POLICY BRIEF

Foreign residents through the HIMS surveys

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Migration constitutes a social phenomenon that demographers have long been interested in, and due to its exacerbation in the past decade, the focus on studying it has been revived. A distinction is made between internal migration (within the federations of a state) and international migration between states. The first sources to document this phenomenon are the population census carried out regularly by states, evidently, this is the case for the countries of North Africa. The increasing complexity of migratory flows from, to, and through different countries requires extensive knowledge to best manage the induced effects.

The absence of reliable administrative data makes the GPHS an essential source for determining the number of employees (stocks), geographical distribution, and the profile of the foreign population residing in a given country on a reference date. The identification of this population is particularly based on three major variables, namely, place of birth, place of residence at the time of the census, and current nationality. The GPHS makes it possible to determine the demographic characteristics, fertility, educational characteristics, economic characteristics, social and health coverage, and living conditions of households of foreign population residents in the host country at a reference date.

However, this opportunity only rises once every ten years and only captures the stocks of migrants and not the flows. Additionally, the causes, determinants, consequences, and migratory paths of foreigners residing in a given territory remain unknown, hence the use of specific surveys such as HIMS surveys fills the gap in this area.

Presentation of the HIMS surveys

The MED-HIMS[1] (Households International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean Countries/ Enquêtes méditerranéens des ménages sur la migration) project is a regional program of coordinated surveys on international migration. It was launched at the request of the national statistical institutes of most southern and eastern Mediterranean countries. The project was launched in 2008, as part of the European Commission's MEDSTAT programme[2]. Since then it has become a joint initiative bringing together the European Commission, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNHCR, ILO, IOM, and the League of Arab States. It aims to overcome the lack of statistical information on international migration in MED countries through the collection of reliable and representative data on migration dynamics and their determinants. The MED-HIMS has been implemented in Egypt (2013),

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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/fr/web/european-neighbourhood-policy/enp-south/med-hims

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=MEDSTAT_programme

Jordan (2014), Morocco (2018-2019 for the emigration component & 2020/2021 for the immigration component), and more recently in Tunisia (2020-2021). Noting that a pilot survey was conducted in the Tadla-Az ilal region (Morocco) in 2013/2014.

Through two versions, one light and the other standard, of the different questionnaires intended for each type of targeted migrants, the survey aims to:

i. Study the causes, determinants, dynamics, and consequences of international migration, including labor migration, as well as the links between migration and development,

ii. Collect, process and analyze reliable data to make it possible to study recent trends in international migration, migration processes and the characteristics of migrants (in relation to non-migrants),

iii. Explore scenarios for closer cooperation in the field of migration and development between sending and receiving countries,

iv. Facilitate data comparisons between countries.

The definitions adopted in this survey, which were used to determine the target populations, are based on the methodological approach developed within the framework of the MEDSTAT statistical cooperation program. They are based on international recommendations[3] in the field of international migration with adaptation to national contexts. The target population of this survey is current migrants, returning migrants, foreigners residing in the survey country at the time of implementation of the survey, and potential migrants. Below is the definition adopted by each category:

•   **Current migrant or national of the country of survey abroad**

A current migrant is any person of the nationality of the country of investigation, aged 15 and over, who resides in another country for at least three months.

•   **Return migrant**

The return migrant is defined as being any member of the surveyed household, of the nationality of the country of execution of the survey, who had lived abroad for three months or more, and returned to their country of origin when he was 15 years or older (at the time of return) to reside there.

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[3] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Principles_and_Recommendations/International-Migration/SeriesM_58rev1-F.pdf

- **Foreigner residing or immigrating**

An immigrant or foreign resident is any person who has resided in the country of survey execution for six months and more or intends to stay more than six months, regardless of their residence status: legal or illegal. It includes all persons of foreign nationality who may or may not hold a residence permit in the country.

- **Forced Migrant**

A forced migrant is considered to be any foreign person on the territory of the country carrying out the investigation, mainly for reasons related to transit to another country, application for asylum or refugee status, insecurity, war, persecution in the country of origin, trafficking or coercion.

In subsequent, we will focus more particularly on the section concerning foreign migrants residing in the country in which the survey is carried out.

Foreign migrants through the HIMS surveys: challenges and opportunities

- **Case of Egypt (survey conducted in 2013)**

When the HIMS survey was conducted in Egypt in 2013, only forced migrants were covered among the foreign population residing in the country. 3,554 were selected among those residing in the Greater Cairo area who are on the list of migrants registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The survey focused on seven nationalities: Iraqi, Syrian, Comfortable Sudan, South Sudanese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, and Somali. The list of forced migrants, provided by UNHCR included their names and phone numbers. They were contacted by telephone and 1,692 households agreed to be interviewed, 1 793 forced migrants aged 15 or over were selected and successfully interviewed.

Although this methodological approach made it possible to determine the profile of this vulnerable population and to highlight their background and experience, the results cannot be representative. In reality, the inclusion of forced migrants on the UNHCR list is voluntary, which means that the list does not cover the entire target population. The basis for drawing the sample is therefore not exhaustive and the sample is not representative and does not provide an estimate of the size of the target population. Furthermore, forced migrants represent only a part of the foreign population residing in Egypt.

- **Case of Morocco (survey carried out in 2 phases: first phase 2018/2019, second phase 2021)**

Like Egypt, the HIMS Morocco survey limited itself to studying part of the foreign population residing in Morocco. The second phase of the national survey on international migration in Morocco focused on forced migrants aged 15 and over, including migrants with irregular administrative status, regularized migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in

Morocco. It focused on migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and other nationalities: Syrians, Libyans, Iraqis, and others.

The survey covered a sample of 3000 migrants divided into 2200 regularized or irregular migrants and 800 refugees and asylum seekers.

The sample of refugees and asylum-seekers was drawn from the database provided by UNHCR. The sample of irregular or regularized migrants was drawn using the quota method based on the structures of migrants who benefited from regularization operations according to sex, age, city, and country of origin.

Admittedly, the results of this survey have made it possible to determine the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of migrants, migratory routes, living conditions, and reasons for entry into Morocco. However, it is representative only at the level of the sub-population of refugees and asylum seekers registered on the UNHCR list and the sub-population of migrants who have benefited from regularization operations. The two subpopulations are part of the foreign population residing in Morocco which was estimated at 84 thousand on the count of the GPHS 2014.

- **Case of Tunisia (survey carried out in 2020/2021)**

The HIMS Tunisia survey benefited from the knowledge, know-how, and lessons learned shared by the statistical institutions that carried out the previous HIMS surveys. In addition to the usual objectives of the survey, the ambition of the national survey on international migration in Tunisia was to estimate the numbers of different categories of migrants, including foreigners residing in Tunisia. To do this, the survey followed a method that made it possible to reach a representative sample throughout the Tunisian territory for each target population, in particular, foreigners residing in Tunisia.

The foreign population residing in Tunisia is a relatively small population, it represents only about 0.5% of the total population. The sampling plan took this scarcity into account and ensured coverage of a sample of foreigners residing in Tunisia. The sample was representative in terms of size and in terms of optimal distribution in space and according to socio-demographic characteristics.

The sampling frame was that of the 2014 General Population and Housing Census (GPHS 2014). Indeed, the most exhaustive and reliable basis for demographic and social surveys comes from the GPHS. On the one hand, it guarantees the actual geographical distribution of the population and gives an idea of the location of the population and its socio-economic characteristics. On the other hand, it has the advantage of providing an area base allowing the updating of the population and its structure according to different characteristics. This database is composed of primary units called enumeration areas (EAs) which represent geographical areas of about 80 households each. From this base, a sample was drawn using probabilistic stratified random sampling of primary units (EAs).

A study of the distribution of foreigners residing in Tunisia through the GPHS 2014 shows that they are distributed in a very unequal way between the (EA). These are stratified according to the classes of foreigners residing there at the time of the 2014 census.

According to the GPHS 2014, the theoretical sample of target migrants to be visited in the (EA) sample is around 3,000 individuals distributed over 480 (EA), which allows an acceptable disaggregation of the indicators. Given the pandemic situation at the time of the survey, the non-response rate was 20%.

For the first phase, it is a matter of completing a search questionnaire for all the households visited. In the second phase, we only interview households with a target category in addition to a sample of households without migrants. The expected non-response rate was 20% given the risk of absence of the persons concerned during the visit or the problem of contacting them.

Table 1: Distribution of EA samples par stratum

Streets	Number EA sample	Proportion of EA sample
0 Foreign resident	80	,3%
1 to 2 Foreign residents	80	1,1%
3 to 4 Foreign residents	80	4,7%
5 to 7 Foreign residents	80	7,1%
8 to 12 Foreign residents	80	12,4%
13 Foreign residents and above	80	16,0%

The census frame posed challenges due to the relative age of the reference year (2014) in the face of a changing phenomenon such as immigration. To remedy this shortcoming, a preparatory phase (sweep operation) to update the sampling frame in terms of the size of the population of each target category took place before proceeding to the collection of individual data. This operation consists of going through the sampled EAs residence by residence and household by household and counting the total population and foreigners. Likewise, the operation entailed counting certain characteristics such as sex, age, nationality, country of origin, date of entry, and address in Tunisia for a probable visit at the time of collection of individual data. At the level of each (EA), households are numbered from 1 to N.

As for the calculation of the weight, each individual surveyed has a probability of selection in the (EA) which in turn has a probability of selection in the overall sampling frame. The weight is calculated as the inverse of the resulting selection probability.

Table 2: Summary table of HIMS surveys in North Africa

Country	EGYPT	MOROCCO	TUNISIA
Year of implementation	2013	P1 2018/19 + P2 2021	2020/21
Implementing agency	CAPMAS	HCP	INS & ONM
Migration type	Forced	Forced	Together
Spatial coverage	Greater Cairo	11 cities	National
Nationalities	Iraqi, Syrian, Sudanese, South Sudanese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, and Somali	Sub-Saharan Africa, Syrian, Libyan, Iraqi and others	Together
Sample size	3554 contacted 1692 households interviewed 1793 individuals interviewed	2200 regularized or not + 800 asylum seekers or refugees	3148 foreigners aged 15 and over contacted including 2981 interviewed
Sampling frame	UNHCR	UNHCR + administration (telephone list + associations)	GPHS 2014
Drawing method	QUOTAS + KISH	QUOTAS	Probabilistic
Interview mode	Phone + face to face	Phone + face to face	Phone + face to face
Interview languages	Arabic, English	Arabic, French, English	Arabic, French, English, German, Italy
Questionnaires	Households + Questionnaire Individuals forced migrant (15 years and over)	Households + Questionnaire Individuals forced migrant (15 years and over)	Households + Questionnaire Individual Immigrants (15 years and older)

Country	EGYPT	MOROCCO	TUNISIA
Thematic	• Demographic profile of households • Living conditions of households • Migration Process • Situation in the host country • future projects and Intentions • Health situation	• Profiles demographic and socio-cultural of forced migrants; • migration processes, trajectories, and routes, the reasons for leaving the country of origin and arriving in Morocco; • administrative situation, conditions of entry of forced migrants to Morocco; • situation of forced migrants vis-à-vis the work; • the health situation of migrants and their behaviors and attitudes during the health lockdown; • perceptions of the experience of migration and their situation in Morocco; • intentions for the future and their future plans. • Living conditions.	• Profiles on demographic and socio-cultural aspects of foreigners; • migration processes, trajectories, and routes, the reasons for departure from the country of origin and arrival in Tunisia; • administrative situation, conditions of entry of migrants in Tunisia; • situation of forced migrants vis-à-vis the work; • the health situation of migrants; • Impact COVID 19; • perceptions of the experience of migration and their situation in Tunisia; • intentions for the future and their future plans. • Living conditions.

Major challenges: How to survey the foreign population living in a country?

To do this we need to know their places of residence. What are the sources to answer this question?

Possible sources depend on the type of migrant, evidently, we are in the presence of mixed migration and therefore very heterogeneous in terms of profile.

• **Regular migrants**

They are supposed to be listed in the **administrative files** of the host country and by the consular services of the countries of origin, but the types of places of residence vary. There are at least three categories: workers, students, and family members in the host country (spouse, descendants, ascendants, collaterals).

Concerning **workers**, they are liable for an authorization issued by the services in charge of regulating the labor in the host country where they are listed. It should be noted that

this population can be divided into three: those whose employment contract binds them to a multinational company, those working in companies under national law, and those working for their own account. For this reason, some of these workers do not live in ordinary households but in **collective households** or **living bases** belonging to the population counted separately[4] during population censuses. The definitions may vary from country to country, hence the need to harmonize them to allow for international comparisons.

As for foreign students, they live in **university residences** when they are scholarship holders from their country of origin or the host country, but they can also be found in housing in the city. In principle, they are listed by the services in charge of education.

As for members of national families, they live in ordinary households. They can also be migrants but bi-nationals that require an appropriate reading.

- **Irregular migrants**

They can be divided into two: those **who entered the country legally** but exceeded **the legal limit of stay** in the country and those **who entered illegally**.

This is a much more mobile and more precarious population (makeshift camps, barracks, housing under construction, in the workplace, etc.). Therefore, there is a need to mobilize more resources beyond the GPHS (security services, associations, consular services, etc.).

Some special cases should be noted:

- Non-migrant foreigners: these are the children of foreign parents born in the host country (when there is no Jus soli);

- Migrant nationals (born in another country): these are nationals (more often bi-nationals) born abroad and residing at the time of the survey in the host country.

- Some countries, such as INSEE in France, do not count their foreign-born nationals as migrants. Are they really returning migrants?

- Circular migrants: these are highly mobile migrants between two or more countries, for economic and/or family reasons and therefore they often escape population censuses;

- Transit migrants: the host country, at the time of the census, is only a transit country. As a result, the stay in the host country is very variable, and therefore it is very likely that they escape the population census. This is a very mobile population and sometimes resides in makeshift camps.

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[4] This is the population living in institutions (hospices, religious institutions, institutions for the elderly or disabled, etc.) or without a fixed home. CertThese countries regard them as collective households.

To conclude....

It is clear that investigating the foreign population residing in a country is a challenge. This is more evident in North African countries for at least two reasons: the lack of reliable sampling frames and the relative weakness of the foreign population (all statuses combined) in the total resident population.

Therefore, the MED-HIMS project is an opportunity to meet this challenge. The socio-economic and political situation in the countries concerned, and particularly the recent pandemic, has somewhat delayed the completion of the various planned surveys.

Consequently, each country has opted for its own methodological choices, Egypt and then Morocco, were interested only in forced migration, unlike Tunisia. Meanwhile in Egypt and Tunisia, the survey covered all segments of international migration simultaneously, this is not the case for Morocco, where the survey on foreign migrants was carried out only later (2021) compared to the other segments (2018/2019).

Thanks to an up-to-date exhaustive sampling frame and specific sampling table, Tunisia was able to estimate the number of each category of migrant, in particular resident foreigners, and to measure migratory flows to and from Tunisia over a long period. However, the specific investigation into international migration is cumbersome and costly. To reduce the cost and ensure the reliability of the data collected, representativeness, and sustainability of the survey, **the following measures** must be taken into account:

- Including modules in the review to identify migrant home households abroad, households with returning migrants, and households with foreign resident members;

- Implementing the survey just after the census to benefit from a recent sampling framework with the advantage of reducing the cost of execution;

- Developing an adequate sampling plan taking into account the rarity of the phenomenon studied and the unbalanced geographical distribution of the different types of migrants;

- Elaborating questions filter to determine the different categories of migrants automatically. The complexity of the phenomenon and the different scenarios that may arise in the field can lead to classification errors on the part of the investigators;

- Shortening the individual questionnaire and adapting it to the specific conditions of the different nationalities;

- Creating a steering committee including the national institutions involved in the theme. The Ministry of the Interior is particularly vital, to ensure a better appropriation of the survey, to overcome the problems of definitions, and thus guarantee the validation of the results thereafter.

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Acronyms:

CAPMAS : Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

UNFPA/UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund

HCP: High Commissioner For Planning

INS: National Institute of Statistics

INSEE: National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies

MED-HIMS : Households International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean Countries

MEDSTAT: statistical cooperation programme between the EU and the Mediterranean countries.

ILO/ILO: International Labor Organization

IOM/IOM: International Organization for Migration

ONM: National Migration Observatory

GPHS: general population and housing census

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

EA: Enumeration Area