



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

Creating a Generic Model for Migration-Related Data Management

Overview and Perspectives on the Basis of a Model Developed for the EECA States

By Thomas Mortensen, Danish Immigration Service and Tamara Babiuk, IOM Technical Cooperation Centre

1. Executive summary

In the mid-1990s, governmental ministries in Eastern European and Central Asian (EECA) States¹ recognized that substantial migrant flows through, from and within the region, needed to be better addressed through new policy and legislation. The States were faced with the challenge of developing national and regional migration management structures that take into account different data sources for capturing the origin and flows of modern migration phenomena in a systematic and comprehensive way. Due to these challenges and the reality that migration was still primarily dealt with nationally as opposed to internationally, the predominant perceptions about migratory flows were different from country to country. Statistics from population registers, censuses, border controls, and migration services were available, but not often shared between and among agencies both at the national and regional level unless the statistics was packaged to respond to official or ad-hoc request. In short, a timely, systematic, and flexible exchange mechanism did not exist in the region.

Then, in the late 1990s, EECA States started asking themselves, “what do we do about making available timely, valid, objective and well documented statistics?” They acknowledged that resources needed to be allocated to build national capacity in this area. This realization was reinforced in light of increased incidences of irregular migration, including human smuggling, trafficking and other forms of trans-border crime.

To improve States’ migration management capacity based on timely, objective and comprehensive statistics, IOM TCC, the Danish Immigration Service and the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) were asked in 2001 and 2002 by EECA State representatives to facilitate and promote a data capacity-building programme by organizing appropriate follow-up events that would eventually lead to more a accurate and coherent statistical collection and exchange.

Attempts to provide a long-range programme for migration-related statistical collection had been made by international organisations and multilateral associations before, but were rarely sustainable. Based on pilot visits to the region², learning from best practices of processes, ownership and drive from states, IOM and partners were able to set-up a capacity-building project for migration-related data management that was simple and operational.

¹ These countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, the Russian Federation, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

² Pilot countries include Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Moldova; site visits were also conducted in Kazakhstan and in Belarus in 2004-05.

A concept paper³, incremental in its approach, offered a strategy that provided options on how States could make use of existing migration-related statistics starting with limited exchange and bearing in mind that this exchange is only the tip of the iceberg. The concept paper also demonstrated how good statistics could be achieved through the culmination of several other activities, which are equally important in understanding the statistics origins. The gathering of such statistics is not just about numbers, but it is also about policy documents, legal norms and bringing together providers and users of statistics.

The importance of not seeing statistics in isolation became evident from the start of the Process and resulted in the development of an easy-to-use and efficient electronic (multi-user password protected on-line) Data Sharing Mechanism, which can be generically applied and adapted to any cluster of countries or ministries, with limited resources (www.dsm-migration.net). This mechanism also includes public sections containing States' policy and legal documents that pertain to migration-related data management and its requisite policy potential. The General Model is a promising approach that is still evolving – however, the basic groundwork has been set and generic tools (training on data management, overview and mapping out of existing processes, establishment of inter-ministerial working groups, etc) can be used in other regions and is constantly being enriched by new and innovative methods provided by national governments and international organizations.

The following provides an overview of the Model, which can be put into perspective within the ongoing global debate about data management in general.

2. Background

On 29-31 October 2001, at the Workshop on Cross-border Cooperation and Development of Migration Legislation in Almaty, Kazakhstan, absence of a regional instrument for interstate migration-related data sharing was cited among main obstacles for efficient policy making in the EECA region. On 3-5 July 2002, at the Workshop on Organizational Structures, Collection and Sharing of Migration-related Information in Prague the governmental representatives from EECA States once again stressed the necessity to deepen interstate dialogue and information exchange on migration, and confirmed that a specially designed Data Sharing Mechanism would become a major facilitator in this process.

At the national level, several governments, both from and outside the region, repeatedly stated and agreed that there a need for a timely, reliable and systematic data collection and sharing, and easy-to-use tools for collecting statistics in order to anticipate *and* meet policy needs. Migration policy makers need statistics! However, data is only the tip of the iceberg. It is important to underscore that the whole process of data management is much more complex then just counting and applying numbers. It involves investing in designated focal points from national ministries, mapping out collection methods, developing templates, gaining knowledge about legal and policy developments through information sharing. It is about creating efficient and electronic sharing mechanisms that can be afforded and are applicable to each country's IT and human resource capacity.

In addition to providing managers and decision-makers with vital statistics, integrated data management needs to have a history. Where does the data come from? Who is providing it? How often is it collected? Which legislation or procedural norms validate at the national level how data can be defined? For every type of statistics, where are the data sources? Can there be multiple data sources? If so, what are the potential factors that may affect data quality or data reliability? It is difficult enough to absorb and address these questions at the national level, let alone try to define

³ The concept paper can be downloaded from https://www.dsm-migration.net/dsm-uploads/concept_paper_eng_050816091110.pdf

data to a common denominator that is well agreed and agreeable to neighbouring countries or any country interested in source country data. Can one develop a global set of statistical requirements for migration-related data? The simple answer is no. Nor should one try to.

The General Model's approach is that one defines statistics to the extent that one can understand and realize how and why countries collect migration-related the way they do. The next step is not conformity, but convergence – promoting regional dialogue to agree on statistics that can and must be shared, and to define commonly understood templates that can either inspire countries to change their data collection methodology *if needed*, or refine the template so that it enables a more or less effective comparison of country-to-country data over time. This is the true and tested approach of the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee, and Migration Policies in Europe, North America, and Australia (IGC). As one Migration official from IGC stated, “Sure, we get statistics, but it's the discussion in the corridors with like-minded officials from source, transit, and destination countries that makes all the difference.”

3. The General Model and the Data Sharing Mechanism

There is no universally accepted or preferable way to develop data management. Yet, to get to a point where statistics can and should be shared certain minimum steps are generally recognised to be needed. Thus, the General Model proposes a dual approach – national and regional.

At the *national level* activities include:

- ***Identifying the national demand for migration-related data*** at different levels of the government from the ministerial levels to officials dealing directly with statistics;
- ***Defining a minimum set of 5-10 overall migration data indicators (overview of the migration reality)***, in cooperation with target countries, that can be collected, actively applied, and shared regularly at the national (and later regional) level using an agreed-upon format (e.g. statistics on asylum applications, labour migration, irregular migration, demographic statistics, etc);
- ***Establishing and providing support to a national network (providers and users)***, i.e. a 'national working group' including core institutions gathering data, well-defined focal points, and entities or individuals that would co-ordinate the data exchange at the national level (indicators to be exchanged at the national level are based on country preference);
- ***Identifying areas for potential trainings*** by external experts to reinforce existing data structures or provide new models where requested and appropriate;
- Reinforcing training capacity through ***direct exposure to other national approaches*** via study tours to EU member states; and
- Providing pilot infrastructures, e.g. software/hardware for managing data collection workflows (***IT and workflow assessments***).

At the *regional level*, the programme includes:

- ***Organizing thematic and technical workshops*** for migration authorities from the participating states (policy makers and experts) to promote data management issues and to discuss migratory trends;

- ***Outlining and further finalizing agreed-upon statistical indicators*** to be shared, taking into account already existing national statistics shared internationally and the needs of the participating states;
- ***Providing follow-up regional training*** based on specific regional needs and levels and leveraging resources (i.e. planning on-site consultations before or after other technical assistance events to maximize resources, etc) and ***sharing best practices*** from and beyond the region;
- ***Enhancing and maintaining the agreed-upon on-line Data Sharing Mechanism*** – www.dsm-migration.net based on the inputs and comments provided by the participating States; and
- ***Providing training through a “toolkit” of self-teaching training modules*** that takes into account national data needs as well as data management principles generally applicable throughout the region and beyond.

Two important reminders for the successful implementation of the above: countries have to drive the momentum by keeping it simple and agreeing to start with operational and incremental activities: site visits, consultations, legislative reviews, etc, so that it can be sustained over time and not be dependent on temporary and project-specific donor funding. It is a long-term process. In fact, every country in the world has to constantly refine, adapt and modernize its systems to keep up with the dynamism and changing faces of migration. Successful implementation of the model relies on strengthening ties between professionals and building trust and confidence in the statistics collected, stored and shared. The second reminder is that IOM and partners are only facilitators and they recognize it takes a long time to establish contacts and institutionalize procedures.

4. Results to date

Based on the above and commitment of the involved parties, the General Model has achieved interesting qualitative and quantitative results since late 2002 – when the first site visits to participating countries took off in earnest. Key achievements include:

a) Limited resources were used effectively. Due to the nature of the activities (consultations with governmental officials, mapping out data structures, researching existing legislation and norms on data collection) many of the related activities were complementary to IOM’s existing capacity building in migration management activities and were supplemented by local mission support and field inputs.

b) The establishing of a data sharing mechanism was completely unique. Over ten different databases and region migration processes were evaluated in order to create new software that was designed specifically for the end-user (migration officials with varied levels of IT knowledge in the EECA). The portal – www.dsm-migration.net allows several methods of uploading data 1) through focal points 2) directly in user-prompt mode 3) in paper 4) via Excel charts. The negotiations between the IT service company and governmental officials resulted in a flexible *bilingual* (English and Russian) mechanism that can easily be adapted for country-administrators to create their own country databases and intranets in any language and propose new reports and indicators over time.

c) Lots of data did exist. The initial perception of IOM, partners and participating countries, was that there was not a lot of statistics out there in the EECA. After some investigation, this turned out to be completely false. For example, Ukraine, in its proposed action plan for collecting data at

the national level identified 25 statistical indicators related to migration management that could be collected and eventually shared at the national level.

d) More than just data, tool for policy and legal exchange. Through the General Model's events, participating governments recognized that although uploading raw numbers into a web site is a challenge, providing and sharing relevant laws and policy papers on migration management that stipulate categories of migrants, roles of institutions and policy practices, is not. Therefore, since March 2005 over 40 policy and legal documents have been provided to the Data Sharing Mechanism by EECA States.

e) Ownership and training and coordinating at national level, e.g. via inter-ministerial working groups, is an added advantage. Those pilot countries that have progressed substantially in building their data capacity and prioritizing their needs have also initiated inter-ministerial working groups. During the last meeting of the inter-ministerial working group in the Kyrgyz Republic, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, five ministries prioritized their tasks for upcoming months. This included working towards the adoption of a legislative base for reforming migration data management and collection at the national level, developing an affordable IT platform for national statistical collection and exchange, institutionalizing training for the national network and approving a minimum set of overall migration statistical indicators that can be collected first at a national and then at a regional level.

f) Recognition that there are some formalities before exchanging statistics. The successes to date were not always geared toward a positive output. Sometimes a success was realizing that although statistics can and is being shared informally, a new legislative basis would need to be created before authenticating the statistics at a formal level. This is a success since participating EECA States are now requesting samples and sources on how to accelerate this process in the region and are trying to ascribe to benchmarks and guidelines being developed by neighbouring regions (for instance, EU).

g) Shortcomings at national level, access to Internet, lack of focal point, lack of resources. Countries collecting data do so in support and in compliance with their own national, legislative, policy and administrative means and preferences. For this reason, most countries in the world have indicated that it is not possible to adopt a standard or universal list of pre-defined migration-related terms. Even if there is a desire to do so, several constraints have to be taken into account, such as inconsistency with existing systems at the national level, poor Internet access, lack of financial and human resources, expenses associated with altering statistical collection systems, political interest groups impeding on new legislation, etc.

h) Best practice and general awareness that contacts and meetings can be used to be inspired and learn from each other's successes, challenges, etc. None of these constraints above are unique. An accomplishment of the General Model is that it has already evaluated existing regional mechanisms for statistical collection and exchange at the European level, in Latin America, and within individual countries. Statistical collection and reporting within international organizations such as IOM, ILO, OECD, and UN has also been documented and shared in English and Russian with participating States.

5. Future activities

Given these achievements and lessons learnt, medium-term perspectives include:

- Improved national statistics on migration stocks and flows – in particular with regard to the indicators to be shared as part of the Data Sharing Mechanism

- Regularization of migration-related statistical exchange and co-ordination among migration-related agencies at the countries' level facilitating national policy-making
- Continuation of regular regional dialogue and exchange of migration-related statistics among the countries of EECA through an efficient usage of the Data Sharing Mechanism
- Consolidation of best practices among national and international migration-related experts through meetings, training and networking
- IT and workflow assessments at the national level

6. Perspective

Access to migration statistics is a global priority. Data management is crucial in making policy at the governmental and the regional level. As important is the need for migration statistics for understanding and assessing today's distribution of international migrants at the country level and in all regions of the world to understand international mobility vis-à-vis push and pull factors for migration and capture trends. Statistics is like a streetlight. It can shed light on changes in the poles of attraction based on work permit applications; safe countries of asylum based on refugee status determinations; or benefits for integrating or employing migrants. Statistics disaggregated by gender and age can have important implications for population growth, education policy and demography. Comparable statistics can also reveal unanticipated shifts in migrant stocks between developing and developed countries. It can clarify trends in labour market circulation and provide the statistical basis for migration policy and resource allocation.

The European Union (EU) and the EU Member States have also recognized and prioritized the need for reliable and impartial statistics as the basis for sound migration policy. A current draft EU Framework Regulation on Community statistics on migration and asylum clearly states that harmonisation and comparability for Community statistics are essential for the development and the monitoring of Community legislation and policies relating to migration and asylum. Moreover, the Draft states that the objective of the Regulation is to establish a common framework for the collection and compilation of Community statistics on migration and asylum. The newly initiated European Migration Network (EMN) is another example of the EU's vested interest in improving migration-related data collection and exchange. Moreover, the EU New Neighbourhood Instrument (which directly affects relations with the westernmost EECA states) calls for cooperation in migration-related information exchange. The EC programme for financial and technical assistance to third countries in the areas of migration and asylum "AENEAS" also underscores the need to "[facilitate] the exchange of information on migration movements, in particular on migration flows towards the EU"⁴. The AENEAS programme proposes "the introduction of systems for data collection; observation and analysis of migratory phenomena" as one action that can contribute to joint EU and EECA cooperation on migration and asylum.

Similar to the EU, the US, as the EU's partner in the ongoing transatlantic dialogue, also has a vested interest in promoting regional migration-related processes in the EECA and supporting governments in their legislative and administrative reform to develop transparent migration policy based on sound data. A migration-related exchange mechanism was developed for Central America (www.siemca.iom.int) in response to a natural calamity and now has expanded to include new Latin American State.

Attempts to set up exchange mechanisms for other regions of the world (South Africa, East Asia) are also being pursued, with IOM's and EU Member States' facilitation, the most recent of which was in and among the six Western Balkan countries. At a May 2005 EU-CARDS funded seminar

⁴ "Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council Establishing a programme for financial and technical assistance to third countries in the areas of migration and asylum AENEAS"; PE-CONS 3698/03, Brussels, 6 February 2004, p. 10.

for managing “irregular migration, trafficking and migration data management”, these six states agreed that a priority would be to work towards the draft EU regulation framework on migration and asylum statistics. Short-to-long term goals emulate those of the General Model – setting up national networks for migration data management with well defined focal points; mapping out existing statistics, and selecting and defining the statistics that can best be presented in Annual Statistics and Policy Trends reports for each country and the region as a whole.

At the global level, IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration’s Data Workshop held in Geneva on 8-9 September 2003 indicated that data management is a priority for all 112 IOM Member States. There was particular recognition that statistical indicators to be shared at the regional level should take into account pre-existing national data. “The creation of a data sharing mechanism would be a valuable next step, allowing easy and facilitated sharing of data within minimum formats”⁵ (simple templates developed by countries’ themselves) corresponding to principles generally applicable within the region.

IOM has continued to develop widely applicable tools to providing training to migration practitioners via its newly released “Essentials of Migration Management” (EMM) tool-kit that contains 32 thematic modules related to migration management (including a lesson plan for migration and statistical data and operational data management). The EMM, currently available in English, will also be translated into Russian and Arabic by early 2006. In parallel, other international organizations are pursuing courses and seminars on data management on migration.

A success, the General Model can be further developed and extended to other states. This can be done easily and in many ways. For instance, the number of indicators can be extended, more training modules can be drafted, more technical meetings can be arranged, etc. The General Model is also applicable to other regions as a sustainable and promising approach – it is not an expensive investment since key steps towards enhanced migration-related statistical collection and exchange have already been undertaken, driven by States’ interests and priorities.

The future success of the Model relies on a sustained or emergent political process. Commitment and sincere interest at the States’ decision-making level are extremely important. One-time meetings, bi-annual events and periodic questionnaires are not enough. The Model has to take root in national strategies and follow-up projects to support an integrated and comprehensive approach. Another crucial factor is the active involvement of IOM local field missions and collaborate and strong and continuous working relations between and among implementing national partners (twinning approach).

The most important achievement of the Model is the States commitment to contribute to moving the process forward, and the active and practical cooperation between participating EECA States, international organizations, and individual IOM Member States that have a common interest in promoting capacity building, dialogue and inter-State cooperation in migration data management and policy development. Although the Model’s achievements are incremental and differences of approach exist from country to country, the Model continues to provide a flexible and feasible generic framework for exchange of statistics – a framework that over time enhances the quality, scope and consistency of migration management for those involved.

⁵ “Challenges for the Future: What Can Be Done?” Final report, Conclusion, IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration, Data Workshop, 8-9 September 2003.

ANNEXES

- 1. Sample Training Module – Introduction to the DSM**
- 2. List of Priority Training Modules**
- 3. DSM E-Library – Table of Contents**
- 4. Sample National Network Contact List**
- 5. Inter-Ministerial Working Group Work Plan**
- 6. Example of technical meeting agenda (the one from last year)**
- 7. Example of meeting agenda national visit**
- 8. Example of meeting agenda regional meeting e.g. Almaty meeting**
- 9. Concept paper**
- 10. Indicators**

ANNEX 1: Sample Training Module

Data Sharing Mechanism: Basic IT prerequisites for Data Collection, Processing and Sharing.

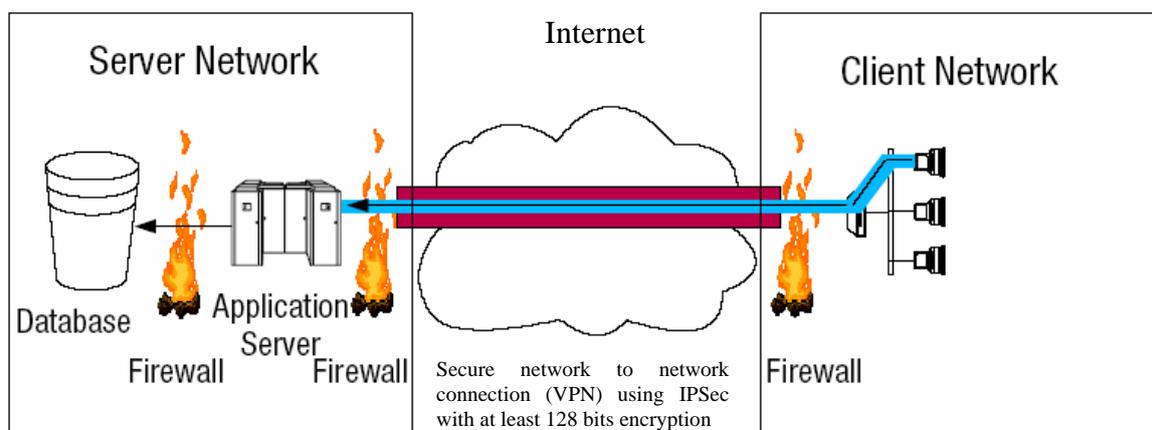
The Data Sharing Mechanism (DSM) is created on the initiative of the governments of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) in order to provide an electronic tool for a rapid collection and exchange of migration-related data in the region.

The DSM is based on a specifically designed database with an on-line interface which provides a possibility to store numerical migration-related data on agreed-upon indicators for further processing and retrieval by authorised users. It also provides a possibility to store and share qualitative information (such as legal and policy-related reports, national statistical overviews and other related documents).

The DSM consists of two parts: the public part, available via www.dsm-migration.net link, and a restricted part, which can be accessed only with a unique username and a password. Administration of users on the regional level is performed by the System Administrator. The Country Administrator of each participating state assigns privileges and manages users at the national level.⁶

The architecture of the DSM responds to the participating states' requirement for confidentiality and high level of security. No unauthorised access to the DSM database is possible.

The DSM IT Architecture:



The two main principles of the DSM are its flexibility and simplicity. Consequently, only minimal IT infrastructure is needed to guarantee the efficiency of the DSM's operations.

Required IT infrastructure for the DSM:

1) Country level (Users and a Country Administrator):

Each agency from the National Network needs to have:

a) Hardware:

- a personal computer with an internet connection
- a coloured monitor with minimum resolution of 800x600 (recommended 1024x768)

⁶ See DSM web-page, Methodology section on the workflow and DSM in practice: www.dsm-migration.net

b) Software:

- a web-browser (Internet Explorer Version 5 or higher, Mozilla Version 1.0 or higher, Netscape version 6 or higher)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0 or higher (to view PDF reports)
- Microsoft Excel 98 or higher (to view EXCEL reports)

The national agency performing the Country Administrator's role will not require any hardware or software in addition to the above-mentioned prerequisites.⁷

2) *Regional level (System Administrator, IOM TCC initially)*

a) all the above specified IT requirements for the Country level

PLUS

b) an application server (Apache Tomcat) and a back-up medium

c) an integrated firewall device

d) a uniquely designed software (provided by the DSM) application to manage the DSM database with an on-line interface

⁷ The role of a Country Administrator is described in more detail in a separate DSM training module: DSM Country Administrator: Privileges, Functions and Areas of Expertise.

ANNEX 2: List of Training Module in the General Model

1. Introduction to the Data Sharing Mechanism
2. Establishing inter-ministerial working groups – examples and lessons learnt.
3. Networks and focal points
4. Linking policy and legal issues with data
5. EU Acquis on asylum and migration statistics
6. Overall data management – concepts and clarifications
7. Lessons learnt from other regional models and processes, including sub-sections on key regional processes such as IGC, Eurostat, CIS, and statistical exchange among Latin American states (SIEMCA)
8. Data collection and processing
9. Data exchange and sharing
10. Basic concepts and categories of migrants
11. Mapping out existing migration data structures in the country – examples and lessons learnt
12. Main elements of capacity-building at the national level
13. Basic IT-prerequisites for data collection, processing and sharing
14. Fundraising and Project Development – illustration of different budget lines that participating countries are eligible for
15. Additional technical data issues
16. DSM Training Curriculum (Country Administrator, Uploading Data, Country Page Management)

ANNEX 3: E-Library of the Data Sharing Mechanism: Table of Contents

1. Historical Background

- CIS-Conference
- Workshop on Cross-Border Cooperation and Development of Migration Legislation, Almaty, 29-31 October, 2001
- Workshop on Organizational Structures, Collection and Sharing of Migration-related Information, Prague, 3-5 July, 2002

2. Recent Events

- Technical meetings
 - i. Second Technical Meeting on Data Sharing Mechanism, Vienna, 7-8 June 2005
 - ii. First Technical Meeting on Data Sharing Mechanism, Vienna, 3-4 June 2004
- Thematic Workshops
 - i. Regional Seminar on Labour Migration Policy and Data Management, Chisinau, 28-30 September 2004
 - ii. Regional Data Workshop for Central Asia, Almaty, 17-18 November 2003

3. Programme Documents of the General Model

4. DSM Elements and Core Documents

- Methodology of the DSM
- Training Modules

5. Information and Data from the Participating States

6. Publications

- National Statistical Reports
- IOM
- UN
- ILO
- WTO

7. Other Dialogues and Processes

- Overview
- Dialogues and Processes
- Meetings, Events

8. Links

ANNEX 4: Network Of Persons From Core Institutions Dealing With Migration-Related Data

COUNTRY

Ministry/Department/Institution	Name / Title	Address	Tel/Fax	E-mail	Website
Ministry of Internal Affairs State Department for Citizenship, Immigration and Registration of Natural Persons	Name First Deputy Director				
Ministry of Internal Affairs State Department for Citizenship, Immigration and Registration of Natural Persons	Name Senior Inspector for Special Missions				
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Consular Service	Name 3-rd Secretary				
Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Department of Employment Policy and Labour Migration	Name Head				
State Employment Center Section for Migration and International Cooperation	Name Deputy Head				
Administration of the State Border Guard Service	Name Head of the Section				
State Committee for Nationalities and Migration	Name Main Specialist				
State Committee of Statistics Population Statistics Department	Name Deputy Director of the Department				
State Committee of Statistics Labour Statistics Department	Name Deputy Director of the Department				

ANNEX 5: Inter-Ministerial Working Group Work Plan (Sample)

Approved:
Deputy Minister of
Foreign Affairs of COUNTRY, YEAR
NAME

Work Plan

Working group on creation of the Data Base of the migration aspects in the COUNTRY, Year

#	Events	Timeline	Responsible entity
1	Drafting a project on Regulation of order and form of collection, exchange of information between state ministries and entities	Third quarter	MFA, all other ministries involved
2	Additions into the composition of the working group – inclusion of representatives of the State Agency of information technology and resources under the Government of the COUNTRY	Second quarter	Passport and Visa Department, MoI
3	Conduction of the working group meeting	Quarterly	MFA
4	Confirmation of minimum set of data	Second quarter	MFA, all other ministries involved
5	Preparation work towards creation of minimum set of data (6 indicators) in ministries and entities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval of set of data - Confirmation of minimum of set of data - Development of order (instruction) of collection and exchange of information - Development of configuration of interdepartmental network - Drafting of list of required equipment 	Third quarter	MFA, all other ministries involved
6	Development of glossary	Third-fourth quarter	All ministries involved
7	Training of staff, who will be appointed to deal with a creation of data base	Second quarter	IOM/MFA --- Done
8	Collection and preparation of information on students – foreign citizens, studying in high schools	Third quarter	Ministry of Education
9	Collection and preparation of information on students – arrived ethnic NATIONALS, studying in high schools in the COUNTRY	Fourth quarter	Ministry of Education
10	Collection and preparation of information on students – citizens of the COUNTRY, studying abroad within the framework of programs of the Ministry of Education of the COUNTRY	Fourth quarter	Ministry of Education
11	Collection of information on citizens of the COUNTRY, wishing to find a job abroad	Third-fourth quarter	Ministry of Labor
12	Placement of information about state authorities working on labor migration issues in the Employment Service Centers		Ministry of Labor
13	Registration of number of tourists, arriving in the COUNTRY	Third-fourth quarter	The State committee on tourism
14	Development of appropriate Regulation and preparation towards creation of data base on the citizens, going for permanent stay in the NABOURING STATE	Third-fourth quarter	The State tax service

ANNEX 6: Example of a Technical Meeting Agenda

Day 1:

- 10:00 – 10:30 Welcoming remarks
- 10:30 – 11:00 The Data Sharing Mechanism
Status of the issues to be addressed at the meeting and demonstration of how the mechanism is expected to be functioning
- 11:00 – 11:40 Tour-de-table
Short introduction by the delegates and presentation of outcomes and challenges of national approaches for each of the participating States
- 11:40 – 12:00 Presentation of OSCE\ODIHR representative
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lessons learnt from existing national and regional models of establishing, maintaining and developing data sharing mechanisms
- 13:00 – 13:30 Discussion
- 13:30 – 15:00 Lunch
- 15:00 – 17:00 Finalisation of the electronic templates to be used for the exchange of the agreed migration indicators in the Data Sharing Mechanism
Set-up and definition of each of the indicators
Data for each of the indicators
Documentation and validation of the data
Data questionnaire related to migration structures: national network of focal points and focal points with regard to the data exchange
Ownership and confidentiality of the data
Frequency of future data collection and sharing
- 19:00 Banquet

Day 2:

- 10:00 – 11:00 Demonstration of the final version of the electronic templates to be used for the exchange of the agreed migration indicators in the Data Sharing Mechanism
- 11:00 – 12:30 The Data Sharing Mechanism and the homepage – part I
Retrieval and verification of the data
Storage of the data and access to the data
Use of the database for request, consultations, meetings, etc.
Demonstration of the data part of the homepage – secure and non-secure part.
Levels of Security and existing IT infrastructure
- 12:30 – 13:30 Discussion
- 13:30 – 14:45 Lunch
- 14:45 – 16:00 The Data Sharing Mechanism and the homepage – part II
Use of the homepage as a library with other information than data (e.g. relevant documents and publications on policy and legal issues in participating States and on other States)
Use of the Data Sharing Mechanism to develop policy and legal issues in each of participating States
Experience from other regional consultations and national Migration Services
Optional national parts of the homepage and the use of the homepage as an intranet for each of the participating States
- 16:00 – 16:30 Future activities
Data Sharing Mechanism
National activities
Regional Data Seminar for the “Western part” of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region
Annual technical meetings (tentative)
- 16:30 – 17:00 Closure of the meeting

ANNEX 7: Example of a National Visit Meeting Agenda

Day 1	IOM meeting (1-2 hour meeting in the afternoon)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of the IOM Data Sharing Mechanism and homepage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - background - structure, content, workflow, public vs. restricted info - indicators for the pilot project - use of the homepage as a library - also with policy and legal doc. info - launch date - Info about the Country on the homepage • Issues for discussion with the gov. focal point • Overview of initiatives and activities in relation to the General Model • Introduction to overall national approaches on data in pilot states • CD-electronic library • Input and ideas from IOM Almaty for activities of relevance for the General Model and in specific for the Country • Development of national proposal and reports • Any other business
Day 2	Data meeting with governmental officials (2 hours in the afternoon, preferably to be held after the IOM meeting)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up to the data seminar with core institutions dealing with migration-related data in the Country • Demonstration of the IOM Data Sharing Mechanism and homepage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - background - structure, content, workflow, public vs. restricted info - indicators for the pilot project - use of the homepage as a library - also with policy and legal doc. info - launch date - Info about the Country on the homepage • The Country's participation in the Data Sharing Mechanism • Overview of initiatives and activities in relation to the General Model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction to new national and regional initiatives and activities within the DSM project - training modules - CD-electronic library - new activities to be undertaken - other initiatives within IOM closely related to data activities in countries of EECA • Overview of main activities in pilot states in relation to data management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - examples of best practices and recent experiences - [initiatives in Belarus and contacts with Russia] - capacity building for migration management in Kazakhstan • Future activities

ANNEX 8: Example of a Regional Meeting Agenda (Labour Migration Policy And Data Management Workshop)

Day 1	
8.30-9.00	Registration
9.00-9.30	Welcoming remarks
9.30-9.45	Keynote speech
9.45-10.00	Discussion
10.00-10.30	PLENARY 1: LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY AND ITS NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS
10.30-11.00	Coffee break
11.00-11.15	<i>Invited Speaker from IOM</i>
11.15-12.00	Discussion
12.00-13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.00	PLENARY II: THE NEED FOR DATA <i>Operationalizing the link between data, policy and legislative issues; challenges, successes, experiences in collecting and managing data on labour migration</i>
14.00-14.30	Discussion
14.30-15.00	Coffee break
15.00-15.20	<i>Invited Speaker from a national Government of a EU member state</i>
15.20-16.00	Discussion
Day 2	
10.00-10.15	Wrap-up from Day 1: Effective practices in labour migration policy and the use of key statistical indicators: examples of the data/information gap at different levels, and in different regions, by different actors (<i>Presenters: IOM and OSCE representatives</i>)
10.15-10.30	Instructions for the breakout sessions.
10.30-11.15	Breakout Sessions <i>Breakout I – Labour migration policy</i>
11.15-11.30	Coffee-break
11.30-12.30	Breakout Sessions – (Continuation). <i>Breakout I – Labour migration policy</i> <i>Breakout II – Strategies for Labour Migration Statistics</i>
12.30-14.00	Lunch
14.00-14.30	Reports from Break-out Sessions
14.30-15.00	Discussion and concluding remarks

ANNEX 9: Concept paper to the Programme for the Creation of a General Model for Collection, Application and Sharing of Migration-related Data in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Challenges and effective approaches to national, regional and international migration data collection, sharing and management: Focusing on short term and practical solutions

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing awareness of the different forms of migration – regular and irregular, voluntary and forced – and the impact of these movements on different sectors in origin, transit and destination countries. The consequences and the reality of this migration will be covered by some of the core topics of the breakout sessions on the second day of the workshop (i.e. migration and security, migration and development, and labour migration and trafficking).

With international migration rising to the forefront of policy issues worldwide, there is a corresponding awareness and interest in migration data issues. Although hardly considered as a new phenomenon, it is useful to be reminded that the range of information and statistical data available on migration is neither complete nor fully comparable, and indeed often limited and most often not timely. In spite of these limitations, a variety of migration data is available “out there” and is being used more or less systematically.

It is important to note that this situation exists despite the fact that several important and recognized initiatives at different levels such as the UN Recommendations of Statistics on International Migration have been put forward and – for some – tested in practice.

Yet, lack of credible data on migration leads to policy-making and trend assessment based upon incomplete or inaccurate information – can governments and other legitimate and important users accept such a (status quo) situation? Indeed, to put it more directly, can users risk such a situation, which, at the worst, can result in dubious and untrustworthy data?

This paper argues “no”. The premise of the paper is that credible data is instrumental and represents an indispensable basis for developing, monitoring and evaluating policy and legal issues in the field of migration. Alongside the aim of contributing to the workshop, the paper focuses on some challenges and effective approaches to national, regional and international migration data collection, sharing and management. The paper will provide an overview and be practical in its approach. It is intended to be used as a general starting point for discussions at this workshop provide a contextual basis for the more case-oriented breakout sessions.

2. The framework

Each state has its own system of data collection, application and sharing – of relevance to its constituencies, legislative and policy frameworks and traditions. Data may come from a variety of sources, be collected by different bodies and be used for a range of purposes.

Sources most often used for collecting migration data include: population registers, registers of foreigners, records of issuance of residence and work permits, records of issuance of entry and exit permits, records of processing of requests for asylum, records for regularization, border statistics, censuses and household surveys and apprehension and deportation records. Collection bodies typically include a variety of government departments, IOs, NGOs, employment/recruitment agencies, educational institutions and any other institution dealing with migrants. The use of data within migration-related activities range from policy making and programme decisions on labour migration, asylum and integration, counter trafficking measures, security and other issues as well as to meet, the

myriad of complex social, economic, demographic and political needs within a country or internationally.

A fundamental challenge to the application, sharing and management of migration data is how to handle the variety of statistical indicators available without having a common reference to a globally established and recognized terminology, within the various migratory zones worldwide or among countries with similar migration perspectives (e.g. those primarily countries of origin) or complementary migration perspectives (e.g. countries with similar migrant flows).

As mentioned earlier, the range of information and statistical data available on migration is neither complete nor fully comparable – and indeed in cases it's limited and not timely. In spite of these limitations, governments are coming to recognize the importance of data, and therefore migration information and statistics in some form are being collected, shared and used by most States. However, in some countries, there is a lack of resources, trained personnel or capacity to move in the direction of developing effective data management programmes.

Apart from the bilateral exchange of information between States, a number of international bodies collect or compile regional and international migration data. These bodies generally collect data related to specific migration themes related to their areas of work (e.g. IOM, UNHCR).

Other organizations and institutions – and sometimes countries – do not produce data, but compile pre-existing data from a variety of sources at national/local levels and use data mainly to analyze trends and/or link and assess data, legal and policy issues together. Examples of these organizations and institutions include the UN as a whole, IGC, EU and OECD.

Migration in its nature is not a static phenomenon. The geographic origin and the nature of flows continue to change and new migratory flows emerge. These characteristics bring new challenges to the process of producing, collecting, using and sharing migration information; challenges that are – as will be evident and emphasized at the workshop – being met in a variety of ways nationally/regionally/internationally.

3. Towards a common understanding of the need for and use of data

One might argue that migration policy could be made with or without data. However, it would seem difficult to envisage “a world” where data on migration was non-existent or barely existing or where perception of trends are based on anecdotal information and impressions.

One might also argue that data is like a streetlight – it provides light but is not always very enlightening. Arguably, there might be an element of truth in the argument in the sense that it illustrates the ever-existing ambiguity the use of data where, on the one hand, there is an obvious need for data for administrative and political purposes, whereas on the other hand there is an inherent risk of possible misuse and abuse of data on migration (e.g. data can be very impressive, but not very convincing).

Consequently, *managing migration* using data implies being able to determine what subcomponents constitute migration (e.g. categories of migrants), and how to most effectively obtain that information (e.g. reporting systems). An *effective management* of migratory trends implies, in addition, that policies and strategies are based upon knowledge of the reality within these flows. Thus, it is of crucial importance that the collection and sharing of migration data is built upon shared principles, which ensures a – wherever possible high – degree of trust and confidence in the data.

“Holding” national data and information up against data and information from other relevant States can, in some cases, *further improve the effective management* of migratory trends. Such data is also essential and often critical in providing insight into cross-border migratory trends, emerging patterns or in

suggesting areas for useful common actions, or in a more general application, when describing, monitoring and evaluating national policies.

In the UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, a series of categories are suggested to form the basis of international migration statistics collection. The categories serve as indicators and guides for data collectors in compiling and sharing migration data. Most governments apply different or additional categories based upon their own legislation, regulations, administrative purposes and traditions. There is *no single instrument (or physical tool in collecting data, which has all the necessary categories) listed pertaining to international migration*. Often as a rule, data is commonly gleaned from a multitude of sources not specially generated by statistical analysis from the original source. Moreover, many governments have only recently begun to include migration concepts in their domestic legislation. In addition, since migration can be a *sensitive issue*, States may prefer to “sit on the data” – even between institutions at the national level. Beyond this issue, a real challenge is to encompass specific national/regional migratory trends – often overlapping with more general data indicators – into a *meaningful statistical and applicable terminology*.

Altogether, the examples above effectively illustrate the challenge at all levels (from the national to the regional/international level) in recognizing the importance of pursuing and obtaining *a common understanding – or at least a broad, sometimes legislative, mandate* – of the need for and use of migration data.

More practically, the inherent challenge in data collection also illustrates a choice to be made, e.g. between *broad, composite definitions* of data categories with limited use to encompass relevant producers of data, *or tables with numerous specific categories*, enhancing the use of the data but presenting a complex picture of the situation in practice (especially if data is compared regionally/internationally). Moreover, the examples above also illustrate that the collection of migration data not only depends on different *legislative issues, but also on different administrative systems*, which are responsible for compiling the data. Streamlining the administrative systems facilitates, but is not essential for, the number of categories of migrants compiled at the national level. Full comparability of migrant categories within a migratory zone is therefore not a realistic target in the years to come.

Therefore, at best and in a more long-term perspective, the importance in working towards a common data collection and sharing approach cannot be stressed enough.

It is the premise of this paper that the collection, sharing and management of migration data is a process, which needs time, resources and priority and which needs to be approached very differently country-by-country and region-by-region. Thus, it is an ongoing process – and not something formed or catalyzed by “single events”. However, it is also a process involving a high degree of coming to terms with and being aware of the *raison d'être* in collecting, sharing and managing migration through and by data.

In the short-term perspective – and due to the ever-increasing need for migration data – simply collecting and sharing the variety of migration data already available “out there” should be pursued.

As will be illustrated later in this paper, one successful and very operational approach to this issue has been to develop a generic and general model only based on a minimum format (instead of trying to meet complex standards) and based on the existing statistical infrastructures at the national level.

Some basic precepts To address and formulate a common understanding of the need for and use of data on migration (irrespective of the level of sophistication infrastructure and resources needed) – would include the following:

The knowledge of the reality of migratory trends should be based upon data.

The availability of data should reflect the recognized needs in the country (and eventually for use by IOs, etc.) – in other words producers and users should be connected.

A minimum set of official data for the whole country should exist – and, to the extent possible, be made available to the public (evidently balancing the need for justifiable discretion against the need for transparency).

Data should be adequate, timely, consistent and objective – in some regards and wherever possible approximately comparable.

Data should be collected and processed by all institutions according to some well-known and well-accepted principles and formats – preferably on the basis on databases/registers directly from the primary (and original) source.

Guiding principles for validating the quality of the data should be formulated and applied.

4. Challenges for the future: What can be done?

Numerous activities have been suggested, promoted and/or implemented with regard to increasing migration data collection, sharing and management at the national/regional and international level.

There is no one solution or structure that will “solve” the existing information and data gap on migration.

Overall, a *continued dialogue* on migration terminology and the exchange of concepts and existing data would contribute towards building clearer global understanding. Dialogue would also help build a better appreciation for and commitment to the need to enhance and improve migration data collection, sharing and management and to promote and shape coordination and cooperation between and among States and regional/international organizations. Increased cooperation and coordination between and within States will also contribute to an increased awareness of the need for timely, reliable and comparable migration data at all levels (nationally, regionally and internationally).

Improving data availability and the effective use of data starts with examining the *primary source of the data* at the national level. A common theme recurring in various conferences and programs on migration data is the need for *building and/or reinforcing the capacity of data management* at the national level – sometimes with assistance indirectly facilitated, or directly provided, by regional and international organizations. Another theme is the role of *regional and international organizations* in collection and sharing data on migration.

IOM – among other IOs – has taken an active role in a number of (mainly) regional processes on migration data management. The following summarizes some lessons learnt from these activities and identifies some prerequisites that would be needed in order to establish *effective migration data management systems* at and for the national level with focus on short-term, immediately applicable solutions.

A very important step, which needs to be taken to ensure the establishment of an effective migration data management system, is to create or enhance an already *existing network of focal points* on migration data among core institutions. An *institution to coordinate the collection, sharing and management of the data* available within the network is important both towards the national and international level. Supporting mechanisms and this coordination creates a framework, where the involved institutions move towards a common understanding of the data available. Often the involved institutions are both producers and users of the migration data; again, the network offers a framework for the *development of a producer – user nexus*.

Experience shows that defining a *minimum set of five-ten recognizable and recognized and aggregated overall data migration indicators* are a good starting point. Then collected, actively applied, and shared regularly at the national (and later regional) level using an agreed-upon format (e.g. data on asylum applications, labour migration, irregular migration, etc) gives experience allowing for further development and further needs of data.

As a first step *statistical indicators to be shared at the regional level, must be outlined* taking into account already existing national data used internationally. The creation of an agreed-upon Data Sharing Mechanism would be a valuable next step, allowing for easy and facilitated sharing of data within agreed-upon minimum formats (with data being shared using simple templates) along principles generally applicable throughout the region.

In practical terms, the data shared in the *Data Sharing Mechanism* is shared electronically according to an agreed-upon frequency and using a common and recognized template. As a possibility, the Data Sharing Mechanism could also serve as service for the institutions and parties involved in the process and can also be used for requests, queries and consultations in and between countries participating in the mechanism. The more informal and flexible the Data Sharing Mechanism is set up, the more effective the Mechanism would seem to be – allowing for the involved parties to adjust to the given administrative and cultural reality. Upgrading and inventing new IT-platform(s) may be a long-term derivative from collecting and sharing migration data – however *starting with the existing statistical infrastructure* would – for most States – suffice.

Thus, creating or enhancing statistical infrastructures can often be obtained using a limited number of resources within a limited timeframe. An important prerequisite, however, is that any such process is built upon national ownership.

The development of a “General Model” for the collection, application and sharing of migration data – an emerging approach

The philosophy behind the “General Model” is that each State finds itself at a different stage of development in migration data management; level of sophistication in infrastructure, access to resources and level of commitment. For those States who are themselves (*ownership*) interested in and committed to further developing and enhancing their statistical infrastructure (*capacity building*), the “General Model” offers a flexible, proactive approach to data management.

The Model can be used for all types of migration data. In principle, the elements of the Model can be applied in different tempi and in different order. The elements of the Model are therefore not mutually exclusive nor do they represent an all or nothing approach. The Model is based on the fact that the reality of migratory trends is based on *timely, consistent* and *objective* data. It is also based on the fact that *producers* and *users* should be connected.

The Model is developed as the practical result of the follow-up of the workshop on Organisational Structures, Collection and Sharing of Migration-related Information held on 3-5 July 2002 in Prague. At this workshop OSCE ODIHR and IOM TCC were requested to promote the initiative of the collection and sharing of migration data in the region. In the light of this request, OSCE ODIHR and IOM TCC – and the partners Danish Immigration Service and Inter-governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC) – have developed the “General Model” for the EECA States.

Continued

Some of the main elements included in the “General Model” are:

- Establishment of a national network including core institutions dealing with migration data with well-defined focal points, appointed coordinating institutions and a mechanism for a fast and reliable sharing of relevant migration data.
- Mapping out of the existing statistical infrastructures, including uncovering what governments collect and share, where, when, why, how and by whom.
- Identifying the national demand for migration data at different levels – from minister-level to technicians dealing with data – and defining, as a starting point, a minimum set of 5-10 aggregated, overall data indicators recognised and recognizable for the country. The data being collected actively applied and shared at the national level and potentially at the regional/international level. The minimum set of data include e.g. asylum data, labour migration, data on cross-border activities and some demographic variables. Documentation for the data is instrumental. Therefore, a matrix with key methodological notes and definitions of the indicators is made. The institution compiling the data is the owner of the data.
- Establishment of a Data Sharing Mechanism on the basis of the minimum set of data and on the existing statistical infrastructure enabling the involved partners to share the agreed data in an informal, transparent and effective manner. Data is not necessarily comparable. However, the availability of some minimum standards (e.g. principles on collecting and sharing the agreed data) ensures that the data can be trusted and used among the EECA States. The sharing of data – and in general information (e.g. enquiries, requests, etc.) – is based on electronic communication (could also be based on paper) with emphasis on an ease and direct way of communicating. The sharing of data is based on rapid exchange of the agreed data. The sharing of data is driven by the network and can gradually – according to the users need – be expanded in terms of the network, the frequency and the data indicators shared.
- In order to further promote the follow-up events and to provide an easy and efficient access to the Data Sharing Mechanism, a homepage will be created at IOM TCC containing not only data as agreed to exchange and share but also information on statistical and legal issues of relevance for understanding and using the data.
- At the regional level seminars are under planning. As with the activities at the national level, an important objective with the regional seminars will be to present tools and models for an effective approach to migration data management and to include elements of data training in the seminar.
- To be used both at the national and the regional level, 15 training modules on statistics is contained in the model, including modules on 1) why is there a need for data, 2) which data indicators are relevant/needed, 3) basic concepts and categories of migrants, 4) how could data be compiled/used and 5) how could data, policy and legal issues be linked together.
- Furthermore, it is planned to have a technical training seminar for the key-technicians on migration data from each of the EECA States, to develop a curriculum for the follow-up activities, and to arrange study tours for local data experts and migration authorities.
- In parallel National projects are being developed supporting national needs and priorities. Since the process is ongoing these efforts and the activities in the General Model supplement each other.

The Model can easily be applied in other regional consultative processes. Evidence suggests that the engagement of external partners – typically IOs – can (often) facilitate the process. The Model has already relatively easily, within a reasonable timeframe (one year) and with modest resources created some promising results in relation to enhancing national structures (test countries have initially been Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine), revitalizing the regional cooperation and dialogue and by starting a Data Sharing Mechanism where all the EECA States are invited to take part (hosted in IOM TCC).

For further information about the “General Model”, reference is made to the project proposal " CREATION OF A GENERAL MODEL FOR THE COLLECTION, APPLICATION AND SHARING OF MIGRATION-RELATED DATA" and to TCC Coordinator Mr. Claus Folden, email: cfolden@iom.int

5. Key challenges for consideration and discussion with focus on short-term solutions

Migration policies will be formulated whether data is available or not.

Better they are formulated on the basis of data rather than in a void.

Better they are formulated on the basis of recent rather than historical data.

Better to connect producers and users rather than focus on each element in isolation

Better they are formulated in reference to data from other countries.

Better to begin work with existing fragmented data than waiting for an ideal system to be set up.

Better to continue a dialogue on the need for and use of migration data than to keep the existing status quo situation and accepting the current information and data gap.

Better data is fenced upon recognized and recognizable principles rather than arbitrary case- by-case methods.

Better to cooperate and coordinate with neighbouring countries than thinking that migration is only a national issue.

Better to prioritise a common understanding of a minimum format for the exchange of data rather than wait for standards to be implemented.

Better to recognise the need for a long-term common data collection approach in the field of migration rather than hope that time would solve the information and data gap on migration – ideally by defining a generic approach based on a minimum format.

Annex 10: Initial Migration-related Indicators in the DSM

Number of Foreigners in the Country,
Number of First-time Applications for Work Permit and for Work Permit
Extensions and Number of Decisions on Such Applications,
Number of Foreigners Entering the Country
Number of Foreigners Leaving the Country
Number of Asylum Applications in the Country and
Number of Refugee Status Determinations in the Country