MAFE Migrations between Africa and Europe

MAFE Project
Migration between AFrica and Europe

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& the MAFE Team

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Why a project on Sub-Saharan Migration?

- A paradox
  - A major policy concern in Europe (EU and member states)
  - Albeit a minority in stocks and flows of migrants
- Public debates (and policy making) haunted by a collection of pre-conceptions conveyed by medias
  - One-way (irregular) moves, with no (spontaneous) returns
  - By people fleeing misery, difficult to integrate
  - … whose objective is to bring their whole family in Europe
  - A monolithic view of Sub-Saharan migration
- An emblematic case of ill-informed public debate
  - Among other reasons…
  - Because of a lack of accurate data / empirical evidence

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Project Objectives

- Objective: to collect quantitative data (socio-demo survey) to produce statistical analyses on…
  - Trends of migration (departure & return)
  - Causes of migration (departure & return)
  - Effects of migration
    - Socio-economic trajectories, contributions at origin
    - Family life
- « Between » rather than « from… to »
  - Hypoth.: Return migration, circulation, transnational practices are significant
- Outline:
  - Project methodology
  - Migrants' connections with their home country
  - Return: trends and factors
  - Returnees's socio-economic trajectories

A focus on return migration

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MAFE Methodology

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Pre-requirements & Methodological Choices

- The right comparison group at the right time
- A need to compare migrants, non-migrants and returnees
  - i.e. information on people living in different countries
  - 2 practical solutions
    - Household survey at origin, with questions on migrants (absentees)
    - Individual survey in origin and destination countries
- A need for “dated” data
  - A retrospective approach (incl. full life histories)
- A need of representative data
  - “As far as possible” (rarity, irregularity, no sampling frame)
- The need for international comparisons
  - Identical questionnaires and survey tools in all countries

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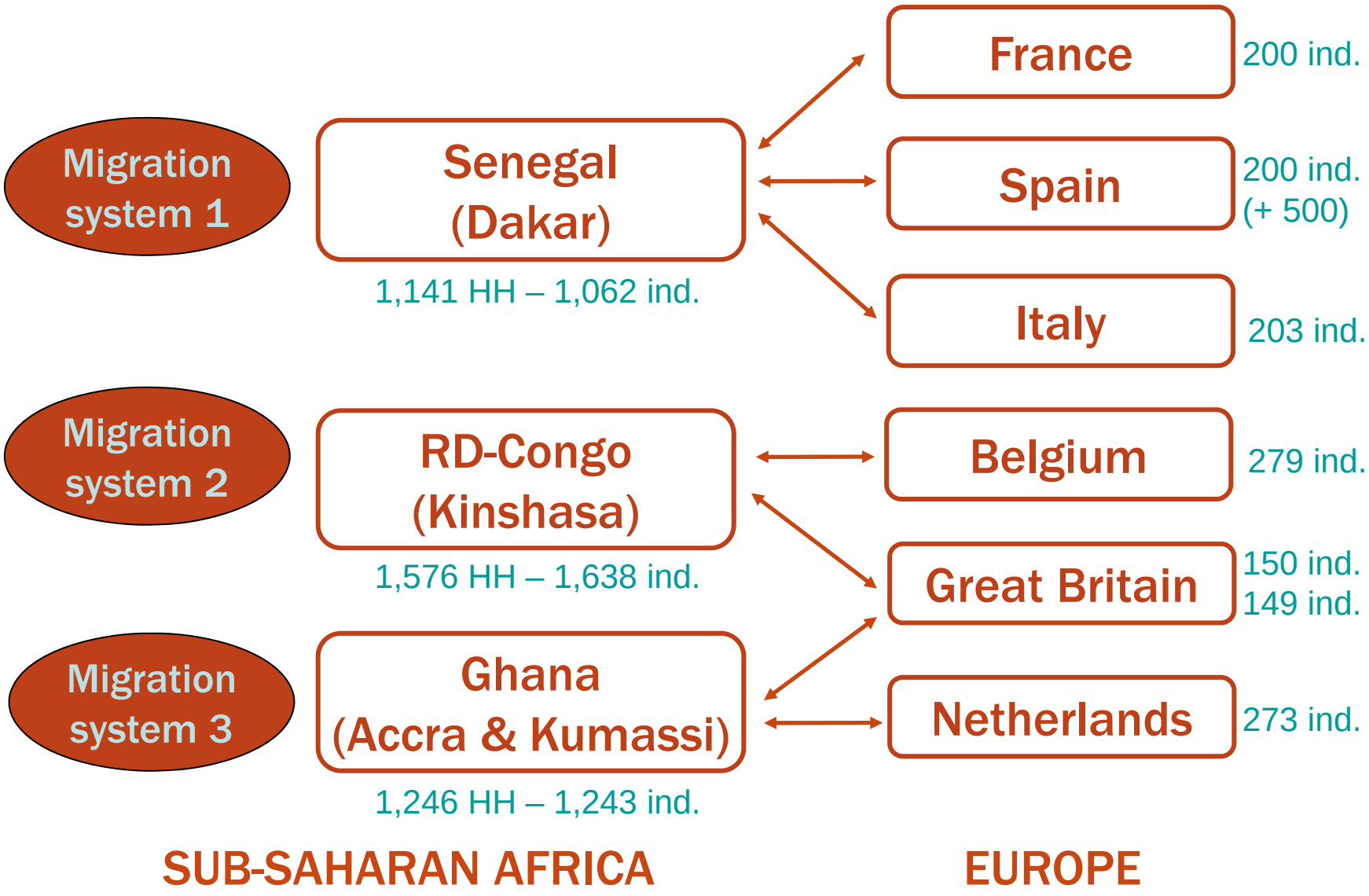
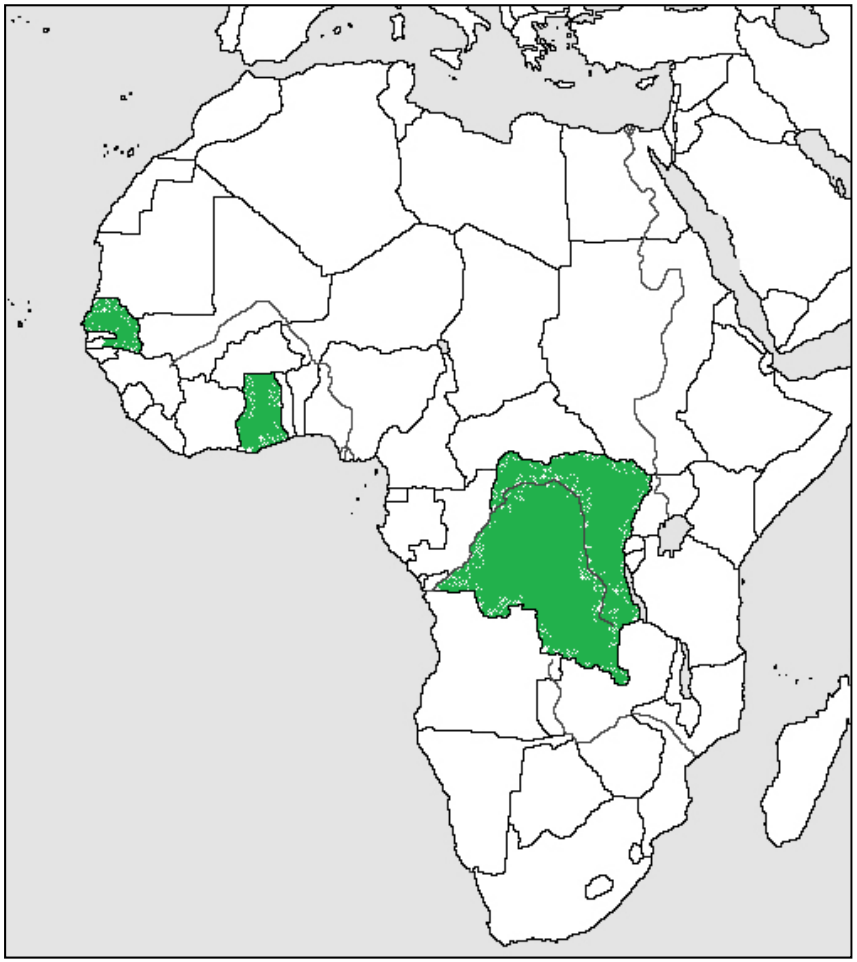
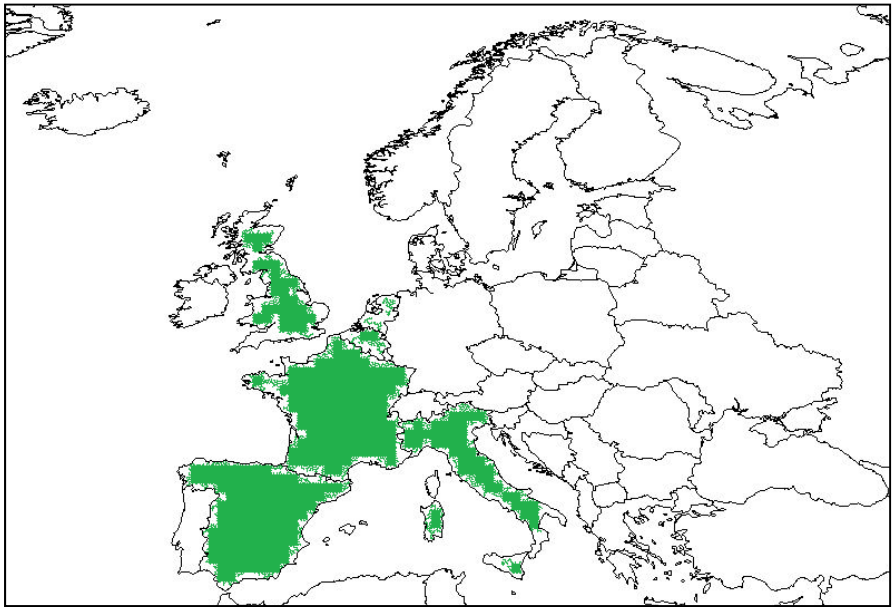
The Case Studies







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Connections with the Home Country

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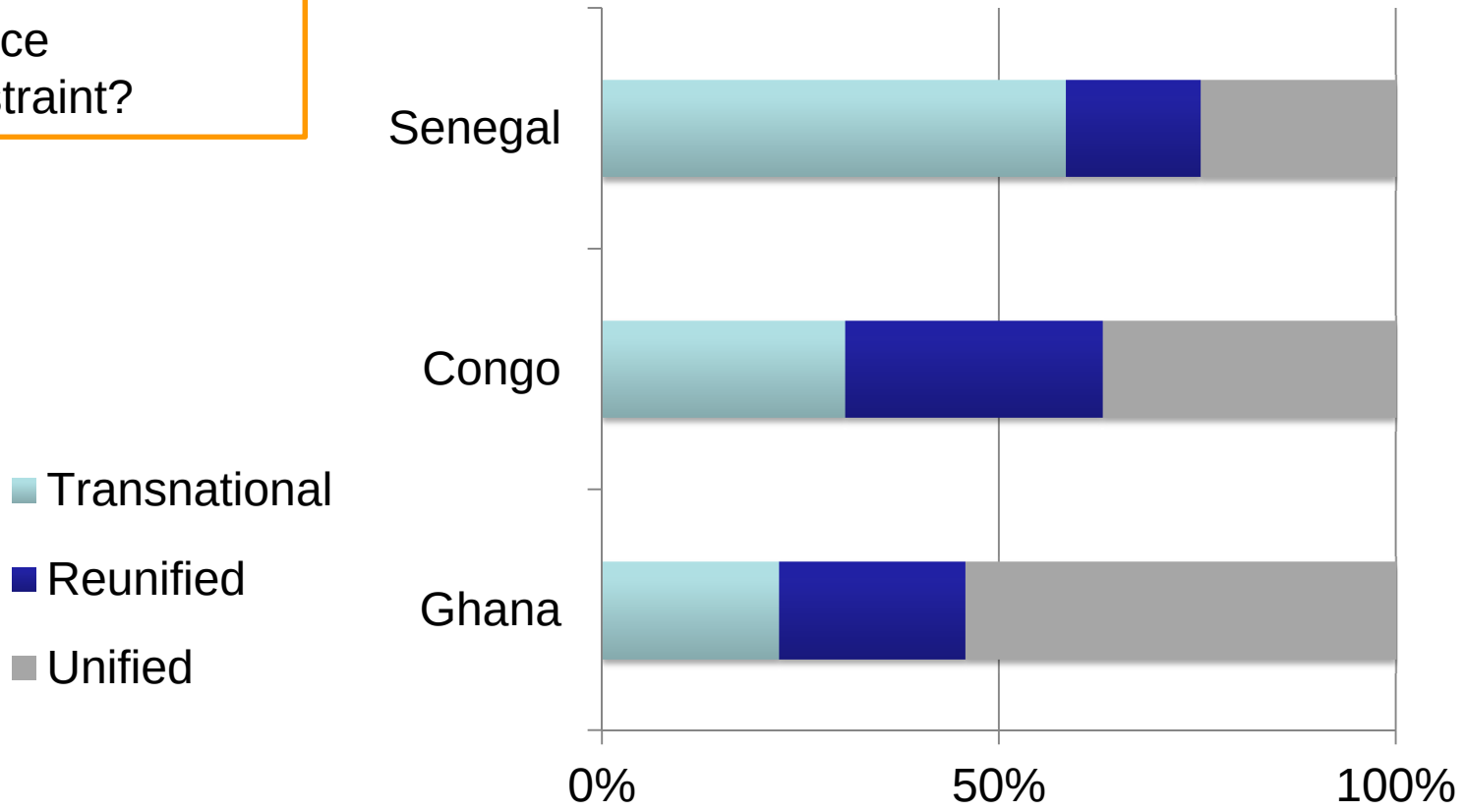
Family arrangements of African migrants in Europe

- 1/4 has no nuclear family
- **Significant numbers of transnational families (20 to 60%)…**
- Personal choice or policy constraint?



Reunification with Children: When and Where?

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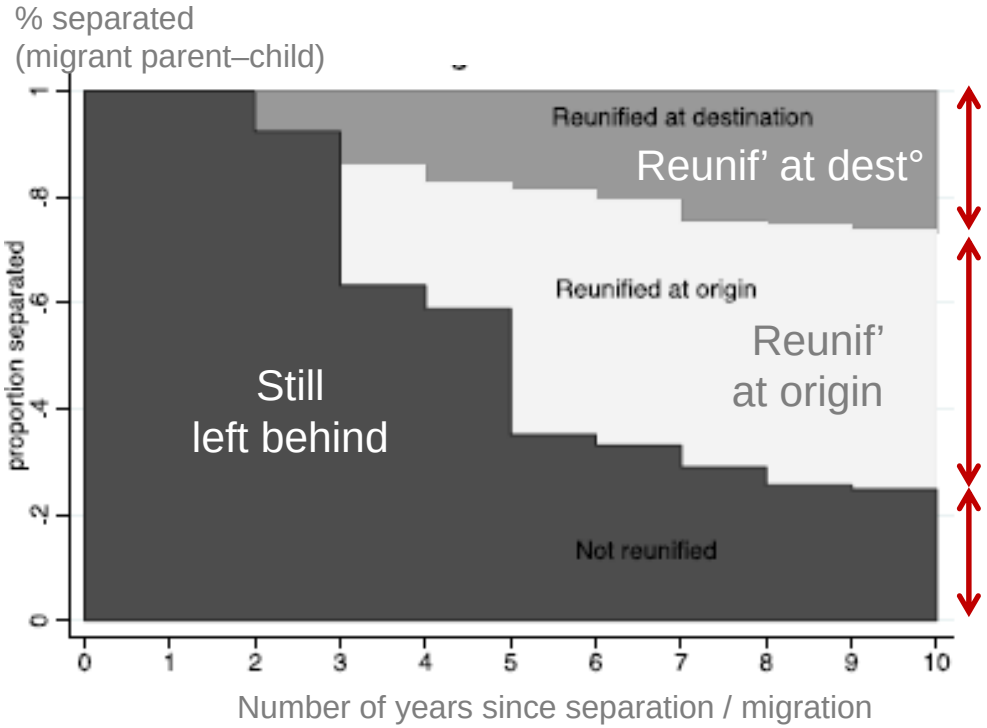
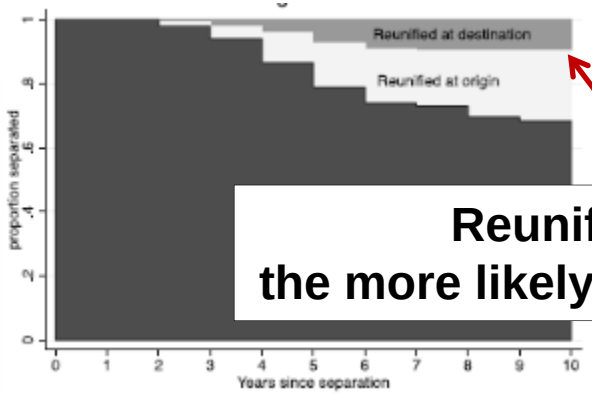
Ghana



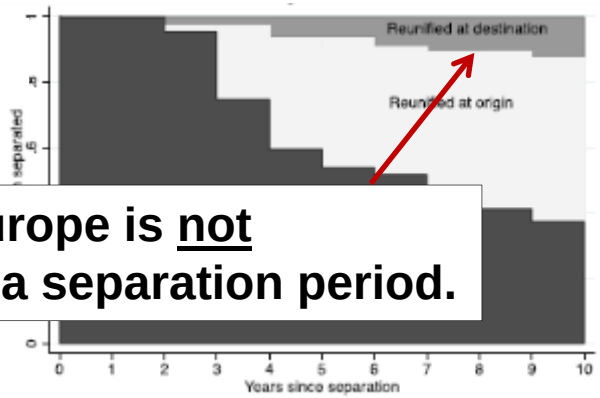
10 years after separation:

- **1/4 were reunified in Europe**
- **1/2 were joined in Ghana by their returnee parent**
- **1/4 of the left-behind children are still separated from their migrant parent**

Senegal



Congo



Reunification in Europe is <u>not</u> the more likely outcome of a separation period.

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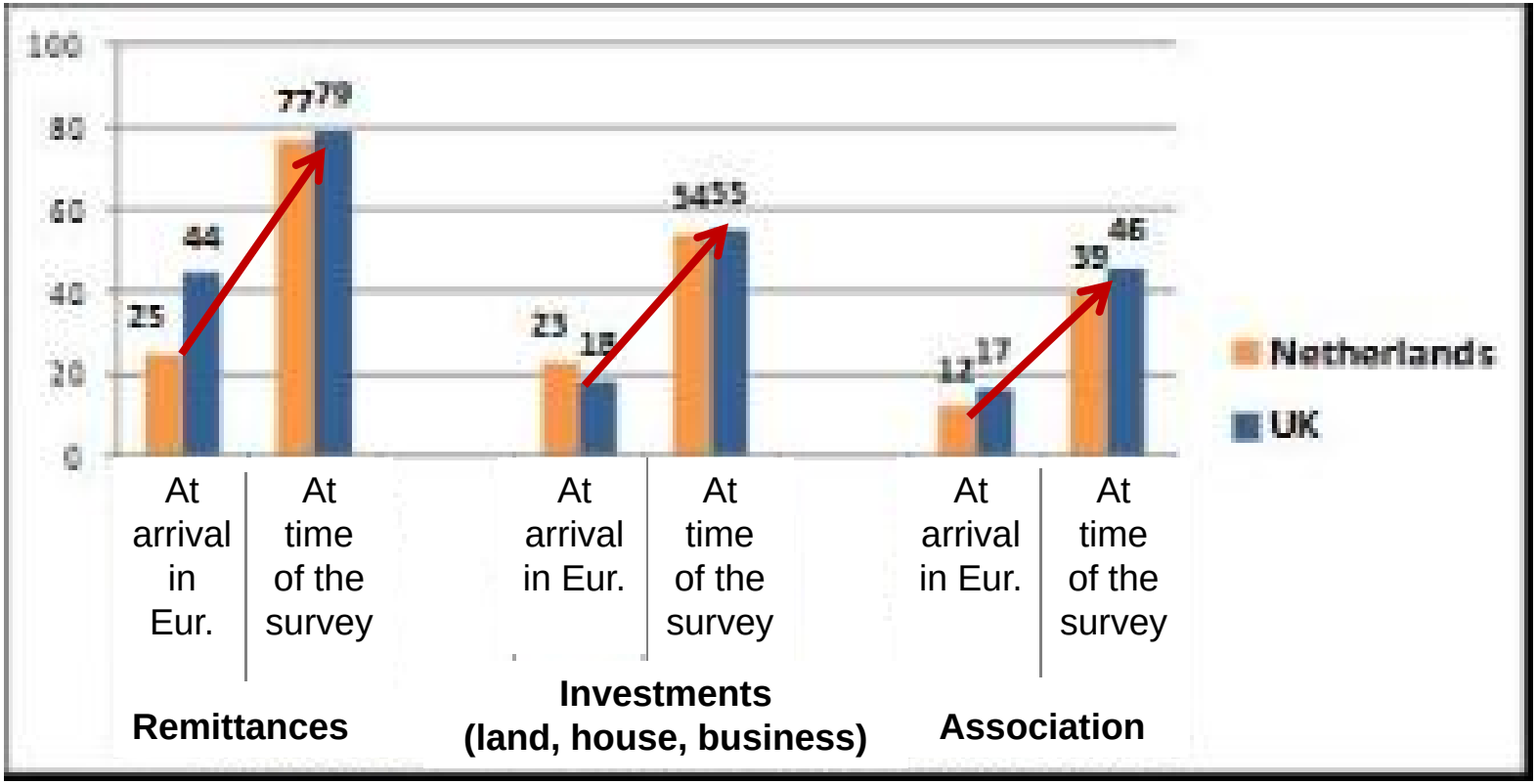
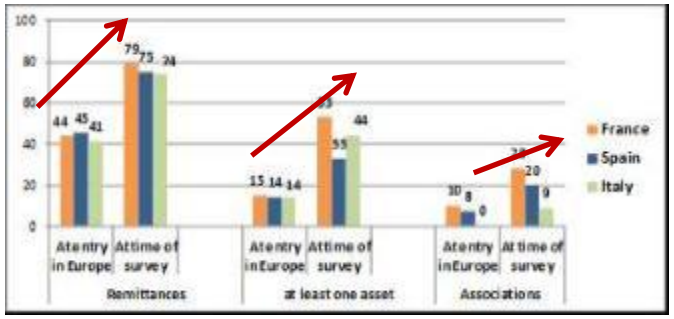
Migrants' economic contribution to origin countries

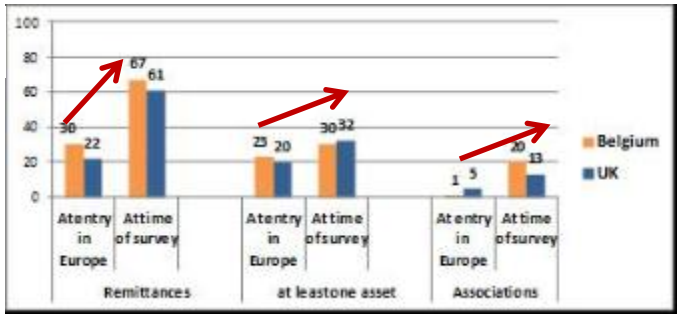
Ghana



Senegal



Congo



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Return: Trends and factors

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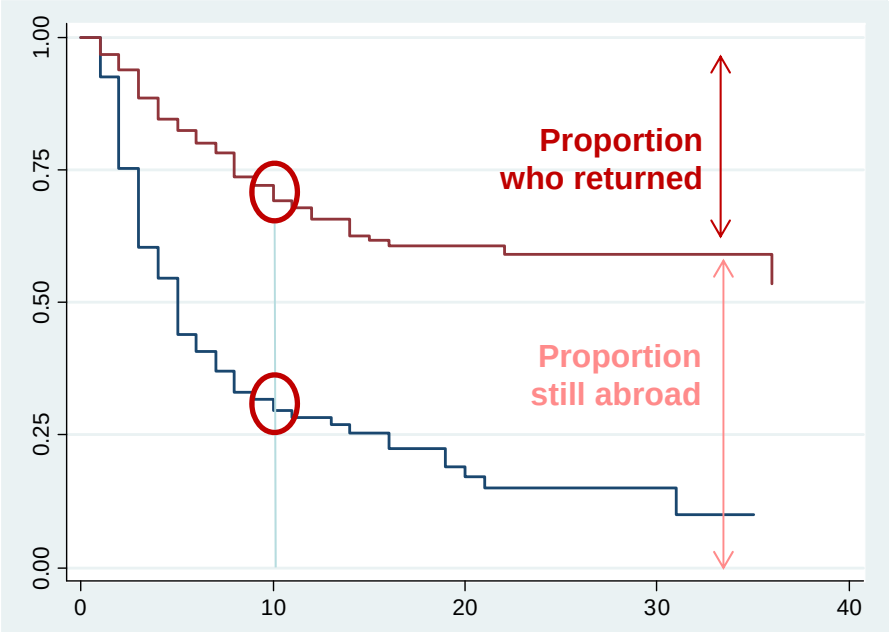
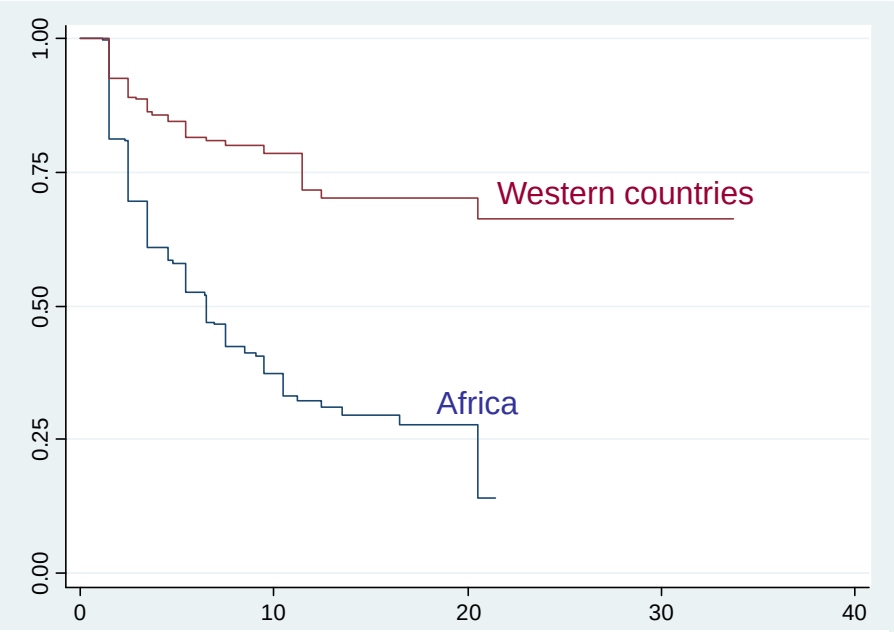
Return over time from Africa vs. Europe

Percentage of migrants still abroad since 1st departure



Number of years since 1st departure



Number of years since 1st departure

SENEGAL **DR CONGO**

After 10 years,
- 1/3 of all migrants have returned from Western countries
- Against 2/3 from Africa

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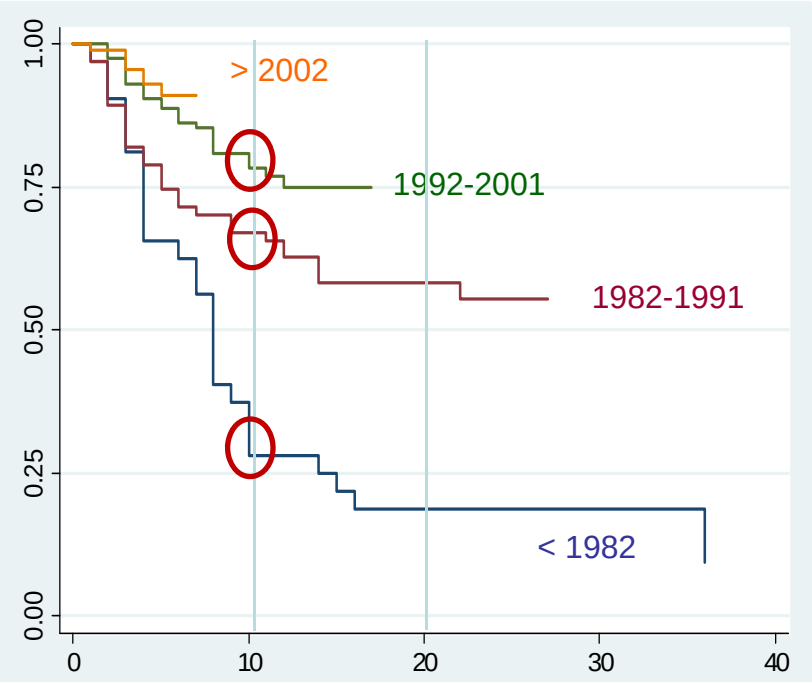
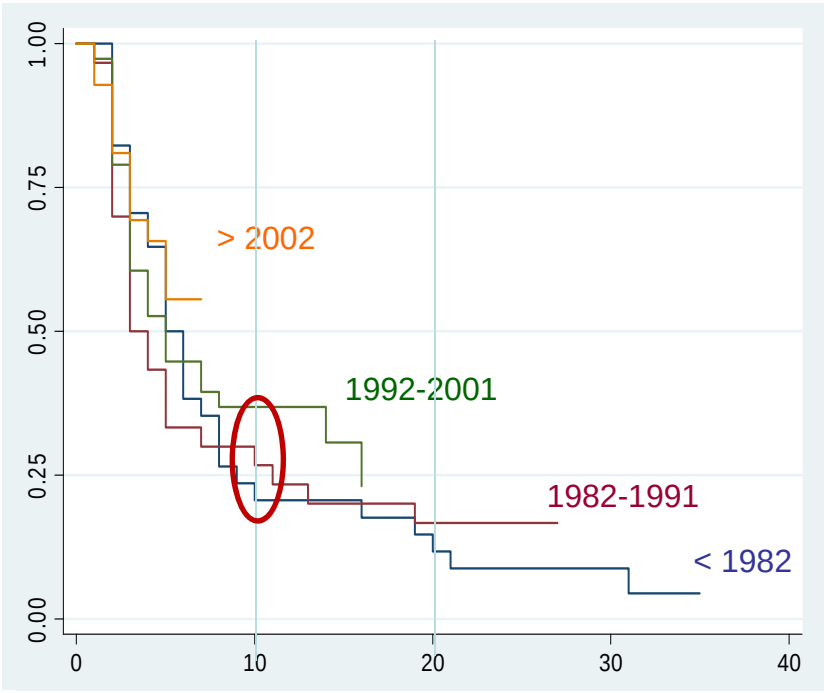
Return over time
Period effects - Senegal

Percentage of migrants still abroad since first departure



Number of years since 1st departure

From Western Countries



Number of years since 1st departure

From African Countries

Migrants return less and less from Western countries…
… while they keep returning from Africa.

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Who is more likely to return from Europe?

Methodo: Event history models to explain 1st return. All controls included

- Family
  - Left behind spouse and/or children
- Education
  - The more educated migrants (vs. those with less than tertiary level)
  - Migrants who moved to study (vs. those who moved for other reasons)
- More “integrated” immigrants
  - Wealthier migrants (vs. no suff’ ressources for basic needs)
  - Documented migrants (vs. irregular migrants)
- …

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Socio-economic trajectories of migrants

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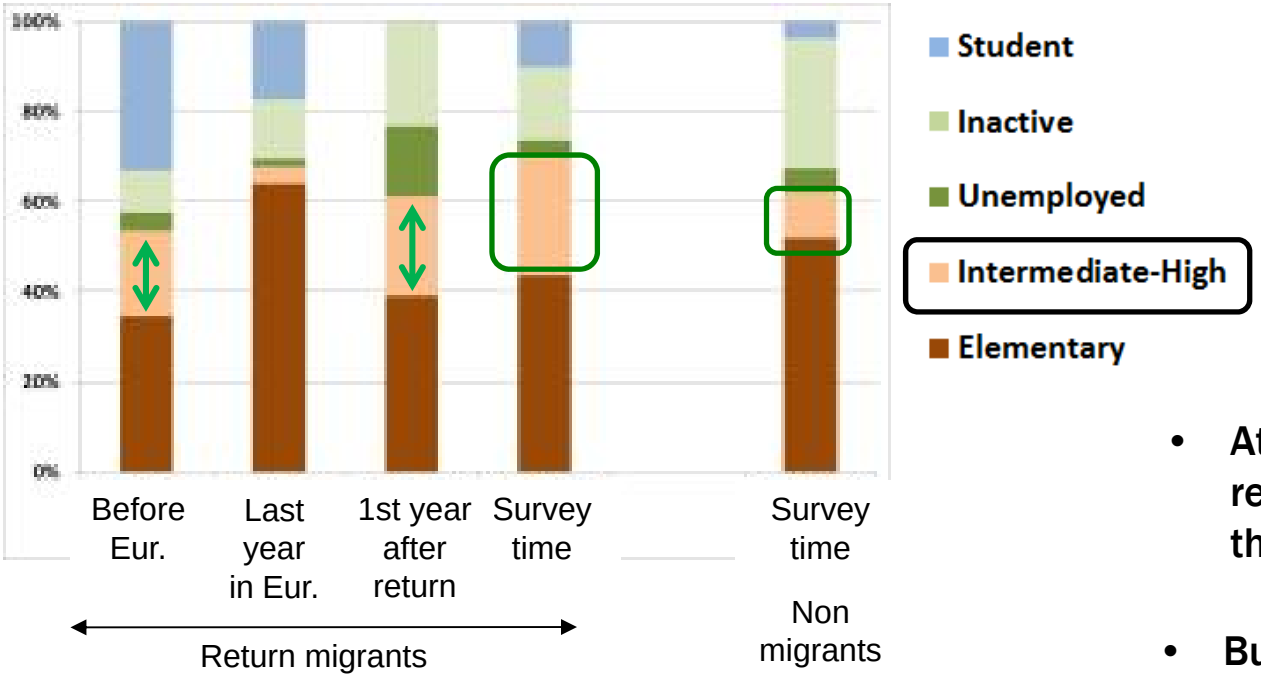
Returnees' Occupation Histories

Senegal



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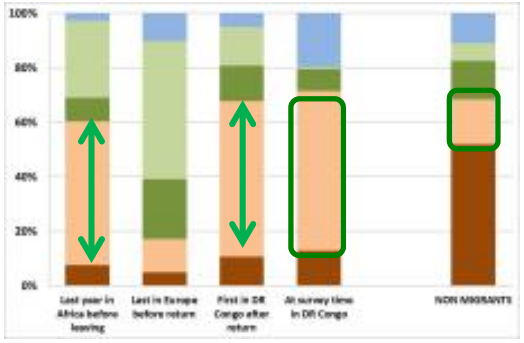
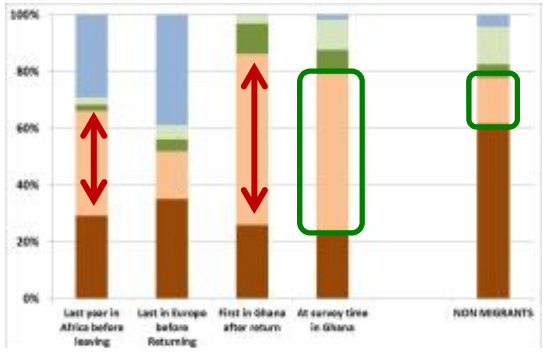


Ghana



- At the time of the survey, returnees have better outcomes than non-migrants…
- But not always as a result of migration:
- Senegal and Congo : BRAIN RE-GAIN rather BRAIN GAIN
- Ghana: profitable migration experience (for students)

Conclusions

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- To sum up
  - Migrants keep strong connections with their home country
  - Return migration is a very significant (spontaneous) phenomenon
  - The migration gain is uncertain (migrants' occupation trajectories)
  - Patterns vary country by country
- A need for evidence-based policies
  - Recognizing the existence and functionning of spontaneous return migration (rather than promoting return programmes)
  - Among other aspects of the migration process
- Ways forward:
  - Supporting a « Migration World Survey »
  - An old and feasable project
  - Already part of the recomendations for the HLD
  - How to make it real?

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Partners:

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See the **MAFE Policy Briefs** at:

www.mafeproject.com

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