Measuring migrants’ well-being

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Parallel session 1E: “Measuring immigrant integration: filling knowledge gaps and exploring new measurement approaches”
The OECD framework for measuring well-being

INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING
[Populations averages and differences across groups]

Quality of Life
- Health status
- Work-life balance
- Education and skills
- Social connections
- Civic engagement and governance
- Environmental quality
- Personal security
- Subjective well-being

Material Conditions
- Income and wealth
- Jobs and earnings
- Housing

SUSTAINABILITY OF WELL-BEING OVER TIME
Requires preserving different types of capital:
- Natural capital
- Human capital
- Economic capital
- Social capital
Guiding principles

- Focus on **people**, not just the economic system
- Focus on **outcomes**, rather than inputs or outputs
- Reporting both **averages** and inequalities
- Capturing both **objective** and **subjective** aspects of life
- Concerned with well-being both **today** and **tomorrow**
How’s Life? 2017 special chapter on migrant well-being

How’s Life? is OECD’s flagship publication on well-being measurement. It includes:

- An overview of levels and trends in 25 headline indicators of current individual well-being and 32 indicators of natural, human, economic and social capital
- Detailed country notes for all OECD countries and selected non-Member countries
- Special thematic chapters, e.g. child well-being, gender, multi-dimensional inequalities

Latest edition (launched November 2017) includes chapter on migrant well-being

- Migrant make up a significant minority in most OECD countries – capturing info about their well-being is critical for a fuller picture of how life is going in a country
- Key for supporting governments’ efforts to integrate migrants and address their needs/capacities
- Central to UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
Data limitations and selected indicators

- Ideally, to measure migrants’ well-being, we need data that allows for dynamic and granular analyses (e.g. change over time, outcomes for different migrant groups, comparisons with matched non-migrants).
- Currently available internationally-comparable data do not tend to allow this however.
- Chapter presents aggregate well-being outcomes for migrants (foreign-born) compared with native-born for a selection of indicators.

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Selected findings – Income and wealth

Mean average net wealth of migrant households is around half that of natives, where data are available.

And median income of migrant households is around 25% lower...

28% of people living in migrant households experience relative income poverty, against 16% for native-born HHs.
Migrants face greater exposure to risky or harmful working conditions...

And are much more likely to be overqualified for their jobs: 1/3 of highly-educated migrants against 1/5 of native-born

Also more likely to work anti-social hours and experience in-work poverty
Selected findings

While migrants tend to experience worse outcomes than native-born in many dimensions of well-being but there are exceptions...

Relative outcomes for migrants and the native-born population for selected well-being outcomes

Share of OECD countries, %

Note: Results are based on the analysis of the confidence intervals at 90%
Does migration mean a better life?

Migrants from low income countries/regions tend to experience the biggest increases in life satisfaction from moving to OECD countries.

Life satisfaction for migrants and matched stayers, by income level of birth country and region

Mean values on a 0-10 scale, 2006-2015

- Migrants
- Stayers

THANK YOU

wellbeing@oecd.org

www.oecd.org/howslife

www.oecd.org/statistics/better-life-initiative.htm