



Responding to policy challenges : Estimating migration flows

(Seventh UN Coordination Meeting on International migration)

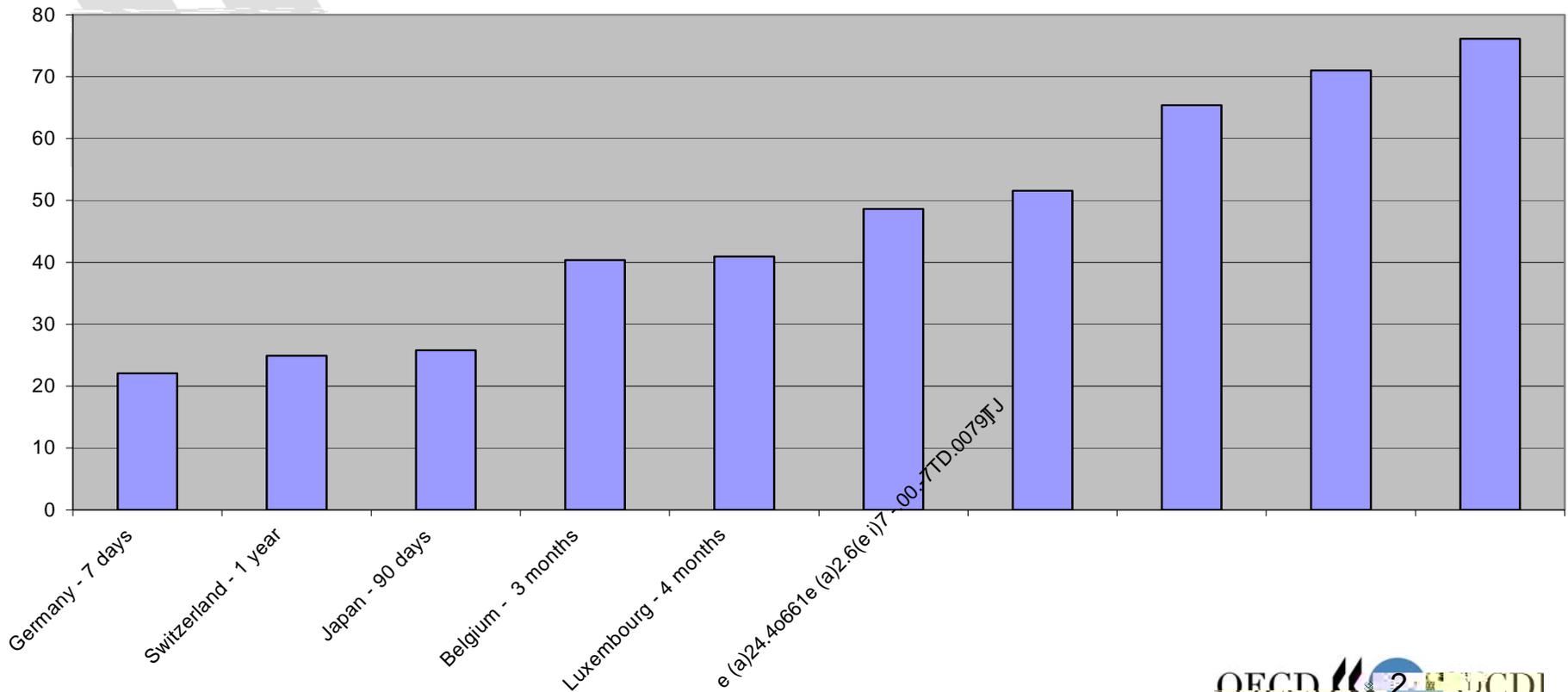
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The (wretched) world of national statistics

Chart 1. Estimated retention rate (1992-2001) by intended stay criterion for entry into the population or foreigners' register
(retention rate=net migration as a percentage of the inflows)



What has been available:

- National flow statistics by nationality, sex, age
 - No clear idea of their comparability across countries
 - No possibility of adding up movements across countries
 - No information on the types of movements or their characteristics
 - Modality of entry
 - Duration / renewability of permit

What is required:

- Flow statistics that are
 - Internationally comparable
 - Provide disaggregations according to dimensions that are of interest to policy
 - Country of origin, sex, age
 - Category of entry (labour, family, humanitarian, etc.)
 - Possibility of settlement
 - Changes in status
 - Irregular movements
 - Skill level

Some concepts

- Discretionary vs non-discretionary migration
- Temporary vs permanent migration
 - A temporary permit does not imply a temporary migration
 - In the world of migration, the right of permanent residence upon entry is exceptional
- Demand-driven vs supply-driven labour migration
- Selection of labour immigrants
- Low-educated vs low-skilled
 - Personal qualifications vs job requirements

What we have done:

- Ignored UN statistical recommendations
- Focused on regulated flows (+ free movement)
- Tried to estimate permanent-type movements
- Attempted a categorical approach to immigration flows
- Incorporated changes in status, that is, the flows are into the permanent resident population, not necessarily cross-border movements

Figure 2. Power-law type interactional



Using the estimates

- Hypothesis : an increase in migration which leads to 3% percent increase in OECD work force (+15M) yields \$300 B in benefits (approx 20K per immigrant worker).
- How can 3% increase be achieved?
 - Increase current OECD permanent labour migration from 500K to 2M per year (Australian labour migration rates, equal spousal participation, no outflows)=> takes five years.
- Achieving same effect with temporary migration (assume 2 year stay) => annual flows required after five years = 7.5 million per year.

National vs OECD “standardised statistics” (2006)

Country	OECD standardised	National	Difference	% Difference
Japan	87 600	325 600	-238 900	-73
Germany	216 000	558 500	-342 500	-61
United Kingdom	343 200	451 700	-108 500	-24
Canada	251 600	251 600	0	0
United	1 266 300	1 266 300	0	0
Italy	204 300	181 500	22 800	13
France	169 000	135 100	33 900	25
OECD (18 countries)	3 241 900	4 001 900	-760 000	-19

What's missing

- Temporary labour migration
- Changes in status – a growing area
- Specific movements
 - Intra-corporate transfers
 - Cross-border service provision
 - High-skilled vs low-skilled