions are managing *ad-hoc* databases but are not producing any statistical data save data for their own internal use.

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Inward migration: relevant information on sources					
Source	Institutional body in charge of collecting and diffusing data	Population of reference	Migration related variables contained in the source	Data collection methodology	Advantages (+) and drawbacks (-) compared with other sources
Moldovan Population Census Main info: Primary source; stock data. Periodicity: every 10 years. Last census: 2004, next one: 2014.	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).	Population census covers persons who live permanently in households residing in Moldova (resident permanent population, <i>de iure</i> population). Immigrants are defined according to the country of birth criterion.	Population by country of birth and country of citizenship according to number of years lived in Moldova.	Data collected through personal interviews, using paper questionnaires.	(+) Small errors, enough cases for tabulation; (-) Data is old.
SIAMA (Integrated automated information system "Migration and Asylum") Main info: Primary source; Administrative source; stock and flow data. Periodicity: Continuous registration; Monthly.	Data is collected by 11 governmental institutions. SIRC "Registru" (see below) manages the system, tabulates and disseminates the data. The system offers data on both visitors and immigrants.	Foreign citizens or stateless persons who have obtained the right to live permanently or temporarily in Moldova, according to the legal requirements. These persons are included into the <i>de iure</i> population.	Foreign citizens or stateless persons by country of previous residence, reason for immigration, country of citizenship.	Data collection based on official documents issued by governmental institutions.	(+) Continuous data collection; (+) Low cost; (-) The system is not fully operational yet; (-) Data is collected for administrative purposes, therefore the methodological base is weak; (-) Few variables.

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<p>State Register of Population (SRP)</p> <p>Main info: Administrative source; stock and flow data.</p> <p>Periodicity: Continuous registration; Monthly.</p>	Data collected, processed and disseminated by SIRC "Registru".	SRP covers persons who are permanently residing or temporarily staying in Moldova. A foreign citizen can stay in Moldova for up to 5 years, based on temporary stay permit. After staying continuously for 5 years in Moldova (3 years for foreign nationals married to a Moldovan citizen), the foreign national can obtain a permit to permanently reside in Moldova, if all legal requirements are met.	Country of citizenship.	Data collected based on official documents issued by the SIRC "Registru".	(+) Continuous data collection; (+) Low cost; (-) The system is not fully operational yet; (-) Data are collected for administrative purposes, only based on official documents, therefore the methodological base is weak and data are updated with delays.

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Moldovan Population Census	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).	Population census covers persons who reside permanently in households in Moldova (resident permanent population), but who were temporarily abroad at the moment of the interview.	Reason for staying abroad; year of emigration.	Data collected through personal interviews, using paper questionnaires.	(+) Small errors, enough cases for tabulation; (-) Data is old. (-) Underestimation of emigrants because migrated households are not captured
Main info: Primary source; stock data					
Periodicity: every 10 years. Last census: 2004, next one: 2014					
Labour Force Survey (LFS)	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).	LFS covers persons who reside permanently in households in Moldova (resident permanent population), but who were temporarily abroad at the moment of the interview.	Reason for staying abroad; time spent abroad (less than one year or more than one year); destination country.	Data collection through a two-stage stratified cluster sample survey, personal interviews, using paper questionnaires. Sample size: 4000 households per month.	(+) Methodology based on ILO recommendations; (+) A wide set of characteristics available; (+) Continuous data collection; (-) Underestimation of migrants because migrated households are not captured.
Main info: Sample survey; stock data					
Periodicity: Continuos.					

Outward migration: relevant information on sources					
Source	Institutional body in charge of collecting and diffusing data	Population of reference	Migration related variables contained in the source	Data collection methodology	Advantages (+) and drawbacks (-) compared with other sources
Labour Force Migration Survey (LFMS) Main info: Sample survey; stock data Periodicity: Ad-hoc module to LFS, 2nd quarter, 2008	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).	LFMS covers persons who live permanently in households residing in Moldova (resident permanent population) and who in the 12 months, prior to the interview, worked or searched for work abroad .	Migration reasons; migration channels; migration costs; destination country; time spent abroad; work conditions abroad; future plans, etc.	Data collected through a two-stage stratified cluster sample survey, personal interviews, using paper questionnaires. Data were collected from a) returned migrants and b) relatives of migrants.	(+) Methodology based on ILO recommendations; (+) A wide set of migration-related characteristics available; (-) Inaccurate data in case of proxy interviews with relatives of migrants; (-) Underestimation of migrants because migrated households are not captured.
SIAMA (Integrated automated information system "Migration and Asylum") Main info: Primary source; Administrative source; flow data Periodicity: Continuous registration; Monthly.	Data is collected by 11 governmental institutions. SIRC "Registru" (see below) manages the system, tabulates and disseminates the data. The system offers data on both visitors and immigrants.	Moldovan citizens who cross the border for different reasons. It refers to both migrants and non-migrants .	Time spent abroad.	Data collection based on official documents issued by governmental institutions.	(+) Continuous data collection; (+) Low cost; (-) The system is not fully operational yet; (-) Data is collected for administrative purposes, therefore the methodological base is weak; (-) Few variables.

Outward migration: relevant information on sources					
Source	Institutional body in charge of collecting and diffusing data	Population of reference	Migration related variables contained in the source	Data collection methodology	Advantages (+) and drawbacks (-) compared with other sources
State Register of Population (SRP)	Data collected, processed and disseminated by SIRC "Registru".	SRP covers Moldovan citizens who go abroad for permanent residence and de-registered their residence in Moldova).	Destination country.	Data collection is based on official documents issued by the SIRC "Registru"	(+) Continuous data collection; (+) Low cost; (-) The system is not fully operational yet; (-) Data are collected for administrative purposes, only based on official documents, therefore the methodological base is weak and data are updated with delays.
Main info: Primary source; Administrative source; stock and flow data.					
Periodicity: Continuous registration; Monthly					
Household survey on labour migration and remittances	Data collected by a private company "CBS-AXA"	It covers persons abroad either currently or during the 12 months before the survey.	Migration reasons; migration channels; migration costs; destination country; time spent abroad; work conditions abroad; future plans, etc	Data collected through a sample survey, personal interviews, using paper questionnaires	(+) Panel design; (+) A wide set of migration-related characteristics available; (-) Underestimation of migrants because migrated households are not captured; (-) Inaccurate data in case of proxy interviews with relatives of migrants.
Main info: Sample survey					
Periodicity: Panel design (2004-2006-2008)					

Data accessibility: Population Census (<http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&idc=295>); SIIAMA: some tables are published by the NBS; others upon request; SRP (http://www.registru.md/stat3_en/);

LFS (<http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Database/EN/03%20MUN/MUN07/MUN07.asp>, <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&id=2204&idc=263>): additional data available upon request; LFMS (<http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&idc=350&id=2570>): additional data available upon request; Household survey on labour migration and remittances (http://iom.md/attachments/110_2009_05_05_remmit_boom_over_eng.pdf).