

# How the UN recommendations and the forthcoming EU regulation on international migration statistics are fulfilled in the 25 EU countries ?

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## ABSTRACT

Relative to other demographic phenomena, like births and deaths, migration is assuming increasing importance in measurements of population change. Unlike other demographic phenomena, however, migration flows pose particular challenges to the production and measurement of reliable and widely comparable statistics.

Reasons for these challenges can be found both in the characteristics of migration itself and in current strategies for collecting and interpreting migration data. Migration flows, for example, fluctuate rapidly while many demographic patterns change only slowly. International migration is also the only demographic statistic that is currently produced simultaneously by two different national statistical institutes – one in the country of departure and one in the country of arrival. Despite the difficulties, reliable international migration data are urgently needed in the areas of population projections and policies.

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UN recommendations on international migration statistics provide a useful target for improving the collection, reliability and comparability of such statistics in Europe. This contribution will explore the current state of EU25 international migration statistics and the prospects for greater coordination in the line of the UN recommendations.

In order to fulfill this objective of harmonization of international migration statistical data along the UN recommendations, the EU forthcoming EU regulation will enforce all member states to produce reliable and harmonized statistics on international migrations also including asylum, residence permits, illegal migration and acquisition of citizenship. This will be a real opportunity to improve the data collection system in Europe and in this aim a parallel policy-oriented research project THESIM (*Towards Harmonized European Statistics on International Migration*) has been launched in April 2004. As a result a fully comprehensive view of the situation of international migration statistics in Europe is now available and a scientific publication will appear later in 2005<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Check with GÉDAP website for more information on this publication ([www.gedap.ucl.ac.be](http://www.gedap.ucl.ac.be))