



Key trends: Migration

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Workshop "Global Demography Expert Survey on Drivers and Consequences of Demographic Change" JRC | Brussels | 13 December 2023



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Web: www.quantmig.eu Twitter: @QuantMig

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high-migration processes theories challenges emigration high high-migration environments long-term work living studies Europe between early specific setting time unintended uncertainty demographic preparedness whole analysis understanding recommendations drivers decision-makers limits complex attitudes increase possible decisions IMEM regions across UK assumptions extent past role theory magnitude option once-m-a-decade standard results role theory events approach data alternative effects looking sources EU sols scenarios information approaches areas models particular information areas models particular information areas models particular information areas models particular information in traditional policies predictive origin changing population impact better asylum immigration population less working-age example including findings needs help reduced QuantMig asspirations implications flows factors intra-EU insights modelling aspirations implications flows factors intra-EU insights modelling knowledge family scenario policy complexity impacts mobility asylum-seekers levels based decision migrants need twice-in-a-century range increasing horizons
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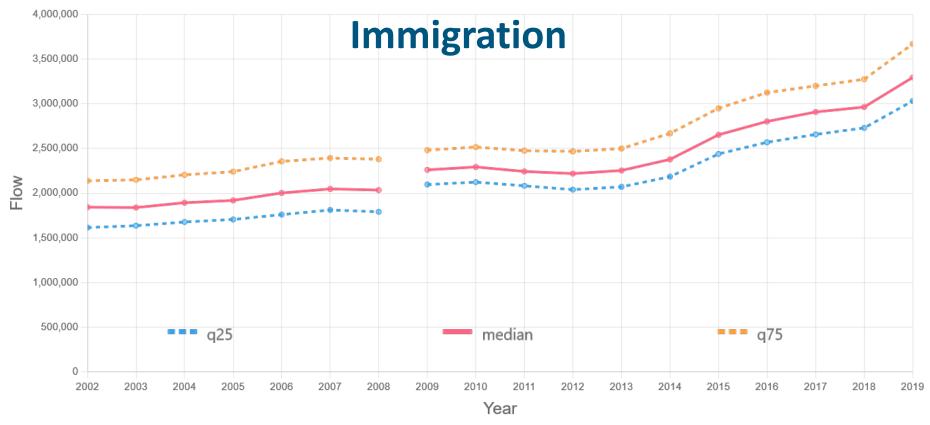
- IOM World Migration Report 2022
 - Headline figure: 281m migrants worldwide (global stock, by CoB)



- Europe on par with Asia (86m), but European migration is mostly within Europe (70%) true for most other regions except Americas
- Migrant share: at 12%, Europe is below N. America and Oceania
- Stocks steadily increasing cohort effect but what about flows?



Europe: Flows in the 2000s and 2010s

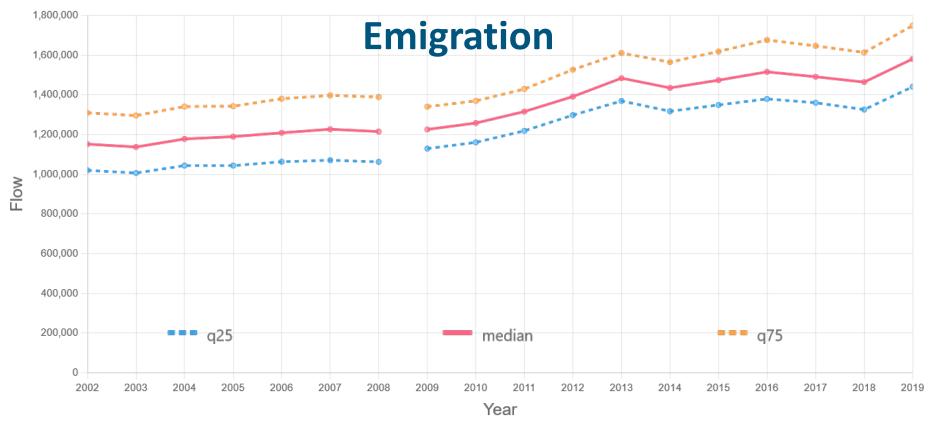


Harmonised estimates for 2002–08 (IMEM) and 2009–19 (QuantMig), EU+EFTA+UK

Source: QuantMig Migration Estimates Explorer, bit.ly/quantmig-estimates



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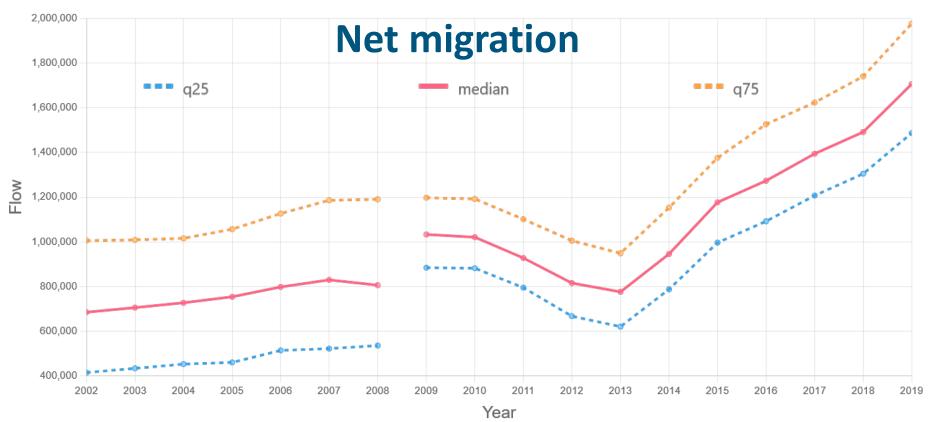


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QuantMig

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Research timeline



Regulatory changes	Regulations (EC)	Regulation (EC)	UN & EC:
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(UN 1976, 1998) Migration statistics & censuses Demographic statistics consultations

From measurement to estimates

THESIM (2004–2006) IMEM (2009–2012) QuantMig
MIMOSA (2006–2009) IMEM spin-offs (since 2012) (2020–2023)

New technologies

IMEM + New data

WorldPop / Flowminder (since 2013)

e.g. Wesolowski et al. (2013), Garcia et al. (2015), Lai et al. (2019)

From stocks to flows

Azose & Raftery (2019)
Abel & Sander (2014)
Abel & Cohen (2019)

Towards HMigD...

2000 2002 2004 2006 2008 2010 2012 2014 2016 2018 2020 now

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Achievements so far

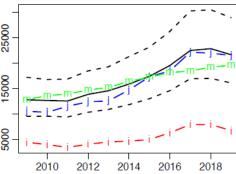


- Much better understanding of the data and collection processes
- Several sets of harmonised probabilistic estimates for different European migration stocks and flows, plus global matrices
- Estimates ideally based on probability distributions: point estimates reported with the assessment of uncertainty
- Statistical methods provide a natural way of integrating different data sources, their uncertainty assessment, and expert opinion
- Still work in progress

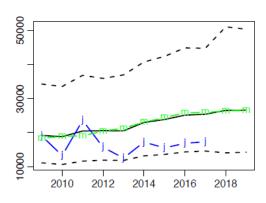
Estimates

- No single data source is sufficient
- Since 2009, EU data comparability has improved, at the cost of availability
- Increased uncertainty of estimation whenever some data not available





Italy to Spain



Germany to UK

Source: QuantMig Deliverable 6.3

Observations



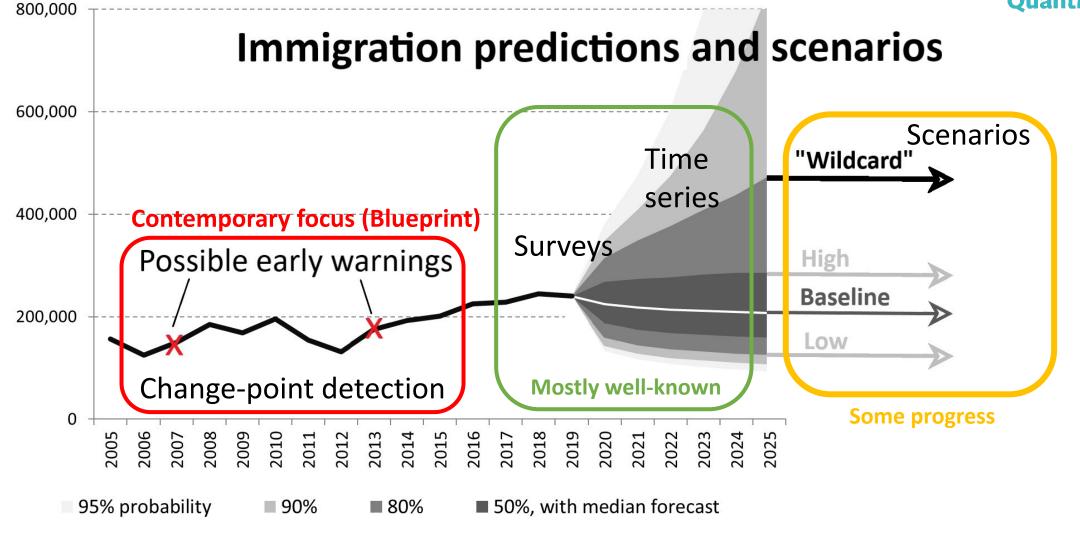
- Despite efforts to harmonise migration statistics at the European level,
 some discrepancies in the reported figures remain
- Potential to use new data sources, but not on their own, ensuring consistency in concepts, definitions and estimates (flows and stocks)
- Key message: a lot of European migration reality is still uncertain

• Challenge: going beyond Europe, especially in the LMIC context, with different data situations (Global Compact on Migration, objective 1)

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Forecasting migration: State of the art









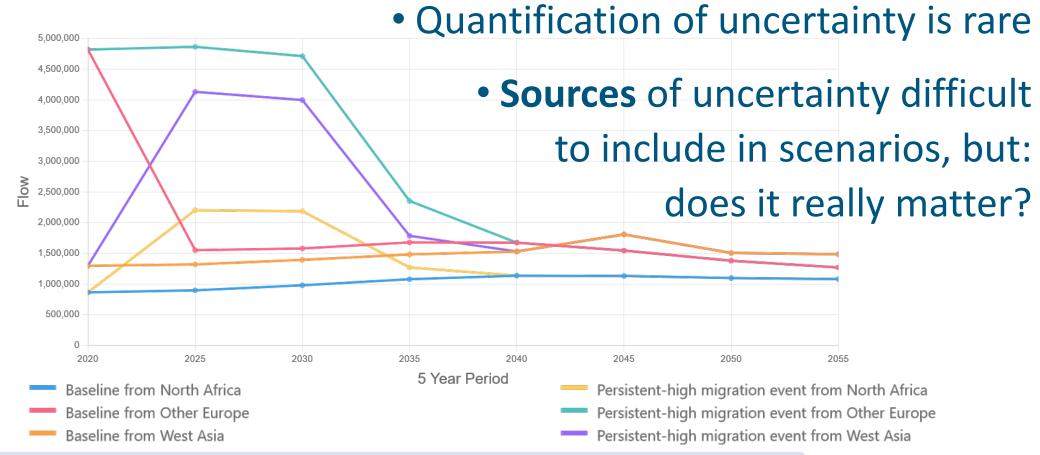
Arguments for disaggregation and varying focus

Impact \ Uncertainty	Low	Medium	High
Low		Migration of nationals	Short-term migration
Medium		Family migration	Economic migration Study migration
High		Settlement migration	Asylum Migration
Prediction horizon	Long-term	Mid-term	(Very) short-term

Adapted from: Bijak J et al. (2019) *Journal of Forecasting*, 38(5), 470–487.

Scenario uncertainty: Immigration to EU27



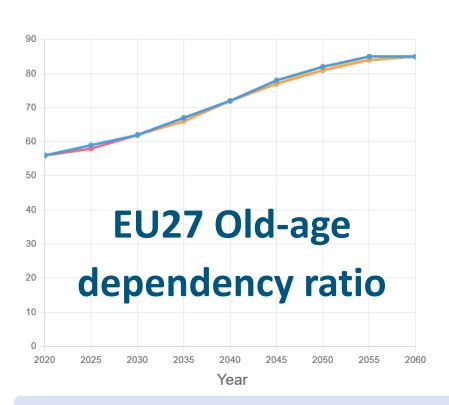


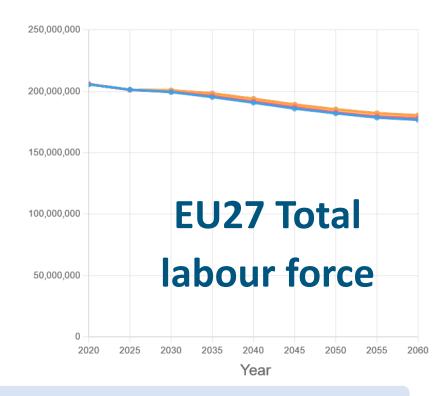
Source: QuantMig Migration Scenarios Explorer, bit.ly/quantmig-scenarios





Impact predictably limited – short term and localised





Source: QuantMig Migration Scenarios Explorer, bit.ly/quantmig-scenarios

The work continues



- Horizon Europe Project FutuRes:
 Towards a Resilient Future of Europe
- Resilient policies in the face of ageing and demographic change
- Migration as an important and less predictable driver of change
- Led by Arnstein Aassve (Bocconi)



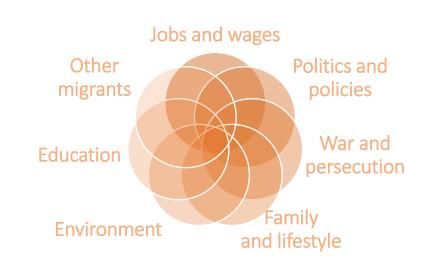
futu-res.eu

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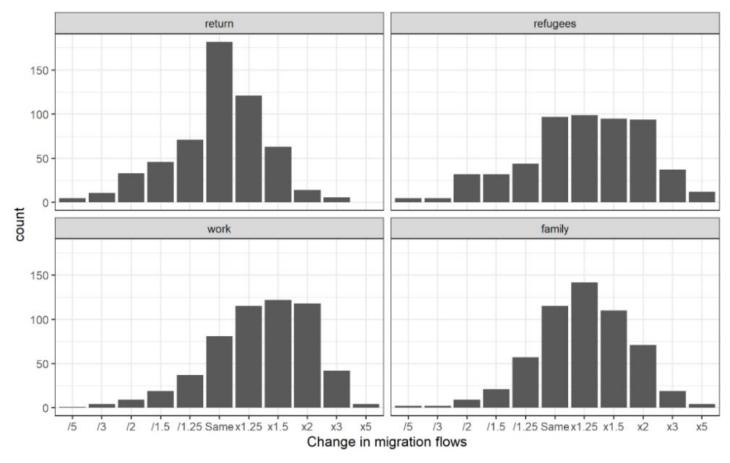
- Varying, but rather low levels of consensus between the experts:
 to be expected, given the uncertainty of migration
- High variability of answers, as measured by standard deviation (with caveats about using a discrete five-point measure)
- Uncertainty particularly visible for:
 - Climate-related variables
 - Returns and duration of stay
 - Policies aiming at reducing migration
- Findings qualitative in nature, as expected: quantification would be very challenging



Which drivers for which migration?



- Lessons from a vignette study on migration from MENA to Europe
- Different signal for the impact of demography (origin & destination), economic convergence, political instability (origin) as well as attitudes and policies (destination)



Boissonneault et al. (2022). QuantMig Deliverable D7.2





- Between interventionism and abstentionism: so-called "root causes" drive aspirations rather than migration
- But: changes in policies and driver environments alter the numbers, trends, and composition of flows, often in unpredictable ways
- Uncertainty of governance: 'pivot to status quo' and negativity bias
- Some policies in name only, but also new trends and challenges: securitisation, instrumentalisation and weaponisation of migration

DEMIG-QuantMig Migration Policy Database https://bit.ly/quantmig-policy

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Migration trends

Key messages



- From our experience, driver-based scenarios can be problematic:
 - Complexity: interactions with and between the many drivers are complex
 - Uncertainty: future pathways and relationships remain unknown
 - Main use: baseline as an input to argument-based projections
 - Suitability: mainly qualitative quantification remains a challenge
 - Alternative: impact of rare events for contingency planning
- Corollary: Strategic policies policies should not focus on numbers
- Migration policies are means to an end, not specific targets
- Policies should be driven by their purpose, not headlines

More in: White Paper on Migration Uncertainty, bit.ly/migration-uncertainty





Thank you!



For details, see www.quantmig.eu

White Paper: bit.ly/migration-uncertainty





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