

Using population registers for migration and integration research: examples from Denmark and Sweden

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Migration and Integration Studies in Denmark and Sweden

Focus of scholarly attention

- Focus on integration outcomes
- Focus on integration as cross-generational process

Data sources

- Surveys
 - Few
- Registers
 - Dominant

Registers as data sources for scholarly research

Content of registers

- Basic personal information (gender, age, country of origin...) in the general population register
- Linkage possible to other registers for detailed information (labour market, health, income) – in specific conditions

Regulatory Framework

- Scholarly access in country-specific conditions (affiliation, price)

Registers as data sources for scholarly immigration research

Characteristics of register data

- Completeness
- Longitudinal data
- Accurateness
- Limited bias sensitivity
- Linkability

In particular, for immigration research

- Cost-effective
- Available for researchers
- Longitudinal
- Limited attrition

Registers as data sources for scholarly immigration research

Caveats of register data

- Sources of register data (self-reported vs. objective)
- Only legally resident population included (illegal immigrants, short term mobile persons not included)
- There are differences in the way countries report register data – not comparable

Registers as data sources for immigrants surveys

General advantages/uses

- Central registers
- Sampling
 - Cost-effective
 - Representative
 - Possible panel
- Weighting data

Registers as data sources for immigrants surveys

Caveats

- Tailored to the type of research and research question
 - Only the legally residing population
 - Different rules for including new residents in the register
- Contact
 - Problematic, as de-registration is not reported
- Data protection and privacy
 - Relevant for securing cooperation of respondents

Final reflections

- Complex samples at low cost
- Complex research at low cost
 - Register data as complement to surveys
- Comparative potential
 - Depends on rules of access and data handling
 - Depends on rules of registration of new residents
 - Raw data – similar (country of birth ex)
 - Well documented data, longitudinal
 - Few countries have central registers