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**Understanding Afro-European Labour Trajectories:
Integration of Migrants into the European Labour
Market, Transnational Economic Participation and
Economic Reintegration into the Country of Origin.
A Comparative Study**

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INTRODUCTION

Studying the labour market outcomes of migrants: a dynamic approach on trajectories of migrants between origin and destination countries

The labour market integration of migrants in destination countries is a crucial issue in the current academic debate, and a major political challenge at national (for both origin and destination countries) and European levels.

However, when looking at migrants' labour outcomes at destination, current research tends to focus either on singular events or on summary performance measures, following mainly a cross-sectional approach. In particular the existing quantitative literature provides limited insight into the complexity of the occupational situation before migrating and on employment outcomes *after* the first settlement at destination. We currently lack the kind of quantitative longitudinal research that would allow a systematic and detailed picture of immigrant pathways across time and of the long-term performances of migrant workers in receiving countries (Fuller, 2011).

On the other side, another – separated - strand of literature on return migration studies the outcomes of economic re-integration of returnees at origin, without taking in account the previous trajectories and achievements in the labour market during migration. The question of how migration trajectories and economic integration interact is traditionally embedded into two distinct fields of study and theories, depending on whether migrants are observed from the receiving or the sending countries' point of views. On the one hand, the question is addressed by the literature on integration and social cohesion in developed nations. On the other hand, the issue of the re-integration of returnees concerns the research realm of migration and development.

As a result, economic integration at destination and re-integration in the origin country, are theoretically conceived and empirically studied as two distinct objects. In this perspective what is importantly missing is a more comprehensive approach, able to provide measurable trends of migrants' trajectories as a whole, bridging the origin and destination countries at different steps of the migration process.

The objective of this paper is to explore longitudinally the labour market outcomes of migrants, looking at both ends of the migration system, considering labour trajectories before leaving, during migration, and upon return.

The paper addresses in particular the following questions:

On the one hand, how do immigrants' careers unfold during their first years upon arrival? Do migrants find in Europe jobs corresponding to their competences at their entry in Europe? And across time? To what

extent do their experiences differ from one destination country to another? And according to gender?

On the other hand, upon return to the country of origin, to which extent are returning migrants reintegrated in local labour markets? Which is the educational level of those coming back?

Lastly, this work will examine to what extent African migrants are engaged in transnational activities. We will explore their attitudes to sending remittances, to engage in investments back home, or to participate in development associations, and how these attitudes change across time and according to their occupational status at destination.

All these questions related to socio-economic changes concern the issues of migrants' integration in destination countries and of returnees' re-integration in their origin countries. They are major concerns to policy makers, whose objectives are: (1) within Europe, to maximize the benefits of migrants' human capital in order to stimulate growth and productivity; and (2) in Africa, to use (returning and circulating, and transnationally engaged during migration) migrants as key actors to promote the development of their countries of origin (policies for 'migration and development')².

The afro-european migration system

Senegalese migration

Senegalese migration to Europe has its origins in the colonial relationship with France. During the colonial period some workers were temporarily employed in French administration through blue-collar positions. As a French colony, Senegal had also representatives in the French parliament (van Nieuwenhuyze, 2009). At the same time, at the end of the 19th century, and during the Second World War, the French enrolled *Tirailleurs* in its army. Once the war ended, some of them settled in France for good, engaging mostly in commercial activities.

In the immediate post-war reconstruction and subsequent economic growth period, an active recruitment policy was specifically sustained by the French public authorities in order to attract foreign workforce - mainly male workers from colonies in Africa, among which Senegal. As a result the flows towards France intensified after the Independence (1960), responding to the needs of the rapidly-developing automobile industry (Pison, Hill, Cohen, Foote 1997 ; Robin 1997; Robin, Lalou and Ndiaye, 2000).

Later, in response to the economic crisis of the early 1970s, France followed the example of other European countries and in 1974 stopped all

² This paper is based on the results of Schoumaker *et al.* (2013), Black *et al.* (2013) and Castagnone *et al.* (2013)

recruitment programmes for foreign workers. This, however, led neither to immigrants returning to their own countries, nor to a decrease in immigration. On the contrary, many immigrants remained in France and were subsequently joined by their families. In terms of numbers, family reunification has since become the most important channel for immigration. Following the halt to foreign labour recruitment programmes in 1974, external and internal controls (visas and residence permits, respectively) were furthermore introduced (Devitt, 2012). In 1985 France introduced a compulsory visa for Senegal.

Meanwhile, Senegal was facing one of the most serious periods of drought of its contemporary history, with a subsequent crisis of the traditional agricultural system. Propelled by the globalisation of the economy, by ineffective national development policies and by accelerated pauperisation, more families invested in an international migrant (Adepoju, 2004: 73). Senegalese migration to Europe considerably increased since the early 80s. Beside the intensification of migration flows, also a diversification of destination countries (with a switch from France to South Europe countries) and of migrants' profiles (in terms of area of departure from Senegal, ethnicity, level of education, religious affiliation, gender composition, etc.) took place.

The transition from the French to the new destination countries in South Europe takes place at the end of the 1980s. Italy became the most important destination for Senegalese migrants in the 1990s, after laws legalising irregular migrants were passed in 1990 and 1994. Here the new immigrants were able to find work in the informal trade and in the industrial sector. Initially the Senegalese arrived in Italy especially through secondary migration from France, and subsequently they established direct channels and networks of migration from Senegal. Since the end of the 1990s, Spain has also become a popular destination, with its strong construction and agricultural sectors attracting Senegalese workers.

Contrarily to the most recent trends in France, the economic migration channel dominated entry and residence policies in the Italian and Spanish migration regimes. This is due both to the fact that they are more labour-intensive than the north-western countries and to the greater weight in their economies of sectors more likely to rely on immigrant unskilled or low-skilled labour (Arango, 2012). The underground economy has also played a crucial role in shaping the migration patterns (with a strong attraction effect) and the migration governance in these countries, representing one of the main structural differences with France (Reyneri and Fullin, 2010).

As for the socio-demographic composition of the Senegalese coming to Europe, while up to the 1980s, most of the international migrants were coming from the rural areas of the Senegal River Valley, the later period saw a diversification of departure regions, with cities in general, and the capital in particular, assuming an increasingly key role. The first migrants

were Toucouleur and Soninke from Valley of the Senegal river, little or not at all educated, primarily employed in French manufacturing and construction industries. They were mainly men relying on existing social cohesive networks groups abroad. Since the 70s, gradually also migrants with higher level of education started migrating, some of them with the objective of completing their studies abroad, especially in France. In addition, women began to join their husbands and to establish new families abroad, mainly in France, while in Italy and Spain, this phenomenon is still reluctant. However, an increasing number of women began to move independently to fulfil their own economic needs, especially directed to countries of recent migration, such as Spain and Italy (Fall, 2010; Tall, Tandian, 2010).

Congolese migration

Congolese immigration in Belgium dates back to colonial times, but the number of Congolese migrants remained low until the independence of Congo (1960). The 1960s and 1970s marked the beginning of a significant migration from the Congo directed to Belgium in particular, and to France. These international migrants were mainly elite students or labour migrants sent by major Congolese companies. At the same time periods of political instability prompted distinct waves of political migrations and high outflows of refugees across porous borders to neighbouring countries (Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda, Congo Brazzaville, Zambia and Angola). Whilst the economy picked up under the early stage of the Mobutu regime, from 1965, government spending and debt of the newly-renamed Zaire increased substantially. From 1975 to 1982, the economic situation seriously deteriorated and political turmoil resurfaced.

The migration from DRC has significantly changed since the 1960s. The profile of migrants have diversified from the 1980s and 1990s. The deteriorating economic and political situation has been accompanied by an increase in asylum seekers, and a change in the educational profile of migrants (Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013). The feminization of the Congolese population has also been observed (Schoonvaere, 2010).

In Europe, alongside Belgium, France has long been a popular destination for the Congolese and, more recently, the United Kingdom and Germany have attracted a sizeable share of the Congolese migrants.

While Congolese flow to Belgium was historically rooted in the colonial relationship with this country, Congolese immigration in the UK is much more recent. It began in the 1980s and gained momentum in the late 1980s and in the 1990s (Rutter, 2006). Early Congolese migrants in the UK were mainly intellectuals, opponents to the Mobutu regimes (Rutter, 2006). They were later followed by asylum seekers, with two main waves

in the early 1990s and late 1990s-early 2000s. Congolese migrants to the UK also included migrants coming from other European countries (mainly France and Belgium, see Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013), "attracted by What They Perceive as better labor market requirements in Britain, with lower levels of discrimination" (Pachi, Barrett and Garbin, 2010, p. 3). These inflows of migrants has led to a rapid growth of the Congolese community in the UK. According to the OECD migration statistics based on the 2001 Census (OECD, 2005), around 8,500 Congolese documented migrants were living in the United Kingdom circa year 2000. In 2008, the population was estimated by the Annual Population Survey at around 15,000. However, estimates vary widely across sources, and an IOM report (2006) suggested as many as 30,000 migrants from DRC were living in the UK in the mid 2000's. These discrepancies across estimates reflect both the rapid changes in the Congolese migrant population and the relative lack of reliable data on migrants. The fact that many Congolese migrants arrived in the UK as asylum seekers (IOM, 2006), and that requests are very often rejected (Rutter, 2006) may explain these discrepancies (due to a high proportion of undocumented migrants).

In Both countries, Congolese migrants are to a large extent living in urban areas, and notably in or close to the capital. Half of the Congolese migrants in Belgium live in Brussels (Schoonvaere, 2010), and approximately two thirds of Congolese in the UK are thought to live in the Greater London area (IOM, 2006).

Ghanaian migration

For many decades, until the late 1960s, Ghana was the leading destination for migrants in the region. Despite the obvious dominance of internal migration in the early period, international migration also occurred, albeit at a minimal level. While migration out of Ghana involved few people, mostly students and professionals to the United Kingdom as a result of colonial ties (Anarfi, et al. 2000) and other English-speaking countries such as Canada (see Owusu, 2000), migration to Ghana was visible and clear and its documentation dates back to the pre-colonial period.

The relatively few persons who migrated internationally did so for the purposes of education, training, and work in the foreign services. This trend of net immigration into Ghana continued until the late 1970s when economic and political instability led to a reversal of migration trends in Ghana, as the country became a net exporter of persons.

In the following decades, regional and inter-continental emigration from Ghana gathered momentum as a result of the economic hardship that engulfed the country. This led to the widespread emigration particularly of skilled workers and professionals from the health and education sectors as well as from other sectors (Awumbila et al., 2011). Ghana's

educational and economic system, providing few opportunities for a growing population, as well as political instability were identified as basic causes of Ghana's international out-migration in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Peil, 1995; Fosu, 1992)

As the culture of emigration took root in the 1980s, substantial numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers also emigrated (Anarfi et al, 2003). Initially, the destinations of Ghanaian emigrants included African destinations, such as the Ivory Coast and Nigeria, as well as Southern Africa. In the following decades, destinations have extended to include several other countries in Europe and North America.

Since the last two decades, however, new migration dynamics have emerged in Ghana with globalization, shifts in the global political economy, as well as from the economic and political stabilisation of the country. These have brought about increasing diversity and complexity not only in internal mobility patterns but also in international movements, thus making Ghana to simultaneously experience internal migration, immigration, transit migration and emigration both within and outside Africa. Also there is a trend towards greater diversity in migration patterns, away from the traditional colonial divisions and patterns, and involving new actors and new and multiple destinations.

The MAFE data

This paper builds on the **MAFE dataset**³ to shed new empirical evidence on: the long-term economic outcomes and labour trajectories of migrants from Senegal, Congo and Ghana in a selected number of destination countries (respectively France, Italy and Spain; Belgium and UK; Netherlands and UK); the forms and degrees of migrants' transnational economic engagement towards the origin country across time and; on the labour re-integration of returnees from European destinations.

MAFE (Migration between Africa and Europe) is an international research project which yielded a new data set on Afro-European migration system between 2008 and 2010, through biographic surveys in both sending (Senegal; Congo; Ghana) and receiving countries (France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, UK, Netherland) (see Beauchemin 2012 for further details).

For this purpose MAFE data are innovative in two respects, allowing the generation of unique quantitative evidence on the labour paths undertaken by African migrants⁴, as they:

³ For more details on the Methodology of the MAFE project, see : Beauchemin (2012)

⁴ Some methodological limits are nonetheless associated to the MAFE individual data. Firstly, we restricted our analyses to migrants (or returnees) who came to (/back from) Europe. This choice was guided by the need to restrict to more homogeneous migration paths for improving comparability across labour careers. Furthermore we wanted to explicitly address the Afro-European migration system and to provide European and African policy makers with new insights into the labour market outcomes of migrants of these specific groups. Secondly, while our analysis is focused on the migration and labour experience in Europe (or on returnees coming from Europe), we should however remind that some migrants had previous migration and labour paths in extra-European destinations, mainly in other African countries (Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013; Castagnone, 2011; Flahaux, Beauchemin, Schoumaker, 2010). Furthermore some migrants did not arrive directly to the 'destination country' in which they were finally sampled, but undertook secondary migration within Europe (Castagnone, 2011). All in all, migratory patterns are often more complicated than linear, one-way migration from an origin country A to a destination country B. According to analyses based on the MAFE data (*ibid.*), in fact, around 30% of migrants had articulated migration patterns, entailing step-wise or circular movements. More in detail on the nature of the data, attention should be paid, furthermore, to the fact that interviewees in the three destination countries came to Europe at different points in time and with varying ages. This has direct consequences on the choice to display and compare migrants' trajectories on the basis of the time elapsed from their first arrival to Europe, without distinguishing between different age groups or migration cohorts. As a consequence some of the differences by duration may also be due to changing compositions of migrants over time and to the historical (economic and juridical) context in which they first came to Europe, or to the time-dependency of the length of their stay in Europe. Another crucial aspect to consider about the MAFE data is that the survey in Senegal was undertaken in 2008, just before the crisis began, failing in registering its pervasive effects on the labour market; while the survey in Congo and Ghana took place in 2009, when the global economic downturn was already in place. 3) Also the comparative analysis of the labour market reintegration of return migrants presents some limits associated to the nature of the available data. Given that return migration occurs at different rates depending on the country of residence in Europe (see Schoumaker,

1) are longitudinal in nature. They result in fact from retrospectively collected individual life-histories. The biographic questionnaire was designed to collect longitudinal retrospective information on a yearly basis from birth until the time of survey (2008). The data collected include in particular a large range of information on socio-demographic characteristics, migration and occupational histories of the interviewed persons.

2) allow comparative analysis among different populations, as identical questionnaires were answered by each sampled individual, whatever his/her country of residence at the time of the survey, i.e. among migrants in the destination countries, and among returnees from European destinations and non-migrants in the origin countries.

While flow-specific papers on the three migration flows are aimed at analysing and comparing the economic outcomes of Senegalese, Congolese and Ghanaians in the related destination countries (Schoumaker et al. 2013, Black et al. 2013 and Castagnone et al. 2013), this paper has as an objective to put those results in a broader perspective, highlighting commonalities and differences among clusters of countries.

At this purpose, sequence and descriptive longitudinal analysis are here presented, based on the retrospective biographic surveys held both in origin and destination countries between 2008 and 2010 (see Beauchemin 2012).

Tab. 1: Sample of the research

	Spain	France	Italy	Senegal	Belgium	UK	RDC	UK	Netherlands	Ghana
Migrants in Europe	200	200	203	-	279	149	-	149	273	-
Returnees from European destinations	-	-	-	62			47			87
Returnees from other destinations				146			297			242
Non-migrants	-	-	-	859			1294			914
Total	200	200	203	1,067	279	149	1638	149	273	1243

Source: MAFE Survey

The paper is organized in three main sections. The first section deals with African migrants' integration in the European labour market, addressing and inspecting their labour market outcomes and trajectories

Flahaux et al. 2013), the results on return migration are dominated by the experiences of returnees from France in the Senegalese case, and the United Kingdom in the Ghanaian case. Furthermore, in addition to the trajectory abroad, the context at origin is crucial to understand opportunities and obstacles to a successful reintegration. An analysis of three countries facing very different economic and political challenges and considering returns occurring at different points in time over several decades can only provide first insights into the labour market situation of returnees. Still, the fact that certain patterns that emerge are quite similar for the migrant groups observed gives confidence in the data. Similarly, the economic and political context both at origin and destination acts as facilitator or obstacle to transnational economic activities, such as asset acquisition at home or remittance transfers.

over time. This part highlights the composition of migrants at the moment of departure, looking in particular at their last occupational status in the year before leaving, according to the different origin and destination countries. Their labour trajectories are then considered for their first ten years of stay in Europe, looking at how migrants' careers unfold across time and according to the different origin and destination countries. The second section enquires on migrants' transnational economic contribution to their respective countries of origin, looking in particular at how the transfer of remittances, the owning of assets, and the association membership change across time, according to the employment status and the sex, by destination country. The third section focuses on the returnees from Europe, analysing the forms taken and degree of success of the labour market re-integration in the origin countries. Some final conclusions are lastly presented.

1. AFRICAN MIGRANTS INTEGRATION IN THE EUROPEAN LABOUR MARKET: LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND TRAJECTORIES

European countries have diverse migration histories and migration regimes (the set of policies regulating entry and the entitlements necessary to access the labor market) and different structures of opportunities (the structure of the economy and the economic sectors where there is a demand for foreign workers; the regulation of the access to the public functions or to specific occupations, etc.). This diversity is reflected in the labour market outcomes of immigrants in the different receiving countries.

While detailed information on outcomes in different destination countries within each specific flow are provided in Schoumaker et al. (2013), Black et al. (2013) and Castagnone et al. (2013), here some more general trends of the insertion and pathways in the labour market of migrants in Europe will be drawn, through the comparison of different national groups and different European destination countries.

The occupational status definition in the research

The key occupational variable analysed in Sections 1 of this paper (and in Section 3 on economic re-integration at destination) is the occupational status, distinguishing between elementary, intermediate-high occupations, unemployment, inactivity, and students. The variable is computed based on two questions in the biographic questionnaire: (i) a question that records the self-reported labour market status (study, economically active, unemployed, various inactive statuses); and (ii) for those who work, an open question that recorded in detail the occupation, tasks performed, sector, etc., over the life-time of the respondent. Information provided was subsequently coded using a three-digit classification adapted from ISCO-08.

Depending on the method used, the analysis presents:

- the share of individuals in each of the five occupational statuses at different time points (before migration to Europe, the first year after migration, each year during the first ten years in Europe, the last year before returning to the country of origin, the first year after returning, at the time of the survey).
- most frequent transitions between different occupational statuses.

1.1 The profile of migrants at their entry in Europe: low-skilled and medium-highly skilled, old vs new destination countries

The profile of migrants before migrating to Europe varies considerably, both according to the origin (Senegalese, Congolese, or Ghanaian) and the European destination countries. The first column on the left of each graph of figure 1 show the last occupational status of migrants in the year before leaving, according to the different origin and destination countries.

Data suggest that **migration flows directed to the new destinations** have a higher share of **low-skilled workers**. Around 70% of Senegalese in Spain and around 60% in Italy in fact left Senegal as non-qualified workers (elementary positions, in brown in the first column on the left), while only slightly more than 30% of those who migrated to France were low or unskilled workers prior to departure. In addition migrants from Ghana to the Netherlands were also relatively low-skilled, with elementary workers predominating (50%).

An anomaly is provided by the 'new' migration of Congolese to the UK, where not only there was a significant proportion (around 25 per cent) of students, but non working individuals (pulling together students and those who were inactive or unemployed) made up over half of all migrants. This may reflect the circumstances of arrival of this group, many of whom had fled as refugees from Congo rather than being labour migrants in the conventional sense.

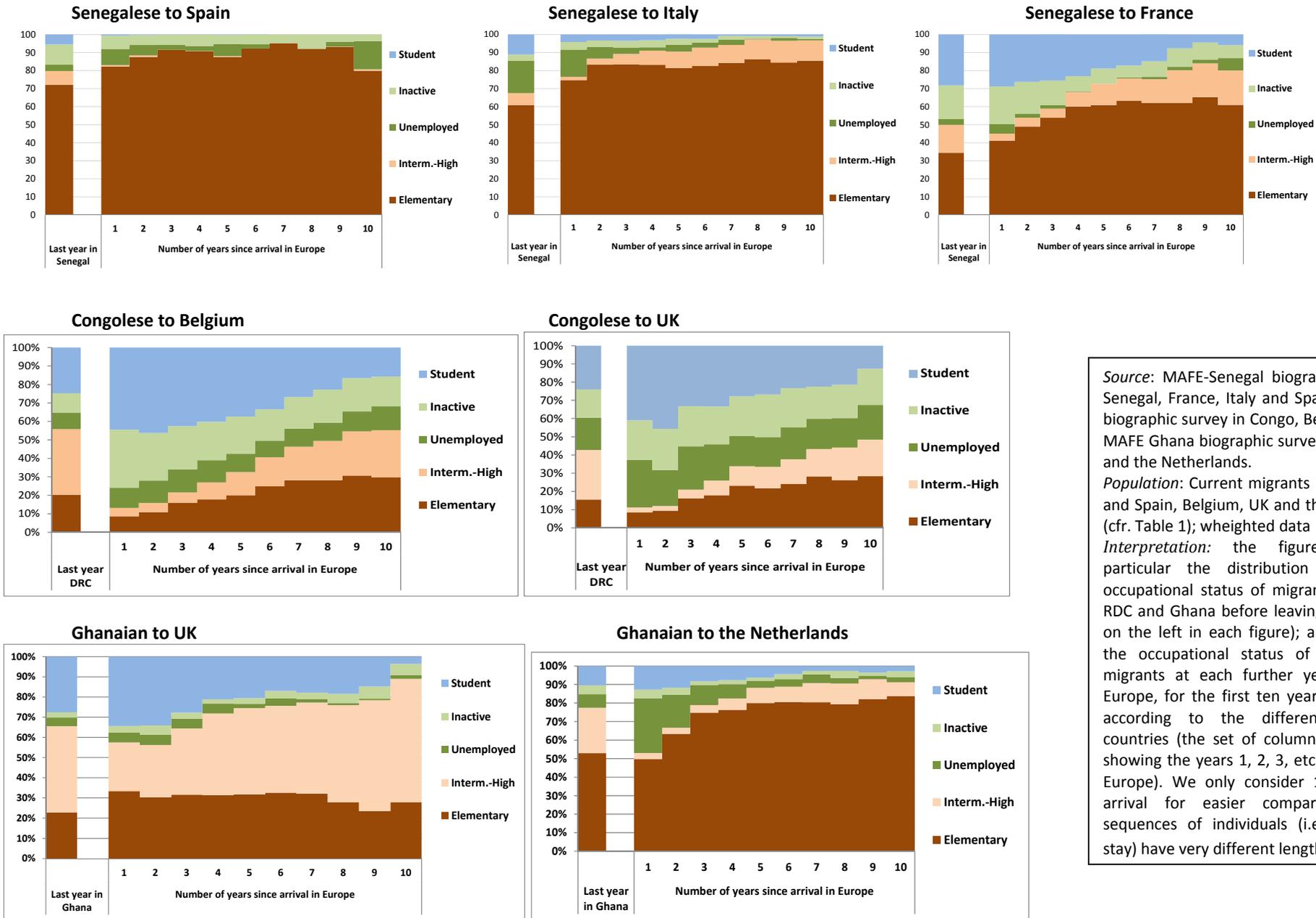
In contrast, **migration to 'traditional' destinations** – former colonial metropolises – involved much higher proportions of former **students**, or **those working in intermediate or high-level occupations** in the year prior to departure. Amongst Senegalese migrants moving to France, and Ghanaian migrants moving to the UK, over 30 per cent were students immediately before leaving; some 25 per cent of Congolese migrants to Belgium were in the same category.

Colonial links seem thus to remain crucial in both the composition of migration flows and in the structure of opportunities available to citizens from former colonies, among which linguistic commonalities and similar educational systems.

Colonial powers, having deeply shaped the educational systems in former colonized countries through assimilationist policies, established a common scheme of formal entitlements, recognizing furthermore the educational credentials obtained by citizens of former colonies. A further element encouraging the choice of the former colonial countries as a destination for students is the higher availability of study grants, often associated to other facilities (students' residences, documents, housing, economic support, etc.) in this country.

Students and highly skilled will accordingly choose former colonial countries as preferable destinations, with an evident selection effect; the other way around, the mentioned structural opportunities offered by the receiving countries will inevitably have a significant impact on the career of students and will shape the migrants' integration in domestic labour market.

Figure 1: Occupational status in the last year in Africa and at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years), by country of origin and of destination



Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.

Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data

Interpretation: the figures show in particular the distribution of the last occupational status of migrants in Senegal, RDC and Ghana before leaving (first column on the left in each figure); and the rate of the occupational status of the stock of migrants at each further year of stay in Europe, for the first ten years of residence according to the different destination countries (the set of columns on the right showing the years 1, 2, 3, etc. after entry in Europe). We only consider 10 years after arrival for easier comparison because sequences of individuals (i.e. duration of stay) have very different lengths¹.

1.2 Which patterns of labour market integration in Europe?

But how do migrants' careers unfold in the first years upon arrival and in the following years and to what extent do migrants' experiences differ from one destination country to another? The next set of tables helps to better understand which kind of careers African migrants experienced most frequently, according to the different origin and destination countries.

The low-skilled workers

Stagnant, (horizontal mobility) trajectories in low-skilled occupations

The most frequent occupational trajectories are globally quite simple, involving most of the time only one change of status. Most Ghanaians in the Netherlands, and Senegalese migrants in Spain, Italy and France, are steadily in unskilled positions (reflecting the labour status upon entry in Europe) with their relative proportion increasing over time. The stay in elementary position may reflect, however, both the permanence in the same position at all times, as well as lateral, unobserved mobility, with changes of jobs at the same occupational level.

Table 2. Five most frequent sequences of occupational status of migrants during their stay in Europe, by country of residence (possible states : elementary, intermediate-high, unemployed, inactive, student)

Senegalese in Spain		Senegalese in Italy		Senegalese in France		Senegalese in 3 Countries	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%	Sequence			%
Elementary	67.5	Elementary	64.3	Elementary	35.5	Elementary	52.2
Elem.→ Unempl.	7.7	Unempl. →Elem	10.9	Inact. →Elem	11.6	Unempl. →Elem	6.4
Unempl.→ Elem.	4.9	Elementary→Interm/High	4.3	Student→Interm/High	9.3	Inact. →Elem.	6.3
Inact. →Elem.	3.8	Inactive	3.4	Student	8.0	Student→ Interm/High	4.4
Unemployed	3.5	Student→elem.→Interm/High	1.6	Student→ Elem.	4.7	Student	3.8
Other	12,6		15,5		30,9		11,8
N	199		203		200		602

Congolesse in Belgium		Congolesse in United Kingdom		Congolesse in 2 Countries	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%		%
Inactive	13,5	Inactive	12,8	Inactive	13,19
Student	13,0	Student	7,96	Student	10,76
Student → Interm./High	5,9	Unemployed	7,84	Student → Elementary	5,57
Student → Elementary	5,5	Student → Elem.	5,66	Unemployed	4,95
Student → Inactive	5,2	Student → unemployed	4,75	Student → Interm./High	4,89
Other	56,9		61		60,6
N	278		149		427

Ghanaian in United kingdom		Ghanaian in Netherlands		Ghanaian in 2 Countries	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%		%
Student→Interm/High	20,3	Elementary	39,3	Elementary	21,4
Elementary	18,6	Unempl.→ Elem.	20,0	Student→Interm/High	17,7
Interm/High	13,6	Student	4,1	Interm/High.	12,0
Student	6,1	Student.→ Elem.	4,1	Student	5,9
Elem.→Interm/High	5,1	Inactive→ Elem.	2,8	Elem.→Interm/High	4,7
Other	36,3		29,7		38,3
N	149		273		422

Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.

Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data

Interpretation: The table shows the most frequent sequences of occupational status (possible states: elementary, intermediate-high, unemployed, inactive, student). Horizontal mobility (implying changes within the same status) are not tracked here, i.e. if an individual has changed different non-qualified jobs, his/her trajectory will be registered a unique sequence "elementary". It should also be remarked that only the "principal activity status" is registered per year, which result in a underestimation of short unemployment or inactivity spells.

The medium-high-skilled workers

A predominant trend of downward mobility upon entry in EU

As for those who entered Europe having been employed in intermediate or high level occupations before migrating, most of them experienced a drastic downgrading at the entry in the European labour market. The phenomenon is visible in figure 1 in all the sampled European countries, where the share of African workers in medium-high positions dramatically decreases in the first years of stay in Europe, with downward mobility occurring mainly at the time of migration, while much less once in Europe.

The share of highly skilled workers subsequently recovers over time, without nevertheless reaching the rate witnessed before departure. Only in Spain we find the highest majority of migrants entering and enduring in the lowest level of the labour market, an overall dispersion of students⁵ and a dramatic downward mobility for medium-highly skilled workers (see fig. 1: Senegalese to Spain).

Increase of the rate of highly skilled across time...

Although some upward mobility trajectories take place in the destination countries (sequences *elementary* → *Intermediate/high*), the growth of the share of the highly qualified is mainly produced by the students' entry into the labour market in qualified positions, after completion, as data in table 2 show.

...mainly produced by the entry of students into the labour market

In other words a migrant has a much higher probability to obtain a qualified occupation if he/she has spent periods of study in the destination country (sequences: *student* → *intermediate/high*), instead of entering as a skilled worker (sequences: *intermediate/high* for those who directly entered the labour market as skilled workers or *elementary* → *Intermediate/High* for those who either were underemployed upon entry and afterwards caught-up, or experienced an upgrade once in Europe).

Nonetheless, it should be underlined, a proportion of students does not necessarily reach higher position, but joins the labour market in unskilled occupations, or fall into unemployment or inactivity (sequences: *Student* → *Elementary*; *Student* → *Inactive*; *Student* → *Unemployed*).

The UK as a good example of economic integration of migrants

The only exception is UK, where highly skilled migrants from Ghana in particular, after having initially been penalized at their arrival in Europe, in the following years even exceed the original distribution across occupational statuses, in particular thanks to the successful entry of students into the labour market (cfr. Figure 1 and table 2). The case of Ghanaian in the UK in particular records among the most frequent trajectories: the highest rate of successful transitions from study to intermediate/high positions (20%); stable skilled careers (13,6%); and upward mobilities (with a change of status from elementary to

⁵ Over time, this may mean that they finished their education and entered the LM or moved on (back to Africa or to another country). Comparatively, a lower endurance in the "students" state, may also mean that in Spain they follow shorter degrees/courses, rather than (for example) a tertiary degree (for a few years).

intermediate/high positions: 5,1%).

The mismatch between educational attainments and occupational level

The human capital is a crucial issue in the debate on labour migration. On the one side the European receiving countries advocate more and more for highly qualified migration to Europe, in view of growing shortages of highly-skilled labour in the coming two decades (Chaloff, Lemaitre, 2009). On the other one the origin countries have to deal with the brain drain and the loss of the best educated from their countries. However the literature stresses how mismatches between workers' competences and what is required by their job are widespread in receiving countries.

In the previous set of analysis a systematic downgrading in the European labour market of migrants holding qualified position before migrating was shown. The following graph offers a picture at survey time of the extent to which migrants' educational level of the working population of the three groups is matched to their employment positions. The objective is here to see if their competences meet a job of a correspondent level. The three bars represent the proportion of the sample in each level of education⁶, within which the three shades indicate the distribution in the different levels of occupation

An overall majority of low-skilled migrants

First of all we find that the composition of the three African groups according to the educational level is very different, reflecting also their occupational level before leaving (see par. 1.1 and fig.1): individuals with higher education account for less than 20% of the working migrants from Senegal, while those with no or primary educational credentials represent the majority (more than 50%) of the migrant population surveyed. On the other hand, around 60% of Ghanaians and Congolese are highly educated, and migrants from these countries with very low educational attainments comprise around the 20%. The degree of qualification of the different groups of migrants, has indeed a decisive impact on the subsequent economic integration in the labour markets at destination, as already shown.

Evidence of over-qualification

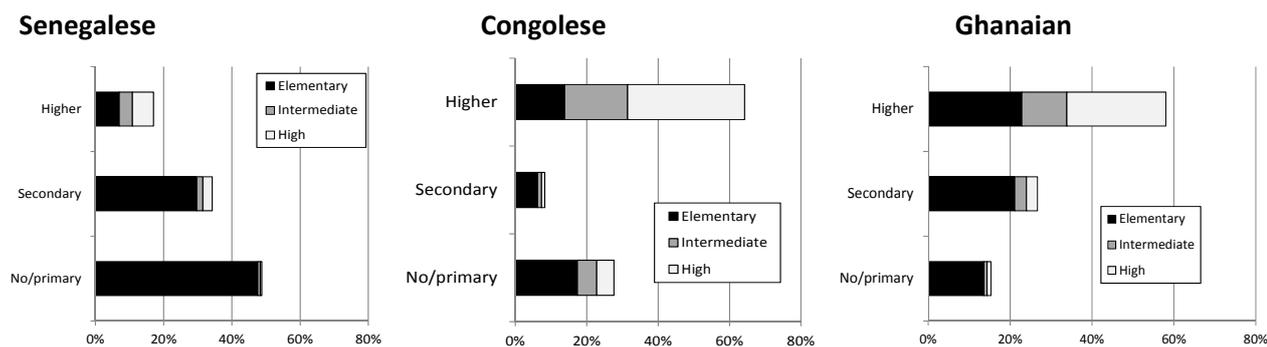
If we then look at the distribution by occupational level, there is some evidence of brain waste in the MAFE dataset, as, although the majority of those in higher-level occupations (unsurprisingly) have higher level qualifications, important shares of the skilled workforce is found occupied in elementary jobs (figure 2), suggesting that their qualifications are not fully put to use.

UK registers the best labour market outcomes

The group with the highest rate of highly educated employed in high positions, i.e. with a successful match between the degree of education and the position covered abroad, proves to be the one of Ghanaians, and, among them, especially those directed to the UK (cfr. fig.1). Even there, however, the access to skilled work often was preceded from a period of higher education post-arrival (cfr. Tab.2).

⁶ The level of education at survey time for each migration flow is here considered.

Fig. 2: Distribution of migrants by level of occupation and level of education (diploma) upon entry in Europe



Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.
Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data
Interpretation: the three bars represent the proportion of the sample in each level of education at survey time, within which the three shades indicate the distribution in the different occupational levels.

Lack of proficiency in the host-country language is one of the elements influencing the difficulty of immigrants to find jobs matching their skills and experience, or to access the educational system in order to retrain for improving the circumstances of access to the labor market. Language, however, is not the only obstacle for a successful economic integration at destination.

The discrepancies in relative over-qualification rates between countries may also reflect specific features of the labour markets. Whereas some countries do a better job in integrating immigrants into employment, they may leave them at greater risk of being overqualified.

The differential quality of training systems between origin and destination countries may also play a role in the inefficiencies of migrants' economic integration at destination. Global rankings confirm that marked differences exist between the caliber of tertiary sectors in developed and developing nations, correlated with length of academic tradition and the level of resources (Hawthorne 2008).

The education or training obtained in the origin country may furthermore be inappropriate because the organization of tasks at the workplace or the technologies used differ between origin and destination countries, requiring adaptation to prevailing practice in the host country. Part of this "discount" is attributable to the fact that degrees and work experience acquired in non-OECD countries are not always perceived by employers to be fully "equivalent" in the host-country context (Chaloff, Lemaitre, 2009). Furthermore potential employers often have little understanding of formal qualifications when earned from an educational institution in another country, and are thus unable to assign a proper value to prior education. In some professions, especially self-regulated and licensed occupations, foreign qualifications and experience are rarely fully acknowledged or accepted. For the access to public employment, the formal recognition of qualifications

obtained abroad may take years (and a often complex and expensive application process) and often don't lead to a full translation to equivalent entitlements.

In addition to the problems of transferability of human capital, a concurrent factor explaining the obstacles for migrants' integration into the labor market is represented by their methods of job search. First, migrants are disadvantaged as they are less familiar than the natives with the employment opportunities and retraining channels. In addition in the job search they have mainly access to networks based on relations internal to their origin community, which are less extensive than those of the natives and more concentrated in specific economical sectors (Ambrosini, 2003; Fullin, 2011).

Their penalty may ultimately be due to discrimination by employers, as shown by studies conducted by the ILO (Allasino et al., 2004; Zegers de Beijl, 2000).

In and out the labour market: inactivity and unemployment affecting mainly women

Female migrants are much more likely to be inactive prior to migrating

The participation to the labour market is strongly affected by gender and is primarily connected to the conditions and the motivations of departure of migrants.

The female migrants are in fact much more likely to be found inactive than their male counterparts when leaving their origin countries, especially among Senegalese and Congolese.

This is very evident in the Senegalese case, where migration of unaccompanied women has been discouraged, especially when carried over long distances and without the support of family members at destination. Senegalese migration is in fact traditionally and prevalently undertaken by men, with women very much relying on families, who determine the departure and the following development of their migration project. This feature is also crucial in the construction of the subsequent labour trajectories in Europe.

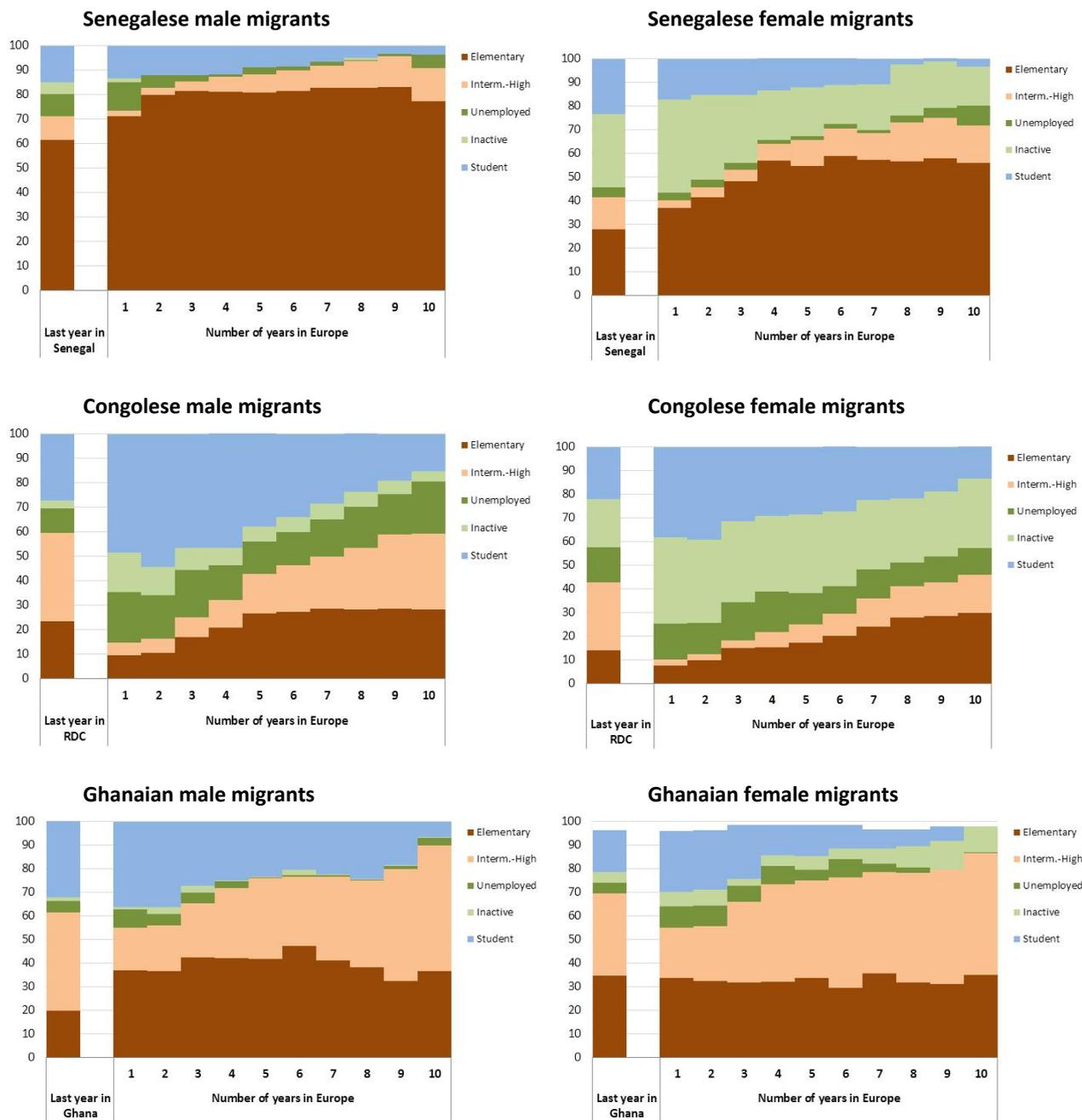
At the same time growing, albeit slow, processes of feminization of migration are observable, through the diffusion of autonomous migration choices and individual trajectories of women. In recent years selective female migration has become a major survival strategy in response to deepening poverty in West Africa and as an emerging family strategy in the Senegalese context.

Female inactivity increases upon entry in Europe.

The rate of female inactivity registers an increase at the immediate entry in Europe for the three groups, but then decreases for the Senegalese women, keeps constant for Congolese and even slightly increases for the Ghanaian.

Among the Congolese, contrary to the Ghanaians and the Senegalese, inactivity affects also the men. This may reflect the circumstances of arrival of this group, many of whom had fled as refugees from DRC rather than being labour migrants in the conventional sense.

Figure 3: Occupational status in the last year in Africa and at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years), by gender



Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.
 Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1);
 whighted data
 Interpretation: same graph as figure 1, according to gender

Women are more exposed to pemanence in inactivity

Data on the most frequent trajectories highlight some general trends about the participation to the labourforce according to gender, confirming that African women are particularly affected by inactivity also during migration. While in fact non employment for men is a residual phenomenon, essentially limited to the Senegalese in Spain (cfr. Fig. 2) and to Congolese men both in Belgium and UK (cfr. Fig. 2), women are more exposed to the permanence in inactivity and more at risk of falling back to inactivity once having initially joined the labour market.

The women who are not inactive display better performances than men

As for the educational careers, Senegalese women do not have very different probability to undertake education or training paths as compared to men, and Congolese women to have successful trajectories as students (8,19% of women are students all the time vs. 13,89% of men and 7,25 % become inactive after periods of study).

The Ghanaian population reveals to be, finally, the most gender-balanced one in terms of labour outcomes at destination, with men and women experiencing similar career paths, with only some slight differences.

Table 4. Five most frequent sequences of occupational status of migrants during their stay in Europe, by gender (possible states : elementary, intermediate-high, unemployed, inactive, student)

Senegalese in France, Italy and Spain

Males		Females	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%
Elementary	60.5	Elementary	64.3
Unempl.-Elem	8.3	Inact.-Elem.	10.9
Student	4.2	Inactive	4.3
Student-Interm/High	4.1	Student-Interm/High	3.4
Elem.- Unempl.	3.5	Inact.-Elem.-Inactive	1.6
Total	80.7%		69.9%
N	330		273

Congolese in Belgium and UK

Males		Females	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%
Student	13,89	Inactive	19,35
Student-Interm/High	7,84	Student	8,19
Student – Elementary	6,68	Student-Inactive	7,25
Elementary	6,23	Inactive-Elementary	5,85
Unemployed	5,88	Student-Elementary	4,66
Total	40,5%		45,3%
N	229		198

Ghanaian in UK and the Netherlands

Males		Females	
Sequence	%	Sequence	%
Elementary	23,6	Elementary	19,0
Student-Interm/High	22,0	Interm/High.	14,4
Interm/High.	9,9	Student-Interm/High	13,0
Student	4,9	Student	7,0
Elem.-Interm/High	4,6	Elem.-Interm/High	4,7
Total	65.0%		58.0%
N	330		273

Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.

Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data

Interpretation: same data as tab. 2, according to gender

2. MIGRANTS' ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION TO ORIGIN COUNTRIES

Migrants use varied channels when engaging in transnational economic activities. Remittance transfers certainly play a crucial role in most migrant sending countries, both in terms of the contribution to GDP and, at the micro-level, as income source for origin households. However, several hypotheses exist with regard to how remittance behaviour evolves depending on the length of the stay abroad, and how it is related to characteristics of migrants, for example their gender.

Another possible channel is the acquisition of assets, such as land, housing, and businesses, in the origin country. Moreover, migrants may contribute to development of communities at origin or support other migrants through participation in migrant associations. Membership as identified in the MAFE data implies that migrants “pay contributions or membership fees to one or more associations (including religious organisations) that finance projects in [the origin country] or support [...] migrants in Europe”.

Remittances, assets, and association membership by destination country

High levels of involvement in transnational economic activities

Figures 4 show the percentage of migrants sending remittances, owning at least one asset (plots of agricultural land, construction land, housing, or a business activity) in the origin country and contributing to associations at two points in time: the first year they arrive in Europe, and at the time of the survey (2008/2009).

Remittances are measured in each year the migrant sends regularly money to a recipient in the country of origin. The amount or the exact frequencies with which remittances are sent are not captured in the MAFE survey. The paper analyses the share of remittance senders at different time points during the migration.

Assets owned in the origin country that are recorded in the MAFE survey include construction land, agricultural land, dwellings, and business activities. The results presented either refer to the share of asset owners at a given point in time (at least one asset) or to the average number of assets owned.

A question on contributions or membership fees during the stay abroad that finance projects in the origin country or support migrants from the origin country in Europe was used to analyze the share of migrants involved in migrant associations at different points in time.

In general, transnational activities and the support of origin households and communities seem to be an important aspect of the migration experience, as a substantially higher proportion of remittance transfers, asset ownership, and association membership is observed at the time of the MAFE survey compared with the time of arrival in Europe. For instance, the proportion of asset owners more than doubles in the case of Senegalese and Ghanaian migrants. Congolese investments in assets

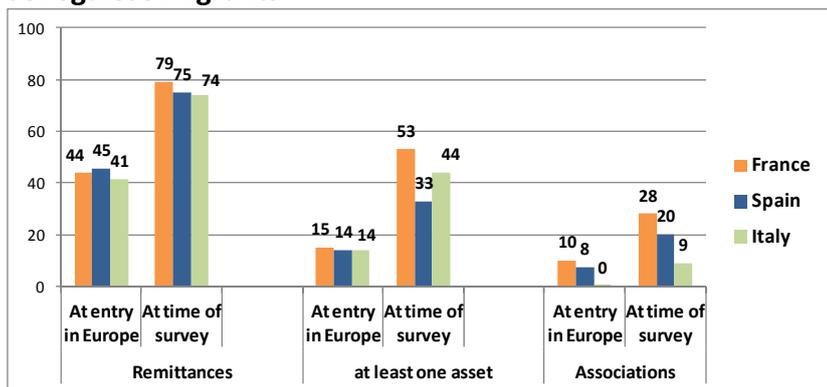
after migration also increase, but less than for the other two migrant groups. The lack of security for investments in DRC (REF), and the low intentions of return among Congolese migrants (see Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013) probably partly explain this.

Migrants give priority to remittances over investments at origin or contributions to migrant associations

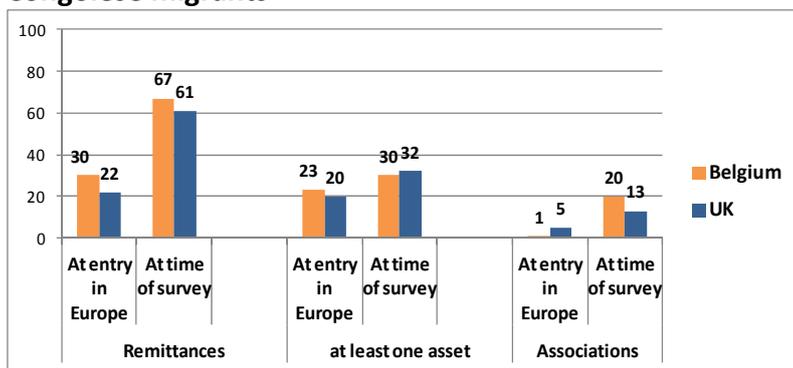
In all three countries one can observe that remittance transfers are a priority for migrants, followed by investing in assets in the origin country. Fewer migrants participate in migrant associations. With regard to the latter, Ghanaian migrants are the most active, with 39% of those living in the Netherlands and 46% of Ghanaians living in the United Kingdom contributing to associations. A possible explanation is the strong involvement of Ghanaian migrants in religious organisations. Except for the Senegalese case, where one observes more pronounced levels of transnational economic engagement in France, no systematic differences can be observed for migrants residing in a country with former colonial links or a “new” destination country.

Fig. 4: Proportion of migrants sending remittances, owning asset(s), paying associative contributions at survey time, by country of residence, at entry in Europe and at the time of the survey

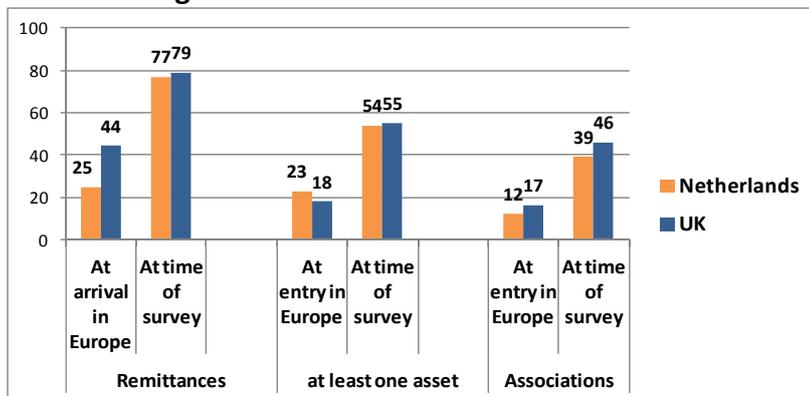
Senegalese migrants



Congolese migrants



Ghanaian migrants



Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.

Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (see Table 1); weighted data

Interpretation: the graph shows the rate of individuals sending remittances, owning at least one asset, and contributing to associations at two point in time (upon entry in Europe and at survey time), by country of residence.

Evolution of economic activities during stay abroad by employment status

Figures 5 to 7 provide additional insights into the patterns of transnational economic activities by Senegalese, Congolese, and Ghanaians during their stay in Europe. Firstly, we observe not only two time points, as above, but a ten-year period abroad. One should keep in mind that for longer migration durations, averages are calculated over a smaller subsample as not all migrants stay abroad for ten years. In addition to the time horizon examined, a distinction is made according to the employment status of migrants in a given year to examine in how far access to resources through work influences migrants' capacity to send remittances, invest at origin, and contribute to migrant associations. Differently from above, investment is measured as the average number of assets owned by a migrant at origin. For the case of assets, we also depict the average number owned in the year before migration, in order to detect asset losses around the time of departure.

Access to destination labour market is crucial for economic contributions at origin

The graphs illustrate the importance of access to the labour market at destination for economic contributions to the country of origin. In most cases, the share of remitters, members of migrant associations and the number of assets owned is higher among those migrants who have a job, at the beginning of the stay but also over the entire period we observe. While most pronounced for Senegalese migrants, the difference is largest in case of remittances in all three migrant groups (Fig.5). A regular income is crucial in order to enable migrants to provide financial support to households at home. The gap is less prominent in case of asset ownership (Fig.6) and contributions to migrant associations (Fig.7). Land, dwellings or business activities considered may be financed and maintained through more diverse income sources, including gifts or inheritances. Moreover, a regular income flow may be less of a requirement than for transfers, as migrants are more flexible with regard to the timing of asset acquisition. Membership in migrant associations also tends to be less dependent on employment status. The diversity of types of associations migrants can participate in (e.g. religious or non-religious) and the varying levels of monetary cost involved is one factor that explains this pattern.

Migrants sustain links with home country even during prolonged stays in Europe

With regard to the evolution over time one can observe differences both by type of economic activity and migrant group. The share of migrants sending remittances either increases over the entire time period (e.g. Senegalese migrants) or increases first and stagnates at a higher level (e.g. non-employed Ghanaian migrants). Both patterns suggest that Senegalese, Congolese, and Ghanaian keep strong linkages to the origin country through remittance transfers, even after having spent several years in the destination country. Similarly, contributions to migrant associations show in general a positive trend over the ten-year period observed, though at much lower levels than in the case of remittances. For Senegalese and Ghanaians, a prolonged migration experience is also positively related to the number of assets owned in the country of origin. Asset ownership, in particular dwellings, has been emphasised by previous research as a sign of social status and success, which facilitates reintegration after return (Tall 2009, Osili 2004). The behaviour of Congolese employed migrants differs from the Senegalese and Ghanaians in this regard. Rather than an increase

in assets, one observes a tendency to disinvest at the time of migration and to a lesser extent during the stay abroad. According to the results from Schoumaker, Castagnone et al. (2013), asset ownership in Congo does not increase the chances of migrating for a first time to Europe. The pattern we observe may thus rather be due to the lack of security already mentioned above, in combination with slightly lower return propensities than to the other two countries (see Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013).

Do women and men contribute differently?

Senegalese male migrants are more active in transnational economic activities than female migrants, but the patterns are more balanced for Ghanaian and Congolese migrants

Figures 8 to 10 follow the same logic in presenting shares of migrants sending remittances, participating in migrant associations, and numbers of assets owned at origin, but distinguish between female and male migrants instead of by employment status.

Female-male transnational behaviour differs depending on the migration flow. Senegalese migration is still the most male-dominated migration of the three population groups. This male dominance is also evident in migrants' engagement in economic contributions to the country of origin. Without taking into account further characteristics, such as education or employment, a larger share of Senegalese male migrants than of female migrants seems to remit, to become members in associations and male migrants own, at the average, more assets in Senegal. In the case of Congolese and Ghanaian migrants, this gender gap is less pronounced. Similar shares of female and male migrants send money home. Also, Congolese men and women in Europe participate to similar extent in migrant associations, and female Ghanaians are even more active than their male counterparts. In terms of asset ownership, one observes a more traditional division for Congolese migrants, with men owning at the average a larger number of assets than female migrants. Ghanaian female migrants are less disadvantaged, especially in the early stages of migration. However, with longer migration durations, male Ghanaian migrants seem to accumulate more assets.

Fig. 5 Proportion of migrants sending remittances to origin countries by employment status, at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)

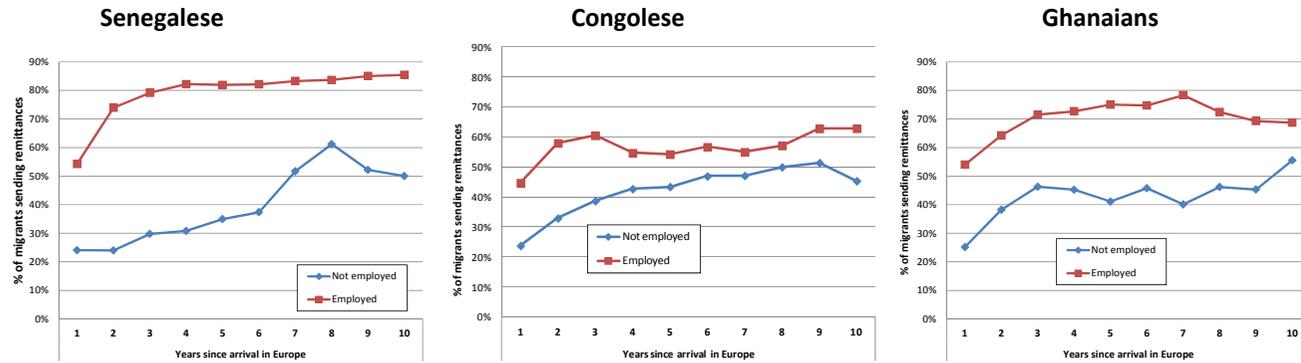


Fig. 6 Mean number of assets per migrant to origin countries by employment status the last year before migration and at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)

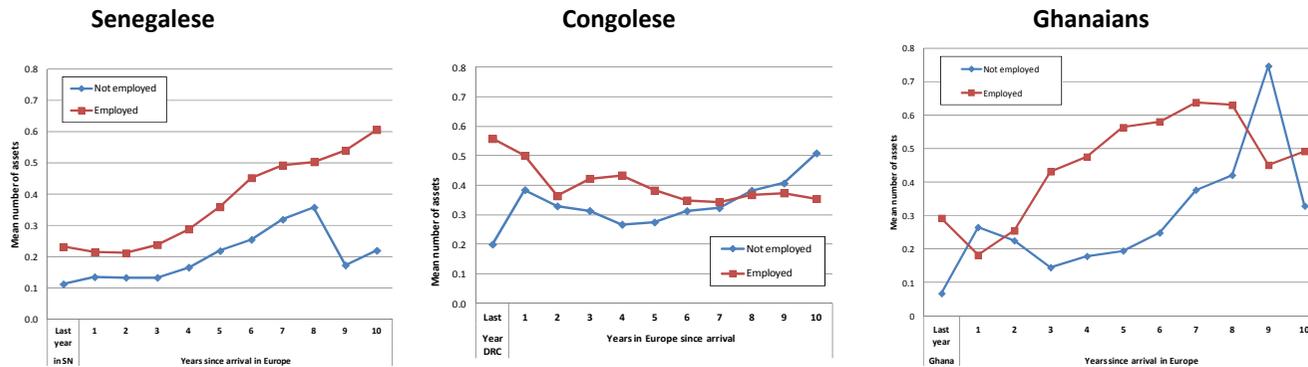


Fig. 7: Percentage of migrants paying associative contributions by employment status, at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)

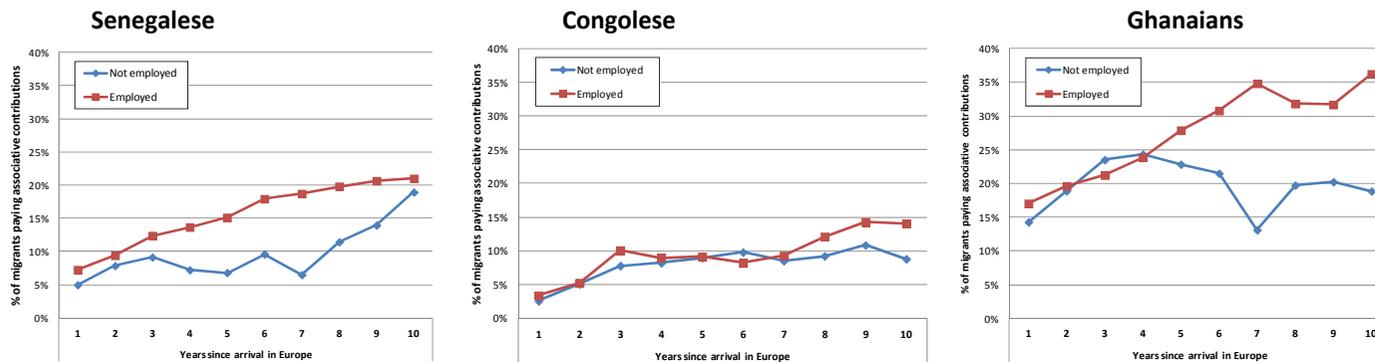


Fig. 8 Proportion of migrants sending remittances to origin countries by sex, at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)

Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.
Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data
Interpretation: Rate of sampled migrants sending remittances (Fig 5) or being member of an association (Fig 7) at each year of stay in Europe, for the first ten years of stay, according to the labour status at each year. Fig6. shows the mean number of assets owned per migrant in the last year before migration and at each year of stay in Europe, for the first ten years of stay, according to the labour status at each year.

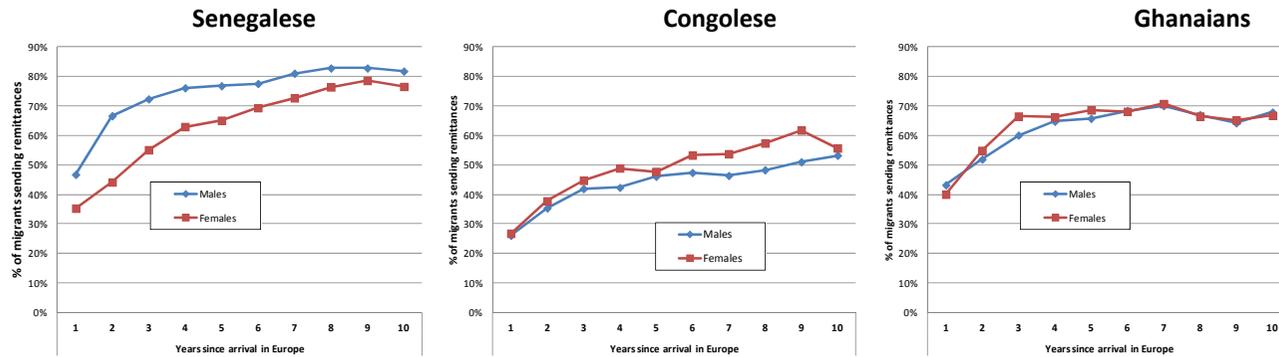


Fig. 9 Mean number of assets per migrant to origin countries by sex, the last year before migration and at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)

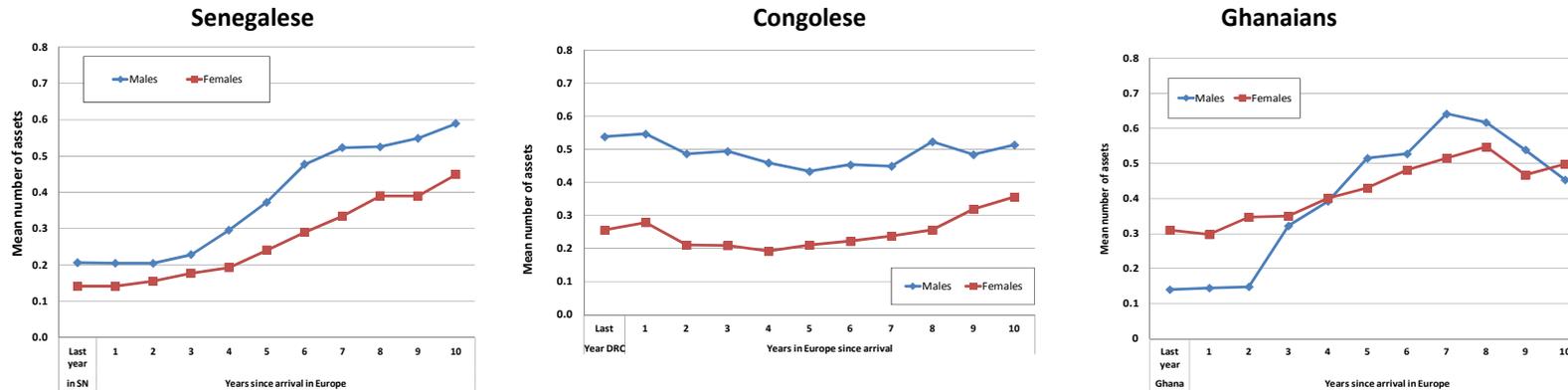
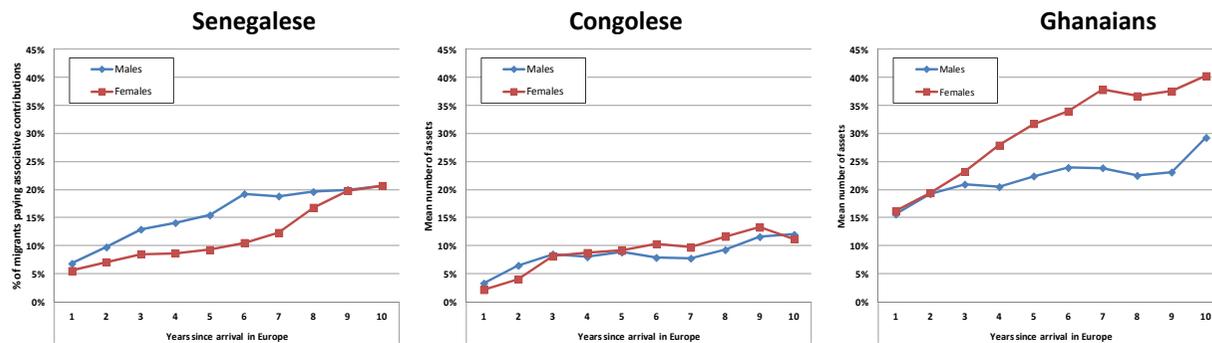


Fig. 10: Percentage of migrants paying associative contributions by sex, at each year of stay in Europe (for the first ten years)



Source: MAFE-Senegal biographic survey in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain; MAFE RDC biographic survey in Congo, Belgium and UK; MAFE Ghana biographic survey in Ghana, UK and the Netherlands.

Population: Current migrants in France, Italy and Spain, Belgium, UK and the Netherlands (cfr. Table 1); weighted data

Interpretation: Rate of sampled migrants sending remittances (Fig 5) or being member of an association (Fig 7) at each year of stay in Europe, for the first ten years of stay, for female and male migrants. Fig6. shows the mean number of assets owned per migrant in the last year before migration and at each year of stay in Europe, for the first ten years of stay, for female and male migrants.

3. LABOUR MARKET RE-INTEGRATION IN ORIGIN COUNTRIES OF RETURNEES FROM EUROPE

What becomes of migrants who return to their country of origin, in particular in terms of labour market status? Return migration has been highlighted by policy makers and researchers alike as a possible source of development. Policy schemes encouraging return have been part of destination countries' policy instruments for several decades, and have experienced a revival in more recent years with the signing of readmission agreements. Also origin countries emphasise the importance of return migration in transferring know-how and providing impulses to entrepreneurship.

However, the opportunities for return migrants are closely linked to the labour market context at origin, to the links they maintain while they are away, and to their employment career in the destination countries (Cassarino, 2004). The migration represents an interruption in the employment at origin country and a loss of contacts or understanding of the labour market conditions may hinder the professional reintegration. Urban labour markets⁷ as those investigated in MAFE surveys are particularly affected by unemployment, and difficult access to skilled jobs or jobs in the formal sector. Moreover, financial resources accumulated during the stay abroad may be insufficient to start a profitable business activity and little transferrable know-how may have been acquired during the stay abroad. Overall, the labour market patterns described above for Senegalese, Congolese and Ghanaian migrants in Europe suggest that downgrading at arrival in the destination country is a common experience which is not fully reversed during the years spent abroad. In how far do returnees recover once they return to their country of origin, and how do they fare compared to non-migrants?

Overall, return migrants find their way into the origin labour market

The occupational status after return plotted in Figures 8 suggests that return migrants are, overall, participating in the labour market after coming back to their country of origin. Return migration in connection with "retirement" from the labour market does not appear to be frequent in the cases that we study. However, for returnees to Senegal and Ghana one does observe an increase in unemployment immediately after return. The interruption in local labour market experience coupled with the downgrading of occupational status abroad may hence encumber a smooth reintegration into urban labour markets (Mezger and Flahaux, 2012). Over time, however, returnees seem to be able to exit unemployment. Among Congolese returnees, who experience higher rates of both unemployment and inactivity during their stay abroad than the other two migrant groups, unemployment decreases in the year after the return. One should, however, keep in mind that short unemployment

⁷ For reasons of readability, we refer to "Senegal", "DR Congo", and "Ghana" in this section. However, since MAFE-surveys were conducted in the region of Dakar in Senegal, in Kinshasa in DR Congo, and in Accra and Kumasi in Ghana, results on return migration are restricted to the urban context and provide no evidence for the situation in rural areas or at the national average.

spells (of less than one year) are not observed in the MAFE data and temporary drop-outs tend to be underestimated. Still, despite causing an interruption in local labour market experience, migration does not seem to have a long-term disruptive effect.

**“Brain re-gain”
but limited
“brain-gains”
from migration**

Moreover, in all three countries one can observe that the share of intermediate/high level workers increases already in the first year after return compared to the occupation held in the last year in Europe. However, in the case of Senegal and DR Congo, occupational patterns are similar to those held before migration and the slight differences are mainly due to switches from pre-migration student status (Senegal) or inactivity (DR Congo) to employment. Returnees experience a “brain re-gain” rather than a “brain gain” from migration through newly acquired knowhow and skills.

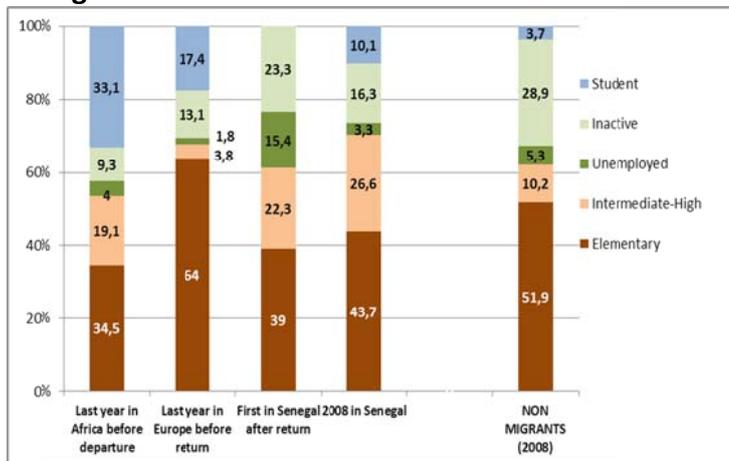
The only exception is, once again, the case of Ghanaian returnees. Their share of intermediate-high skilled occupations increases after return, also when compared to their pre-migration status. This pattern could be due to the fact that returnees who had studied during the last year abroad succeed in accessing primarily higher-level jobs once they are back in Ghana.

**Better
occupational
status than
non-migrants –
but already
before
migrating**

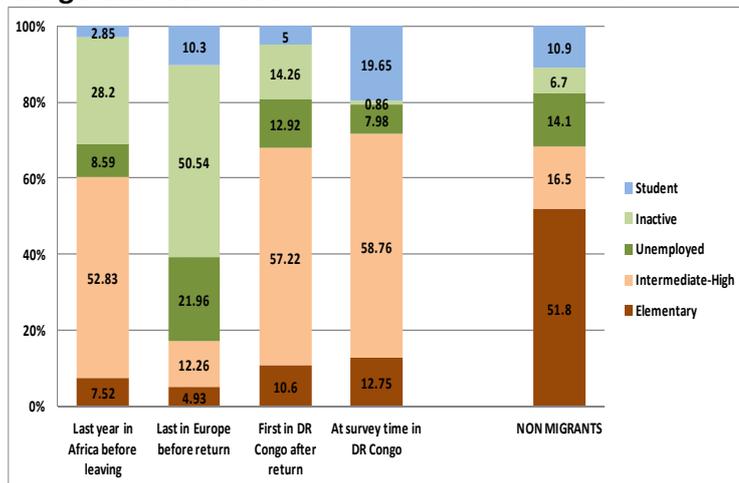
In all three countries, the overall integration of returnees in the labour market shows better outcomes than for individuals who never migrated. Especially in DR Congo and Ghana one observes considerably lower shares of returnees in elementary occupations and among the inactive population. Though less pronounced, the general pattern is similar in the case of Senegal. Nonetheless, the migration experience itself may not be the driver of this advantage on the labour market. Instead, returnees were in more qualified occupations even before migrating. The difference between non-migrants and return migrants who had been to Europe seems to be primarily related to characteristics of individuals who experience international migration and return, not to benefits from migration.

Figure 8: Occupational status the last year in Africa, the last year in Europe, the first year after returning, in the survey year (all returnees from Europe)

Senegalese returnees



Congolese returnees

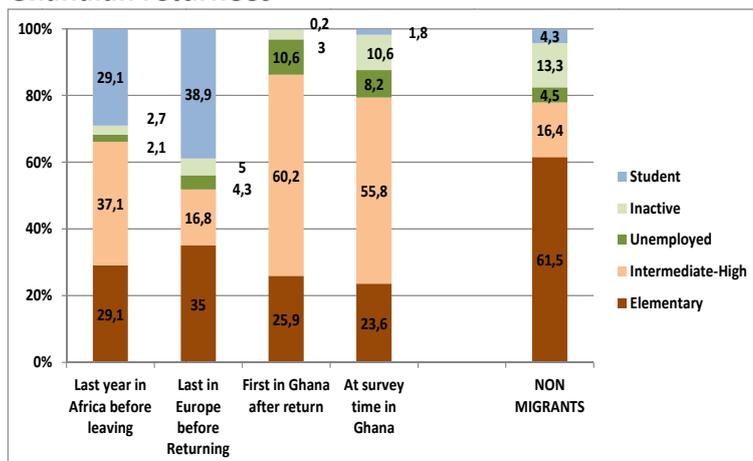


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CONCLUSIONS

This paper had the objective of exploring the labour market outcomes of migrants on the long term, looking at both ends of the migration system, considering labour trajectories before leaving, during migration, and upon return.

The paper aimed in particular at studying different groups, in different contexts, having migrated at different times, with different lengths of stay in Europe.

We chose in particular to look at and to compare some key stages in their migratory paths, such as the year before having left for the first time for Europe; the first year of arrival and the following ten years of stay in Europe; and for returnees the last year before having left Europe; the first year back in the origin country and the year of the survey. Such a choice, i.e. to concentrate on key stages rather than having a calendar-based approach (i.e. comparing the same year or period for all the respondents), helped us to make such different groups, migration time frames and receiving contexts comparable, or at least to reduce the complexity and the heterogeneity of these elements, in order to better grasp the *structure of the main pathways of labour market integration* for the three African groups.

Some of the main findings resulting from our analysis are the following:

1) The composition of the migration flows from the different African countries varies significantly, in terms of educational level, with around 60% of migrants from DRC and Ghana with higher educational entitlements prior to arrival in Europe, vs. less than 20% of those from Senegal (see fig.2), as well in terms of employment profile, with a relevant overall component of qualified labour migrants in the Congolese and Ghanaian migration, in comparison to the Senegalese one (see fig. 1 and par. 1.1).

A strong self-selection effect was furthermore found on specific destination countries within each flow. While migration directed to 'traditional' destinations –former colonial metropolises– involved much higher proportions of students and medium/high skilled workers, flows in 'new' destinations countries, were found to be mainly composed by low educated and low-skilled individuals (see annex 1).

This result suggests that the destination choice of the best educated has been strongly affected –at least until recent times– by colonial legacies, with a prolonged effect of the opportunities offered by former colonial countries to the highly skilled and the student migrants from related countries.

Beside structural factors that made former colonial countries more attractive to the migrants from the ancient colonies (such as the language commonalities, the common educational system, specific opportunities offered to students, etc.), historical economic, political and cultural relationships with the elites from the former colonies have been maintained. As a result, a social class stratification according to the destination countries took place, forming a complex relational, social and

cultural capital, translating in a framework of opportunities for the social and cultural elites from origin countries.

3) Looking at the individuals' trajectories, one of the main result of the analysis shown in the paper is the **downgrading** (intended as the employment in occupational levels inferior to the educational level owned) experienced by a huge proportion of migrants from African countries mainly **upon entry into the European labour market**.

Newly arrived migrants are in fact more likely to take up jobs below their formal educational level, as upon entry they often don't own the host country specific human capital, consisting of the knowledge of the language and of the functioning of the labour market of the receiving country, and the access to functional networks (OECD, 2012).

The literature tends to stress how they tend to move on from such work, as they stay longer in the host country and become more integrated into the labour markets at destination. However our data show that **overqualification does not decrease over time**: highly skilled migrants who integrate into the labour market at levels lower than their educational level upon arrival, in fact hardly manage to subsequently experience upward mobility at destination.

4) While an increase in the share of highly skilled migrants takes place across time (see par. 1.2 on "the medium-high skilled workers" and fig.1), our data show how that this outcome is hardly the result of an inversion of careers of overqualified workers downgraded at their entry or of patterns of upward mobility from elementary to medium-high level occupations. The **rise in the incidence of the highly-qualified** is rather the result of the **entry of the students into the labour market** (see table 2, showing the most frequent labour trajectories of migrants in Europe).

This means, in other words, that it is much more probable to obtain positive labour market outcomes in the destination countries, having spent there periods of education or training, rather than directly joining them as medium and highly skilled and directly accessing to the labour market.

Foreign students already settled in the destination countries seem then to be the first reservoir of highly qualified foreign workers in European receiving countries. They are in fact more likely to overcome many of the problems that beset immigrants arriving directly from abroad, as they presumably improved on the host-country language skills, training, or experience relevant to the domestic labor market. In addition, local employers can better value and understand their credentials as compared to those of immigrants admitted through other immigration channels (Hawthorne, 2008).

However international students are not a skilled-migration panacea. First, their flows can be volatile. Second, transformations in traditional source countries' own tertiary-education sectors provide an increasingly attractive option for individuals who might otherwise have sought further education

abroad. Third, there is growing competition between developed countries for students in a global environment where delays or uncertainty in the visa procedures intensify the risk of students enrolling elsewhere. Fourth, some doubts have recently been cast over former students' perceived —work readiness in the host country. In some cases, their language ability and quality of training has not been as high as expected, and although their employment rates remain strong, their earnings, job satisfaction, and use of skills may lag behind those of immigrants arriving directly from abroad (Hawthorne, 2008).

5) The most encouraging example of labour market integration from MAFE research comes from Ghanaian migration to the UK, where a majority of migrants who had been in the country for over a decade were found to be working in intermediate or high-skilled positions, either after periods of study or through upward mobility patterns (see fig. 1 and tab. 2). In contrast, migrants from the same national group in the Netherlands were found to be mainly working in unskilled positions, with the proportion of those employed in elementary jobs increasing over time. The comparison between Ghanaians in the two receiving countries indicates a much more favourable context in the UK in terms of labour market integration of highly skilled migrants and students. At the same time such differences in economic outcomes are also the result of a different educational (see annex 1) and occupational (see par. 1.1 and fig. 2) composition of the groups directed to the two different countries, since their very first departure to Europe.

Diverging signals on the effectiveness of the UK as an optimum in integrating migrants into its labour market, are drawn from the comparison between the Ghanaians and Congolese in the UK. Congolese in fact, despite owning fairly high levels of education, show labour market outcomes very different from the ones of Ghanaians in the same country. Lack of recognition of diplomas and language barriers may influence their integration on the labour market, while the specificities of the Congolese migrant populations, in particular in relation to the fact that large proportion of Congolese migrants arrived as asylum seekers (Schoumaker, Flahaux et al. 2013), especially in the UK, has often been mentioned as an explanation for their low participation in the labour market (Black et al. 2013).

6) Finally, the participation to the labour market at destination is strongly affected by gender and is primarily connected to the conditions and the motivations of departure of migrants. While non employment for men is a residual phenomenon, women are much more likely to be found inactive than their male counterparts when leaving their origin countries (especially among Senegalese and Congolese). The rate of female inactivity registers an increase upon arrival, with different subsequent outcomes for each of the three groups. However female migrants are much more strongly exposed to the permanence in inactivity during their time in Europe and are more at risk of falling back to inactivity once having initially joined the labour market.

7) With regard to economic transnational activities (remittances, asset ownership, and contributions to migrant associations), the data show that migrants from all three countries maintain links to their origin countries, even after a prolonged stay abroad. Access to the labour market in the destination country is an important enabling factor, in particular for migrants' remitting behaviour. This result could be further investigated using more detailed measures of labour market status and taking account of other individual and migration-related characteristics. Interesting differences across the three migrant groups and type of economic contribution appear when comparing male and female migrants. While Senegalese male migrants are more involved in economic activities than female migrants, this gender gap is much less pronounced in the case of Congolese and Ghanaians. This difference could, however, also be linked to different labour market reintegration and access to resources for men and women observed for some destinations.

8) Finally, the paper examined the reintegration patterns of return migrants in Senegalese, Ghanaian and Congolese labour markets. The image of return migration as a "triple win situation" for the individual migrant, the destination country, and the origin country is not outright supported by this first descriptive examination of the data, at least for the Senegalese and Congolese cases. Handicapped by a downgrading of their employment at destination, return migrants seem to regain a status similar to the one they had before leaving their country of origin. However, Ghanaian migrants appear to be able to transit from studies abroad to intermediate to high-skilled jobs after returning home. While return migrants in all countries examined are advantaged compared to non-migrants, most of this difference seems to have already existed before migrating for the first time. A more in-depth analysis of the types of jobs taken up by return migrants and accounting for characteristics that determine migration and return migration in the first place could provide additional insights in this regard (Mezger and Flahaux, forthcoming; Mezger, 2012).

ANNEX:

Migrants level of education and duration of stay in Europe, according to gender and country of residence at survey time

	Gender		Country			
SENEGALESE	Males	Females	Spain	France	Italy	Total
<i>Level of education</i>						
No/primary	58.3	53.7	77.8	46.4	50.1	55.5
Secondary	24.9	27.6	19.6	23.3	37.3	26.5
Higher	16.8	18.7	2.6	30.3	12.6	18.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Duration of stay in Europe</i>						
1-4 years	19.4	13.7	35.9	9.2	15.3	17.8
5-9 years	30.8	36.8	40.0	28.8	31.7	32.5
10 years and over	49.8	49.5	24.1	62.0	53.0	49.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	333	273	200	200	203	603
CONGOLESE	Males	Females	Belgium	UK		Total
<i>Level of education</i>						
No/primary	15.0	17.9	8.7	26.5		16.6
Secondary	26.4	35.6	30.7	32.5		31.5
Higher	58.6	46.5	60.6	41.0		51.9
Total	100	100	100	1000		100
<i>Duration of stay in Europe</i>						
1-4 years	17.43	18.29	22.45	12.18		17.90
5-9 years	27.73	34.01	27.37	35.99		31.19
10 years and over	54.84	47.70	50.18	51.82		50.91
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		100.00
N	228	199	278	149		427
GHANAIS	Males	Males	Netherlands	UK		Total
<i>Level of education</i>						
No/primary	23,9	31,7	19,7	28,8		27,6
Secondary	5,7	11,6	45,4	2,6		8,5
Higher	70,4	56,7	34,8	68,6		64,0
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0		100,0
<i>Duration of stay in Europe</i>						
1-4 years	15,6	17,0	17,6	16,1		16,3
5-9 years	25,9	29,4	28,0	27,5		27,6
10 years and over	58,5	53,6	54,4	56,5		56,2
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0		100,0
N	222	200	273	149		422

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