

Reasons for migration & their impact on return behaviour

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Return & Migration Policies

1. Renewed interest on promoting return migration due to both economic crisis, integration & development concerns
2. Limited & misleading understanding of return dynamics, which hampers efficient policies
3. Voluntary return (vs. forced return) is overwhelming more numerous, however this is often overlooked

Return: under-studied behaviour

1. Oversimplification & missinterpretation of some theories
2. Ideology of settlement along with fears of invasion
3. Relatively recent cheaper travelling that makes return more common
4. Data constraints → Quali studies & small non-representative samples
 - Lack of returnees registers in origin countries
 - Under-coverage of return in destination countries
 - Lack of sampling frame
 - Rare population

Partial Theoretical Approaches

1. Main theories designed to explain return of economic migrants
2. Very little is theorized for family migrants, who are supposed to follow the decision of others, and others
3. Even for economic migrants, theoretical elaboration by NE and NELM was sometimes oversimplified and missinterpreted
 - NE: return = failure
 - NELM: return = success
 - Transnationalism --- multiple trips and returns

Previous disturbing evidence

- 1) Jensen & Pedersen (2007): no effect of unemployment at arrival or during stay in Denmark for women from less developed countries
- 2) Fokkema & De Haas (2011): no effect of any variable related to labour force status & occupation **on return** of four African groups, and absolutely no effect of family links either in origin or destination!
- 3) Pungas et al (2012): no effect of education **on intention to return** of Estonians in Finland
- 4) González-Ferrer et al. (2014): no effect of being employed or not on **return behaviour** of Senegalese, Congolese and Ghanaians in Europe

Potential explanation for unexpected results

1. “Heterogeneity concerning reasons for migration, their change over time and their impact on return intentions and actual return behaviour” [Constant and Massey, 2002]
2. OCDE (2008): The available theoretical and empirical works seldom distinguish between categories of migrants.

Same theories are applied to explain any type of migration:
family, study or politically motivated

A few studies paid attention to “reasons for migration”

Aydemir and Robinson (2006) in Canada, Klinthäll (2006) in Sweden, Shortland (2006) in New Zealand, Statistics Norway (2007) in Norway, Bijwaard (2007, 2010, 2013) in Netherlands...

Results: students the most likely to return and refugees the least

BUT... they work with register based info on reasons for migration:

1. Legal category of admission does not necessarily corresponds with actual reasons for migration (migrants use the open door)
2. Legal category of admission produces largely endogenous results, since it determines residence rights & thus return behaviour
3. Register based data exclude immigrants who migrated irregularly or overstayed their tourist visa

Contributions of our study

1. Analysis of return behaviour by reasons for migration
2. Reasons for migration based on self-report of individuals (not admission category)
3. Inclusion of individuals who migrated irregularly and had no admission category
4. Dynamic analysis with yearly life-course data: **MAFE**
 - Retrospective biographical individual information, year by year
 - Surveys collected in both in origin (Senegal, Ghana and DR Congo) and multiple destinations in Europe
 - Complete labour, family and migration trajectories, plus detailed info on networks, properties, etc.

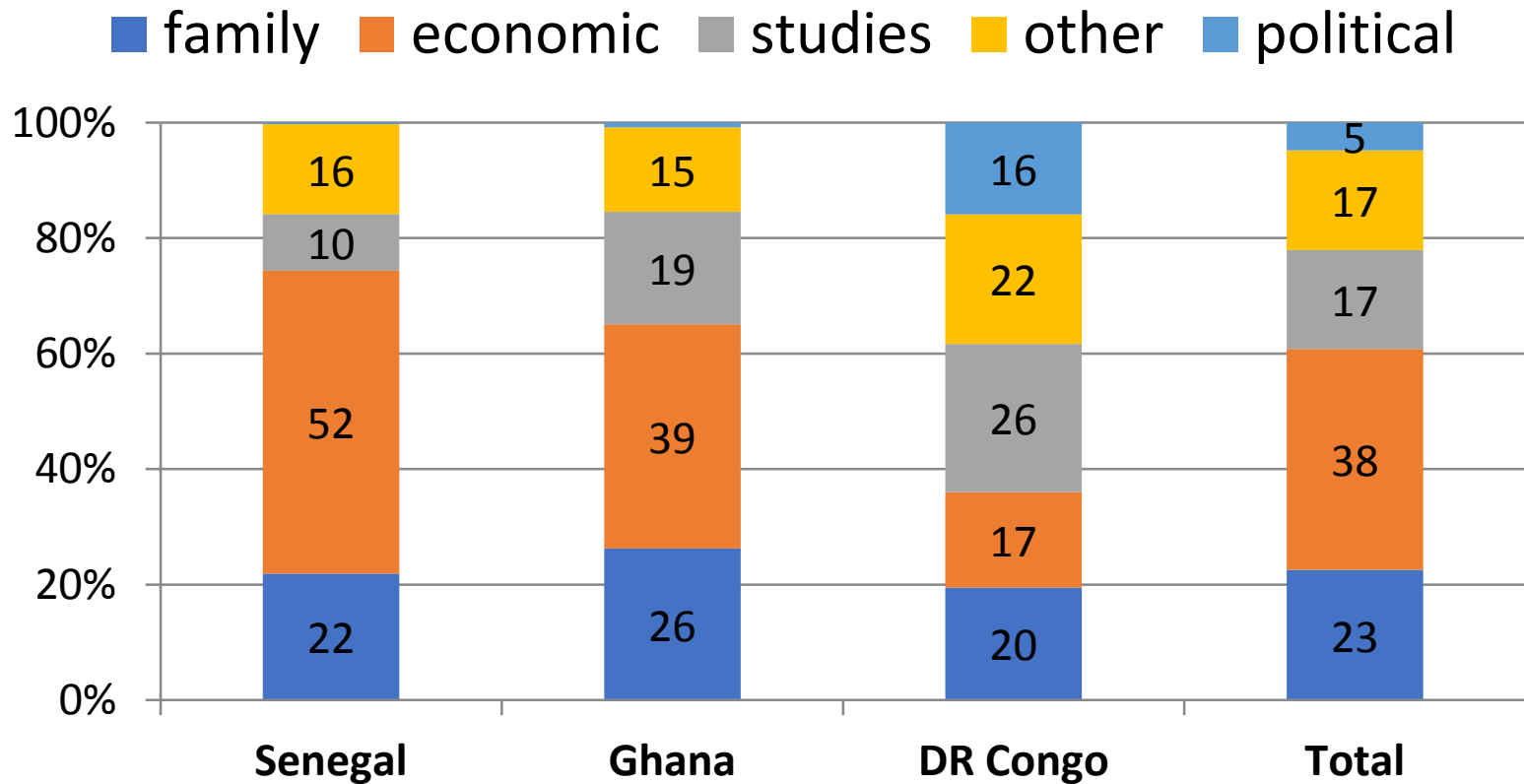
Sample

1. Restricted to first adult return from an European destination to country of birth
2. Only migrants who spent at least one year in the European destination (shorter stays excluded)
3. Only individuals who were adults at the time of their first migration to Europe

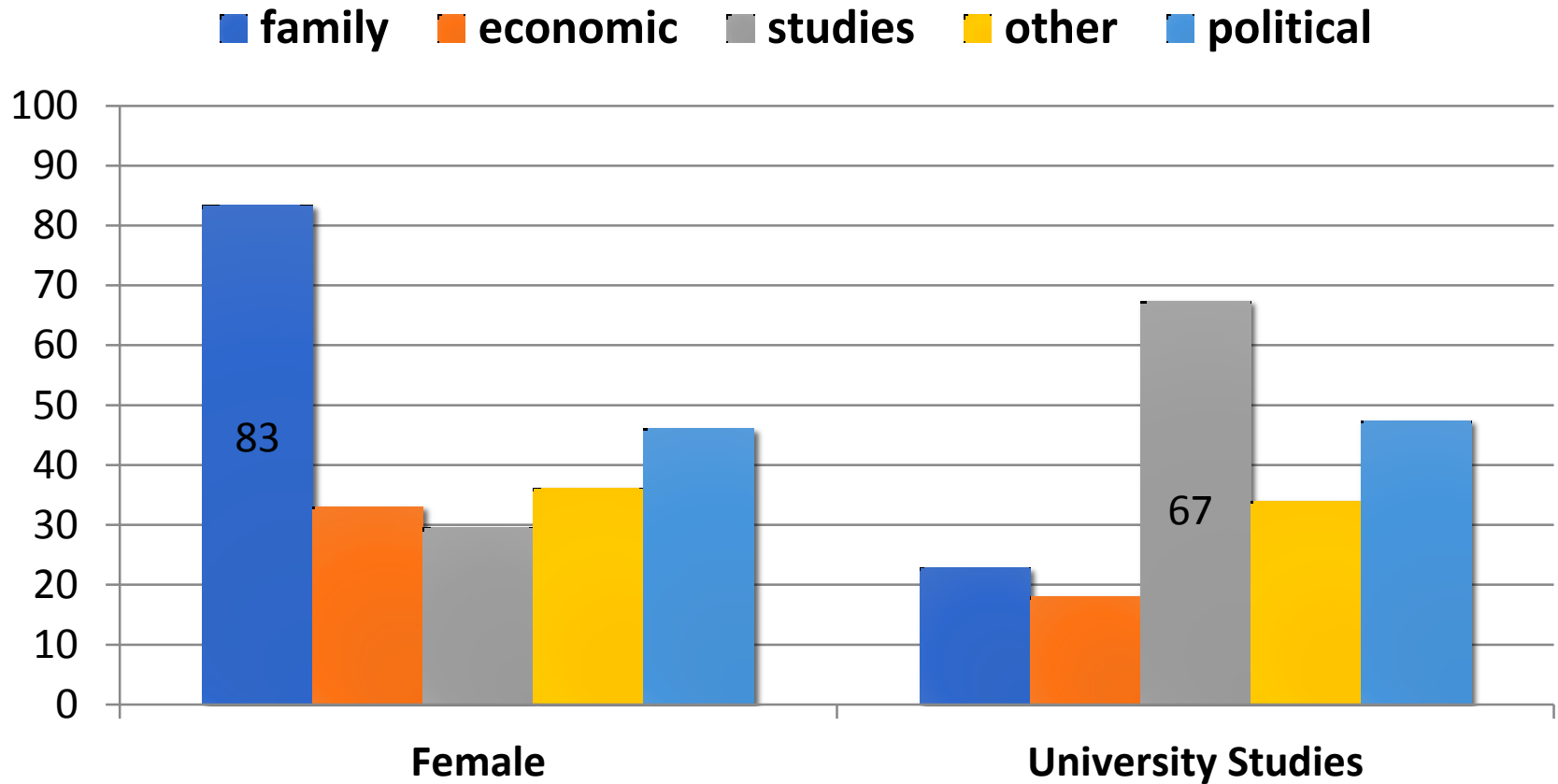
N= 1,575 (of which 218 [14%] are returnees)

Average length of stay in Europe: 9 years

Reasons for migration



Reasons for migration by gender & education



Methods

1. Event history analysis, logistic regression
2. Separated regressions for sub-samples of migrants based on reasons for migration
3. DV: return to country of origin in current year
4. IV:
 - Not time-varying: country of birth, country of destination, sex, education, age at migration
 - Time-varying: period, length of stay,

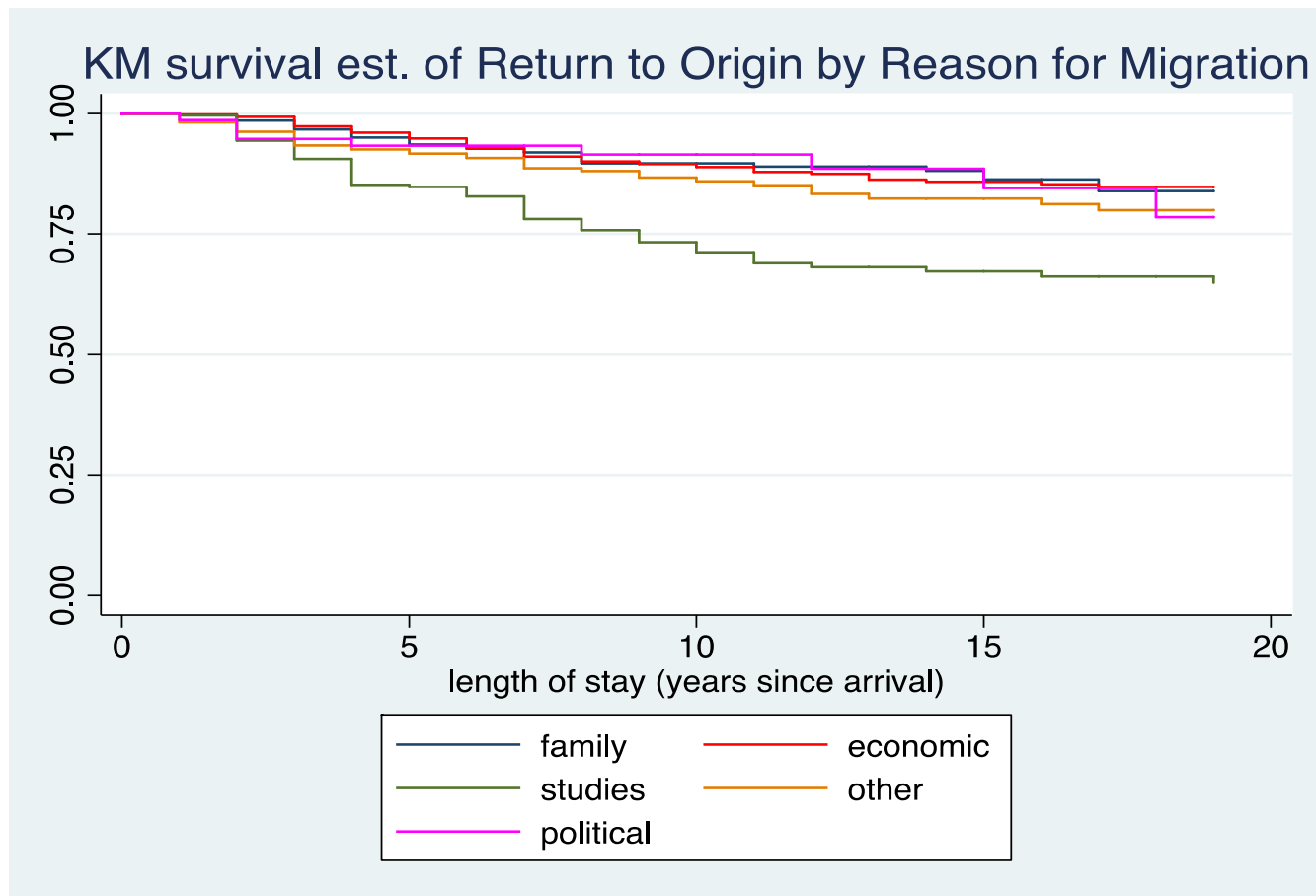
Hypotheses

1. Return is expected to be quicker for students & economic migrants
2. Gender and educational selectivity is expected to be highly correlated with reasons for migration and, therefore, of little importance in explaining return once reasons are controlled for.
3. Work related factors will be more important in predicting return of migrants who left for economic reasons
4. Having partner in origin is expected to increase return for all migrants
5. Having partner in Europe is expected to reduce return for all (except economic migrants if they behave according to NELM)
6. Legal status is expected to increase return for all migrants

Results I: controls

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| After 1995 | -0.220 [-0.83] | -0.354 [-1.04] | 0.202 [0.63] | 0.629* [1.76] | -1.758** [-2.00] |
| Ref. Senegal | | | | | |
| Ghana | 0.222 [0.74] | -0.103 [-0.19] | -0.0822 [-0.22] | 0.300 [0.75] | |
| DR Congo | -0.0427 [-0.09] | -0.843 [-1.48] | -0.668* [-1.82] | -1.929*** [-3.46] | |
| Destination = Colonial power | 1.798*** [5.57] | 1.370** [2.54] | 2.516** [2.57] | 1.041** [2.85] | |

Results II: Length of stay



Results II: Length of stay

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ref. <3 years | | | | | |
| 3-5 years | 1.389*** [3.52] | 0.637 [1.22] | 0.0248 [0.05] | -0.642 [-1.15] | -1.149 [-0.98] |
| 6+ years | 0.924** [2.11] | 0.384 [0.72] | 0.692 [1.55] | -0.127 [-0.26] | 0.478 [0.83] |

H1. Partially confirmed

Speed of return is higher for economic (and maybe) study migrants

Results II: gender & education

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Female | -0.667** | 0.334 | -0.357 | -0.0373 | 0.193 |
| | [-2.06] | [0.60] | [-1.07] | [-0.11] | [0.25] |
| University studies | -0.729* | -0.143 | -0.395 | 0.390 | 1.599 |
| | [-1.89] | [-0.30] | [-0.89] | [1.09] | [1.35] |

H2. Rejected only for economic migrants

Gender & Educational level still important in predicting their return

Results III: labour market situation

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Enter into employment | -1.094 | 1.130** | 2.963*** | 1.403** | 2.055* |
| | [-1.04] | [2.15] | [9.54] | [2.95] | [1.85] |
| Fall into unemployment | 1.676** | 1.300 | 0.943 | 0.483 | |
| | [3.22] | [1.61] | [0.98] | [0.56] | |

H3. Confirmed

Falling into unemployment only relevant for economic migrants

Results IV: Ties with origin & destination

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Ref. No partner | | | | | |
| Partner in Origin | 1.075*** [3.31] | 0.528 [0.84] | 1.533*** [5.23] | 0.299 [0.71] | 3.658*** [4.13] |
| Partner in EU | -0.221 [-0.57] | -0.508 [-1.06] | -1.261** [-2.30] | -0.730 [-1.38] | 1.231 [0.99] |

H4. Confirmed: Partner in Origin increases likelihood of return

H5. Rejected: With the only exception of Migrants for Study Reasons, Partner in Europe does not affect return behaviour

Results V: legal status

| | economic | family | studies | other | political |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Legal status | 0.394 | 0.291 | 0.238 | -0.186 | |
| | [1.07] | [0.55] | [0.51] | [-0.45] | |
| Visit to Origin t-1 | -1.884** | -0.457 | -0.490 | 0.221 | 2.193* |
| | [-2.45] | [-0.58] | [-0.84] | [0.34] | [1.94] |

H6. Rejected

Legal status does not affect the return behaviour of any type of migrants, after controlling for all the other factors (Highly correlated with visits in previous year)

Conclusions

1. Reasons for migration may have a long-term effect on migration strategies including return
2. Reasons for migration are linked not only to different return propensities but also to different explanatory factors
3. Same variables have opposing effects in explaining return behaviour of different types of migrants (ex. Visits to origin, Partner in destination)
4. Proper testing of theories but also efficient immigration policy design requires distinguishing migrants according to REAL reasons for initial migration

Thank you!



| | family | economic | studies | other | political |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Senegal | 41 | 58 | 24 | 38 | 3 |
| Ghana | 35 | 30 | 34 | 25 | 5 |
| DR Congo | 24 | 12 | 42 | 37 | 92 |
| Female | 83 | 33 | 30 | 36 | 46 |
| University Studies | 23 | 18 | 67 | 34 | 47 |
| Length of stay (years) | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Age at migration (years old) | 29 | 29 | 27 | 30 | 32 |
| Everworked | 81 | 95 | 80 | 92 | 80 |
| Worked in t-1 | 53 | 71 | 50 | 69 | 55 |
| Not working at arrival | 57 | 27 | 80 | 51 | 79 |
| Work experience as % years of stay | 57 | 81 | 45 | 65 | 45 |
| Ever visited OR | 52 | 54 | 45 | 41 | 36 |
| Visited OR in t-1 | 25 | 34 | 22 | 25 | 12 |
| Ever remitted | 70 | 80 | 60 | 69 | 74 |
| Remitted in t-1 | 62 | 75 | 52 | 63 | 66 |
| No partner | 29 | 47 | 64 | 45 | 63 |
| No child | 50 | 59 | 78 | 54 | 51 |
| Decided migration on their own | 10 | 59 | 45 | 43 | 13 |