

MirreM Data Collection – Country Context

PORTUGAL

Name and email address of rapporteur: João Carvalho, joao.miguel.carvalho@iscte-iul.pt;
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Instructions:

Reflecting on your deskwork and fieldwork, please provide a brief snapshot (1 – 3 pages in total) of the overall picture of irregular migration data in your country. For each question, please address stocks, flows and indicators (or indicate N/A).

Questions:

1. What is your overall assessment of the quality of irregular migration data in your country?

The data on irregular migration is not available to the public apart from the number of candidates that obtained an authorization of residence on an annual basis on behalf of the exceptional regularization regime. This data is objective but does not provide information over the timespan required by the Portuguese authorities to analyse the individual request for the exceptional regularization. Unfortunately, there is no public information over the annual number of requests for the exceptional regularization.

2. How is irregular migration data generally used in policy making?

Portuguese policy makers employ the indicators of the stocks of irregular immigrants provided by the national authorities to manage this social phenomenon. The data concerns the annual number of requests for social security number by foreign citizens and the annual number of requests for regularization presented to the Border Police. The data is employed to raise awareness about the intensity of the social phenomenon in general, or in a particular region. The data also provides an idea about the resources required to manage the pool of requests for regularization made by irregular immigrants.

3. How did you go about the data collection process?

The data collection process was supported by the national statistics published by the Portuguese authorities.

4. Were there any specific difficulties you experienced during this process? How did you address them?

Through the interviews, we became aware that certain statistics were available to policy-makers and public authorities but not published at the public level. We made formal requests to obtain this data, but we were warned that it can take long time.

Additionally, it was rare to find definitions to the indicators employed in the national reports, which hindered accuracy and reliability when comparing data from different datasets.

5. What were the main gaps in the evidence base (i.e., unmet user needs) that emerged during your data collection process?

Did not find any significant gaps

6. Were there any meetings with producers or users of irregular migration estimates and indicators that you were unable to secure, but sense that endeavouring to do so in future may be worthwhile? If so, please provide contact information for this person/entity and explain why you think such detail would be helpful.

There are indicators that we were unable to secure:

- Annual number of requests of social security numbers by foreign citizens
This data is collected by the Instituto da Segurança Social, whose President of the Directive Council is Dra. Ana Vasques
<iss-secretariado-presidente@seg-social.pt>
- Annual number of requests for the exceptional regularization presented to SEF
This data is collected by SEF and the assistant of the Secretary of State informed us that he resent our request to SEF. The assistant's name is Filipe Mimoso and his email is: filipe.mimoso@mai.gov.pt
The national director of SEF is named Fernando Silva and his contact is: gricrp.rp@sef.pt

7. Please point to an example of good practice estimating irregular migration and/or making use of estimates of irregular migration in policy-making that you came across. Why did you select this example?

The only estimates of irregular migration found in Portugal refer to media reports about irregular migration that cite confidential sources within the Border Police (SEF) about the number of pending requests for regularization..

The knowledge of large contingents of irregular immigrants and their origins have enhanced Portugal's efforts to sign bilateral labour agreement with India and Morocco, and to promote a mobility agreement with the Portuguese speaking countries.