



International Centre
for Migration Policy Development

**Estimates on the Numbers of
Illegal and Smuggled Immigrants
in Europe**

**Presentation at Workshop 1.6
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Illegal Migration as a subject of research?

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:

	Residence legal	Residence illegal
Entry legal	Work illegal	Work illegal No Work
Entry illegal	Work illegal	Work illegal No Work



Methods I: “Residual” estimates

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)**



Methods II: “Multiplier” estimates

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



Methods III: “Demographic” estimates

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**



Methods IV: “indirect” estimates

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**



Stock results II: The capture-recapture method in the NL

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**



Stock results III: Evidence from regularization programmes

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)**

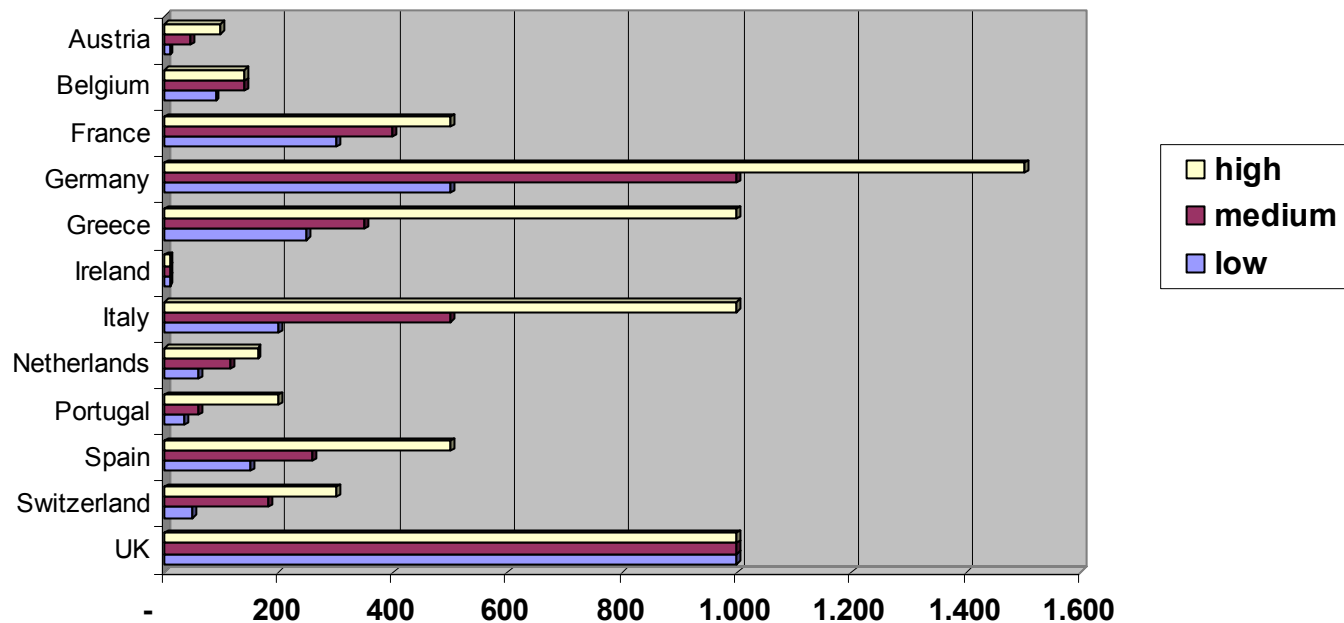
Problems:

- **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 → 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 → 500,000 per year**



Flow results II: Illegal immigration to the UK

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

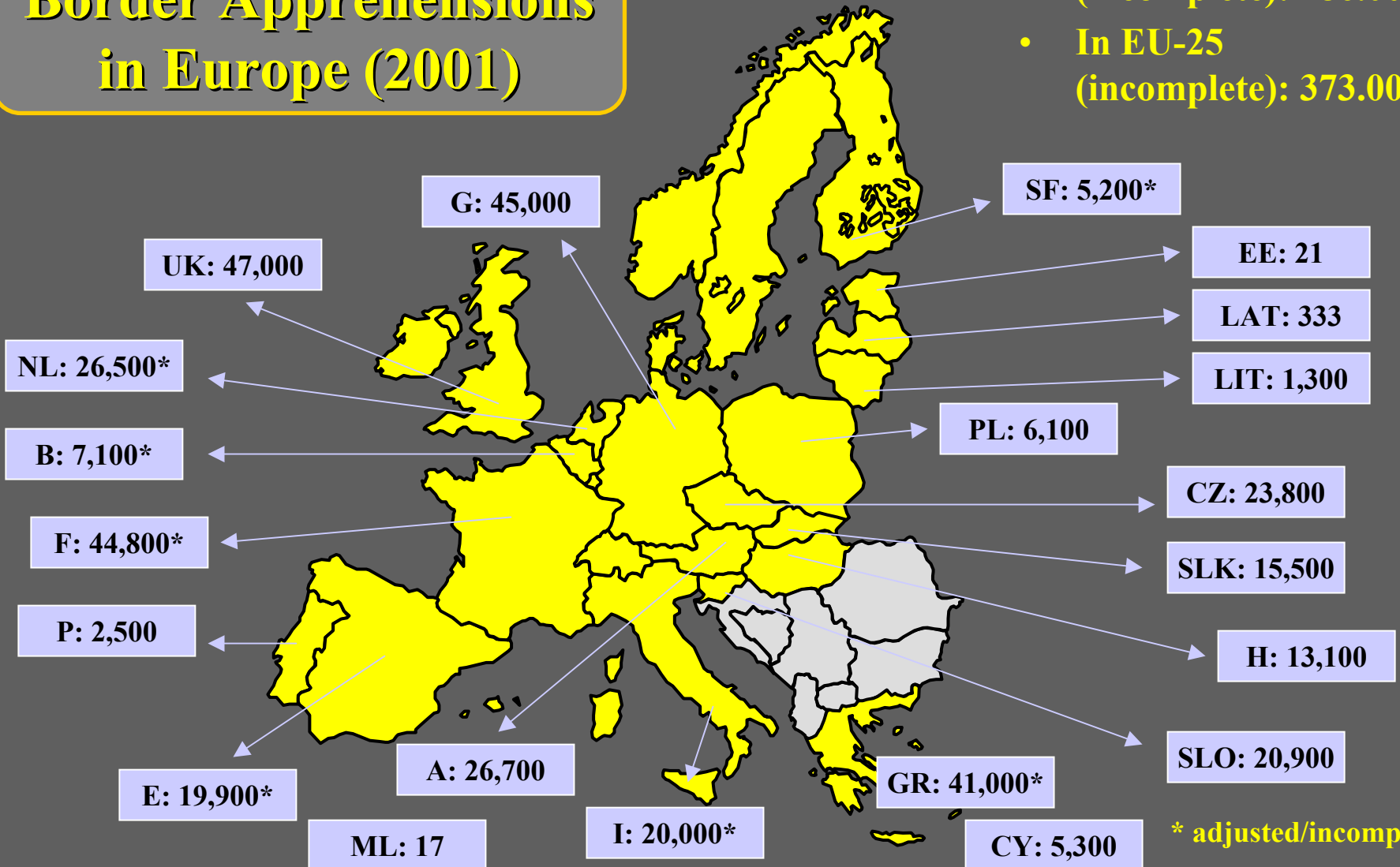
- In 2001: total of 219,598 apprehensions, of which 167,168 from border guards and 6,864 from the coast guard
- 75 % of apprehended migrants were Albanians (circular migration involving only short distances, multiple apprehensions likely)
- Multiplier = ?



Border Apprehensions in Europe (2001)

Total border apprehensions

- In EU-15
(incomplete): 286.000
- In EU-25
(incomplete): 373.000



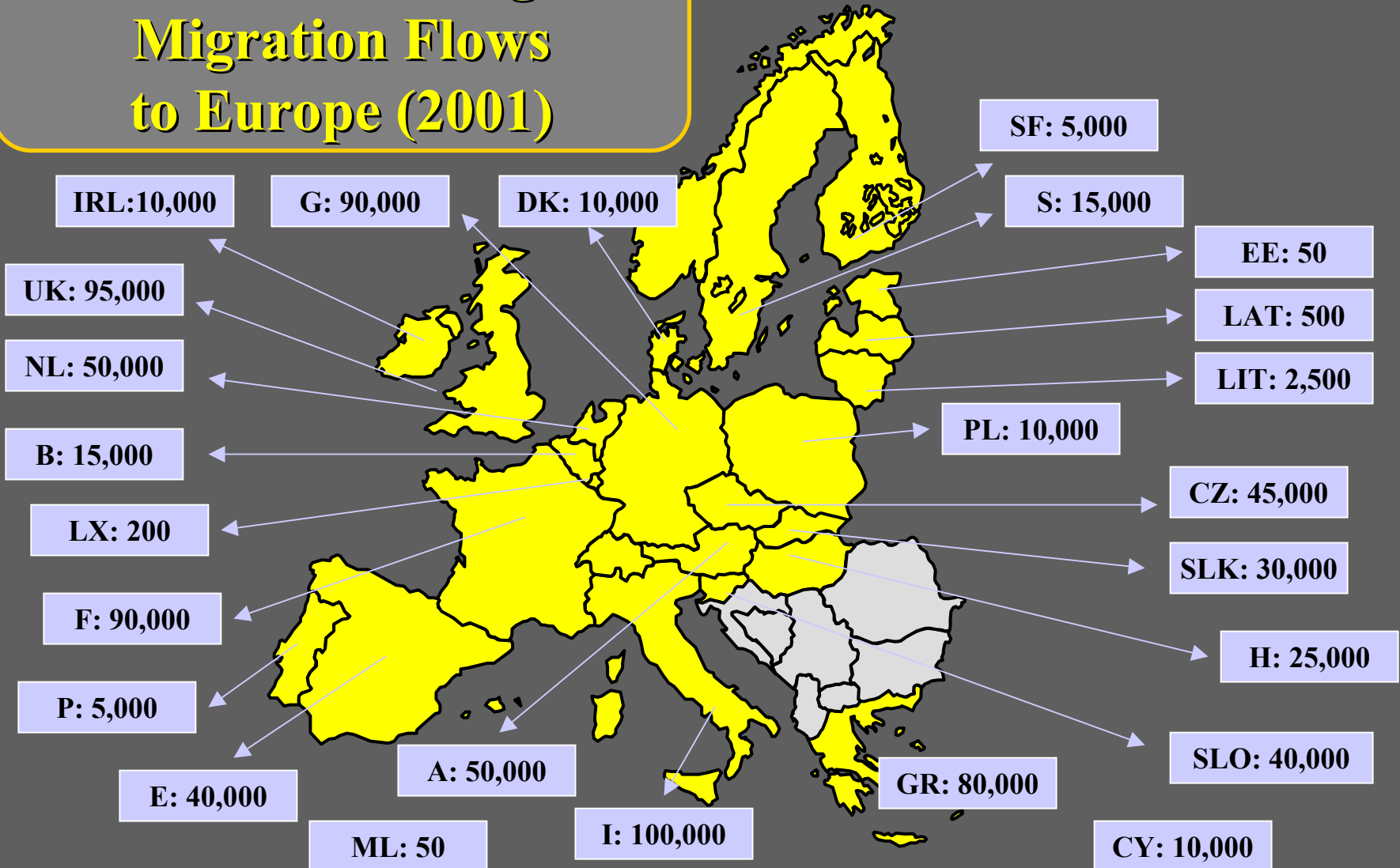
* adjusted/incomplete



Estimates of Illegal Migration Flows to Europe (2001)

Total estimated flows:

- In EU-15: 650.000
- In EU-25: 800.000





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**



An important note at the end

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.**