Men, women and migration aspirations: a comparative analysis of sixteen areas of origin

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Abstract

This paper explores the determinants of migration aspirations with particular attention to gender. It does so on the basis of new survey data from sixteen areas of origin for migration to Europe: four areas each in Morocco, Senegal, Turkey and Ukraine (N = 16 x 500). These areas differ with respect to migration history, social conservativeness and migration aspirations. We find that no determinants affect migration aspirations consistently and significantly across the sixteen areas. The most consistent pattern is that being in a conjugal union or having children decreases migration aspirations. This is true for men and women alike. When we compare the sexes, we find that migrant networks and previous migration experience has stronger effects on migration aspirations among women than among men. Relative household wealth, by contrast, has a greater impact on men's migration aspirations. While the paper makes substantive contributions to the study of migration aspirations, it also aims to make methodological advances for comparative analyses of multi-sited survey data. The data is collected as part of the FP7 project *Imagining Europe from the outside (EUMAGINE)*.

Preface

This paper is among the first to be written on the basis of a new and complex dataset. The analysis is still work in progress, which we hope will benefit from discussions at the conference. Results should be regarded as preliminary, not for citation.

Introduction

The spread of international migration and interpersonal transnational networks has exposed growing numbers of people to the *idea* of moving to another country. In this paper we ask which factors make people see international migration as a desirable course of action. We use survey data on 8000 individuals of whom slightly more than half express international migration aspirations. In addition to addressing substantive explanations, we explore how to approach differences between the sexes and across geographical contexts. There are differences not only in the prevalence of migration aspirations, but also in which factors best explain individual outcomes.

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Migration aspirations have at times been dismissed as uninteresting because of the tenuous link with actual migration. There are two fundamental counterarguments to this concern. First, migration aspirations—even when they are unfulfilled—are a key aspect of migration dynamics. If a large proportion of the population wishes to migrate, it affects the nature of migration control mechanisms, the conditions under which individuals make migration decisions, and the nature of transnational connections with emigrant communities (Carling 2002, Carling 2008). Second, widespread migration aspirations affect the local economy and society. It can be detrimental if the most industrious individuals spend their lives waiting for an opportunity to leave rather than investing in local livelihoods. Alternatively, if hopes for migration fuel investment in education, for instance, unfulfilled migration aspirations could have positive effects.

The connections between migration aspirations and migratory outcomes merit more attention. The dataset we use offers opportunities in this respect, but those will be addressed in other publications. The present paper is inspired by a small but well-established literature on migration aspirations within demography, economics, geography and migration studies (e.g. Carling 2002, De Jong 2000, De Jong *et al.* 1996, De Jong *et al.* 1986, Fuller *et al.* 1986, Haug 2008, Hughes and Mccormick 1985, Lu 1999, Lu *et al.* 2009, McHugh 1984, Papapanagos and Sanfey 2001, Simmons 1985, van Dalen *et al.* 2005, van Dalen and Henkens 2008, Von Reichert 2006, Yang 2000).

The gendered aspects of migration have long been recognized, but calls for greater attention to the gender dimension persist. Gender as a relational and dynamic dimension appears to figure much more prominently in qualitative research than in quantitative research. Within the qualitative literature, however, 'gender' is often used as a label for studies that are only about women. There are, of course, exceptions to these general observations: several quantitative studies have placed gender relations centre-stage in the analysis of migration intentions and outcomes (e.g.Croes and Hooimeijer 2010, Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003, De Jong 2000). The principal limitation of these studies is that they address one specific case. Gender relations differ tremendously between countries, communities and social groups. Comparative analyses across such differences can therefore yield new insights.

The data and analysis presented in this paper is part of the FP7 project *Imagining Europe from the outside (EUMAGINE)*.[1] The project seeks to understand how people in the vicinity of Europe perceive various aspects of life in Europe and in their own countries, and how these perceptions may or may not translate into migration aspirations. Perceptions of conditions that relate to human rights and democracy are given particular attention in the project overall. The focus of the present paper is a different one, however.

Data collection was conducted in sixteen research areas, four areas each in Morocco, Senegal, Turkey and Ukraine (Figure 1). Responsibility for each country was shared between a local partner and a European partner in the consortium. The research areas were selected on the basis of pre-existing knowledge about migration and socio-economic conditions, with a view to ensure a diversity of contexts. The research areas are num-

[1] The project is coordinated by the University of Antwerp (BE), under the leadership of Professor Christiane Timmerman. The other partners are the University of Oxford (UK), the Peace Research Institute Oslo (NO), Koç University (TR), Université Mohamed V – Agdal (MA), Centre of Sociological Research (UA) and Université Cheikh Anta Diop (SN). See *www.eumagine.org*.

bered 1–4 within each country preceded with by the first letter of the country's name, e.g. T1 for the first research area in Turkey.

We use data from the quantitative component of the project, data that we refer to as the *EUMAGINE Survey*.[2] This survey was conducted through personal interviews. The detailed questionnaire was developed over a ten-month period, including extensive pilot testing in each research area. Questions covered household socio-economic characteristics migration histories, individual migration aspirations and migration preparations, transnational practices, perceptions about Europe, perceptions about one's own country, life satisfaction and other individual background variables.

Households were selected randomly within each research area, based on procedures that reflected local characteristics and data availability. After all household members were enlisted with the help of the first respondent, a household member aged 18–39 was randomly selected for an individual interview. The data collection procedures are described in detail by Ersanilli, Carling and de Haas (2011).

Mapping sixteen migration contexts

The sixteen areas differ tremendously. For instance, average household size ranges from 3.2 in Solomyansky (U3) to 18.8 in Orkadiére (S4). Observable differences can also be modified by differences in perceptions. The extremes in assessment of health care services, for instance, are found in Morocco's Central Plateau (M2), and Turkey's Dinar (D2), where 3 per cent and 62 per cent, respectively, rate services as good or very good. Standard indicators of health services, by contrast, would have suggested that the extremes would be found in Senegal and Ukraine.

Figure 1. Location of the research areas.

[2] Minor corrections have been applied incrementally after general data cleaning was completed. All the data and analysis presented in this paper makes use of the dataset as of 24 October 2012.

Since we are concerned with determinants of migration aspirations, understanding differences in migration history and dynamics between the research areas is particularly important. The remainder of this section will provide a brief comparative overview.

We are constrained, of course, by only having interviewed current residents. This means that if entire families have left *en masse* and have limited contacts with people who remain behind, it will not show in the survey data. This would be a problem had we been interested in the actual migration history of each area. What matters to us, however, is the extent to which current residents are making decisions within a tradition of migration.

For a summary description of migration context, we use information about current migrants who belong to one of the following two categories: 1) adult family members or relatives living abroad, with whom the respondent has been in contact at least once during the past twelve months; 2) other adults who live abroad, whose help the respondent could count on if it was needed. Together, these persons make up the respondent's transnational network, and allow us to calculate two measures for each research area.

Our first summary measure is simply the proportion of respondents who have a transnational network as defined above. This number ranges from 6 per cent in Van Merkez (T4) to 79 per cent in Emirdağ (T1). The second summary measure is based on information about each migrant's (first) year of emigration. For each research area we record the *lower quartile* of the distribution of migration years, i.e. the year by which one quarter of current emigrants had emigrated. This year ranges from 1980 in Fatih (T3) and Novovodolaz'ka (U4), to 2000 in Zbarazh (U1) and Golf Sud (S3). The departure years should be interpreted with care, as an approximate indication.[3]

The two indicators can be thought of as representing the *prevalence* and *maturity* of each research area's transnational connections. They are plotted against each other in Figure 2, which reveals a diversity of migration contexts. Perhaps the most striking impression from this figure is the generally high prevalence of transnational networks. Having someone abroad is rare in only two areas: Van Merkez (T4) and Tounfite (M4). The durability of networks is also remarkable. In many areas, a quarter of the migrants who remain connected have been abroad for twenty years or more. Finally, it is worth noting how much variation there is within each country. For more than half the research areas, the area that is most similar with respect to the prevalence and maturity of transnational networks is located in another country.

Dependent variable

We measure our dependent variable, migration aspirations, by means of answers to the following survey question: *Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in [this country]?* The wording deliberately avoids terms like 'migration' or 'emigration' which would have culturally specific connotations. The time frame of five years is intended to be long enough to make migration aspirations independent of immediate constrains such as a pregnancy and short enough to make the question specific.

[3] Migration history information is often imprecise (Carling 2012). There is considerable heaping in our data, with a Whipple's index of 154 (applied to calendar years divisible by 5). Heaping in itself has minimal consequences here, but heaping at this level suggests that there may also be shifting.

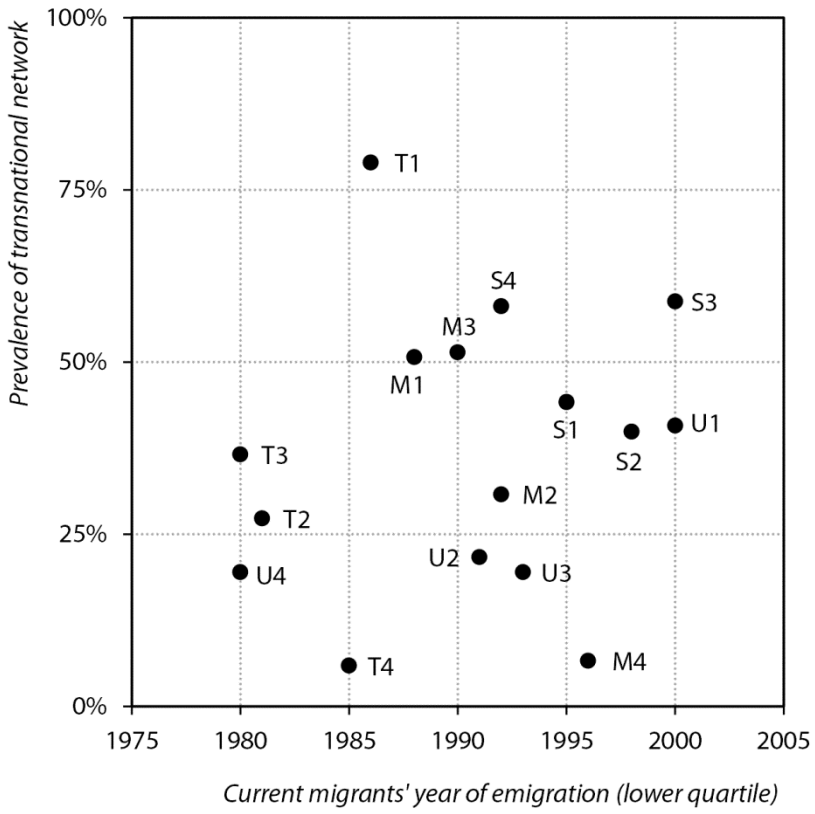

Figure 2. Summary indicators of the research areas' migration history.

Source: EUMAGINE Survey. Database version: 20121024. Prevalence of transnational networks refers to the proportion of respondents who have either a migrant relative with whom they have been in contact over the past twelve months or a non-relative migrant whose help they could count on if they needed it. Weighted. Current migrants' year of emigration is based on information about the same two categories of people. Unweighted.

Migration aspirations, measured in this way, are prevalent. Estimates by research area and sex are displayed in Table 1. For both sexes combined, the prevalence ranges from 39 to 82 per cent. The lowest sex-specific figure (25 per cent) is found among women in Van Merkez (T4) and the highest (90 per cent) among men in Orkadiére (S4).

Figure 3 displays sex-specific migration aspirations for all the research areas. The prevalence is higher among men than among women in all the areas, but the difference is often slight, especially in the Senegalese and Ukrainian research areas. Only in Van Merkez (T4) are women less than half as likely as men to have migration aspirations. The figure also shows that migration aspirations overall are very high in the Senegalese areas, modest in the Turkish and Ukrainian areas, and the most diverse among the Moroccan areas.

Independent variables

In order to allow for comparisons across small samples, we use a parsimonious model with variables that can be assumed to be important determinants of migration aspirations. These are found in four areas: (1) gender, age and family situation (2) migration network and experience, (3) relative household wealth and (4) education and employment. We will present each in turn. Descriptive statistics for all the independent variables are presented in Table 1.

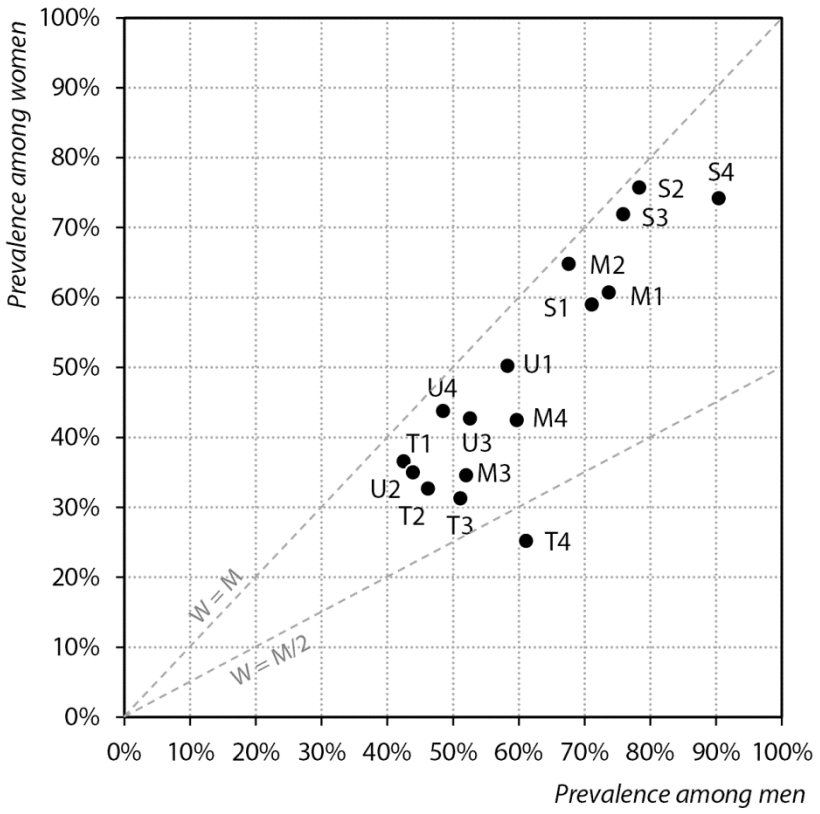

Figure 3. Migration aspirations by research area and sex

Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied. Aspirations are measured by means of answers to the following survey question: Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in [this country]? In the annotation on the dashed guidelines, M and W represent prevalence among men and women, respectively.

Gender, age and family situation

The standard approach to measuring the effect of demographic characteristics would be to have a dummy variable for sex, continuous first- and second-order variables for age, and perhaps dummy variables such as 'has children' or 'is married' to capture family circumstances. We experiment here with a different approach.

The data covers a relatively short age span of young adulthood (18–39) in which age is closely associated with family formation stages. The isolated effects of age, marriage and parenthood are of lesser substantive interest than differences between socially meaningful situations that are characterized by typical *combinations* of such variables. These situations are strongly gendered, in the sense that being unmarried and childless in mid-adulthood, for instance, is a fundamentally different circumstance for men and women. We are interested in how migration aspirations differ between individuals in different situations, rather than in abstractions such as the isolated effect of marriage across ages and the two sexes.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics, per cent

	M1	M2	M3	M4	T1	T2	T3	T4
	Todgha Valley	*Central Plateau*	*Tanger*	*Tounfite*	*Emirdağ*	*Dinar*	*Fatih*	*Van Merkez*
Has migration aspirations	68	66	47	52	40	41	39	39
Among men	74	68	52	60	43	46	51	61
Among women	61	65	35	42	37	33	31	25
Family category, men								
Single childless (18–24)	19	21	29	21	18	16	15	14
Single childless (25–39)	20	12	27	14	10	8	13	6
In union and/or parent	16	20	16	20	26	37	13	19
Family category, women								
Single childless (18–24)	13	14	11	17	10	5	13	16
Single childless (25–39)	19	11	7	6	5	3	8	5
In union and/or parent	13	22	10	22	31	32	39	40
Has transnational network	51	31	51	7	79	27	37	6
Has return migrant relatives	9	4	9	1	9	9	16	1
Is return migrant	1	0	3	0	3	4	3	0
Years of education (mean)	8.4	6.1	8.0	3.8	9.6	10.1	11.2	7.4
Employment status								
Employed outside agriculture	44	20	59	25	30	35	31	21
Employed in agriculture	2	26	0	22	13	19	0	3
In education	13	11	11	8	12	9	21	8
Unemployed [R]	16	12	17	12	9	7	12	19
Not economically active	25	31	12	32	36	30	35	48
	S1	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**U1**	**U2**	**U3**	**U4**
	Darou Mousty	*Lam-baye*	*Golf Sud*	*Orka-diére*	*Zbarazh*	*Znamy-anska*	*Solomy-ansky*	*Novovo-dolaz'ka*
Has migration aspirations	64	76	74	82	53	39	47	46
Among men	71	78	76	90	58	44	53	49
Among women	59	76	72	74	50	35	43	44
Family category, men								
Single childless (18–24)	13	10	15	15	13	8	9	9
Single childless (25–39)	6	8	19	8	8	9	9	8
In union and/or parent	24	11	9	23	19	24	22	23
Family category, women								
Single childless (18–24)	9	12	17	5	12	3	9	10
Single childless (25–39)	3	6	13	4	1	3	8	4
In union and/or parent	45	54	26	44	46	54	43	47
Has transnational network	44	40	59	58	41	22	19	20
Has return migrant relatives	13	8	15	22	10	0	4	1
Is return migrant	4	3	3	9	7	4	6	4
Years of education (mean)	1.5	1.6	9.8	1.5	13.3	12.5	13.8	12.6
Employment status								
Employed outside agriculture	25	23	39	12	44	56	69	59
Employed in agriculture	21	2	0	17	1	3	0	3
In education	13	10	34	9	16	5	11	9
Unemployed [R]	2	3	7	12	18	12	5	9
Not economically active	39	62	21	50	21	25	15	20

Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied.

Table 2. Family situation, by gender

		Men					Women				
		Single, without children (18-24)	*Single, without children (25-39)*	*In union, without children*	*In union, with child(ren)*	*Single parent*	*Single, without children (18-24)*	*Single, without children (25-39)*	*In union, without children*	*In union, with child(ren)*	*Single parent*
M1	Todgha Valley	34	37	9	20	0	30	41	10	18	2
M2	Central Plateau	40	23	8	29	1	30	23	10	32	5
M3	Tanger	40	38	9	13	0	40	24	6	29	1
M4	Tounfite	38	25	16	20	1	37	13	12	34	3
T1	Emirdağ	34	18	10	37	1	22	10	5	61	2
T2	Dinar	26	13	7	54	0	12	7	13	67	2
T3	Fatih	37	32	9	22	0	22	13	8	55	2
T4	Van Merkez	36	16	8	39	0	26	9	8	56	1
S1	Darou Mousty	30	15	13	42	0	16	5	15	61	3
S2	Lambaye	35	28	14	22	2	17	8	10	62	3
S3	Golf Sud	35	44	6	15	1	30	24	9	33	4
S4	Orkadiére	33	17	13	33	3	10	7	17	61	4
U1	Zbarazh	32	20	10	37	0	21	2	9	62	6
U2	Znamyanska	19	22	8	50	1	6	4	7	68	14
U3	Solomyansky	23	22	17	37	1	15	13	16	48	8
U4	Novovodolaz'ka	22	20	15	43	1	16	6	13	57	8

Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied. Unions include monogamous and polygamous marriage, and co-habitation. Parenthood is only counted when children are living in the respondent's household.

Identifying the relevant family situations is partly an empirical issue. Table 2 shows five family situations for each research area and sex. We make initial distinction between being in a conjugal union or not, and between having children or not.[4] With a few exceptions, single parents represent a very small group. In all the research areas, most of the people who are in a conjugal union also have children. The age distribution of the groups (not shown) indicates that forming a union and having children are sequential steps in family formation.

The single and childless make up a large group in most of the research areas. Although the relative size of this group declines with age, it is the only group that is substantial across the age span. However, we may expect that the social significance of being single and childless differs with age. While the younger members of this group have simply 'not yet' started a family, older members are more likely to be seen as deviating from the typical family formation pattern. The consequences for migration aspirations might be substantially different, and it seems pertinent to differentiate by age. The most relevant cut-off point between the 'younger' and 'older' single and childless obviously differs, but age 25 is a reasonable compromise across this diversity.

In order to form a categorical variable without too many values for analysis at the re-

[4] Conjugal unions include monogamous and polygamous marriage, and cohabitation. Parenthood is only counted when children are living in the respondent's household.

search-area level, there are both pragmatic and principled reasons for collapsing the groups of people who are in a union and/or have children. The single parents are simply too few to keep as a separate category. Considering the probable effects of family commitments on migration aspirations, it seems more appropriate to merge this group with the parents who are in a union, than with the single and childless. Respondents who are in a union but do not have children will often be recently married and expect to have children within the five-year period that the migration aspirations question refers to. These arguments lead to a six-way division of the sample, as displayed in Table 1.

Migration network and experience

We include three dummy variables that capture different aspects of the possible positive feedback loops of migration (cf de Haas 2010). The first is whether or not the respondent has a current transnational network. We use the definition that was accounted for on page 4, encompassing family members and other adult migrants that maintain a connection with the respondent. Having a transnational network could affect migration aspirations through two separate mechanisms: the *bridgehead effect* potentially lowers the transaction and adaptation costs of migrating to the destination where contacts are located. The *demonstration effect* makes respondents aware of the possibility and potential benefits of migration. This effect could also be negative if migration is perceived as unsuccessful.

The second variable is whether or not the respondent has relatives (within or beyond the household) who have lived abroad for three months or more and now reside in the survey country. Having return-migrant relatives could affect migration aspirations through the demonstration effect. Finally, we include a dummy variable indicating whether or not the respondent is a return migrant, in the sense of having lived abroad for a period of three months of more since the age of six.

Relative household wealth

Household wealth is measured by means of an asset index, as is common in household surveys in low- and middle-income countries. The underlying data is a series of dummy variables recording availability of the following household assets and utilities: electricity, flush toilet, running hot water, shower, radio, television, satellite dish and receiver, video or DVD player, telephone (landline or mobile), computer, internet connection, refrigerator, gas or electric stove, dishwasher, washing machine, bicycle, moped or motorcycle, and car, truck or van. Principal components analysis was used to construct a single wealth index from these variables. The underlying assumption of this method is that there is a latent (unobservable) household wealth variable that manifests itself through ownership of the different assets.

Figure 4 provides a summary comparison of wealth and inequality across the sixteen research areas. Inequality is measured here simply as the standard deviation of the household wealth index.[5] The Senegalese research areas are the poorest while the wealthiest are found in Ukraine and Turkey. In all four countries, the most urbanized research area is the wealthiest. Not surprisingly, inequality follows an inverted U-curve pattern with respect to average wealth. This pattern holds true also if the outlier M2 is removed.

[5] This is a rough measure, calculated without the application of weights for sampling probability or design.

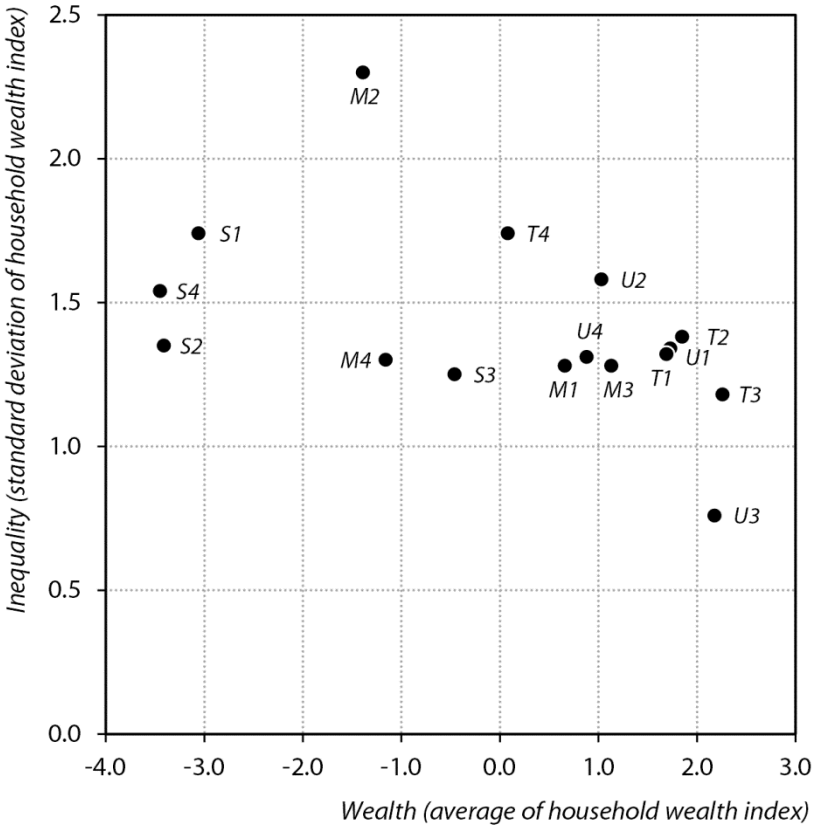

Figure 4. Comparison of wealth and inequality across the research areas.

The values of the household wealth index were subsequently recoded to deciles *within* each research area. This recoding produces a measure of relative household wealth with a scale that has the same length in all research areas. In the regression models, we measure the effect of increasing household wealth to the next decile. This approach yields a comparable scale. The substantive meaning of this determinant should be interpreted with reference to Figure 4.

Education and employment

We measure educational attainment as years of completed education. This is a context-independent measure that was possible to apply across the four countries. As shown in Table 1, average educational levels vary greatly, from less than 2 years to more than 13 years.

The data includes information about respondents' *principal activity*, which could include employment. A detailed classification of occupations was used, but this is a notoriously difficult element in cross-cultural survey research. In particular, seniority and skill gradients are hard to capture in a consistent way. We have consequently used a crude but relatively reliable classification with five categories: (1) employed outside agriculture, (2) employed in agriculture, (3) in education, (4) unemployed, and (5) not economically active. Unemployment is here a self-reported status that may differ from official definitions.

Analytical strategy

Accommodating diversity

The multi-sited nature of the project creates an overarching analytical challenge: how do we properly accommodate the diversity between research areas? With sixteen research areas spread across four countries, three strategies are immediately apparent:

1. Pooling the data into one model (N=8000) that includes a 16-value categorical control variable for research area.
2. Running sixteen parallel models, one for each research areas (N=500).
3. Pooling the data into four country-specific models (N=2000) that include a four-value categorical control variable for research area.

The first option raises questions of an ontological nature: do we believe in the existence of general 'laws of migration' across socio-cultural contexts? If so, we could see local variation as noise that can be eliminated by control variables in order to isolate the universal effect of key determinants. If this approach is chosen, it should be with caution. The large sample yields a seductive array of significant effects, even if the coefficients are relatively small. It may be necessary to examine how *widespread* the observed effects are—which could take us in the direction of the second and third analytical strategy.

Another challenge with a pooled analysis is how to conceptualize the generalizations that are made. The EUMAGINE project covers four countries in what can be called Europe's 'labour frontier' (Skeldon 1997). All are located in the vicinity of Europe and have experienced substantial migration to Europe. In all four cases, migration is primarily motivated by livelihood opportunities. It may be that if a pooled analysis is adopted, the European labour frontier is an appropriate level of generalization.

The second option represents the other extreme: keeping the data separate for each research area and running sixteen parallel models. This approach is true to the nature of the sample: respondents were selected randomly within each research area, and the research areas do not add up to any meaningful larger populations. With samples of 500 per research area, separate analyses are feasible, but will suffer from large confidence intervals.

The third option is an in-between solution based on the assumption that the largest differences are found between the four countries. A possible golden mean, then, is to run four country-specific models with the four research areas as controls. The risk with this approach is that we fall victims to methodological nationalism: an unfounded belief in the nation-state as a natural unit of analysis (Wimmer and Schiller 2003). There is also a pedagogical challenge inherent in this approach: the effects observed in, say, the four Turkish research areas must not be interpreted as 'the effect in Turkey'. While the four research areas were selected with a view to *diversity*, their national *representativity* as a set was not a criterion.

In the analysis that follows we start with the second approach and run sixteen parallel models. This analysis shows substantial differences between research areas within the same country.In order to differentiate between effects among men and women, however, the samples within each research area are too small. We therefore proceed with an anal-

ysis that pools the data for each country, but separates between the sexes. This allows for comparing effects between eight sub-populations. In the final section of the analysis we pool the data from all four countries but separate between men and women.

Allowing for comparisons

Until recently, the standard approach to estimating determinants of a binary outcome has been logistic regression. However, in a widely cited article in *European Sociological Review*, Carina Mood (2010) shows that unobserved heterogeneity causes particular problems in logistic regression analysis, regardless of whether omitted variables are correlated to the observed independent variables or not. One of the 'important but overlooked consequences' of this problem is that log-odds ratios or odds ratios can produce misleading conclusions when we compare effects across samples of across groups within a sample. That is exactly what we do in this paper. Among the solutions Mood suggests, the applicable one in our case is to use a linear probability model (LPM), i.e. linear regression with a binary dependent variable. If we are only interested in the direction, average strength, and significance of an effect, 'and not in the non-linearity of the relation per se', Mood (2010:78) writes, 'a LPM is entirely appropriate'. We follow this recommendation in estimating the effect of determinants of migration aspirations and comparing across sub-samples.

Results and discussion

Comparisons across research areas

The estimated effects for each research area are presented in three tables. Table 3 displays the full model with estimated coefficients for each research area. The variable *gender and family situation* is displayed as comparisons with the reference category *male, single childless (18–24)*. To facilitate interpretation, Table 4 redisplays this variable with the corresponding female group as the reference category. Table 5 provides a summary of significant effects across the sixteen research areas.

The overall picture can be summed up in three points. First, although there are many significant effects, none are consistent and significant across all sixteen research areas at the 95 per cent level.[6] Second, significant effects are not systematically clustered by country. In fact, no effect is significant in every research area within one country. Third, there is only one instance of significant effects in opposite directions for different research areas: the effect of being a return migrant is significant and positive in five research areas but significant and negative in Orkadiére (S4).[7]

Turning to individual results, the most consistent pattern is that people who are in a conjugal union and/or are parents are less likely to have migration aspirations than people who are young single and childless. This difference is significant in half the research areas for both men and women. Differences between the sexes within each family situation are not so pronounced. If sex and family situation are treated as separate variables, the difference between men and women is significant in only four research areas (not shown).

[6] All the subsequent references to significance use this threshold.
[7] This is an area in which 90 per cent of international migrants went to other African countries, not to Europe. Consequently, the meaning of return migration is different from in many other research areas.

Table 3. Estimated LPM coefficients of determinates of migration aspirations, by research area

	M1	M2	M3	M4	T1	T2	T3	T4
	Todgha Valley	*Central Plateau*	*Tanger*	*Tounfite*	*Emirdağ*	*Dinar*	*Fatih*	*Van Merkez*
Gender and family situation								
Male, single childless (18–24)^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Male, single childless (25–39)	−0.10	0.02	0.02	−0.03	−0.16	−0.06	0.10	0.14*
Male, in union and/or parent	−0.28***	−0.08	−0.22*	−0.23**	−0.22*	−0.16*	−0.21	−0.09
Female, single childless (18–24)	−0.16	−0.05	−0.17	0.07	−0.17	0.01	−0.09	−0.36***
Female, single childless (25–39)	−0.09	0.02	−0.23*	−0.11	−0.22	−0.14	−0.14	−0.48***
Female, in union and/or parent	−0.41***	−0.19	−0.47**	−0.38**	−0.20	−0.13	−0.22	−0.35***
Has transnational network	0.04	0.08	0.11*	0.17	0.07	0.12*	−0.03	0.20
Has return migrant relatives	0.01	−0.14	−0.00	0.35**	−0.02	0.27**	0.02	−0.04
Is return migrant	−0.19	0.34**	0.02	0.08	−0.19	0.22*	−0.08	
Relative household wealth	−0.01	−0.04***	−0.02*	−0.03**	−0.03***	−0.03***	−0.00	−0.01
Years of education	−0.01	0.00	−0.00	0.01	−0.01	−0.00	0.01	0.02**
Employment status								
Employed outside agriculture^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Employed in agriculture	−0.12	0.12	..	0.03	0.10	−0.07	..	−0.22
In education	−0.03	0.12	0.15	−0.23	−0.07	0.04	0.12	0.11
Unemployed	−0.07	0.24**	0.05	−0.08	−0.02	−0.03	−0.10	0.20*
Not economically active	−0.10	0.20*	0.18	−0.07	−0.01	−0.15	−0.03	0.09
Constant	1.01	0.78	0.63	0.80	0.73	0.69	0.45	0.47
N	500	500	500	499	500	500	497	500
R^2	0.100	0.104	0.102	0.158	0.065	0.114	0.124	0.208

	S1	S2	S3	S4	U1	U2	U3	U4
	Darou Mousty	*Lam-baye*	*Golf Sud*	*Orka-diére*	*Zbarazh*	*Znamy-anska*	*Solomy-ansky*	*Novovo-dolaz'ka*
Gender and family situation								
Male, single childless (18–24)^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Male, single childless (25–39)	0.01	−0.11	−0.09	0.02	−0.16	−0.07	−0.09	0.09
Male, in union and/or parent	−0.24*	−0.27**	−0.09	−0.06	−0.22*	−0.00	−0.17	−0.14
Female, single childless (18–24)	0.02	−0.02	−0.05	−0.01	−0.05	−0.10	−0.07	0.03
Female, single childless (25–39)	0.08	0.06	−0.12	0.01	−0.10	0.11	−0.16	0.11
Female, in union and/or parent	−0.27**	−0.15	−0.25*	−0.19*	−0.23*	−0.08	−0.30**	−0.12
Has transnational network	0.11**	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.10*	0.16**	0.15**	0.06
Has return migrant relatives	0.09	0.15**	−0.02	0.07	0.22**	0.49*	0.14	0.01
Is return migrant	−0.05	0.11	0.09	−0.13*	0.31**	0.39***	0.13	0.39***
Relative household wealth	−0.03***	−0.00	0.00	−0.00	−0.00	−0.01	0.00	0.01
Years of education	−0.00	0.01	−0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Employment status								
Employed outside agriculture^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Employed in agriculture	−0.01	−0.02	..	−0.01	0.18	−0.05	..	0.01
In education	0.07	0.01	0.17*	−0.05	0.08	0.10	−0.02	−0.00
Unemployed	0.08	0.17	0.21*	−0.01	0.09	−0.03	0.07	0.16
Not economically active	−0.03	−0.05	0.19	−0.07	−0.01	−0.11	0.15*	0.01
Constant	0.95	0.87	0.76	0.94	0.48	0.27	0.45	0.30
N	498	499	500	500	496	500	500	498
R^2	0.107	0.083	0.068	0.096	0.093	0.087	0.066	0.075

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, ^{R} Reference category, .. No or insufficient number of observations. Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied.

Table 4. Estimated LPM coefficients of gender and family situation on migration aspirations, female reference category, by research area

	M1	M2	M3	M4	T1	T2	T3	T4
	Todgha Valley	*Central Plateau*	*Tanger*	*Tounfite*	*Emirdağ*	*Dinar*	*Fatih*	*Van Merkez*
Gender and family situation								
Male, single childless (18–24)	0.16	0.05	0.17	–0.07	0.17	–0.01	0.09	0.36***
Male, single childless (25–39)	0.07	0.06	0.20*	–0.10	0.01	–0.06	0.19	0.50***
Male, in union and/or parent	–0.11	–0.03	–0.04	–0.30**	–0.05	–0.17	–0.12	0.26*
Female, single childless (18–24) [R]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female, single childless (25–39)	0.07	0.06	–0.06	–0.18	–0.05	–0.14	–0.04	–0.13
Female, in union and/or parent	–0.24*	–0.14	–0.30**	–0.45***	–0.03	–0.14	–0.12	0.00
	S1	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**U1**	**U2**	**U3**	**U4**
	Darou Mousty	*Lam-baye*	*Golf Sud*	*Orka-diére*	*Zbarazh*	*Znamy-anska*	*Solomy-ansky*	*Novovo-dolaz'ka*
Gender and family situation								
Male, single childless (18–24)	–0.02	0.02	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.10	0.07	–0.03
Male, single childless (25–39)	–0.01	–0.09	–0.03	0.03	–0.11	0.03	–0.02	0.07
Male, in union and/or parent	–0.26*	–0.24*	–0.04	–0.05	–0.17	0.10	–0.10	–0.16
Female, single childless (18–24) [R]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female, single childless (25–39)	0.05	0.08	–0.07	0.02	–0.05	0.21	–0.09	0.08
Female, in union and/or parent	–0.29***	–0.13*	–0.20*	–0.18**	–0.18	0.02	–0.23*	–0.15

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, [R] Reference category, .. No or insufficient number of observations. Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied. The model is the same as in Table 3; only the choice of reference category is different. Other variables are not shown.

The effects of transnational networks, return migrant family members and relative household wealth are all as expected in about a third of the research areas and insignificant elsewhere. Education and employment situation have limited effects.

How reliable are these comparisons across research areas? Comparability is strengthened by the identical sample size and the project-wide efforts to ensure consistent methodology.[8] Translations could potentially affect comparability for variables that are based on questions where nuances in wording are important. However, the model presented in Table 3 includes primarily factual independent variables with limited room for interpretation. The dependent variable is an exception, though. Migration aspirations are potentially unstable characteristics that are difficult to model. This is not primarily a question of comparability across research areas, but a reminder of the coarse nature of the entire exercise.

Comparisons between research areas should use significance thresholds with caution. First, the variations in settlement patterns and internal heterogeneity resulted in different sampling procedures and hence differences in standard errors that are unrelated to the characteristics of the population. Second, a significance threshold of 95 per cent means that every twentieth significant effect is a misleading result. When we compare a large number of coefficients such outcomes are not unlikely. Many of the estimated results are significant at higher levels, though.

[8] The gross sample is the same everywhere (500) and reductions due to missing values are minimal with the models used here.

Table 5. Summary of estimated effects on migration aspirations, by research area

	Number of research areas[1] with significant[2] effects	
	Negative	*Positive*
Gender and family situation compared to *male, single childless (18–24)*		
Male, single childless (25–39)	–	1
Male, in union and/or parent	8	–
Female, single childless (18–24)	1	–
Female, single childless (25–39)	2	–
Female, in union and/or parent	9	–
Gender and family situation compared to *female, single childless (18–24)*		
Male, single childless (18–24) [R]	–	1
Male, single childless (25–39)	–	2
Male, in union and/or parent	3	1
Female, single childless (25–39)	–	–
Female, in union and/or parent	8	–
Has transnational network	–	6
Has return migrant relatives	–	5
Is return migrant	1	5
Relative household wealth	6	–
Years of education	–	1
Employment status, compared to *employed outside agriculture*		
Employed in agriculture	–	–
In education	–	1
Unemployed	–	3
Not economically active	–	2

Based on Table 3 and Table 4. *Note:* [1] Sixteen in total. [2] $p<0.05$

Another general point about interpretation of regression results is worth stressing. The absence of a significant effect can mean two very different things: (1) uncertainty to the extent than no conclusion should be drawn or (2) reasonable confidence that the effect is close to zero. The latter can be an interesting result.

Comparisons across countries and the sexes

By pooling data for the four research areas in each country, we obtain samples that are large enough for running separate models for men and women. We use the more detailed classification of family situation (as in Table 2), and include a control variable distinguishing between the four research areas in each country. The other components of the model are unchanged. Results are presented in Table 6.

Before discussing the effects of family situation more in-depth, we briefly review the other determinants. As in the comparison of research areas, we find that the effects of having a transnational network or return migrant relatives are either as expected or not significant. Being a return migration significantly increases the likelihood of having migration aspirations in Ukraine, for both men and women. Coefficients elsewhere are generally much smaller and never significant. This finding is consistent with the pattern

of serial migration that is more common in Ukraine than in the other countries. Relative household wealth depresses migration aspirations almost everywhere, but the effect is only significant among men in Morocco and Turkey.

The analysis confirms that family situation has a consistent impact on migration aspirations. Results for this variable are displayed graphically, with confidence intervals, in Figure 5. As reflected in the table and figure, the two age groups of single and childless respondents are never significantly different from each other.[9] Comparisons with people who are in a conjugal union, however, show a clear gradient: migration aspirations are less likely among people who are childless but in a union, and the least likely among people who are in a union and have children. The contrast with the latter category is significant in seven out of eight cases. The effect of having children, once in a union, is always in the expected direction, but significant only among Senegalese women. Single parenthood is rare in most instances, and never significantly different form other family situations. (The effect of single parenthood is now shown in the figure.)

Table 6. Estimated LPM coefficients of determinates of migration aspirations, by country and sex

	Moroccan research areas		Turkish research areas		Senegalese research areas		Ukrainian research areas	
	Men	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
Family situation								
Single childless (18–24)^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Single childless (25–39)	−0.03	−0.03	0.01	−0.09	−0.07	0.02	−0.08	0.03
In union, childless	−0.14*	−0.27**	−0.12	0.01	−0.12	−0.08	−0.14*	−0.10
In union, with child(ren)	−0.24***	−0.31***	−0.14**	−0.09	−0.20***	−0.18***	−0.16**	−0.16*
Single parent	..	−0.08	..	0.12	−0.10	−0.14	−0.00	−0.08
Has transnational network	0.08*	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.02	0.07	0.05	0.15***
Has return migrant relatives	−0.03	0.09	0.12*	0.05	0.01	0.11***	0.26***	0.13
Is return migrant	−0.02	0.21	0.01	0.01	−0.09	0.04	0.33***	0.24**
Relative household wealth	−0.03***	−0.01	−0.02***	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	0.00	−0.00
Years of education	−0.00	−0.00	0.00	0.01	−0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01
Employment status								
Employed outside agriculture^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Employed in agriculture	0.05	0.32*	0.01	−0.11	−0.03	0.32***	0.06	0.04
In education	0.03	0.07	0.14*	0.03	0.03	0.17***	0.03	0.05
Unemployed	0.04	0.16*	0.05	0.02	0.06	0.17*	0.10	0.02
Not economically active	0.22**	0.13	−0.16	−0.01	−0.13	0.14*	−0.07	0.01
Research area								
Research area 1^{R}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Research area 2	−0.08	0.10	0.09	−0.00	0.06	0.17**	−0.05	−0.08
Research area 3	−0.24***	−0.22***	0.04	−0.05	0.06	−0.01	0.00	−0.05
Research area 4	−0.14*	−0.11	0.22***	−0.06	0.19***	0.12	−0.02	−0.01
Constant	0.96	0.62	0.52	0.36	0.87	0.58	0.30	0.43
N	1079	920	954	1043	728	1269	806	1188
R^2	0.102	0.143	0.080	0.036	0.099	0.095	0.084	0.068

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, ^{R} Reference category. .. No or insufficient number of observations. Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied.

[9] If the model is estimated only for the single and childless, with age as a continuous variable, there is a significant negative effect only among Senegalese and Ukrainian men (not shown).

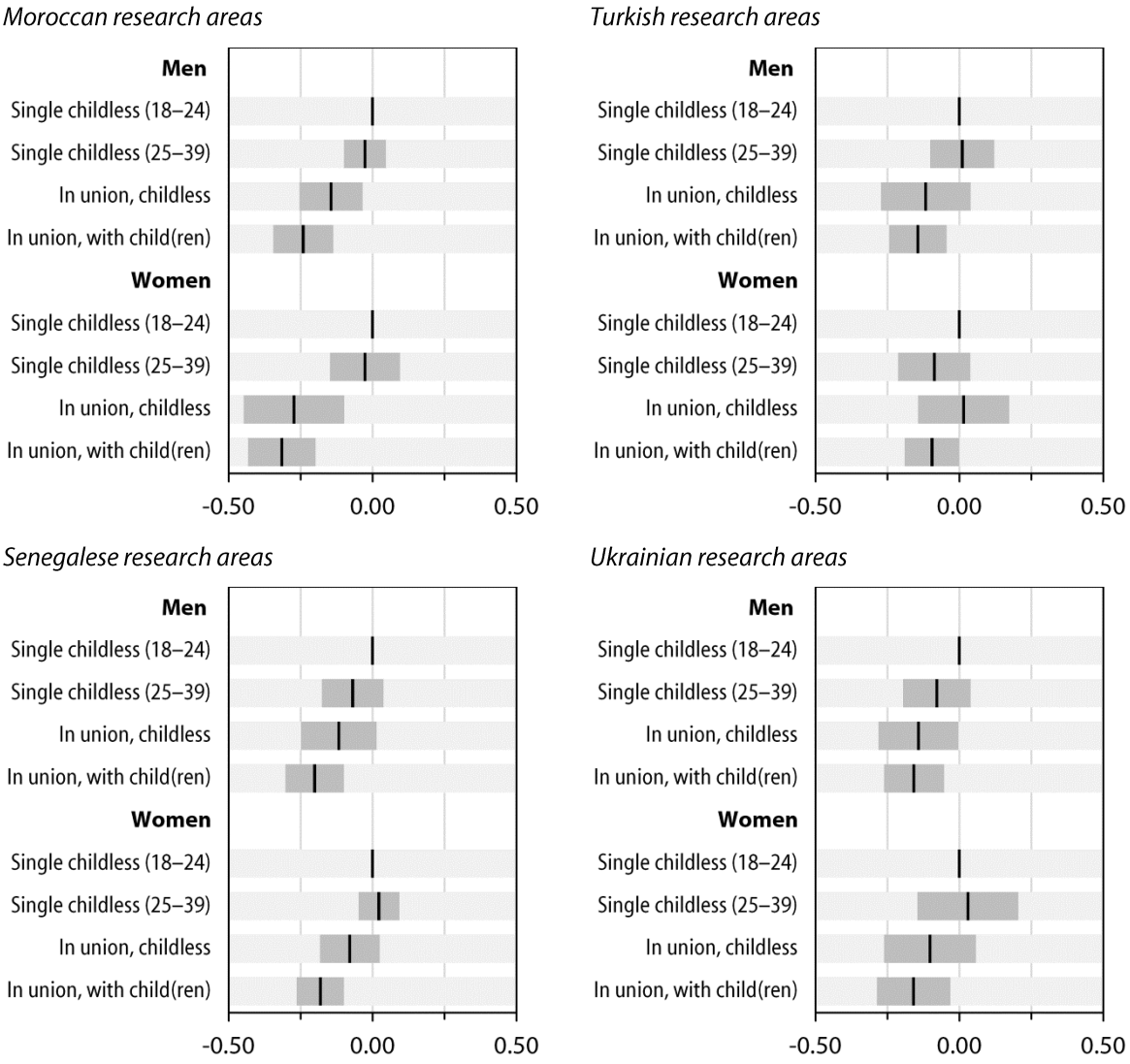

Figure 5. Estimated LPM coefficients of family situation on migration aspirations, by country and sex

Notes: Based on the models displayed in Table 6. Shaded areas represent 95 % confidence intervals. 'Single, childless (18–24)' is the reference category. The category 'Single parent' is not shown.

The caveats about comparisons that were mentioned in the previous section also apply here. In addition, there is now a difference in sample size between the groups that we compare. One striking feature in Table 6 is the apparent difficulty of predicting migration aspirations among women in the Turkish research areas. This is not just a matter of larger standard errors, but of smaller estimated effects and a very low overall coefficient of determination. It is not surprising that when the same model is applied to eight different groups, goodness of fit varies. The question that emerges in this specific case, is how the 31 per cent of women in the Turkish research areas who wish to migrate differ from the 69 per cent who do not.

Comparison between the sexes

The results presented in the previous section suggest that the effects of family formation are similar among men and women. Other effects could differ between the sexes, but

there are no consistent patterns across all four countries. In order to explore possible generalized gender differences, we pool the data from the four countries and estimate separate models for men and women. The results are shown in Table 7.

The influence of various family situations on migration aspirations is indeed remarkably similar between the sexes. As in the disaggregated results, there is no significant age difference among the single and childless respondents. The difference between being single and being in a union, however, is large and significant. Among those who are in a union, having children further reduces the likelihood of having migration aspirations. This effect is smaller among men and only statistically significant among women (not shown).

The three migration-related variables affect migration aspirations in the expected direction: people who have a transnational network, relatives who have lived abroad, or personal experience of international migration, are more likely to have migration aspirations. All these effects are stronger among women than among men. A possible interpretation is that men have greater freedom or willingness to test unchartered waters through migration. Many of the research areas are socially conservative in terms of gender relations, and women may more readily see migration as desirable if they are following the example of others.

Relative household wealth also affects migration aspirations in the expected direction: people who live in wealthier households, compared to others in the area, are less likely to have migration aspirations. The gender difference is the opposite as for migration-related variables: the effect is stronger and more highly significant among men than among women. Since men tend to be the principle income earners in the areas under study, it is possible that they feel a greater pressure to resolve household poverty through migration.

Table 7. Estimated LPM coefficients of determinates of migration aspirations, by sex

	Men	Women
Family situation		
Single childless (18–24)^{R}	0.000	0.000
Single childless (25–39)	−0.042	−0.011
In union, childless	−0.129***	−0.108**
In union, with child(ren)	−0.186***	−0.184***
Single parent	−0.086	−0.087*
Has transnational network	0.055**	0.090***
Has return migrant relatives	0.064	0.087**
Is return migrant	0.089*	0.156**
Relative household wealth	−0.015***	−0.007*
Years of education	−0.003	0.004
Employment status		
Employed outside agriculture^{R}	0.000	0.000
Employed in agriculture	0.026	0.142**
In education	0.049	0.063
Unemployed	0.047	0.076*
Not economically active	−0.038	0.046
Research area		
M1 Todgha Valley	0.000	0.000
M2 Central Plateau	−0.059	0.096
M3 Tanger	−0.235***	−0.248***
M4 Tounfite	−0.127*	−0.089
T1 Emirdağ	−0.303***	−0.201***
T2 Dinar	−0.217***	−0.163**
T3 Fatih	−0.228***	−0.224***
T4 Van Merkez	−0.085	−0.237***
S1 Darou Mousty	−0.027	0.102
S2 Lambaye	0.052	0.268***
S3 Golf Sud	0.004	0.117
S4 Orkadiere	0.140**	0.225***
U1 Zbarazh	−0.121*	−0.033
U2 Znamyanska	−0.213***	−0.133*
U3 Solomyansky	−0.144**	−0.092
U4 Novovodolaz'ka	−0.176***	−0.061
Constant	0.862	0.558
N	3567	4420
R^2	0.115	0.152

(Continued in next column)

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, ^{R} Reference category. Source: EUMAGINE survey data. Complex survey weighting applied.

Conclusions and ways forward

In this paper we have explored determinants of migration aspirations, with particular attention to differences between geographical areas and between men and women. The aim has been to combine a substantive analysis with raising questions about how to engage with diversity in multi-sited migration research. We will not reiterate the substantive findings here, but make observations about diversity and generalization.

The analyses have shown that effects in the aggregated samples are often not consistent across geographical areas, even within the same country. This is not just a question of reaching significance thresholds or not, but of reasonably certain differences in actual effects. For instance, having return migrant relatives strongly increases the likelihood of migration aspirations in Dinar (T2) while the effect is quite certainly close to zero in nearby Emirdağ (T1)[10]. The proportion of people who *have* return migrant relatives is almost identical in the two areas, as is the prevalence of migration aspirations.

In other cases, geographical differences reflect variations with respect to the independent variables. The effect of single motherhood is a case in point. We see in Table 7 that, compared to young, single and childless women, single mothers are significantly less likely to have migration aspirations. However, 60 per cent of the single mothers in our sample are Ukrainian. It is not remarkable that aggregate effects are disproportionately influenced by certain segments of the sample. However, it challenges the meaning of our generalizations.

In addition to noting the lack of consistency, we should emphasize the virtual absence of explicit *inconsistency*. In other words, effects may be present or absent, weak or strong, but rarely point in opposite directions. As noted on page 12, there was only one instance of the same effect having significant, opposite effects in different research areas. No such contradictions were observed in the models with more aggregated samples.

There are several possible ways forward from the analyses presented in this paper. First, the basic model can be refined with a view to increase its predictive power. For instance, it is possible that the socio-economic complex of household wealth, educational attainment and employment situation could be specified in other ways that better capture differences between people who want to migrate and people who do not.

Second, similarities and differences between research areas could be explored further. We know that the prevalence of migration aspirations differ, as do the effects of different determinants. Rather than aggregating and disaggregating on the basis of pre-existing categories such as country and sex, as we have done here, it might be possible classify the research areas in an attempt to identify different types of 'emigration environments' (Carling 2002).

Third, if suitable levels of aggregation are identified, the gender dimension of migration aspirations can be explored more comprehensively. For instance, we have not considered the respondents' relationship to the head of household, or, for people in a conjugal union, what the partner's principal activity is. It would also be possible to include attitude variables related to gender relations and migration of men and women, respectively. Such variables exist in the data.

[10] Only coefficients and significance levels are shown in Table 3. The complete results are 0.265** (0.104–0.426) for Dinar and –0.021 (–0.153–0.110) for Emirdağ.

Finally, it might be possible to seek case-by-case explanations for interesting differences in the mechanisms underlying migration aspirations. The difference between Dinar (T2) and Emirdağ (T1), mentioned above, is a case in point. Such explanations could be sought by exploring additional variables in the quantitative data, but also by means of the rich qualitative data within the project.

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