

# Migration in China in the 1990s and Beyond: Definitions and Measurements

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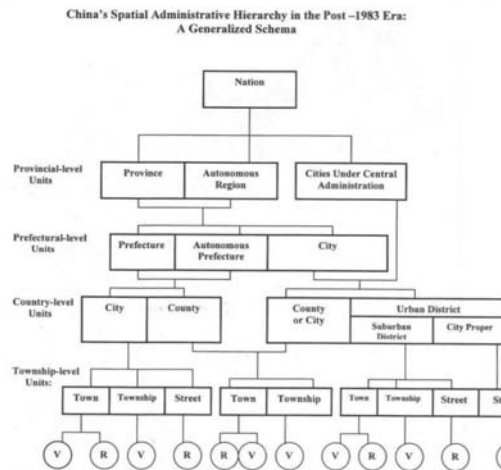
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## Introduction

- Migration is a very important aspect of present Chinese demography and society - "Age of migration"
- Mobility surge in the last 25 years
- Measurements are an extremely complex issue
- "The blind feeling the elephant"
- A brief report of work in progress

## Definition of Migrants

- Geographic/administrative boundary crossed



## Definition of Migrants

- Min. length of stay
  - to differentiate "residents" from non-residents (e.g. tourists) in the statistical sense
  - 2000 Census uses a 6-month length of stay criterion
- Resident (legal/*hukou*) status – unique to China

# The Hukou System

(The Household Registration System, 户口制度)

- The PRC version was formally set up in 1958
- divided society into two major types of households: rural and urban
- differential treatments of the rural and urban residents
- controlled by the police and other govt departments

- the system regulates residence changes (as an internal passport system)
- change of status from rural to urban (also to cities) is tightly controlled
- residential control was tied to food supply, employment and other social benefits in 1960s and 1970s
- social and political control to serve state goals



## Two broad types of migrants

- **Hukou Migrant:** migrant with full hukou status in the locale (street, town or township) where he/she is currently staying (*hukou* population)
- **Non-hukou Migrant:** migrant without full hukou status in the locale (street, town or township) where he/she is currently staying (“non-*hukou* population”; “temporary population”, or more generally, “floating population”).

## Aggregate Migration Figures

Table 1. Major Aggregate Migration Figures, 1982-1999 (in millions)

Geographic boundary	Hukou Migrants (Yearly flow figures) reported by the MPS	"Floating Population" ("Accepted" estimates)	Non-hukou Migrants (Stock figures)			
			"Temporary Population"		"Rural Migrant Labor"	
			Township or urban sub-district	County, or City	Township	Township
Minimum length of stay	No minimum	Usually 1-3 days	6 months	6 months or one year (see below)	Regularly engaged in work outside townships	Those who work outside the township, excluding those away from home for 6 months or more and those employed in TVEs
Series	A	B	C	D	E	F
1982	17.30	30		6.6 (1 yr)		
1985	19.69	40				
1987	19.73			15.2* (6 mos.)		
1988	19.92	70				
1990	19.24			21.6 (1 yr)		15.57
1991						15.80
1992	18.70	60-70				18.28
1993	18.19					34.48
1994	19.49	80			64.3	39.38
1995	18.46		49.7	29.1** (6 mos.)		30.27
1996	17.51		60.0		68.4	39.84
1997	17.85	100	61.8		62.6	42.13
1998	17.13		62.4			49.15
1999	16.87	100	63.7			

Notes: \* the geographic boundary is based on city, county or town; \*\* the geographic boundary is based on county-level units.  
MPS = Ministry of Public Security; SSB = State Statistical Bureau; MOA = Ministry of Agriculture  
Sources: Compiled by the author from various sources. For details see Kam Wing Chan, "Painting a Portrait of the Elephant: Migration in China,"

# The Universe of Migrants

- *Hukou* migrants
  - Annual **flow** figures
- Non-*hukou* migrants
  - **Stock** figures
    - Floating Population
    - Temporary Population
    - Rural Migrant Labor

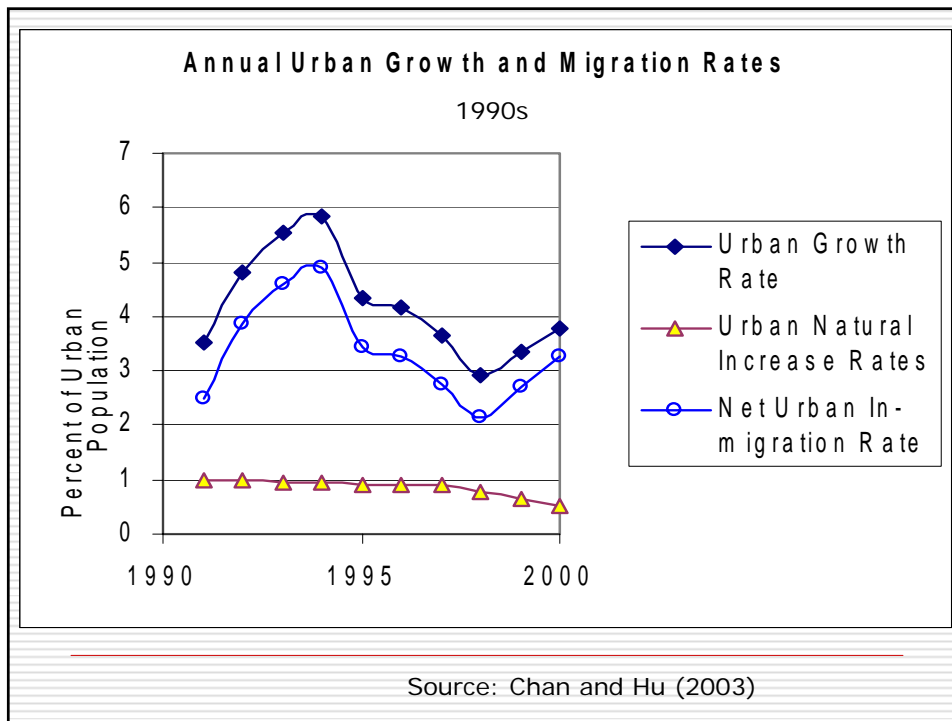
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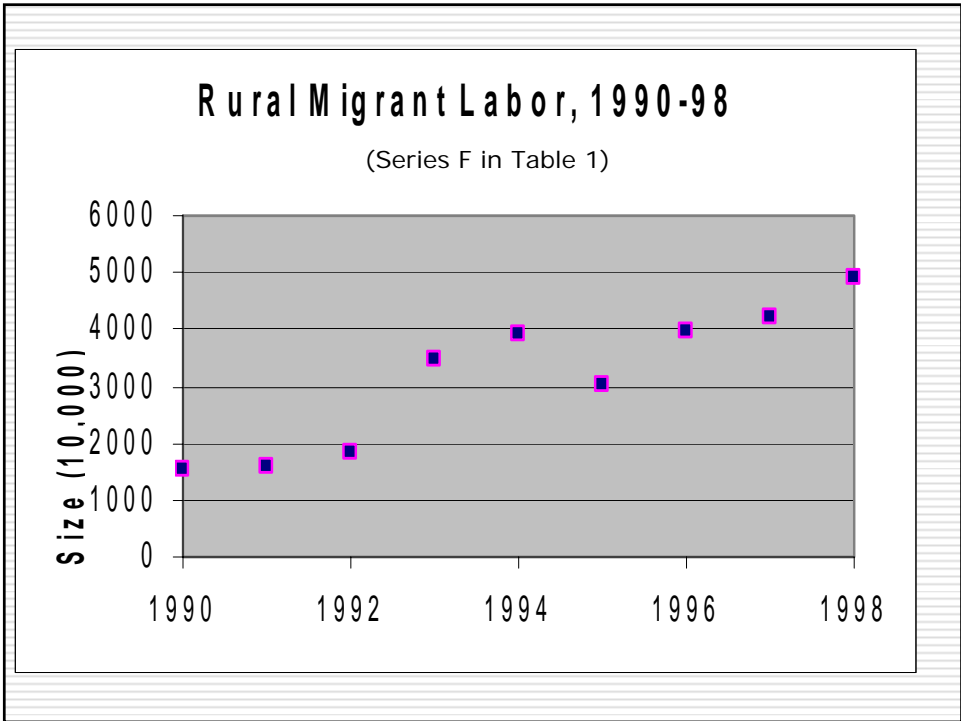
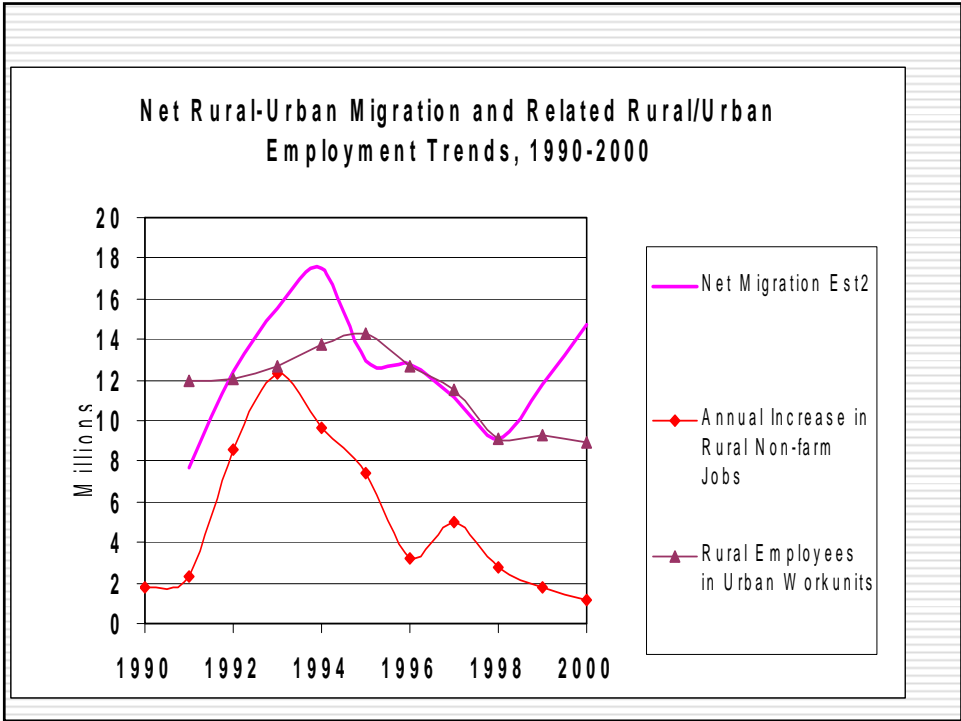
	Hukou Migrants (Yearly flow figures) reported by the MFS	Non-hukou Migrants (Stock figures)				
		"Floating Population" ("Accepted" estimates)	"Temporary Population"		"Rural Migrant Labor"	
			National Censuses/ SSB Population Surveys	Estimates based on MOA Annual Surveys	Estimates based on SSB Annual Rural Household Surveys	Geographic boundary
City, Town, or Township	Township or urban sub-district	County, or City	Township	Township		
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## Mobility rate in China

- Prelim estimate: “total amount of moving” (change of address) or “annual mobility rate”: about 5-6% per year in the late 1990s
- Comparisons
  - USA and Canada 1990s: 16-19%
  - Taiwan 1970-1: 10%
  - Belgium and Netherlands: 6-7%
  - USSR 1980s: 5%
  - India 1981: 1.5%





## Migration since 2000

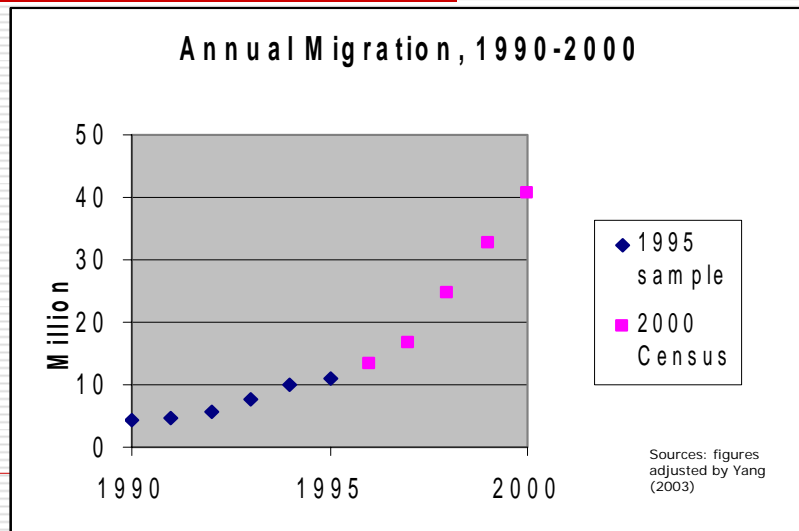
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2000	19.08		144.4	Census		
2001	17.01		NA			
2002	17.22		108.0			
2003			107.8			

## Five-year Migrations (in millions)

Five-year period	Minimum length of stay for non- <i>hukou</i> migrants	Geographic boundary	Total volume	<i>Hukou</i> Migrants	Non- <i>hukou</i> Migrants
1982-87	6 months	County- and town-levels	30.44	20.5	10.0
1985-90	1 year	County-level	33.84	18.3	15.8
1990-95	6 months	County-level	33.23	NA	NA
1995-2000	6 months	Township-level	124.7	43.0	80.3
(2000 Census)	6 months	County-level	67.96 (estimate)	NA	NA



## Annual Migration Figures



## The issue of *zanzhu renkou* in Census 2000

- In Census 2000, a new form was introduced to count this group of people, who were staying at the destination less than 6 months (non-residents)
- Practically, supposed to count everybody at the destination - presented tremendous logistical difficulties
  - E.g. How to differentiate 6 months or not
- So far, this figure for the nation has not been released

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- ❑ An internal figures of less than 20 million for *zanzhu renkou* has been used
  - ❑ Compared to 144 M of non-*hukou* resident population (6 months or more), it is obviously too small.
  - ❑ Very likely that some of the *zanzhu renkou* was “transferred” to the category of non-*hukou* resident population.
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## Concluding Remarks

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- ❑ Prudence and caution when using the 2000 Census migration figures
  - ❑ Migration trend in the 1990s can be relatively confidently established – the story is relatively consistent
  - ❑ 2000 Census aggregate migration figure is likely to be overcounted → implications on research
  - ❑ More work needs to be done to verify the migration trends in the last four years.
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Thank you!

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