

الأمم المتحدة
اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا

UNITED NATIONS
Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia



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Commission Economique et Sociale
pour l'Asie Occidentale

**EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION STATISTICS
IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES**

Beirut, 23-24, September 2013

Information Note

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International migration and refugee issues are becoming increasingly important globally. Although there has never been a UN-sponsored worldwide summit on international migration, the topic has been the subject of discussion during several General Assembly meetings since 1993. As a result of such discussion, the UN has recently established a Global Commission on International Migration, and passed the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families. Issues relating to international migration, including forced migration, has risen to the top of political agendas of many countries, including Arab countries.

The Arab world houses the largest numbers of refugees worldwide, and many countries in the region are both large senders as well as receivers of international migrants, including domestic workers. Forced migration is especially an important policy concern in many countries of the Arab region, owing to recent and ongoing conflict. The number of migrants and refugees from the conflict-affected countries (Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan and Somalia) to the rest of the Arab countries has undoubtedly increased during the recent past. Likewise, emigration from the Arab region, particularly the poorer or otherwise overpopulated countries, has also increased, mostly in form of labour migration to the Gulf countries but also to Europe. Such flows have led to changes in the demographic make up of the entire Arab world, with important implications for socio-economic development. Despite its increasing importance however, reliable data on the magnitude and patterns of international mobility is scarce.

In view of these, ESCWA organized its first Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics (Cairo, 14-16/11/2005) with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and partnership with relevant international and regional organisations. The meeting focused on the data and indicators required to formulate policies and programmes; discussed the concepts and definitions used in the region to measure migrant stocks and flows; and analyzed capacity-building for the national statistical offices (NSOs). In addition, ESCWA Statistics Division organized, jointly with MEDSTAT, a workshop on international migration in Cairo in 2009.

Most of the Arab countries collect some data on international migration. The sources of data vary from country to another: most countries rely on administrative records (mainly through border controls) and/or population censuses. More recently, a few countries started gathering data on international migration through the Mediterranean Household International Migration Survey (MED-HIMS) lead by MEDSTAT.

ESCWA Statistics Division is undertaking a desk review on measurement issues in international migration statistics in some the Arab countries. The study will describe the current situation of international migration statistics in three selected countries, including methods of data collection, sources of data, and relevant estimation methods using existing data. It will suggest methods and tools for compilation of exiting data (surveys, censuses and administrative records) and to recommend potential tools and methods for future surveys in the selected countries.

The draft of the study will be discussed during an Expert Group Meeting on measurement issues in international migration statistics in the Arab countries in Beirut during the period 23-24 September 2013.

This EGM is expected to help us identify needs for capacity building in specific areas such as data gathering, harmonization, and analysis of international migration indicators in the Arab countries. Finally, the EGM aims to facilitate the production of high-quality international migration statistics to a variety of users, including policymakers, civil society organizations, and academics.

A. Main areas of discussion

The participants will present and discuss studies prepared by experts on the following subjects:

- a) Main methods of data sources, analysis of international migration statistics;
- b) Challenges and opportunities in collection and dissemination of international migration statistics.

B. Participants

Regional and international experts in international migration statistics.

C. Documents

- a)
- a) A study on measurement issues in international migration statistics in the Arab countries;
- b) Experts' papers.

D. Language

The language of the workshop will be in English and Arabic. Interpretation is available

E. Venue and time of the workshop

The workshop will be held during the period of 23-24 September 2013, at ESCWA UN-House in Beirut, Lebanon.

F. Administrative arrangements

1- Requirements: Participants are requested to:

- Send a copy of their passports to this following e-mail address: sinnoz@un.org,
- Make their own arrangements for a visa to Lebanon (if needed; experts with European or American passports will get the visa at the airport)

2- Accommodation: A list of hotels, in Beirut, will be sent to the participants to make their own reservations.

G. For further information, contact:

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