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**Senegalese Migrants between Here and There:
An Overview of Family Patterns**

Cris BEAUCHEMIN, Kim CAARLS, Valentina MAZZUCATO

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SENEGALESE MIGRANTS BETWEEN HERE AND THERE: AN OVERVIEW OF FAMILY PATTERNS

CRIS BEAUCHEMIN, KIM CAARLS, VALENTINA MAZZUCATO

1. Introduction

Family migration has become the main legal mean of entry into Europe. Both at the European and national levels, family reunification has become a major concern for policy makers who design more and more constraining policies in this domain. In France in particular, Sub-saharan migrants and their families –among which Senegalese migrants form one of the largest groups– have been especially stigmatized in the 2000's. The belief that African immigrants, among others, overuse their right for family reunification is widespread in Europe (European Migration Network 2012). In France especially, Sub-Saharan families are often presented as poorly integrated and were publicly designated as responsible for the riots in 2005. In the following years, family migration was labeled as a “migration subie” (i.e. unwanted -even though legal- migration), as opposed to a “migration choisie” (i.e., chosen migration, thanks to the selection of workers).

These views are dissonant with the development of socio-anthropological studies on West African migrants, especially the Senegalese ones, showing that they are reluctant to reunify in France, Spain or Italy and that they maintain transnational lives, made of comings and goings, and based on a multi-sited distribution of family members (Barou 2001; Riccio 2006). However, there is so far no quantitative evidence on these patterns. Most figures on family migration are indeed administrative data on family reunification. If they allow to counting the close relatives –especially spouses and children– who enter into European countries to join a prior migrant, they are not fitted to count the relatives who stay in their origin country. As a result these data say nothing about transnational families, i.e. those families whose members live in different countries. In addition, since data on out-migration from European countries are quite rare, there is also no information on the processes of family reunification in origin countries, i.e. a reunification act resulting from the return of migrants at home, where they meet up again with their family.

The data of the MAFE project make possible to give a more complete picture of the various family arrangements of African migrants¹. The objective of this paper is thus to assess the extent of transnational vs. reunified families among Senegalese migrants, adopting a double viewpoint based on the use of data collected both in Europe (France, Italy and Spain) and in Africa (Senegal). The second section will provide an overview of the existing literature on Senegalese families and will show that living apart is quite a common arrangement in the Senegalese context. This leads to the hypothesis that transnational families are, to a large extent, an extension of this way of life, even

¹ For more details on the methodology of the MAFE project, see Beauchemin (2012).

though they may also result from policy restrictions aimed at curbing family reunification. Using the MAFE data, the third section looks at the extent to which households in the region of Dakar are indeed involved in transnational families. The following section turns to a European view of transnational families (their amount and their socio-economic characteristics), using the individual and biographic data collected among migrants in Europe. And, finally, the last section –before conclusion– studies how transnational are formed and how they evolve (or not) into reunified families.

2. Migration and family in Senegal: a literature review

Multi-residential system as a common family arrangement in Senegal

Senegalese families contrast highly with the model of the nuclear family, with the mother, father and minor children living together in a household of limited size. First, Senegalese households are among the largest in West Africa, with an average number of 9.5 person in rural places in 1997 and 8.2 in urban areas, where 44% of all the households count at least 9 individuals (Locoh and Mouvagha-Sow 2005)². Second, the composition of the households is particularly complex both because of a high prevalence of polygamy and because of a family functioning marked by a quite frequent multi-residential system, in which fathers, mothers and children live in separate places. In this section, we describe briefly and roughly family arrangements in Senegal with a special interest for the location of family members. It doesn't do justice to the diversity of family arrangements in Senegal that vary from a region to another and that evolve over time, especially in a context of growing urbanisation and spreading of formal education. However, this very general description of the Senegalese family functioning provides some clues to understand how some Senegalese families can be transformed into transnational families.

Partners “living apart together”

For various reasons, quite commonly and as in many other sub-Saharan countries, spouses in Senegal “have marriages where the level of conjugal interaction is quite low” (Findley 1997). In the daily life, husbands and wives take their meals separately, rarely socialize and have separate rooms, if not separate houses, as it is often the case in Dakar among polygamous families (Marie 1997). This can be explained by the fact that choosing a partner is not a personal matter: matrimonial unions are more alliances between families than individual companionships, and decisions are taken by the elders for the youngest. Family-arranged marriages remain a social norm, even among families with migrants in Europe (Mondain 2009). Polygamy and age difference –10 to 15 years in Dakar in 2001, according to the generation, (Dial 2008)– tend also to impose a certain distance among spouses. Actually, this “weakness of the conjugal bond” (Findley 1997) is a way to reproduce the lineage organisation of the society: too much intimacy between the spouses could lead to a wish of independence of the couple and could weaken the extended family (Poiret 1996). In short, couples have to be of “low consistency” in order to respect and reproduce the social order (Barou 2002). This social distance within Senegalese couples tends to ease the spatial separation of the spouses. In

² After Senegal, the highest proportion in the region is 24% in Guinea. This gap between the 2 countries with the highest proportion of extended households illustrates quite well how large extended families are pregnant in Senegalese family structures.

Senegal even more than in other African countries, there is quite a high proportion of spouses living in separate places: “in areas where this pattern is found [in Sub-Saharan Africa], around one-third of wives stay behind while their husbands go to cities or other rural areas to work”, with the highest rates (43 to 68%) being registered in Senegal (Findley 1997).

Fostered children

Living apart is not only frequent within couples. Children also live quite frequently without their parents. Senegal is indeed the country where the proportion of fostered children under 15 is the higher in West Africa, with 28% in rural places, and 35% in urban areas (Locoh and Mouvagha-Sow 2005)(p.14). In Senegal, as well as in other west African countries, no stigma is attached to fosterage, which is a widely accepted practice. Again, this can be explained by the role of the extended family, the children “belong” more to their lineage than to their own biological parents. Circulation of the children is part of the social system in a context where direct biological links are not considered as the more important. For instance, in matrilinear ethnic groups, links between a child and his father are weaker (in matter of authority or inheritance) than the links between the child and his/her uncle (brother of his/her mother). Thus, the well-being of the children does not depend necessarily on the proximity with their born parents (Bledsoe 2008). Fosterage is not only organized in case of decease or overload of the parents. Children circulation is part of their education. For all of them, circulation is considered as a form of training to a social life in large groups. For some, fosterage is synonym of apprenticeship of early work. For others, especially children born in rural places and sent in urban areas, being fostered gives a chance to go to a (better) school (Locoh and Mouvagha-Sow 2005).

Ubiquitous families

With couples having a low level of interactions and children whose education can be confided to relatives who are neither the mother nor the father, members of a single nuclear family can be spread in various places. More often than not, such residential patterns correspond to economic strategies defined at the level of the extended family, usually by the elders, in which individuals are scattered in various places to share resources and risks, an organisation that fits quite well the family model of NELM theories (Stark 1991). The extended family continues to function as a social and economic unit over geographical distance. The Senegalese family functions thus as an “ubiquitous” organization, as it was labelled in other sub-Saharan countries (Dupont and Dureau 1986; Lututala 1989). Since the 1990s, this kind of multi-residential system has been reinforced by the economic crises: families increasingly try to take advantage at the same time of the various opportunities offered by different places in order to overcome their financial difficulties (Chaléard and Dubresson 1989; Findley 1997; Potts 1997). These family arrangements are not limited by state borders: families also takes advantage of opportunities offered in foreign countries. Members of a same family may be spread across several countries and thus form what can be labelled as a “transnational family”.

Family and international migration: a short story

Even though migration to Europe, and especially France, started in the early XXth Century in Senegal, it became a significant movement only in the early 1960s. From this time, migration has always been a family matter, but the roles of the various family members evolved over time. This section summarizes this evolution.

Young male migrants under control

The first significant wave of out-migration from Senegal started in the early 1960s in the Northern part of the country, among Soninke and Toucouleurs of the Senegal River Valley. At the beginning, international and domestic migration were clearly a community matter and were organised as a collective system dominated by the elders (Quiminal 1991; Timera 1996; Guilmoto 1998). Young bachelor men were sent to France on a temporary basis. They were expected to come back a first time after about 10 years to marry a young woman chosen by the elders. Then they left again for a two or three year period, with visits to the home village in between that allowed them to take (a) new spouse(s) and insure the reproduction of the family. When they finally returned for good, they were polygamous well-to-do and new migrants were sent in France in replacement. During husbands' absences, wives and children were left behind with the migrants' families, which offered several advantages to the elders: it ensured that migrants would send them remittances (all the more since migrants had no family burden at destination); it offered a workforce to the extended family (all the more necessary since young men were absent), and it finally guaranteed that migrants would finally come back to the home village. For all these reasons, the elders were opposed to any form of "family reunification", as conceived in Europe that is, implying the out-migration of wives and children. In destination regions, migrants' associations helped to maintain this social order.

The gentle onset of family reunification in France

In the mid 1970s, the economic crisis made a breach in this oiled system (Barou 2001). Circulating between Europe and Africa became much more complicated both because of states regulations (the French borders were closed to new international labour migrants in 1974) and because of economic reasons (it was no longer possible to quit a job and find easily a new one when coming back after a sojourn in the home country). Basically, the migrants had to stay for long in France or to go back for good. In 1976, a new legal disposition clarified the possibility for family reunification in France. Despite the opposition of the elders, some migrants took this opportunity to bring their spouse(s) in France, and also –sometimes– their children. Senegalese female immigration started thus in the late 1970s, quite lately compared to other groups (Timera 1996; Barou 2002). Shortly, Senegalese reunified families came up against various difficulties. The polygamous ones in particular encountered various integration problems and were especially confronted to housing difficulties. At the same time, new relationships problems arose within the reunified families. The isolation from the extended families disrupted strongly the usual forms of social organisation and control: the dominant role of the father and husband started to be contested, divorces multiplied (Barou 2002). The idea that the French law was too favourable to women spread among the Senegalese community, so that males started to fear family reunification, a feeling fuelled by the elders who remained in the home villages (Azoulay and Quiminal 2002). Finally, a new legal obstacle appeared: in 1993, a law forbade reunification of polygamous families. For all these reasons, family reunification at destination never became a universal objective of Senegalese migrants. And wives and children happen even to be sent back to the home country.

New Migrants in Spain and Italy

Spain and Italy became new destinations for Senegalese migrants from the 1980s onwards. For various reasons, the migrants who head towards these countries are not completely similar to those who left to go to France. On one hand, they are enmeshed in the same kind of social constraints, especially regarding generation and gender relationships, most of them being of Wolof origin, a

patrilineal group, as the Soninke and Toucouleur of the Senegal River Valley. On the other hand, they differ under several respects. First, they left more recently, at a time of lesser control of the elders. Even though their departure could generally not be decided without their parents' ascent, this new generation of migrants tends to move more frequently without parental permission (Lalou and Ndione 2005; Riccio 2008). Second, a significant number of them originate from urban areas (including Dakar), while the bulk of the migrants of the Senegal River Valley were of rural origin. Third, migrants in Italy and Spain are more often than in France involved in the Murid brotherhood, a very structured religious group that encourage strongly international migrants to keep a strong attachment to Senegal (Riccio 2006).

Senegalese migrants in Italy are labelled "transmigrants" in recent socio-anthropological studies (Riccio 2006; Sinatti 2011) that emphasize their attachment to their home country and describe how they organise their work life so that they can come and go between Europe and Senegal. In a context where family reunion is legally possible³, Riccio evokes their "resistance to family reunification" and interprets it as a product both of an economic choice (relatives are more expensive to maintain in Europe) and of a social option. « For Senegalese, [family reunion] can become a source of stigmatisation expressed through the fear that children may lose their cultural and religious point of reference by living abroad" (Riccio 2008). The matrimonial story of these new migrants is very similar to the model above described: marriages are arranged by the elders, spouses have usually no interactions before it, unions are quickly sealed during migrants' visits, and the wives are left to their in-laws afterwards (Mondain 2009).

Transnational vs. reunified families: previous statistical evidence

All in all, the socio-anthropological literature on Senegalese migrants in Europe suggests quite clearly that they are not very prone to family reunification, whatever the country where they live. However this literature is mainly based on case studies and does not provide any measure of the amount of transnational families, i.e. families whose members (spouses and children) live across borders, one of the members being in Europe. Although, in general, few quantitative data are available on transnational families (Mazzucato and Schans 2011), two nationally representative surveys in France and Spain provide some evidence in this matter (no equivalent survey is available in Italy). In both countries, Sub-saharan migrants –and especially those from Senegal– appear to have a stronger tendency than migrants of other groups to maintain a dispersed type of family. It especially appears regarding the parents-children relationship (Eremenko and Gonzalez-Ferrer 2012). In France, according to the TeO Survey (2008-2009), only 25% of the children left behind by at least one of their parent(s) had joined them five years after separation. In Spain, according to ENI, after a similar separation, the proportion was even weaker, with only 10% of reunified children among Senegalese, while the proportion was almost 50% among Eastern Europeans and South Americans and 40% among migrants from Maghreb. As for couples, so far, results are only available in Spain for Sub-Saharan migrants as a whole. In any case, they also appear as a specific population: 19% of all the African men (excluding Morocco and South Africa) in Spain are engaged in a transnational union (i.e.

³ Family reunification is regulated by a law voted in 1998 in Italy and a royal decree of 1996 in Spain. Even though reunification rules were defined later in these two new countries of immigration than in France, the criteria used to grant the right of reunification are very similar in the three countries of interest of our study (France, Italy and Spain).

they were in union before entering into Spain and their partner was still out of Spain at the time of the survey), against only 8% on average for all immigrants (Esteve and Cortina 2009). And this special feature remains when controlling for education, period of entry and age at the time of immigration. How to interpret this specificity consisting in maintaining a separated way of life?

It is probably not the process of a state selection: if Spain and France have indeed increasingly stringent reunification policies, in principle, none state selects candidates for reunification according to their origin. A more credible explanation reverts to migration history: Sub-Saharan people in both countries arrived quite recently when compared to other groups and it might be that reunification happens more quickly when the groups are more settled and the opportunities to integrate more diverse. This would, by the way, explain why Senegalese children reunification is lower in Spain than in France, Senegalese immigration being older in the latter country. Another explanation is socio-cultural and is related to the differential tendency of migrants to reunify with their family. The way family life is organized in Senegal, on an extended mode, with spouses and children commonly living apart, helps to understand that Senegalese migrants tend to postpone, or even avoid, family reunification in Europe. Some of them may even prefer to reunify in Senegal, after a temporary stay abroad. This option is in line with indications of a substantial movement of return. Ten years after their departure, about 25% of the migrants who left to go in a western country (mainly Europe) were back in their home country (Flahaux, Beauchemin C. et al. 2010). It remains that some Senegalese migrants decide to reunify at destination, in Europe, while others do not. Why is that? Two studies dedicated to the factors of spouses and children reunification among Senegalese migrants have shown, using the MAFE data, that they are less likely to reunify in Europe when they depart from the Western nuclear model (polygamous, with larger numbers of children, a stronger dependency to the elders, etc.) and when they have a lesser socio-economic integration at destination (Baizán, Beauchemin et al. 2011; González-Ferrer, Baizán et al. 2012).

3. Migrant Families: a View from Senegal

The objective of this section is to assess to what extent households in the region of Dakar are involved in transnational families (see definitions in Box 1) which means two things: first, searching whether and to what extent the household heads are related to international migrants; and, second, searching to what extent households are connected through social and economic remittances⁴ to international migrants. From a policy point of view, this question is important for at least two reasons. First, it is related to migration management issues since migrants' relatives (especially spouses and children under <18) are potential movers thanks to reunification procedures, even though all of them are not actually future movers, as shown in a following section. Second, it is related to the issue of the contribution of international migration to poverty alleviation or to social and/or economic development, a question of major interest for most governmental and non-governmental actors involved in international migration. Basically, our analysis will provide a measure of the proportion of households that receive a material benefit from international migration. More generally, we will study the various kinds of relationships (including social

⁴ Social remittances are the non-material contacts through which migrants and their households at origin can influence each other, for instance via ideas, norms and ways of doing things.

remittances) that migrants have with households left behind and that make possible for families to live apart across borders.

Box 1. Definitions

“Households” are defined as groups of people who live in the same house and share their resources to satisfy their essential needs (housing, meals) under the authority of one person, the household head.

A **“transnational family”** is a group of persons who are relatives and who live spread across borders. The term “transnational” does not refer to the nationality of the family members, it only refers to the country where they live. In the MAFE-Senegal household survey, transnational families are made of households in Dakar who declared migrants living abroad in at least one of these categories: (1) the children of the head; (2) partner(s) of a member of the household; (3) relatives of the household head or of his/her partner and who have been in regular contact with the household over the past 12 months. In this paper, the analyses are restricted to migrants related to the head of the household.

A **“family nucleus”** is defined as a group made of (some of) the following persons: a married couple with their minor children (under 18). They may or not live in the same place. The **“transnational nuclei”** are those in which the husband, the wife and/or the child(ren) do not live in the same country. In this case, a member who remained in the home country is called **“left behind”**.

By contrast with a family or –more restrictively– a nucleus, **a household cannot be “transnational”** since, by definition, all its members live in the same place. For the same reason, a household cannot “contain” international migrants living abroad. Households may however have various types of relationships with international migrants (family links, economic ties...). Obviously, they may contain left behinds.

An account of the left behinds in Dakar

A first important result of the MAFE survey is that households living in Dakar are very commonly involved in transnational families: almost half of them (47.4%, Table 1) declared at least one relative living abroad. To some extent, this high percentage is due to the fact that all kinds of family relationships are taken into account in the figure⁵. However, only migrants who had regular contacts with the surveyed households over the last 12 months were registered and, among them, the majority used to live within the household. 47.4% is thus a correct, albeit high estimation of the proportion of transnational families in the region of Dakar. In details, it appears that 5.7% of the married heads (N=842) are involved in a transnational couple since they have a spouse abroad. More commonly, among the heads who have children (N=1032), one out of five declared at least one child living abroad, most of the children being adult. And among all heads (N=1141), almost a third (30.3%) declared other relatives (possibly in addition of spouses and/or children), the proportion being reduced to 21.6% if only those who used to live in the household are taken into account.

⁵ Among migrants, the most common category of relatives is made of siblings (37.9% of all migrants, out of spouses and children).

Table 1. Households with migrants abroad

	%	N*
Married heads with spouse(s) abroad**	5.7%	842
Heads with child(ren) abroad, including...	20.7%	1,032
... heads with at least one child <18	1.8%	
Heads who have other relatives (neither spouse nor child) abroad, including***...	30.3%	1,141
... heads with at least one contact abroad who lived within the household (at least 6 months)	21.6%	
... heads with contacts abroad who never lived in the household****	8.7%	
Heads who declared at least one contact abroad (whatever the relationship)	47.4%	1,141
Notes:		
* N corresponds to the total unweighted number of individuals out of which the percentages are computed. Percentages are weighted.		
** In the case of polygamous marriages, we look at those household heads with at least one spouse abroad.		
*** This category includes all relatives of the head or of his/her partner (out of children) who are living abroad and who have been in regular contact with the household over the past 12 months. This category also includes heads who cumulate child(ren) and/or spouse(s) with other relatives.		
**** This category includes the only one case where the information (whether the person used to live within the household or not) is unknown.		
Interpretation: There are 842 married heads in our sample, out of which 5.5% have at least a spouse abroad (weighted percentage).		
Source: MAFE Senegal, household survey		

Being involved in a transnational couple is a gendered matter. As above mentioned, on average, 5.7% of the married heads are part of a transnational couple. But this situation concerns essentially women. While only 1.2% of husbands have their spouse abroad, this is the case for almost a quarter of the female heads living in Dakar, the other wives living or not with their spouse in Senegal. Interestingly, our results confirm what was sketched in the literature review: couples living apart in Dakar are quite a widespread phenomenon. This is indeed the case for 8.9% of the male heads and 44.6% of the female heads⁶. This gender difference can be explained by polygamous arrangements in which each wife has her own housing while the husband rotates from a wife/housing to another. In any case, this result reminds us that transnational couples are just a form of living apart couples in a context where the spatial proximity of the spouses is not prerequisite for family life.

Table 2. Spousal living arrangements of the household heads, by sex

	Total		Sex of the head			
			Male		Female	
Household heads live...	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
with their spouse	632	78.1%	580	89.9%	52	32.2%
apart, with spouse in Senegal	139	16.3%	59	8.9%	80	44.6%
apart, with spouse abroad	71	5.7%	15	1.2%	56	23.2%
Total	842	100.0%	654	100.0%	188	100.0%
Notes: unweighted numbers & weighted percentages; <i>Time of Survey</i> : 2008;						
<i>Population</i> : Senegalese married household heads (n=842)						
<i>Interpretation</i> : 78.1% of the married household heads live together with their spouse						

⁶ Living apart arrangement may be underestimated: since the figures only refer to the heads, they do not take into account the situations where, for instance, a wife lives with her parents or in-laws while her husband is living somewhere else (in Senegal or abroad).

Families functioning across borders

The previous section gave a first account of transnational families in Dakar looking at family links. In this section, we provide another view on transnational families by studying the various sorts of material and non-material relationships that households in Dakar have with migrants living abroad. We describe here how migrants keep in touch with the households left behind, looking successively at monetary and in-kind remittances, visits and other sorts of contacts. In a way, these analyses help to understand how transnational families “function” or, in other words, how people can “do family” while living in separate countries.

Quantitative data are not the more suited to show the complexity of the relationships of family members who live at a long distance. They can however give some insights on the variety of the contacts between migrants and their origin households. They show for instance that the functioning of families spread across borders rests on various sorts of relationships: migrants combine indeed several types of contacts with their origin household, the variety of these contacts being higher for those who are closer to the head, especially the spouses (Table 4). Distant communication (through telephone, mail, email...) is by far the most common type of relationship (declared by 90.4% of all households with migrants, Table 3), followed by monetary transfers (60.2%), visits (51.5%) and in kind remittances (32.9%).

Interestingly, **all households who declare migrants abroad do not receive a direct economic benefit from migration**. Among the households who declared at least one migrant abroad, those who received money in the last 12 months are only 60.2% and those who received goods are only 32.9% (Table 3). Another interesting result is that **those migrants who contribute to the domestic economy of the Dakarian households are not only those who have the closest relationships to the heads**. Spouses are only 7.2% of those who sent monetary remittances and 9.0% of those who send goods (Table 3). And their contribution to the households' economy is quite moderate: 29% of the spouses living abroad provide a “very large” or “large” share of all their household expenditures, a proportion which is below the average computed for all migrants whatever their relationship to the head (32%, Figure 1). It remains that spouses are more likely than the others to remit: 73% of them have sent money over the last 12 months, against 49% on average for all migrants (Figure 2). Children, once they are adult, have a smaller propensity to remit (Figure 2), but they have a bigger economic contribution than the spouses: they are the more numerous to contribute (36.8%, Table 4) and they are those who contribute in the larger share to the expenditures of their origin household (Figure 1). Beyond spouses and children, other relatives play an important role in the economic life of the households in Dakar. Even though their rates of remittance is lower than spouses and children (Figure 2), they represent more than half of all contributors, both in terms of money and goods (Table 4), and the amount of their contribution is quite significant. 28% of the siblings and 26% of the other parents contribute to a “large” or “very large” share to the household expenditures, which is hardly less than the spouses' share (Figure 1).

These results show quite well that Senegalese families function on an extended basis and that a westernized view of the family, restricted to the nucleus, is not appropriate to measure the prevalence of transnational families or to understand the social and economic effects of migration. Interestingly, our results also show that **remitting is not only determined by a preliminary contract between the migrant and his/her household of origin**. Indeed, it appears that 35% of all migrants

received some sort of support to organize their migration from the household that declared them. Among them, only 49,9% remitted money over the last 12 months. The proportion is similar (52,7%) among those who did not receive any support (detailed results not shown). This suggests that supporting a migrant with his/her migration trip does not increase the chance of receiving remittances. In the end, it appears that some migrants, some closely related to the head of their origin household or even some who received some help to organize their departure, do not remit. Is it because they can't or because they are engaged in an individual migratory project? More analyses are needed to answer this question and to further explore and disentangle the role of family in the logics of migration.

Table 3. Contacts over the 12 months between the households (with migrants) and their migrants

	% of households with migrants who...	Average number of migrants with contacts per household
... received monetary remittances	60.2%	1.58
... received in kind remittances	32.9%	1.45
... received at least one visit of a migrant	51.5%	1.44
... communicated with at least one migrant	90.4%	1.90

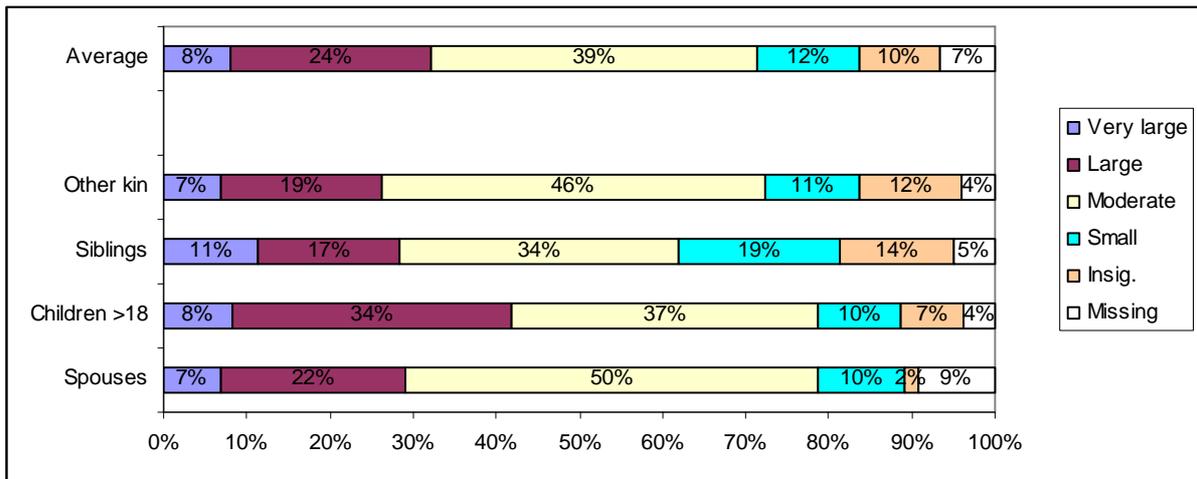
Notes: weighted percentages; *Time of Survey:* 2008; *Population:* Senegalese households with migratory contacts (N=617).
Interpretation: 60.2% of the household who sent money are spouse of a household head.

Table 4. Composition of the migrant population by type of contact (over the 12 months) and type of family relationship

Relationship to the head	Types of contact					Average number of contacts*	Composition of the migrant population
	Monetary remittances	In kind remittances	Visits	Distant communication			
				Once a week	Less than once a month		
Spouses	7.2%	9,0%	7,3%	9,0%	2,5%	2.65	4,8%
Children 0-18	0.6%	0,5%	0,3%	1,2%	3,8%	0.96	2,5%
Children >18	36.8%	35,5%	27,3%	38,0%	16,8%	1.85	30,0%
Siblings	23.2%	27,0%	24,1%	23,1%	30,2%	1.82	23,7%
Other	32.3%	28,1%	41,0%	28,7%	46,7%	1.60	39,0%
Total	100.0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	1.78	100,0%
N	648	336	471	507	228	1227	1227

Notes: unweighted numbers & weighted percentages; *Time of Survey:* 2008; *Population:* Senegalese households' migratory contacts who sent monetary remittances (N=648), or in kind remittances (N=336), or who visited their origin household (N=471), etc.
Interpretation: 7.2% of the migrants who sent money are spouse of a household head.
 * This number is computed as a score adding 1 point for each of the following contacts: visit, in kind remittance, monetary remittances, at least an annual distant communication. A score of 0 means that the migrant had no contact at all with the household. A score of 4 means that the migrants combined all sorts of contacts.

Figure 1. Share of household expenditures, by type of relationship: relative importance of contributors

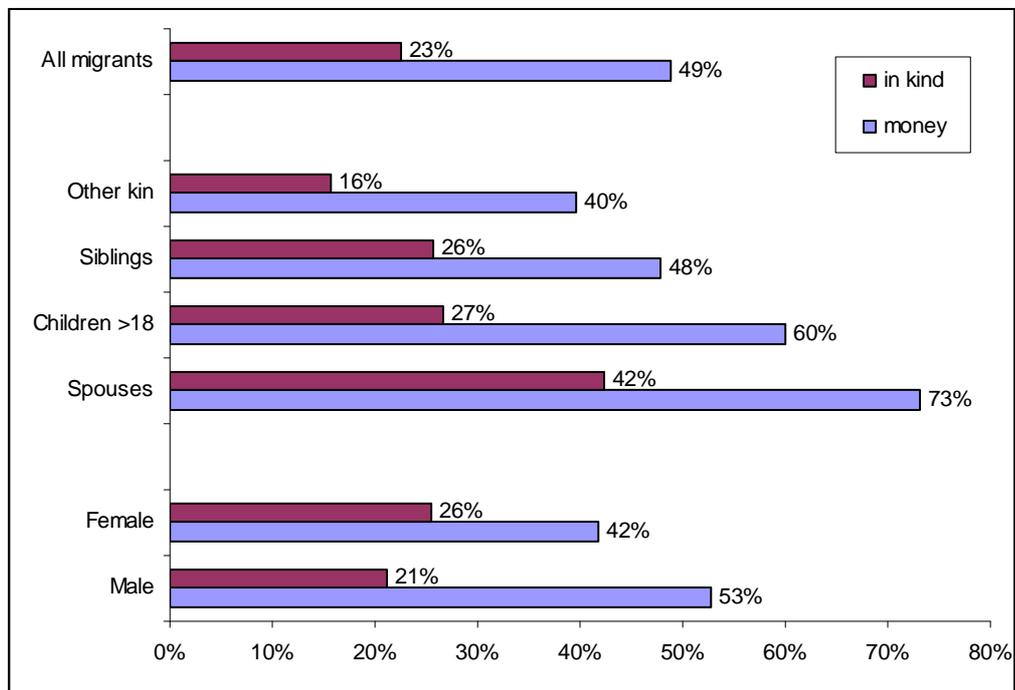


* Answers to the question "Which share of the household's expenditures on food, medicine, housing, transport, etc. have been covered by the money and in-kind transfers you have received from "Name" over the last 12 months?"

Notes: unweighted numbers & weighted percentages; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese households' migratory contacts who contribute (n=773).

Interpretation: Among the heads' spouses, 7% contributed in a very large share, 22% in a large share, 50% in a moderate share, etc. to the household expenditures

Figure 2. Remittance rates by sex and relationship to the head, according to the type of remittance



Notes: Weighted percentages; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese households' migratory contacts (n=1227). Children <18 are not represented

Interpretation: Of the migrant spouses, 73% remit money and 42% send in kind goods.

4. Migrant Families from the European Point of View

Transnational families are made, by definition, of people living in different countries. It is thus theoretically possible to adopt several perspectives to study them, i.e. alternatively the viewpoint of the origin country and the viewpoint of the destination countries. In the previous section, Senegalese families were studied with the perspective of the sending country in the sense that we used data collected through households at origin. In this section, we adopt the reversal viewpoint, using data collected among migrants in Europe, especially France, Italy and Spain. Since family reunification is a concern for European governments, we adopt in this section a nuclear approach of family⁷. Focusing on migrants' spouses and their children under 18, we first assess the amount of transnational vs. (re)unified nuclear families, before studying to what extent these families differ from one another in terms of socio-economic characteristics.

Prevalence of Transnational vs. (Re)unified Families

Accounting for the complex family arrangement of Senegalese migrants

As suggested in the first section of the paper, Senegalese nuclear families have a certain propensity to live apart across borders. In order to give an account of the varied (and somewhat complex) family arrangements of Senegalese migrants living in Europe at the time of the survey, we have built a typology that takes into account the country of residence of their spouse⁸ and/or child(ren) aged under 18. This typology forms a gradient from totally unified families to totally transnational families, as shown in Table 5. Some migrants in Europe have neither a spouse nor children under 18; they are thus considered as having "no nuclear family" (i.e. a family made of a mother, a father, and/or children). Other migrants have a spouse and/or children under 18 who are all living with him/her at the time of the survey and from which he/she was never separated; they pertain thus to the category "Always and totally unified family"⁹. A third category of migrants are living with their spouse and child(ren) but they used to live in different countries; they are thus considered as being part of a "Totally reunified family". The fourth family category refers to cases where the reunification is only partial, i.e. the migrant is living at the time of the survey either with his/her spouse or with his/her child(ren). In other words, this type of family is also a "Partially transnational family" since its members are spread across borders. Finally, when the migrant is separated from both his/her child(ren) and spouse, he/she is considered as a member of a "Totally transnational family".

⁷ Very few countries open reunification to other relatives who are neither spouses or minor children.

⁸ In case of polygamy, the analyses take only account of the last spouse. At the time of the survey, 38 Senegalese migrants were engaged in a polygamous family (37 of them being males), among 602 interviewees in Europe.

⁹ The category "unified family" may refer either to families who moved as a whole or to families that were constituted in Europe (with migrants who married and/or had children at destination).

Table 5. A family arrangements typology

Types	F0	F1	F2	F3	
	No nuclear family (no child* and no spouse**)	Always and totally unified family	Totally reunified family	Partially transnational family = Partially reunified family	Totally transnational family
Ever separated*** from a child and/or a spouse?	n/a	NO	YES Separated*** from at least one child <u>and/or</u> spouse	YES Separated*** from <u>either</u> at least one child or spouse	YES Separated*** from <u>both</u> at least one child and spouse
Separated*** at the time of the survey?	n/a	NO	NO	YES Separated*** from <u>either</u> at least one child or spouse	YES Separated*** from <u>both</u> at least one child and spouse

* Informal unions are not considered, i.e. spouse always refers to marriage, and conversely, “no spouse” also includes those within an informal union. In case of polygamy, only the most recent spouse is taken into account (39 cases among 602 observations).
** Children > 18 (and their whereabouts) are not considered, i.e. no child also includes those with only children > 18; In case of children < 18 who are living at different locations, when at least 1 child <18 is not living with ego, it is considered ‘non-cohabiting’.
*** Separation refers to the fact of living in different countries. It does not imply that couples are divorced. Note that family members who live in the same country do not necessarily live in the same house.

Transnational life: a common family arrangement among Senegalese migrants in Europe

The more striking result when looking at the family arrangements of Senegalese migrants in Europe is the high proportion of transnational families. **Almost half of all Senegalese immigrants in France, Italy or Spain (44%, Figure 3) live in a different country than their spouse and/or minor child(ren)**, most of whom remained in Senegal. This proportion includes 6% of partially transnational families, i.e. families in which the migrant lives in Europe with only some members of his/her nucleus. They are thus also partially reunified families, and could be added as well to the **totally reunified families that account for only 13% of migrants in Europe**. The rest of the migrants have always lived in the same country than their spouse and children (19% of “always and totally unified family”), or have no nuclear family at all, i.e. no spouse and no minor child at the time of the survey (24%).

In most cases, migrants are separated from both their children and spouse (25% of all migrants’ family arrangements). The other cases are very varied, with the migrant living in Europe either with his/her spouse or his/her child(ren), taking into account that some have children but no spouse and conversely. When looking separately at spouses and children, it appears that those who live apart are more numerous than those who live united (Figure 4). While 31% live with their spouse at the time of the survey (after a joint migration or after reunification), 36% are not in the same country (34% having no spouse). And while 27% live with their minor child(ren) in Europe, 33% left their child(ren) behind (40% having no child under 18).

These results reflect the average situation of Senegalese migrants in three European countries. Actually, their **family arrangements vary from a country to another**. While Senegalese migrants are living more often than not in transnational families in Spain and Italy (respectively 56 and 64% of all family arrangements, Figure 3¹⁰), this is the case for only a quarter of those living in France. In this

¹⁰ Note that the specially high proportion of transnational families among Senegalese migrants in Italy is consistent with the qualitative literature, that insists much more on transnational practices in this country than in Spain and, even more, France.

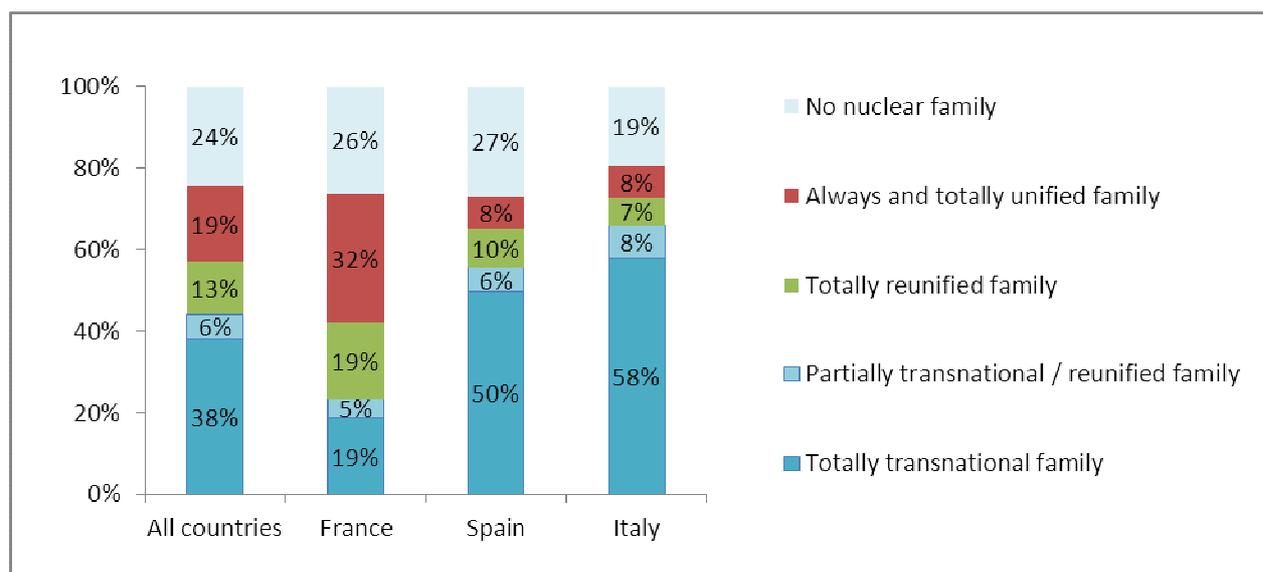
country, compared to the two others, reunification appears as quite a common phenomenon (24%, when adding up partial and total reunification, against 16% and 15% in Spain and Italy). The timing of migration mostly explains this cross-country difference. First, it impacts the policy context: the family reunification policy started to be implemented in France in the 1970s when Senegalese immigration had not yet started in Spain or Italy. Second, for migrants, reunifying takes time. The Senegalese migrants in France arrived earlier and had more time to prepare their reunion with their spouse and/or children (Table 9).

The timing of migration also explains that the most common type of families in France corresponds to those who were never split. Theoretically, these families may result either from a joint migration (members moved together out of Senegal) or from a formation at destination. Two facts tend to justify this second possibility. First, the Senegalese community in France is older, larger, and more sex-balanced than in the other countries (Table 7), which contributes to create a larger matrimonial market at destination. Second, migrants in France have, on average, a longer duration of stay at destination so that they had more time to form a family.

These results contrast with the widely shared common wisdom in Europe that family reunification is the normal path followed by most migrants. It also contrasts with the westernized view of migration, in which members of a family nucleus –the mother, the father and their children– live together¹¹. However, when referring to the functioning of Senegalese families, these results appear much less surprising. As explained earlier in the introduction of this paper, multi-residence (of the husband vs. his wife, of the parents vs. children) has been for long a common family pattern within Senegal. The development of international migration has extended this residential pattern beyond the borders. And, to some extent, it may have reinforced it in two ways. First, for cultural and economic reasons, some migrants explicitly reject the idea of reunification, as already suggested in the literature review (Riccio 2001; Sinatti 2011). Second, through the multiplication of restrictions to family reunification, states also contribute to maintain transnational families. The high prevalence of transnational families is certainly the mixed product of personal choices and policy constraints. Our data do not allow to disentangling clearly to what extent transnational arrangements are due to state regulations or family choices. Comparisons may help to distinguish between self and state selection in the process of reunification in Europe and thus to better understand why transnational arrangements are so widespread (Mazzucato, Schans *et al.*, 2013).

¹¹ Actually, this idealized view of the western family is also more and more contested by the growing complexity of family arrangements in European populations.

Figure 3. The incidence of (re)unified vs. transnational families among Senegalese migrants in Europe



Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of the survey: 2008; Senegalese migrants in Europe (N=200 in France, 200 in Spain, 203 in Italy).

Definitions: see Table 5

Notes: Weighted percentages

Interpretation: 24% of the Senegalese migrants living in Europe (Spain, Italy and France) have no nuclear family, i.e. they have no spouse and no child under 18.

Table 6. The incidence of (re)unified vs. transnational families among Senegalese migrants in Europe (only migrants who are part of family nucleus)

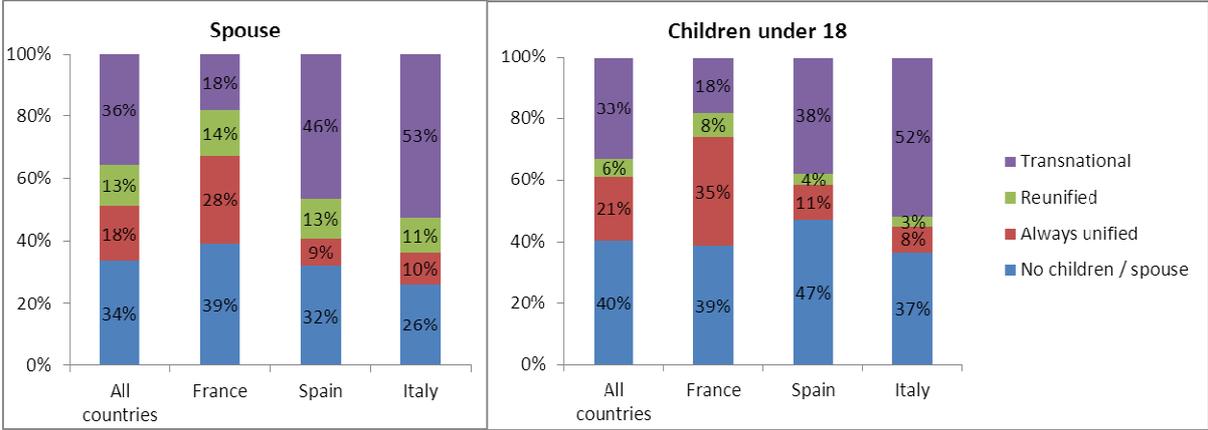
	All countries		France		Spain		Italy	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
F1. Totally unified family	118	24.6%	65	43.0%	34	11.1%	19	9.5%
F2. Reunified family	111	17.0%	34	25.3%	46	13.0%	31	8.6%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	247	58.5%	47	31.7%	87	75.9%	113	81.9%
Total	476	100.0%	146	100.0%	167	100.0%	163	100.0%

Notes: weighted percentages & unweighted numbers

Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese immigrants in Fr/Es/It (excl. "no nuclear family") (n=476)

Interpretation: Of all migrants with a family, in France, 43.0% have a totally unified family, and in Spain, 11.1% do. In Italy, this is 9.5%

Figure 4. The migrants, their spouse and children: Living in the same country or apart across countries?



Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of the survey: 2008; Senegalese migrants in Europe (N=200 in France, 200 in Spain, 203 in Italy)

Notes: Weighted percentages

Definitions:

- “Transnational” means that the migrant and his/her spouse are not living in the same country. For children: “Transnational” applies to migrant who have at least one minor child living in a different country.
- “Reunified” means the migrant and his/her spouse live in the same country after having lived in different countries for at least one year.
- “Always unified” means the migrant and his/her spouse have always lived together since their marriage (they married in Senegal and moved together, or they married at destination).

Interpretation: 34% of the Senegalese migrants living in Europe (Spain, Italy and France) have no nuclear family, i.e. they have no spouse and no child under 18. 18% of them have always lived with their spouse since their marriage.

Table 7. Senegalese population in France, Italy and Spain

	Spain (all ages)	Italy (all ages)	France (aged 25 and over)
Males	30,234	41,048	52,997
Females	5,641	6,037	45,530
Total	35,875	47,085	98,527
Percentage of females	16%	13%	46%

Sources :

Spain: 2008, Padron
 Italy: 2006, Permessi di soggiorno Senegalesi al 1° gennaio
 France: 2006, Census data (RRP2004-2007)

Are Migrants of Transnational Families Different from the Other Migrants?

The results of the previous section have shown that Senegalese migrants are quite commonly engaged in transnational families. Is this family situation just a question of timing, these migrants being in a transitory state before reunification? Or are they different from the other migrants? To answer this question, we compare now the characteristics of the migrants according to their type of family at the time of the survey (reunified vs. transnational), while the next section will explore the timing of reunification.

When looking at their migration conditions, “transmigrants”¹² present –to some extent– a specific profile (Table 9). They are distinct from the migrants who were always and totally involved in a unified family (F1), but similar to those who are now in a total reunified family (F2), under two respects. First, they arrived at an older age. Second, they exhibit shorter durations of stay. These two differences are probably due to the fact that a significant share of those who were never separated from their family nucleus (F1) actually formed their family after migration, while the others (F2 and F3) moved leaving behind their family. Note that the very slight difference¹³ between transmigrants (F3) and reunified migrants (F2) regarding their duration of stay suggests –at first sight– that being engaged in a transnational nucleus is not a question of timing. When compared to the reunified migrants, the transmigrants have very specific profiles in two domains. First, they were much more numerous to receive some support from their parents (except in Spain), which is probably an indicator of the fact that they are enmeshed in a community form of migration, also known to be associated to a family life in which living apart is common (see the literature review). Second characteristic: Transmigrants are much more likely to be undocumented than the other migrants (17.7% on average against less than 1% for the others), they are thus not eligible to legal family reunification schemes.

A significant share of transmigrants forms a vulnerable population. This is true in terms of legal status, as above mentioned. It is also reflected by their socio-economic characteristics. First, they are poorly educated: on average (all countries being combined), only 8% of transmigrants received a tertiary education, while the proportion is 20% for reunified migrants (F2) and 36% for those who were never separated from their nuclear family (F1, Table 8). Their low level of education is correlated to their low economic statuses (ISEI) and, quite logically, to bad measures of subjective well-being (Table 10). While more than 80% of the never separated (F1) and of the reunified migrants (F2) declared “yes, absolutely” when asked whether they had enough to live during their stay in their current country of residence, they were only 70% to give the same answer among the transmigrants. Although these descriptive results do not allow to infer causality, they tend to corroborate the hypothesis that reunification occurs mainly among the more integrated migrants in Europe (Baizán, Beauchemin et al. 2011; González-Ferrer, Baizán et al. 2012). And, again, this may result from a double selection process. On one hand, state regulations certainly play a role to limit reunification. This explains, for instance, that reunified migrants have almost always a regular legal status, while transmigrants are often undocumented. And since France, Italy and Spain apply socio-economic criteria to grant reunification, the differences in the socio-economic characteristics of the various types of migrants may also reflect some effects of state selection. On the other hand, the specific profile of the transmigrants may also indicate the fact that they have distinct migratory logics and that they (or their families) choose to not reunify. A part of them at least are decided to transfer at the international level the family habits of living apart that are already quite common within Senegal. It does not mean however that they are the only ones to maintain ties with their origin country.

Remitting money is indeed a quite common behavior among migrants in Europe. Looking separately at each country (Table 10), it appears that transmigrants are proportionally more numerous to remit

¹² This term was proposed by Riccio (2001) to name the migrants engaged in a transnational life. Here, we use it to name the migrants who are part of a transnational nuclear family.

¹³ The difference is not significant in Italy.

than the other migrants, probably because they both have less expenditure at destination and more people to support at origin. However remitting is also very common among other migrants, which reminds us –again– the extended nature of the Senegalese family: even when living with their spouse and children in Europe, migrants continue to send money to their relatives in Senegal.

Table 8. Socio-demographic characteristics of Senegalese migrants in Europe by country and type of family arrangement

	All countries	France	Spain	Italy
% of females among migrants according to the family arrangement type				
F1. Always and totally unified family	49.7%	53.8%	48.9%	24.8%
F2. Totally reunified family	58.1%	57.0%	64.3%	55.8%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	9.0%	21.3%	5.3%	5.1%
% of migrants with a tertiary level of education				
F1. Always and totally unified family	35.7%	43.0%	2.7%	20.2%
F2. Totally reunified family	20.5%	22.0%	3.2%	34.3%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	8.0%	13.3%	3.1%	8.7%
Notes: weighted percentages				
Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese immigrants in France (n=146), Italy (n=163), and Spain (n=167), excluding "no nuclear family). All countries, n=476				
Interpretation: 49.7% of the migrants in an always and totally unified family are females.				

Table 9. Conditions of migration among Senegalese migrants in Europe by country and type of family arrangement

	All countries	France	Spain	Italy
Age at arrival (mean)				
F1. Always and totally unified family	25.6	25.9	25.3	24.6
F2. Totally reunified family	30.4	31.2	28.7	29.1
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	29.4	30.0	30.1	28.6
Duration of stay at current destination (mean)				
F1. Always and totally unified family	16.8	17.9	13.6	12.9
F2. Totally reunified family	13.6	16.0	8.8	9.1
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	11.1	15.7	7.2	11.4
% of migrants who received some support from their mother and/or father to migrate				
F1. Always and totally unified family	16.2%	17.2%	4.5%	20.4%
F2. Totally reunified family	2.1%	2.4%	0.0%	3.0%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	10.1%	15.0%	1.2%	13.9%
% of migrants who don't have a residence permit at the time of the survey				
F1. Always and totally unified family	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
F2. Totally reunified family	0.4%	0.0%	1.0%	1.2%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	17.7%	11.4%	25.4%	15.6%
Notes: weighted percentages				
Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese immigrants in France (n=146), Italy (n=163), and Spain (n=167), excluding "no nuclear family). All countries, n=476				
Interpretation: Migrants in an always and totally unified family arrived in Europe at a mean age of 25.6.				

Table 10. Socio-economic situation of Senegalese migrants in Europe by country and type of family arrangement

	All countries	France	Spain	Italy
% of migrants who are economically active				
F1. Always and totally unified family	80.5%	78.6%	85.5%	87.6%
F2. Totally reunified family	81.3%	86.6%	79.3%	62.2%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	88.9%	90.9%	78.5%	95.3%
Occupational status (average ISEI*)				
F1. Always and totally unified family	37.6	39.0	29.8	35.5
F2. Totally reunified family	32.4	34.8	25.2	29.5
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	28.7	30.2	23.6	31.4
% of migrants declaring "yes, absolutely" to the question "Would you say that during this period you had enough to live?"				
F1. Always and totally unified family	82.0%	84.4%	55.8%	90.5%
F2. Totally reunified family	85.8%	94.4%	44.7%	98.8%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	70.4%	78.4%	41.9%	86.4%
% who answered they regularly send money during their stay in their current country of residence				
F1. Always and totally unified family	92.6%	96.0%	85.9%	77.7%
F2. Totally reunified family	89.5%	96.1%	80.9%	72.8%
F3. Partially or totally transnational family	89.7%	100.0%	86.8%	86.3%
Notes: weighted percentages				
Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Time of Survey: 2008; Population: Senegalese immigrants in France (n=146), Italy (n=163), and Spain (n=167), excluding "no nuclear family). All countries, n=476				
Interpretation: 80.5% of the migrants in an always and totally unified family were economically active at the time of the survey.				
* ISEI: International Socio-Economic Index. ISEI ranks occupations by averaging status characteristics of job holders (education, skills, employment status...).				

5. The formation and evolution of transnational families

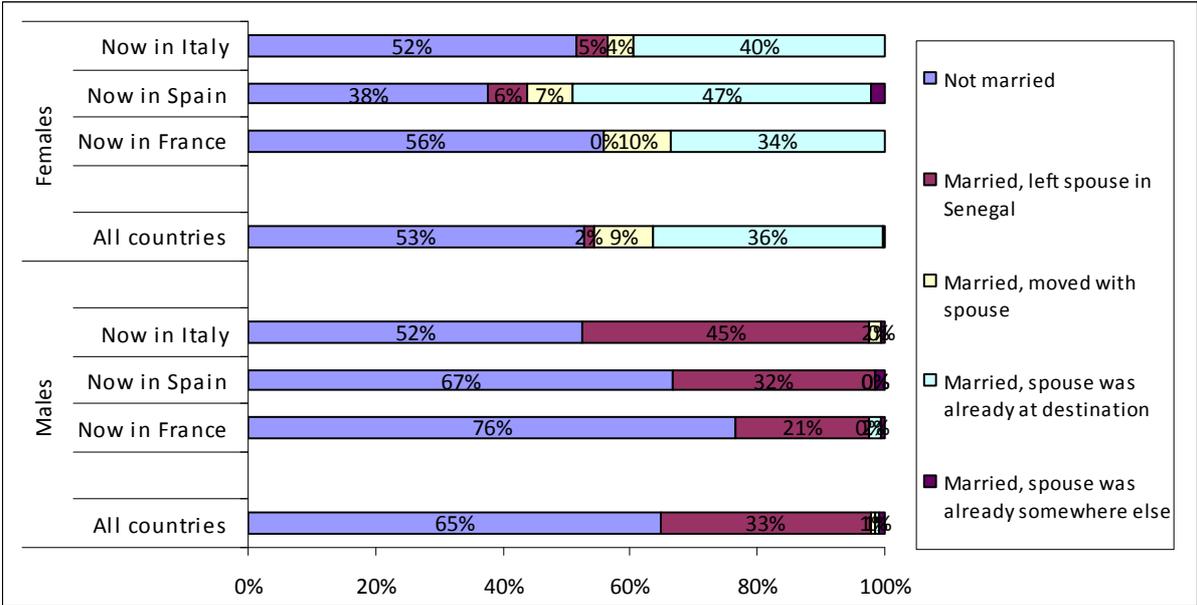
In this last section, our objective is to account for the process of family formation in a context of international migration. In line with the previous section that showed the existence both of transnational and reunified families, the aim is to answer to two basic questions. How are transnational families formed? And how are they transformed into reunified families? Analyses are again restricted to family nuclei, i.e. to the migrants' spouses and children (especially those under 18) since these two categories correspond to those who are eligible for formal family reunification according to the laws in most European countries. For the sake of clarity, we study separately couples and children.

Couples

For a start, it is important to underline that most migrants are not married when they first out-migrate (even when excluding child migration, as is done in our analyses). On average, two thirds of male migrants are bachelor when they leave Senegal, with some variations according to the destination country (76% of unmarried men among those arriving in France and only 52% in Italy, Figure 5). Actually, men without any family engagement can probably move more easily and, it is also

possible that migration is conceived as a way to accumulate the money necessary to start a family in a context of socio-economic difficulties in Senegal. More surprisingly in a context of strong social control over women, female migrants are also unmarried in a large proportion when they leave Senegal for the first time, with proportions of unmarried women varying from 38% in Spain to 56% in France (Figure 5). Among the average proportion of 52% unwedded women (the three destination countries being taken as a whole), only 6% are engaged in a consensual union, the others being single (36%), divorced (10%)¹⁴, or –more rarely– widows (1%, Table 11). These results may be taken as an indicator of the development of autonomous female migration in Senegal¹⁵. In any case, it shows that female migrants are far from being only reunified wives.

Figure 5. Marriage & Migration, at the time of 1st migration



* Not married captures: singles, informal unions, divorcees and widowed
 Notes: weighted percentages
 Source: MAfE-Senegal data; Population: Senegalese immigrants in Europe (n=603); Time of survey: 2008
 Interpretation: At the time of 1st migration, 65% of men were not married. For women, this was 53%.

¹⁴ Interestingly, the proportion of divorced women is much higher than the proportion of divorced men at the time of migration (10.0% against 1.1%) and it also augments after migration. This suggests there is a significant relationship between the experience of international migration and the social status of women in the Senegalese society.

¹⁵ Migrants interviewed in Europe originate from all regions of Senegal, not only from Dakar.

Table 11. Marital status of Senegalese migrants in Europe, by sex

Marital status	Male migrants		Female migrants	
	at the time of 1st migration	at the time of the survey	at the time of 1st migration	at the time of the survey
Single	56.4%	19.1%	35.8%	25.9%
Consensual union	7.2%	6.9%	5.8%	3.7%
Married	35.3%	63.4%	47.1%	45.7%
Divorced	1.1%	10.7%	10.0%	16.9%
Widowed	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	7.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	330	330	273	273

Notes: weighted percentages & unweighted numbers
Source: MAFE-Senegal data; Population: All Senegalese immigrants (n=603)
Interpretation: 56.5% of the male migrants in Europe were single when they first migrated. Only 19.1% were still single at the time of the survey (2008).

Among those who were married before migration, very few moved jointly with their spouse (only 9% of the female migrants and 1% of the males, Figure 5). In married couples, husbands typically moved abroad, leaving their wife behind. 33% of all male migrants were in this situation when they left Senegal for the first time, while 36% of the female migrants moved to join their husband at destination when they migrated to Europe. The reversal configuration is not completely impossible: 5% of female migrants in Italy and 6% of those in Spain were the first movers in their couple and left their husband in Senegal. Albeit small, these numbers are again signs of the existence of autonomous female migration. Transnational couples can thus be formed when either one or the other spouse leaves Senegal to go abroad. In these cases, the marriage occurred before migration. But transnational couples can also be formed when the marriage occurs after migration; this is the case when a migrant already at destination marries somebody in his/her origin country. It is actually a quite common phenomenon among Senegalese migrants: 50% of the transnational couples (married or not, i.e. consensual unions included) registered in MAFE were formed this way (Baizán, Beauchemin et al. 2011).

To what extent are these transnational couples turned into reunified couples in Europe? Conventional data in destination countries give usually few insights on this question because they are most often than not focused on migrants at destination, which creates two limitations. First, they rarely contain information on the left behinds, so that they cannot be used to compute the proportion of reunified vs. transnational couples. Second, they register no information on the migrants who returned and thus cannot be used to give an account of reunification at origin (Senegal), in addition of reunification at destination (Europe). Furthermore, they are usually cross-sectional and thus do not allow to study how couples evolve over time from a transnational to a reunified state. The transnational and longitudinal nature of the MAFE data allows to overcoming these limitations. Basically, what the MAFE data allows to do is to enlarge the focus on family reunification. Rather than legal reunification, we look at *de facto* reunification. Reunification is thus defined as the fact of living together again (in the same country) after a period of separation due to international migration, whatever the legal channel for immigration to Europe (the legal status of the reunified migrant could be “student” or “worker” or any other status, and not only a status linked to legal reunification). Furthermore, with the MAFE data, reunification is not only seen from the

European point of view: we also look at reunification at origin (i.e. in Senegal) to test whether the common wisdom that all migrants aim to regroup their family in Europe is accurate or not.

Box 2. Computation of survivor functions.

“Survivor functions” have been computed to study the timing of reunification between the individuals of two types of dyads: (1) a migrant and his/her spouse(s) and (2) a migrant and each of his/her minor child(ren). Each dyad (of spouses or of parent-child) is followed over time from the first year of separation (when they started to live in different countries, i.e. at the time of first departure of the migrant) until reunification (when they (re-)start to live in the same country for at least one year). We use here the information contained in the biographic questionnaire on the yearly location of the interviewee and of his/her spouse(s) and child(ren). In all survival curves shown below, we only show the proportion of reunified dyads during the first 10 years after the geographical separation.

Reunification can occur either in Europe (when the left behind joins the migrant who is already in Europe) or in Senegal (when the migrant returns in Senegal). We thus distinguished two analyses. The first is restricted to the sample of migrants in Europe and looks at the timing of reunification only in Europe. The second provides a broader view of reunification and takes into account the fact that family members can reunify either in Europe or in Africa, when a migrant returns. This second analysis is based on the transnational sample of MAFE, made of all migrants surveyed in France, Italy and Spain, in addition of those who returned from these countries to Senegal (and who were thus surveyed in Senegal).

Married couples start to be at risk of reunification when one of spouse moves out of Senegal to go to France, Italy or Spain, leaving his/her spouse behind. While being geographically separated (i.e. living in separate countries), they are considered as transnational couples. Couples are no longer at risk of reunification in several cases: (1) when they reunify or (2) in case of right censoring due to the separation of the spouses (death or divorce). When analyzing reunification in Senegal, censoring also occurs if the couple reunifies in Europe. Conversely, reunification in Senegal is considered as a censor case when looking at reunification in Europe.

Regarding reunification with children, migrants enter the risk set when they move out of Senegal living behind their child(ren). Each child is considered separately, which means that migrants with several children are observed several times. Each dyad migrant-child is no longer at risk of reunification when they reunify or in case of right censoring (when the child deceases or becomes older than 18). As for couples, when analyzing reunification in Senegal, censoring also occurs if the dyad reunify in Europe. Conversely, reunification in Senegal is considered as a censor case when looking at reunification in Europe.

Figure 6 shows the proportion of transnational couples (i.e. “separated couples”)¹⁶ who evolve into reunified couples in Europe (on the computation of survivor functions, see Box 2). As mentioned in Box 2, we concentrate here on a 10-year period (i.e. whether or not couples have reunified within 10 years after their geographical separation). After 5 years of separation, approximately 7.3% of the migrants reunified with their spouse (i.e. 92.7% are still separated on Figure 6); after 10 years, the proportion reaches 18.1%. This shows clearly that living apart across borders can be a long-standing couple arrangement. Interestingly, there are almost no differences in the timing of reunification according to the sex of the migrants: when they are the first to migrate in their couple, the wives do not “call” their husband much sooner than husbands do when they are the first movers (gender differences in Figure 7 are not significant).

¹⁶ By definition, in our analyses, a transnational couple is made of two spouses living in different countries, one living at destination (France, Italy or Spain) the other living at origin (Senegal).

Figure 6. Time to reunification in Europe of Senegalese couples (survivor function)

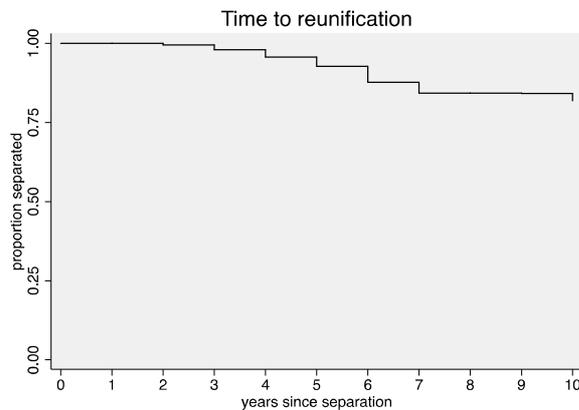
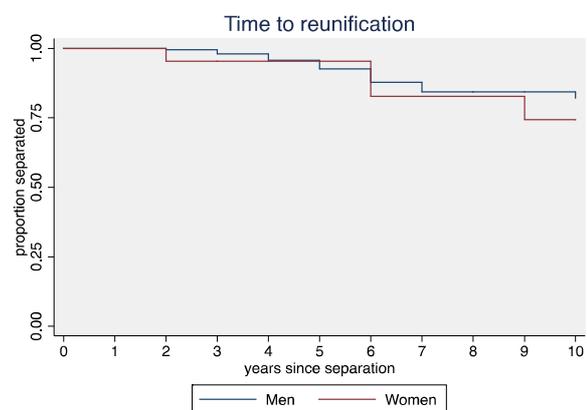


Figure 7. Time to reunification of couples, by sex of the migrant



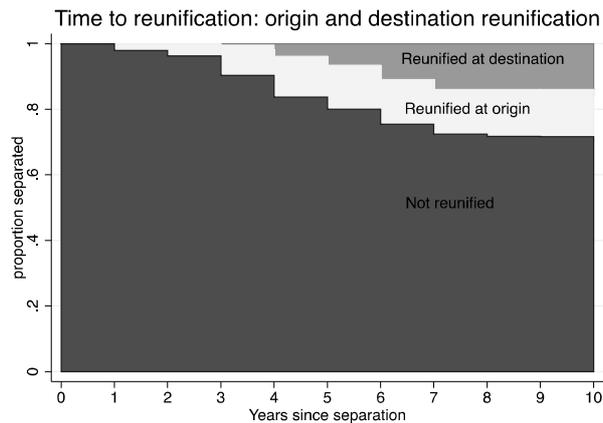
Notes: Weighted results

Source: MAFE-Senegal data; *Population:* Senegalese migrants living in Europe at the time of the survey who have experienced a period of separation from their spouse because of migration (they moved out of Senegal, leaving their spouse behind). Note that the sample used here does not include migrants who married after migration with someone who was still living in Senegal (n=154, 20 failures).

Interpretation: The figures measure the duration between time of separation of married couples and time of reunification either in Europe. After 2 years, 99.4% are still separated; the proportion being 92.7% after 5 years and 81.9% after 10 years. Differences between males and females are not significant (Wald $\chi^2(1) = 0.44$; $Pr > \chi^2 = 0.5077$).

Does the place of reunification make a difference? Do Senegalese migrants reunify more (and more quickly) in Europe than in Senegal? In Figure 8, we compare two separate survivor functions for competing risks. Of the Senegalese migrants who still reside in Europe (France, Italy, Spain) or used to live there before returning to Senegal, we examine the difference between the chances to reunify at destination, i.e. in Europe and the chances to reunify at origin, i.e. in Senegal. In our sample of 172 migrants, who happened to be separated from their spouse because of their departure from Senegal, 21 reunified at destination and 16 at origin. Observing the timing of reunification, it appears that reunification at origin (i.e. in Senegal) is a quite short term process, likely to occur within the five first years after the couples' geographic separation, with a proportion of regrouped couples reaching a level of 13.4% after 5 years (with a slow increase up to 14.3% after 10 years). Reunification in Europe appears as a longer process: after 5 years of separation, 6.6% of the transnational couples have reunified at destination; the proportion keeps rising up to 15.9% after 10 years.. In short, on a long term, married couples rather tend to reunify in Europe, which is consistent with the fact that return is much more likely to occur within a decade after migration (Baizan, Beauchemin *et al.*, 2013). In any case, it remains that reunification at origin is a significant phenomenon which contradicts the common wisdom that all African migrants in Europe come for good and to be joined by their whole family.

Figure 8. Time to reunification: couples, by country of reunification



Notes: weighted results

Source: MAFE-Senegal data; *Population:* Senegalese migrants living in Europe or back in Senegal at the time of the survey who have experienced a period of separation from their spouse because of migration (they moved out of Senegal, leaving their spouse behind) (n=172, 21 failures at destination, 16 failures at origin). Note that the sample used here does not include migrants who married after migration with someone who was still living in Senegal.

Interpretation: The figure measure the duration between time of separation of married couples and time of reunification either in Europe (at destination) or in Senegal (at origin). After 2 years of separation (i.e. after one of the partners moved to Europe), 0.5% have reunified at destination and 3.2% at origin. After 5 years, 6.6% have reunified at destination, and, the proportion of reunified couples in Europe being 15.9% after 10 years. After 5 years, 13.4% reunified at origin, and the proportion of reunified couples in Senegal being 14.3% after 10 years.

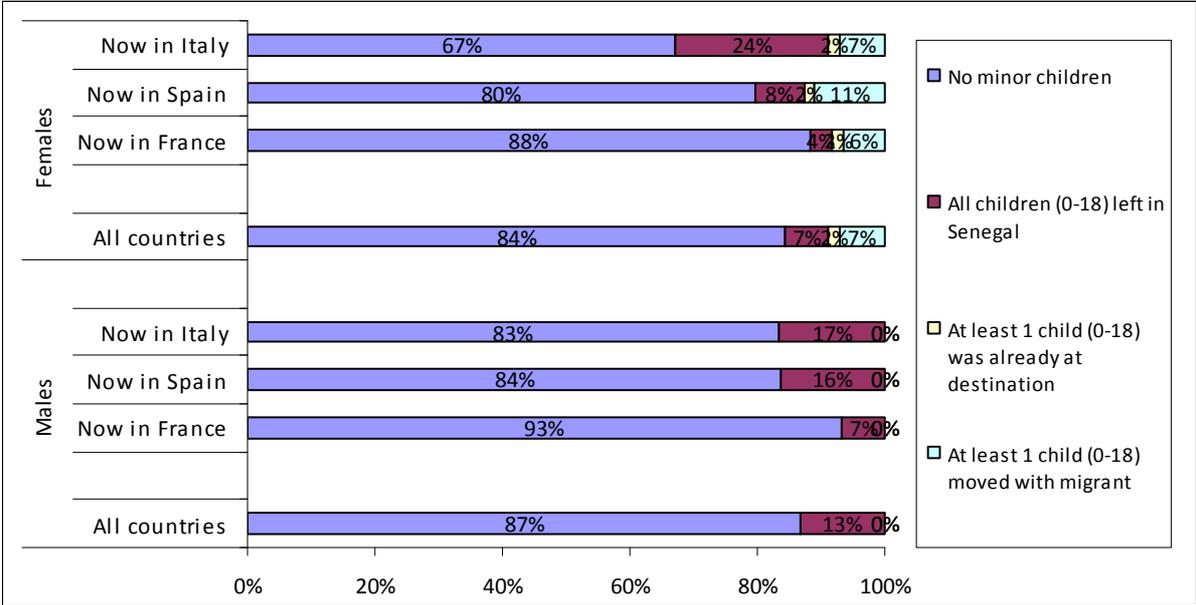
Children

Most migrants being unmarried at the time of their first migration, they are also quite few to have children when they leave Senegal. Again gender differences are discernable under several respects. Women are more numerous to have children before migration, even though the proportion of mothers remains low among migrants (16% against 13% of fathers among male migrants, Figure 9). Compared to male migrants, females' family situation is more diverse by destination country: the percentage of women with minor children varies from 12% in France up to 33% in Italy, while it varies only between 7% and 17% for men respectively in France and Italy. When they have children, women's family situation is also more varied than men: while almost all fathers leave their child(ren) in Senegal, migrant mothers equally move with them (7% of all women leave their child(ren) behind, and the same proportion migrated with them, Figure 9). Here Italy appears however as an exception, with female migrants adopting transnational strategies much more often than in the other European countries: a quarter of them left their child(ren) behind, while the proportion is only 4% of all women in France (Figure 9).

Finally, when migrant mothers do not move with their children, they are significantly more likely to reunify than the fathers, and they do it much quicker (Figure 11). As well as for couples, it is important to have in mind that reunification between parents and children does not only occur in Europe. And actually, reunification with children is quicker and more common in Senegal when migrants return than in Europe when children join their parents at destination. After 5 years of separation, 7.5% of the parent-child dyads have reunified in Europe, against 13.6% in Senegal. And after 10 years, the probabilities of reunification are 9.7% in Europe and 22.6% in Senegal (Figure 12). Again these results show that reunification in Europe is not always the preferred option of

Senegalese migrants, even though family reunion has become the main legal channel of entry into Europe.

Figure 9. Children and migration of Senegalese migrants currently living in Europe, at time of first migration



* Children over 18 are not included in the analyses.
 Notes: weighted percentages
 Source: MAFÉ-Senegal data; Population: Senegalese immigrants in Europe (n=603); Time of survey: 2008
 Interpretation: At the time of 1st migration, 87% of men were not married. For women, this was 84%.

Figure 10. Time to reunification: parent-child dyads

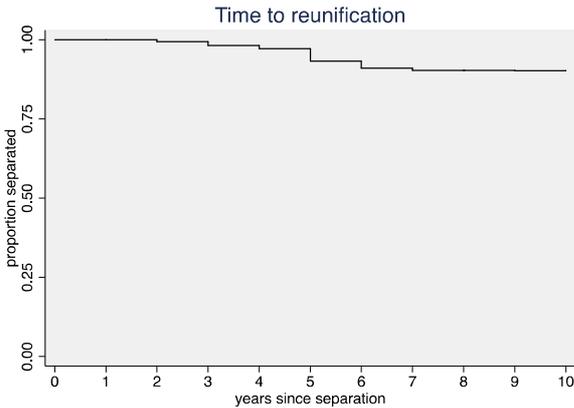
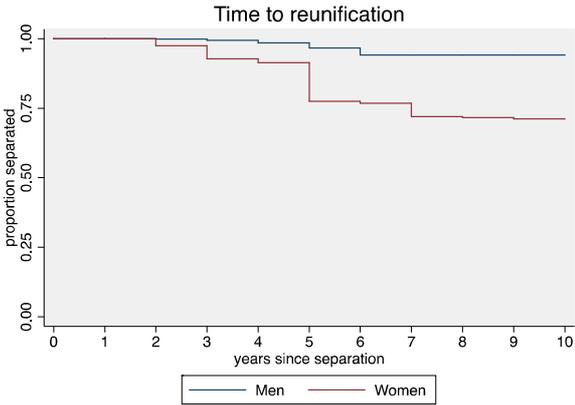


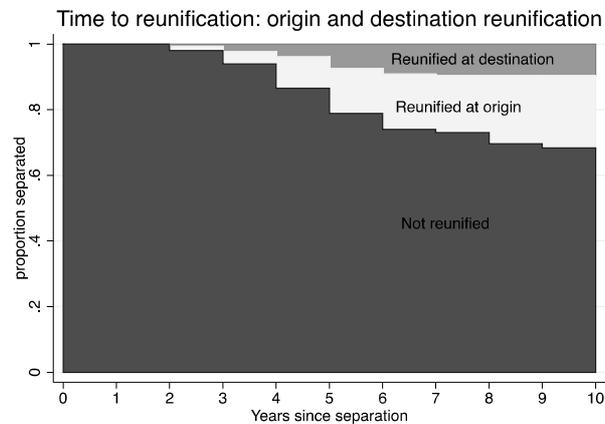
Figure 11. Time to reunification: parent-child dyads, by sex of the migrant



Notes: weighted results.
 Source: MAFÉ-Senegal data; Population: Senegalese migrants living in Europe at the time of the survey who have experienced a period of separation from their child(ren) because of migration. N=569 parent-child dyads (51 failures), made of migrant with children that were under-18 at the time of migration. These dyads are distributed over 221 migrant parents, who have on average 4.05 (sd 2.2) children (range 1-12). Note that the sample used here does not include children born in Senegal after the first departure of one of the parents (usually the father).
 Interpretation: After 2 years, the probability of staying separated is 99.4%, 93.2% after 5 years and still 90.2% after 10 years. In other words, after 2 years of separation, 0.6% of the migrants reunified with their child, 6.8% after 5 years and up to 9.8% after 10 years. For males, the proportion of separated dyads is 100% after 2 years, 96.6% after 5 years, and 94.1%

after 10 years. For females, the proportion of separated dyads is 97.4% after 2 years, 77.4% after 5 years, and 71.1% after 10 years. Sex differences are significant (Wald $\chi^2(1) = 23.82$; $P > \chi^2 = 0.0000$).

Figure 12. Time to reunification: parent-child dyads, country of reunification



Notes: weighted results

Source: MAFE-Senegal data; *Population:* Senegalese migrants living in Europe or back in Senegal at the time of the survey who have experienced a period of separation from their child(ren) because of migration. In total, there are 673 parent-child dyads: parents with children that were under-18 at the time of migration. These dyads are distributed over 246 migrant parents, who have on average 4.39 (sd 2.4) children (range 1-14). Failures: 61 at destination, 82 at origin. Note that the sample used here does not include children born in Senegal after the first departure of one of the parents (usually the father).

Interpretation: The figure measure the duration between time of separation of parent-child dyads and time of reunification either in Europe (at destination) or in Senegal (at origin). At destination: after 2 years, 0.6% reunified, after 5 years, 7.5% reunified and after 10 years, 9.7% reunified. At origin: after 2 years, 1.4% are reunified, after 5 years, 13.6% reunified; after 10 years, 22.6% reunified.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we used the MAFE data to study the relationships between migration and family in the context of Senegal and Europe. While most previous quantitative studies are biased because they offer a restrictive view either on origin or destination, we took advantage of the transnational nature of the data to offer a double viewpoint on families. This led us to a first important result: **transnational families are very common**. Using the data collected at origin, we have shown that half of all households from the region of Dakar declared migrants abroad (whatever their place of residence) and they are strongly connected to them by various sorts of channels (social contacts, money or other material remittances). Importantly, these contacts do not only concern spouses and children but also members of the extended family. Even when adopting a restrictive (and European) perspective on family, by focusing on nuclear rather than extended families, transnational arrangements remain a common fact. Using the data collected in Europe among Senegalese migrants, we have shown that transnational families are clearly more numerous than the (re)unified ones. We have further demonstrated that living apart across borders is quite often a long-lasting arrangement for Senegalese couples, as well as for their children.

A second very important finding is that **reunification is not a unidirectional phenomenon**. In line with the MAFE results showing that return migration is a significant phenomenon, even though on

the decrease in the last decades (Sakho, 2013), we wanted to test the hypothesis that reunification can occur at origin (i.e. in Senegal) and not only in Europe. We thus rejected a legal view of reunification, based on the channel of entry into Europe. We rather adopted a factual definition consisting in comparing the places of residence of the migrant, his/her spouse and child(ren). Observing them over life, from the time of separation (when the migrant moved out of Senegal, leaving behind his/her family) up until the time of reunification (or the time of the survey if they were not reunited at this time), we have shown that reunification at origin is a quite common phenomenon both for spouses and children. It's only when migrants have stayed in Europe a significant number of years (5 years of separation from partners, 10 years of separation from children) that reunification becomes more likely at destination, even though reunification in Senegal remains a preferred option.

The big remaining question is: what makes that some migrants remain separated from their family for long, that others reunify in Europe while other ones choose to go back in Senegal to meet up there with their spouse and children? This question cannot be answered with the results presented in this paper. Other research have shown that the more westernized (in terms of social norms) and the more economically integrated migrants are those with the higher odds of reunifying in Europe (Baizán, Beauchemin et al. 2011; González-Ferrer, Baizán et al. 2012). It is still not completely clear whether this is the result of personal choices or of contextual opportunities linked to the legal framework of reunification in Europe. The anthropological literature suggests that living apart is a common fact for Senegalese families even in the absence of international migration. It could be that transnational families are partly, at least, the result of an internationalization of this habit. On the other hand, the fact that undocumented migrants are more often than not in transnational families suggests that the policy context cannot be ignored. The differences observed between countries (with a higher proportion of transnational families in Italy, for instance) also call for new analyses that take into account the effects of national policies of the reunification process. **To what extent is reunification in Europe or in Africa the result of a self and/or State selection?** This is the next question to be solved.

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