# Statistical response to Covid-19

In the table below, information is presented on the statistical response to Covid-19 in the NSOs of selected countries represented in the Steering Group, with reference in particular to the collection, processing and reporting of data on migration.

The information presented was provided by the SG members indicated. SG members are invited to provide updates, corrections, and information on additional countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country - Expert's name</th>
<th>Situation at NSO</th>
<th>Data collection and reporting</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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<td>Australia – Jenny Dobak (22 April)</td>
<td>Most of us at ABS are now working from home (although our offices remain open) and physical distancing restrictions are in place across Australia.</td>
<td>The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly increased focus on traveller data to help understand the economic impacts on trade and travel for us here in Australia. Fortunately, supply of administrative traveller data from Department of Home Affairs continues to be uninterrupted, and this allows the ABS to continue to deliver the monthly processed overseas arrivals and departures data which remains critical. Due to the disrupted traveller behaviour that we will see now for some time, we have suspended trend estimates from February 2020 for all short-term visitor arrival and short-term resident return series. We are now providing more detailed monthly analysis on visitor arrivals by State and Territory and International Student Arrivals and will continue this over the coming months. The ABS is currently preparing to deliver provisional arrivals and departures data a month earlier in response to increased demand for timely data. At this stage, Census is still scheduled for August 2021 which is line with our standard 5 year cycle.</td>
<td>Following the bans on travel from China to Australia at the beginning of February we have started to see some large drops in short-term and long-term visitor arrivals and departures and some increases in resident returns which would be expected. We are anticipating even more dramatic reductions for March.</td>
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<td>Canada - Julien Béard-Chagnon, Mélanie Meunier, Scott McLeish, Rose Evra and Tristan Cayn (5 May)</td>
<td>Staff is working from home. Mission critical programs (census, Labour Force Survey, demographic estimates, etc) are allowed priority access to the internal network. Population is confined at home. A lot of staff is working only part-time because schools and daycares are closed.</td>
<td>Statistics Canada launched crowdsourcing as a new approach to gather information. Crowdsourcing surveys are used to get information on how Canadians are living this COVID crisis. This data covers information such as precaution to reduce risk, concern on COVID impact or transport behaviours. Our monthly Labour Force Survey was totally done with electronic questionnaires and phone interviews. StatCan also released a microdata file with basic info on known covid-19 cases for researchers. A lot of statistical programs, including immigration programs, are under the spotlight in order to measure the impacts of the crisis. Timeliness is becoming key.</td>
<td>This crisis strongly impacts Canada’s international migration flows. International travel is almost totally shut down. Border with the United States is closed for non-essential trips. In March, Canada’s strongly advised travellers to come back the country and helped travellers stuck abroad to fly back home. Immigrants and non-permanent residents (ie foreign workers and students) flows are well measured and in a timely fashion using immigration administrative data. However, other international migration flows such as emigration and returning emigration are modelled using past trends. This assumption is no longer valid. We are looking at many alternative sources to implement adjustments in our models and to understand the impacts of the crisis on our statistics. Some of the estimates of international migration flows for the first quarter of 2020 (January 1 to March 31) required special adjustments to take into account the situation related to COVID-19. Statistics Canada published a technical supplement that summarizes the adjustments: <a href="https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/9100015m/9100015m2020001-eng.htm">https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/9100015m/9100015m2020001-eng.htm</a>. Another supplement is planned for September.</td>
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At last month, only 35% of CBS employees worked for essential work. In demography and census department works only 20% of the employees. The rest are in vacation (including me) … We are waiting for a government decision at the week end, about a new work format started next week. We demanded to expand the number of essential employee to 50%.

Due to the coronavirus epidemic, and following the measures adopted by the Government to contain it, Istat has implemented a series of actions to ensure the continuity and quality of statistical production even in the emergency situation. Nevertheless due to operational issues caused by the current Covid-19 emergency, some surveys are suspended for example the surveys on consumer and business confidence. Some data collections have been postponed.

Regarding migration statistics, as a register-based country with a fully automated population register we actually face no problems getting the information we need to produce our population and migration statistics.

Today we published a press release about immigration and emigration up and until March 2020. As expected we see a decrease in immigration starting the last week of March. Emigration is on the rise, this was already the case in January and February but continued in March. We see a decline in labour immigration, especially from Poland and India but countries like Turkey, Syria and the former Soviet Union also showed a decline in immigration figures. In this respect it is good to mention that it was not possible to make a request for asylum in the Netherlands between the 16th of March and the 25th of April.

You will find the press release here: https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2020/18/15-5-duizend-mensen-erbij-in-eerste-kwartaal-2020. Unfortunately it's only in Dutch but maybe it's possible to understand some of the key information.

We expect a further decline in immigration in April so we are very eager to get these data. We have plans to release another press bulletin by the end of May with a focus on immigration figures.

All the fieldwork operations have been canceled and responses are collected by Internet or telephone. Some household surveys have to be delayed.

According to demography operations (Census, Migrations, Vital Statistics…) we have registers that could help us in this difficult situation.

We have developed a tool that allows us to measure the mobility. We have divided Spain into more than 3,000 cells and using information from mobile phones operators we can detect if a mobile phone has moved from one cell to another one or not. This is an experimental study that was possible because some developments have been previously done. More information can be found in this link: https://ine.es/covid/covid_movilidad_en.htm

Work continues on preparations of population estimates of 2019 and the growth component (including migration). I assume that many Israeli emigrants came back home and many of the foreigners leave back to home. We don't have any figures yet. We used administrative data for migration statistics, we get the data in daily bases but we have no employees to process and disseminate it. Due to the restrictions in flight we can assume that the migration flows decreased significantly.

We expect an important decrease of migrations (immigrations and emigrations) due to the travel restrictions imposed since March.

About non EU migrants living in Italy, the residence permits set to expire between January 31st and April 15th will remain valid until June 15th, 2020. Renewal applications can be submitted after June 15th.

Also domestic migrations - and each form of movements (if not for exceptional reasons of work or health) - are presently prohibited: people can move with many restrictions, only inside the municipality of residence; from the 4th of May some movements will be allowed inside the region of residence. At the beginning of pandemic many students and workers moved from the North to the South of the Country.
### Switzerland – Marcel Heineger (29 April)

Most of us at FSO have been working from home since March 18 (although our office remains open). Lockdown restrictions will be further eased starting from May 11. How this will affect our home office situation is not clear yet.

Annual migration statistics in Switzerland are exclusively based on administrative data. There are no household or passenger surveys being used that had to be interrupted due to the pandemic. Migratory events are registered at the municipal level (local population registers) or at the federal level (Central Register of Aliens). All the registration offices have been operating normally since the outbreak of Covid-19. As far as we know there are no administrative delays in registering arrivals and departures to/from Switzerland. Regarding entry bans and border controls, all Swiss citizens and all persons with a valid residence permit or work permit in Switzerland are allowed to enter Switzerland from abroad.

Whereas according to preliminary figures immigration of non-nationals had increased during January and February 2020 when compared to the same period one year before, immigration and emigration slowed down in March and April 2020. In the first quarter of 2020, 11 percent fewer asylum applications were submitted than in the first quarter of 2019. Moreover, no national visas will be issued for any third countries until 15 June 2020.

### United Kingdom – Jay Lindop, Nicky Rogers, Rebecca Briggs (updated 13 July)

Everyone is working at home, about 3000 people, with the exception of a few critical data ingestion / system colleagues who still go in to the office when needed.

All of our surveys have also moved to online/telephone where possible, but of course the face-to-face international passenger survey has been paused.

We have data to feed our migration outputs until November, so we are working through what we can do with administrative data between now and then, essentially trying to speed up the transformational work we already have underway in this space. We released an update on changes to travel patterns as part of our May statistics on international migration flows, using available government and commercial data, and plan to repeat this for our next statistics report in August.

In May, we published an update on how our transformation plans have adapted since Covid-19. Following the suspension of the IPS, we have made the decision to deliver new measures of migration based on admin data from November 2020 onwards (known as Admin-Based Migration Estimates ABMEs). We are currently working on the design of these measures, in collaboration with colleagues across the UK Government Statistical Service, and plan to publish an update in late Summer/early Autumn 2020.

### United States – Jason Schachtier (17 April)

We are on our 5th week of 100% telework now at the US Census Bureau. The recent COVID-19 outbreak has certainly had an impact on our work at the Census Bureau, from both a data collection and a data measurement perspective.

Survey field operations have either been suspended or reduced to Internet or telephone based responses only, which impacts particular groups of respondents, such as (recent) migrants, as well as delaying the release of data.

The current proposal is to delay the 2020 Census about 4 months, in a best case scenario. The delayed release of Census results means that we will need to release population estimates for the 2020 mid-year population, which we normally do not do during a Census year. This makes measurement of international migration an even bigger issue for us now.

Given the travel restrictions imposed since March, we expect this to have a drastic impact on levels of immigration (and emigration) to the US this year. Conversely, anecdotal evidence suggests that a large number of US Citizens returned to the country in March, in advance of border closures/flight restrictions.

Given we use data (for 2020, residence one-year ago responses from the 2019 ACS) that lag the migration/COVID-19 event, our current method/data sources won't pick up the impact of recent events. This means we'll need to come up with a method to adjust our international migration estimates for 2020. Flight passenger data is one possibility, but our simulated models have reacted poorly to a huge drop-off in flight passengers, are we suspect will happen from March onwards. We're currently looking at other possible data sources with more up-to-date information, like visas issued abroad and even tourist statistics, but nothing has stood out yet.

**Domestic Migration.** There is a fair amount of anecdotal evidence (e.g. media reports), that some people have been moving away from urban “hot spots” (e.g. New York City), to second homes in other areas (often across state borders) to avoid exposure to/eff the pandemic. Given the Census date was April 1st, and our estimates date is July 1st, this could impact our person counts for certain geographic areas. Also, the use of IRS Tax data to measure domestic migration will be impacted by the extension of the tax filing deadline in the United States to mid-July.