Estimates on the Numbers of Illegal and Smuggled Immigrants in Europe

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Illegal (undocumented) Migration

- is statistically not **directly** quantifiable (by its very nature)
- is therefore scientifically neglected and dismissed
- has high social and political relevance
- is highly present in the media, often based on shaky numbers

- Even if no strictly „scientific“ evidence is available:
  - indications on **methods**, **assumptions** and **sources** of quantitative estimates should be given
  - so that a careful interpretation of data can produce qualified statements on the **dimensions**, **trends** and **quality** of illegal migration.
Illegal Migration: Definitions and Types

Differentiation:
- stock data (illegal residence, illegal work)
- flow data (illegal entry)

6 relevant types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Residence legal</th>
<th>Residence illegal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry legal</td>
<td>Work illegal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entry illegal</td>
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<td>No Work</td>
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Based on the differences between

- Census results and
- Aliens registers, municipal registers, etc.

- Example USA:
  - The INS estimates some 8.5 million illegal residents on the basis of the Census 2000

- Example Spain:
  - The Census 2001 counted 1.57 million foreigners as against 1.11 million foreigners with valid residence permits (INE)
Based on the projection of available indicators, using an appropriately defined multiplier, on:

- **Flow data (illegal immigration)**
  
  Example: apprehension data of illegal migrants at the border

- **Stock data (illegal residence, illegal work)**
  
  Example 1: apprehension data of illegal migrants within the country
  Example 2: data on illegal employment of foreigners from labour inspectorates

**Variant: „Capture-Recapture“ Method**
Based on the observation that illegal (undocumented) migrants leave traces in official demographic statistics, it is (theoretically) possible to make projections on the size of the uncounted population.

- **Examples**
  - Birth rates by nationalities
  - Death rates by nationalities
  - Hospitalization rates by nationalities
  - other
Indirect estimation techniques involve the estimation of uncounted quantities through their postulated correlation to other available indicators.

- **Examples**
  - Cash in circulation (M0) → Size of the “grey economy“ (Studies of Prof. Schneider, Univ. of Linz)
  - Electricity consumption
  - Bread consumption
  - Other
Stock results I: Illegal employment in Switzerland

Piguet (2001)

- Survey of over 800 enterprises in Switzerland
- Sampling according to specific business branches
- Questioned as to the estimated share of illegal employment of foreigners in the own branch

Various results depending on the choice of multiplier:

- Arithmetic Average (1.5% to 10.3% according to branch) → 182,556
- Median (0.1% to 10.0% according to branch) → 73,100
- Highly affected branches: construction, catering and hotelery
Van der Leun et al. (1998)

- Analysis of police apprehension figures of foreigners
- In four cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Den Haag and Utrecht
- Estimation of relation illegally/legally present foreigners
- 7.3% of 545,000 → 40,000 illegally present foreigners in 4 cities
- Projection to the whole of the Netherlands → 60,000

Engbersen et al. (2002)

- Analysis of data from 25 police districts (1997-2000)
- Results → 112,000 – 163,000 illegally present foreigners in the Netherlands
Recurring regularization programmes in:

- Greece (2001 – current; up to 7/2001: 351,110 applications)
- Portugal (2001: around 90,000 regularizations)
- Spain (2000-2001: Total of 614,377 applications concerning some 350,000 persons leading to 334,000 regularizations)
- Italy (2002 – current; up to 3/2003: some 700,000 applications)

Problems:

- Number of applications is not the same as number of persons applying
- Wide differences in implementation (Italy – easier; Greece – difficult)
- Not all illegal residents apply; additional non-residents apply
- Persons regularized can fall back into irregularity
Stock results IV: The range of estimates in 12 European countries

Estimates of stocks of illegal migrants in 12 European countries (in 1,000)

Source: Jandl, 2003

Totals: Lower: 2.6 mio/Medium: 4.0 mio/Higher: 6.4 mio
Flow results I: Illegal immigration to Europe

Problems:
- Very few sources
- EU-wide apprehension statistics are confidential (CIREFI)
- Varying methods

Examples:
- Heckmann (2000): On the basis of EU apprehension data (260,000) and 2:1 multiplier \( \rightarrow 400,000+ \)
- BND (2001): some 1000/day to the EU
- Widgren (2002): On the basis of apprehension statistics and 2:1 multiplier and the share of irregular entries among asylum-seekers \( \rightarrow 500,000 \) per year
Migration Watch UK (2002)

Three-part estimate:

1) „Disappeared asylum-seekers“ (some 60% of total or 50,000)
2) Visa-overstayers (1% of 3.6 mio visitors from non-EU countries or 35,000)
3) Clandestine entries (ratio of 1:2 of 47,000 apprehensions in the year 2000 or 25,000)

Total: 50,000 + 35,000 + 25,000 = 110,000 illegal immigrants/year
Flow results III: Estimating the “correct multiplier”

Example 1: Germany

- 2001: 113,000 apprehensions, of which 45,000 apprehensions at the border
- Multiplier = ?
- Indicator: of 17,000 asylum-seekers from Iraq (2001), only 3,000 had contact with the police before submitting an application (20 %)
- → Multiplier of 5?
- Similar examples from Austria and Czech Republic (M=4 to 5)

Example 2: Greece

- In 2001: total of 219,598 apprehensions, of which 167,168 from border guards and 6,864 from the coast guard
- 75 % of apprehended migrants were Albanians (circular migration involving only short distances, multiple apprehensions likely)
- Multiplier = ?
Total border apprehensions
- In EU-15 (incomplete): 286,000
- In EU-25 (incomplete): 373,000
Estimates of Illegal Migration Flows to Europe (2001)

Total estimated flows:
- In EU-15: 650,000
- In EU-25: 800,000

In EU-25:
- GR: 80,000
- SLK: 30,000
- DK: 10,000
- SF: 5,000

In EU-15:
- IRL: 10,000
- G: 90,000
- UK: 95,000
- NL: 50,000
- B: 15,000
- F: 90,000
- P: 5,000
- E: 40,000
- A: 50,000
- ML: 50
- I: 100,000
- GR: 80,000
- CY: 10,000
- SF: 5,000

Other countries:
- EE: 50
- LAT: 500
- LIT: 2,500
- PL: 10,000
- CZ: 45,000
- SLK: 30,000
- H: 25,000
- SLO: 40,000
The link between illegal migration and human smuggling

- Police authorities from various countries have estimated the proportion of "facilitated" illegal entries between 30% - 80%.
- The German BAFL made a survey among asylum-seekers in 2000 in which 2/3 of respondents claimed to have made use of a facilitator to enter Germany, only 6% claimed to have arrived independently.
- Europol (2001) estimated that about half of all illegal migrants to the EU had made use of smugglers.

Useful differentiation

- Long-distance migration (Iraq, Afghanistan, China,..) → very strong links
- Medium-distance migration (Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia,..) → strong links
- Short-distance/network migration (e.g. FRY) → weaker links
- Visa-free migration (e.g. Romania, Poland) → very weak links
Estimating the size of the human smuggling industry

Smuggling fees

- Long-distance smuggling (Iraq, Afghanistan, China,..):
  € 3,000 up to € 40,000
- Medium-distance smuggling (Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia,..):
  € 1,500 to € 6,000
- Short-distance smuggling/provision of basic documents (e.g. FRY):
  € 200 to € 5,000

Sizing up the human smuggling industry

Based on
- Apprehension figures + estimates of illegal migration
- The geographical distribution of illegal and smuggled migrants
- A differentiation of the links of illegal migration to human smuggling
- A further differentiation according to smuggling fees

→ The size of the industry can be estimated at some € 4 billion/p.a. for the EU-25
All estimates are fraught with substantial problems and errors:

- Varying quality/availability of apprehension data
- Methodological problems (what is the right „multiplier“?)
- Highly complex patterns of migration
- Highly dynamic changes in stocks and flows of migrants

Therefore:

- The figures provided can give only a very rough picture of the dimension of illegal migration to Europe and should not be seen as the definite account of the size of the phenomenon

⇒ Rather, the estimates provided should stimulate debate on how to improve our understanding of illegal migration to Europe.