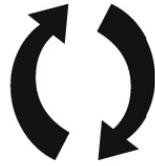


# MAFE



Migrations  
between Africa  
and Europe

## *MAFE Working Paper 18*

# **Changing Patterns of African Migration: A Comparative Analysis**

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# CHANGING PATTERNS OF AFRICAN MIGRATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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## INTRODUCTION

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African migration to Europe is regularly at the center-stage of media and policy attention. The regular media coverage of migrants arriving by sea on the shores or islands of Italy and Spain has fed the idea that the European continent is invaded by floods of destitute migrants. Migration policies in Europe have also to a large extent focused on the control of irregular migrations at its external borders (Gabrielli, 2012). The ideas that African migrants are largely composed of irregular migrants traveling long journeys through the Sahara – and the sea – have entered common wisdom. For instance, the widely consulted Wikipedia website mentioned that “the majority of the African migrants haven't got European travel visas, therefore their only accessible ways northward is that of travelling through the trans-Saharan routes” (Wikipedia, 2012)<sup>1</sup>. This focus by the media and policy-makers on irregular African migration does not acknowledge the large diversity of African migration to Europe. Moreover, the media and policy attention paid to sub-Saharan immigration is at odds with the relatively low numbers of African migrants in Europe (de Haas, 2007; Lessault and Beauchemin, 2009; Gabrielli, 2012).

The lack of basic information on migration is in sharp contrast with the increasing importance of migration in the policy agenda of both sending and receiving countries. Data to study trends of migration in Africa and from African countries are crucially lacking. Census data allow estimating bilateral stocks of migrants for many countries (Parsons et al., 2007), but they give no direct information on migration flows. Administrative statistics on immigration flows are mainly limited to developed countries, and suffer from various imperfections (Poulain et al., 2006). Statistics on outmigration flows are even less frequent, and are also seriously deficient (OECD, 2008). As a consequence, reconstructing trends in departures from African countries with existing data is challenging, and measuring returns of African migrants is next to impossible in most countries. Data on characteristics of migrants are also very limited. While census data allow describing a few characteristics (gender, education) of stocks of regular migrants in destination countries, irregular migrants are to a large extent invisible in these statistics. Finally, data on migration routes also give a partial picture, and are to a large extent based on qualitative studies focusing on irregular migration.

The objective of this paper - using quantitative data of MAFE <sup>2</sup>- is to provide an overview of the changing patterns of African migration in the MAFE countries. Three broad topics are addressed: (1) trend in departures and returns, (2) profiles of migrants, and (3) migration routes. The paper is by nature mainly descriptive, and has not the ambition of identifying

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migrants'\\_African\\_routes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migrants'_African_routes), consulted on December 17, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> For more details on the methodology of the MAFE project, see: Beauchemin (2012)

determinants of migration as such. However, by describing major changes over the last 30 years, this paper suggests possible links with changing political, economic and policy contexts in both origin and destination countries.

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## LITTERATURE REVIEW

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### TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF AFRICAN MIGRATION: A BRIEF REVIEW

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Existing research usually agree that the lack of data is a serious brake to research on trends and patterns of African migrations (Lucas, 2006). Existing reviews mainly rely on international databases on stocks of migrants, or flows to OECD countries. These sources allow describing some of the main characteristics and changes of African migration, but, as discussed later, lack details on trends, patterns and routes of African migrations.

First, African migrants mainly live in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2000, around 70% of the 17,5 millions African migrants lived in sub-Saharan African, and often in neighboring countries (Schoumaker and Schoonvaere, 2012; Lessault and Beauchemin, 2009 ; Özden *et al.*, 2010). This varies depending on the countries: in general, migrants from less developed countries tend to stay within Africa, whereas those from more developed African countries are more likely to go to OECD countries (Lucas, 2006). Intercontinental migration from Africa is largely directed towards Europe (Lucas, 2006). Even though the United States and Canada have attracted a growing number of migrants over the last decades (Zezeza, 2002; Zlotnik, 1993), Europe remains by far the major destination of sub-Saharan migrants leaving Africa. In 2000, the number of sub-Saharan African migrants living in Europe was close to 3 million, almost one million greater than in 1990 (Lucas, 2006). This represents around 55% of African migrants living out of Africa (18% in North America). This concentration in Europe (and to a large extent in France and the United Kingdom) partly results from historical ties –former colonial powers are European countries –, from the geographical proximity, as well as from economic, political and linguistic reasons (de Haas, 2007).

Not only has the “stock” of migrants increased steadily for 50 years; but the annual flows of migrants have also increased significantly since the 1960s, despite restrictive policies. According to Zlotnik (1993) (legal) migration flows from Sub-Saharan Africa to six Western European countries (Belgium, Germany, France, United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Sweden) grew from about 13,000 migrants per year in the early 1960s to nearly 50,000 in the late 1980s. More recent data indicate that entries from Sub-Saharan Africa into these countries were over 100,000 legal migrations per year in the early 2000s (Migration Policy Institute, 2007). Adding migrants the other major European destinations (Spain, Italy, Portugal), well above 100 000 sub-Saharan African migrants enter Europe legally per year.

The 1990s was a turning point in many respects. The end of the Cold War, and the “fear of invasion” triggered by the opening of the Iron Curtain (Streiff-Fénart, 2012, p.viii), led to the tightening of immigration policies in Europe. At the same time asylum seekers from sub-Saharan Africa (which are usually not included in statistics of legal migration, unless they are accepted as legal migrants), also increased significantly. In the same six European countries as above (for which data is readily available), asylum seekers from sub-Saharan Africa were just over 10 000 per year in the early 1980s, but were over 60 000 per year in 2001 (Migration policy Institute, 2007). The extent of illegal migration is notoriously difficult to estimate, but observers suggest that illegal migration between Africa and Europe has also increased

significantly, especially since the 1990s (de Haas, 2006). Overall, the number of migrants arriving in Europe has increased, and is in the several hundred thousand per year. Despite this growth, the populations of African migrants remain relatively small in most countries. For instance, they represent approximately 1% of the total population in France and in Belgium (Lessault and Beauchemin, 2009; Schoumaker and Schoonvaere, 2012).

### **Characteristics of African migrants**

Limited information is available on the characteristics of sub-Saharan African migrants to Europe (in terms of age, gender, qualification, skills...) and on their evolution over time (Hatton, 2004; Lucas, 2006). The existing literature indicates that the educational levels and qualifications of migrants are usually higher than those of non-migrants in the region of departure and that international migrants do not come from the poorest strata of African countries (Lucas, 2006). International database also show the brain drain in Sub-Saharan Africa is higher than in most other regions of the world (Lucas, 2006). This varies across departure countries and has also changed over time. In the case of DR Congo for instance, Sumata (2002, p.16) suggests that, while migration between DR Congo and Belgium until the 1980s was mainly a “middle-class” phenomenon, in the 1990s, the profiles diversified as a result of the political and economic crises. Starting in the 1990s, “both rich and poor people had no choice but to seek political asylum” (Sumata, 2002, p.16). According to some researchers, women are also increasingly represented among African migrants, notably to Europe (Van Moppes, 2006; Adepoju, 2004). Yet, little empirical evidence has been produced on this topic. The gender composition of undocumented migrants and its evolution is much more difficult to ascertain with current data.

### **Returns and circulation**

The lack of individual and longitudinal data in both countries of destination (on migrants) and origin (on returnees) is clearly a handicap in the measurement and understanding of return migration and circulation. Not only is it not possible to estimate the level and trends of return migration, but it is also not possible to measure the duration spent in the destination country before returning. Even aggregate data – such as data on emigration flows from European countries - are insufficient to study patterns of return migration.

Returns of course do occur, and many European countries have tried to encourage them through return programmes (Dustmann, 1996). The extent and trends of returns among African migrants is hard to estimate with existing data. Scattered evidence suggests that return migration – at least from some European countries to some African countries – has decreased recently. Increasingly restrictive policies are thought to have stimulated illegal migration and at the same time decreased returns (de Haas, 2007). For instance, out-migration statistics published by nationality (but not by destination) in Belgium suggest - for Congolese migrants - that the likelihood of return migration has diminished since the 1990s (Schoonvaere, 2010). Data also suggest that a large proportion of returns is made up of spontaneous returns. Assisted returns are relative rare, as illustrated by the REAB programme (the programme of assisted voluntary return implemented by the IOM) in Belgium (IOM, 2007): the number of returns of undocumented sub-Saharan Africa migrants was between 100 and 200 per year between 2002 and 2006 (including rejected asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers). Removals of undocumented migrants – although not insignificant – also seem to affect a limited proportion of migrants in Europe. For instance, according to Eurostat, less than 800 Senegalese migrants and less than 2000 Congolese migrants were forced to leave Europe in 2011 (expulsions and assisted returns combined) (Flahaux, 2012).

Migrant circulation is given increasing attention in academic research as well as among policy-makers (Constant and Massey, 2002; Hugo, 2003; Vertovec, 2007). There is, however, very little quantitative empirical literature on this topic, notably because of the lack of longitudinal individual data (Constant and Zimmermann, 2003). The prevalence of the phenomenon is unknown, as is the trend in circulation of migrants and the characteristic of circular migrants. Qualitative research on Congolese migrants in France and Belgium suggest that migrants develop strategies of circulation between Europe and Africa (Macgaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga, 2000).

### **The routes of African migrants to Europe**

The motives of migration and the legal status at entry in Europe of African migrants are diverse, and so are the routes they use to reach Europe. Contrary to popular knowledge, African migrants usually enter their destination country in a legal way (de Haas, 2007). Even among undocumented migrants, clandestine entry is thought to be relatively unimportant: significant numbers enter legally and overstay their visas, and rejected asylum-seekers who do not leave the country are another major category of undocumented migrants (Collyer, 2006; Düvell, 2006). Although some information on the way African migrants enter Europe and on the changes of their legal status over time was collected for some African countries in the Push-Pull project in the 1990s (Schhorl, Heering *et al.*, 2000; İçduygu and Ünalán, 2001) more recent and detailed data is not available.

The current literature suggests – although in an impressionistic way - that a wide variety of means of transportation and itineraries are used by migrants entering Europe (Van Moppes, 2006; Schapendonk, 2012). Some research indicate that people entering Europe legally come mainly by air, but that a large share of migrants entering illegally travels by sea, whether by cargo ships or by small boats, mainly towards Italy and Spain. In the early 2000s, the major departure areas of sub-Saharan (illegal) migrants were thought to be Northern Morocco (to Ceuta and Melilla and Southern Spain); Libya and Tunisia (to Lampedusa, Sicily, Malta...); and Africa's West Coast (Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal) for migrants going to the Canary Islands (de Haas, 2006; Hamood, 2006; Van Moppes, 2006). Senegalese migrants tend to leave either directly from Senegal by boat to the Canary Islands, or head northwards to Mauritania and Morocco. Ghanaians are thought to reach Africa's West Coast through Bamako and Dakar, or to cross Sahara to Morocco or Libya (Van Moppes, 2006). As an illustration of the long and complex itineraries followed by migrants, Congolese are also thought to be common among migrants moving to Europe through North Africa (Collyer, 2006). Congolese also travel through countries further south (South Africa, Angola) to reach Europe by air (Sumata, 2002).

Migration itineraries shift over time, in response notably to tightened controls and changing policies in transit countries (Düvell, 2006; Väyrynen, 2003; Gabrielli, 2012). In the 1990s, crossing the strait of Gibraltar was a major itinerary between Africa and Europe, but the intensification of controls since 2002 has diverted flows of migrants towards Spain's Canary Islands (Alscher, 2005). More recently, departures from Africa's West Coast seem to have moved further South (Düvell, 2006). Itineraries may also change in response to visa policies in transit countries. For instance, the Turkish visa regime for sub-Saharan African countries was changed in 2005, making migration to Europe through Turkey more difficult (Brewer and Yükseser, 2006). Evidence on organization of travels of African migrants to Europe is also scattered. Van Moppes (2006) mentions that more than half of illegal migrants reaching Europe have had "help" from smugglers at least at some stage of their trip (eg. to cross the sea or the Sahara), but these estimates are based on very shaky evidence.

All in all, available data in migrant stocks and migrant flows allow drawing broad patterns, but lack details on migration trends from African countries, on the profiles of migrants, on their motives, and more generally on the way they travel. While case studies provide in-depth data on some topics and some specific population, they give a partial view of African migrations.

The MAFE data offer a middle ground between the large scale database (that lack details) and the cases studies (from which generalization are not possible). By including different origin and destination countries, the MAFE data allow identifying diversity and country-specific results, as well as showing more general trends among several countries.

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## CONGOLESE, GHANAIAN AND SENEGALESE MIGRATION

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This section presents a brief history of migration in the three African MAFE countries<sup>3</sup>.

Four distinct phases in the history of international migration in Ghana can be distinguished (Anarfi *et al.* 2003). Up until the late 1960s Ghana was relatively economically prosperous and was a country of net-immigration, particularly attracting migrants from the West African sub-region (Twum-Baah *et al.* 1995). During this time emigration from Ghana was minimal; most emigrants were students or professionals who left to the UK or other English-speaking countries. In the second phase, beginning in the mid-1960s, Ghana became a country of net-emigration (Twum-Baah *et al.* 1995). The economic crisis contributed both to a decline in immigration to Ghana and an increase in outmigration (Anarfi *et al.* 2003). The majority of emigrants were professionals such as teachers, lawyers and administrators who went to other African countries (Nigeria, Uganda, Botswana, Zambia) (Anarfi *et al.* 2003). The third phase started in the early 1980s, a time when the economy of Ghana was growing at a negative rate (Anarfi *et al.* 2003), and was marked by two shifts in migration patterns: other sectors of society, not only professionals, began to migrate *en masse* from the southern parts of Ghana and migratory flows spread to more distant destinations in Europe, North America and North Africa (especially Libya). Compounding the situation, Nigeria expelled all foreigners from its territory including 1.2 million Ghanaians in 1983 and a further 700,000 Ghanaians in 1985 (Anarfi *et al.* 2003). It is thought many of those expelled sought greener pastures overseas. In the fourth phase, migration from Ghana to overseas destinations continued steadily so that in the 1990s Ghanaians came to constitute one of the main groups of 'new African diasporas' (Koser 2003). Since the mid-1990s there exists some evidence of return migration to Ghana as a result of an improving economy in comparison to neighbouring West African countries to which many Ghanaians migrated; but also due to the tightening of immigration laws and restrictions on travelling abroad, particularly to European countries that require the possession of valid travel and employment documents (Anarfi *et al.* 2003; Twum-Baah *et al.* 1995). Furthermore, Ghana regained political stability in 1992 when democratic elections were held after a decade of military dictatorship. In general though, there is relatively little data on international return migration to Ghana, both in terms of numbers and the impact on the development of the country at large (Black *et al.* 2003a).

In DR Congo, the country's independence in 1960 marked a turning-point in the history of migration in several respects. While some Congolese migrated to Belgium in the first half of the twentieth century, migration to Europe did not truly take off until the 1960s. At that time, most migrants were members of the country's elite who went to Europe to study (Kagné and

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<sup>3</sup> These are based on the country-specific working paper (Schoumaker, Flahaux, 2013 ; Schans, Mazzucato *et al.*, 2013 ; Sakho, Beauchemin *et al.*, 2013)

Martiniello 2001; Schoonvaere, 2010), and returned to the Congo after completing their education. The deterioration of the economic and political situation in the 1980s, and even more so in the 1990s, led to an increase in flows, to a decrease in return migration (Schoonvaere, 2010) and to a diversification of the destinations and profiles of Congolese migrants, with more females and less educated migrants (Demart 2008; Schoumaker, Vause, Mangalu, 2011). Migrants' way of entry and itineraries also became more diverse. Firstly, many Congolese migrants started coming to Europe as asylum seekers (Schoonvaere, 2010). Secondly, it would appear that migration trajectories became more complex. Illegal immigration developed and several studies indicate that it has become a key component of Congolese migration (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga, 2000; Ngoie Tshibambe, 2008), though its scale has not been documented. Destinations also changed. France gradually became the preferred destination, and other countries, notably the United Kingdom and Germany, also attracted growing numbers of Congolese migrants (Ngoie Tshibambe and Vwakyankazi 2008). Major changes in the patterns of migration towards Africa were also observed in the late 1980s and the 1990s. In the 1990s, and especially after the abolition of apartheid, South Africa became a leading destination country (Steinberg, 2005; Sumata, 2002). Existing data on return migration from Europe show a downtrend in returns and a low proportion of intentions to return. Using Belgian administrative data, Schoonvaere (2010) showed a substantial decrease in returns among migrants who arrived in the 1990s.<sup>4</sup> Based on a small survey among 122 Congolese migrants in Paris, Lututala (2006) showed that three-quarters of migrants intend to stay in France, and that only 14% intend to return permanently to RD Congo (12% are undecided).

The history of the Senegalese migration began in the early twentieth century with navigators, demobilized "tirailleurs" (soldiers) and early traders who settled in the countries of French West Africa and, to a lesser extent in France (Lalou, Robin, Ndiaye 2000). These flows intensified from the mid-1960s, to countries of the sub-region (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana), notably with the economic success of cocoa and coffee, as well as to more distant flourishing economies (Gabon). The recruitment of labor in the automobile industry in France (Pison, Hill, Cohen, Foote 1997; Robin 1996) also stimulated migration to Europe. At that time, the presence of Senegalese in France was mainly composed of single men who left their families in their home villages (Petit 2002). The stop to labour migration in the mid-1970s, and the promotion of family reunification in Europe, are thought to have contributed to more permanent settlements (Robin, Lalou and Ndiaye 2000). The late 1980s were marked by a large emigration (Tall 2001) and a diversification of destination countries (Ma Mung 1996). Traditional destinations within Africa lost their attractivity, as a result of economic and political troubles (Robin, Lalou and Ndiaye 2000), and the Senegalese emigration to Africa ran out of steam (Ba, 2006). France continued hosting Senegalese migrants, but other Western countries (notably Italy and Spain) have attracted increasing shares of migrant from Senegal. Senegalese migration has also received a significant media and policy attention due to the large numbers of Senegalese migrants arriving by sea on the shores or islands of Europe (Pastore et al., 2006; Oumar Ba & Choplin, 2005). However, existing studies on Senegalese

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<sup>4</sup> Existing statistics also suggest that many returns are spontaneous; expulsions and returns under assisted voluntary return programmes represent a minority. For example, between 50 and 100 undocumented Congolese migrants are deported from Belgium each year (CECLR, 2008), and the number of migrants assisted by "voluntary return" programs is also relatively small (Ngoie Tshibambe & Lelu, 2009).

migrants' routes are mostly monographic and thematic (Antoine & Sow, 2000, Fall 1997; Sakho and Dial, 2010). Data on return migration is also limited. Robin et al. (2000) indicate that the majority of Senegalese return migrants are those who had migrated to neighboring countries such as Gambia and Mauritania (Robin et al., 2000), suggesting return migration from Europe are more limited.

## MIGRATIONS FROM GHANA, SENEGAL AND DR CONGO: A GLOBAL VIEW WITH MAFE DATA

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The household questionnaire of the MAFE surveys collected data on first international migration (date, destination) of a series of current or previous household members. Using event history models, these data allow reconstructing migration trends by large periods and by destination, as well trends in return (see Box 1)

### Box 1 : Reconstructing migration trends

MAFE data allow reconstructing the trends in departures and returns of migrants by computing retrospective rates of migration. The household questionnaire of the surveys conducted in origin countries provides the dates of the first international migration (for at least 12 months) of the head of household, of his/her partner(s), and of his/her children. This information is available for migrants, regardless of their current country of residence (still living abroad or return migrants), and the date of first return is available for those who returned after their first departure. The household questionnaire also recorded the dates of birth, gender, and level of education of the head of household, the partner(s) and the children, whether they migrated or not.

Age-specific migration probabilities are computed by dividing the number of migrants at a given age during a given year, by the number of people of that age who had not yet migrated by that year. These probabilities are estimated using event history models including both ages and time periods as independent variables. They are then transformed into indicators that are more easily interpreted. The indicator used here is called the lifetime probability of migration, and measures the probability that a person would do at least one international migration during his/her adult life (18-70), if the age-specific probabilities of migration observed during a given time-period (i.e. 1990-1999) were applied to people from age 18 to age 70. This is the 'synthetic cohort' principle commonly used for other types of demographic indicators (period life expectancy, period age-specific fertility rates). Trends in returns are reconstructed in a similar way. Probabilities of return are computed (among migrants) using event history models with time periods and duration of migration as independent variables. The coefficients of the models are then transformed into a synthetic indicator measuring the probability of returning within 10 years of first departure for separate periods. Because the population at risk of returning is only composed of those who left, the sample size for returns are much smaller, and indicators are less reliable.

Apart from problems of small samples in some cases, these techniques of reconstructing migration trends from retrospective are not free from biases. One possible bias is due to the fact that, for people not living in the household, data are collected from proxy respondents. Some migrants may not be declared, and data on those who are declared may be inaccurate. Another possible bias stems from the fact that some entire households may have migrated abroad, and as a result these emigrants may not be recorded as emigrants (the head or spouse may still be mentioned by their parents, but the children would not be mentioned). On the other hand, some people may be reported twice, since they can be reported by parents and spouses. Finally, only the first migration is included in the reconstruction of trends, and this may lead to underestimating recent migration. Even though biases are inevitable, they compensate each other to some extent, are considered sufficiently small to provide acceptable estimates of departures and returns. .

## LEAVING, RETURNING – THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF AFRICAN MIGRATION

In all three countries, chances of migration have increased over time, but with varying intensities (Figure 1). The increase was very slight in Senegal, whereas migrations have considerably expanded from DR Congo<sup>5</sup>. As a result, the differences across countries in migration probabilities have also changed considerably. Lifetime probability of migration currently varies between a little less than 20% in Senegal, and little less than 30% in DR Congo. In other words, given the current rates of migration, between one adult out of five (Senegal) and 3 adults out of ten (DR Congo) would do at least one international migration between 18 and 70. International mobility is clearly a central component of people’s life in these countries. As explained later, a examining trends by destinations is necessary to better understand these changes. Changes in DR Congo mainly result from increases in migration to Africa, while migrations to Europe increased from Senegal and Ghana.

FIGURE 1: LIFETIME PROBABILITY OF MIGRATION (BETWEEN AGE 18 AND 70) FROM AFRICA, (1975-2008). HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.

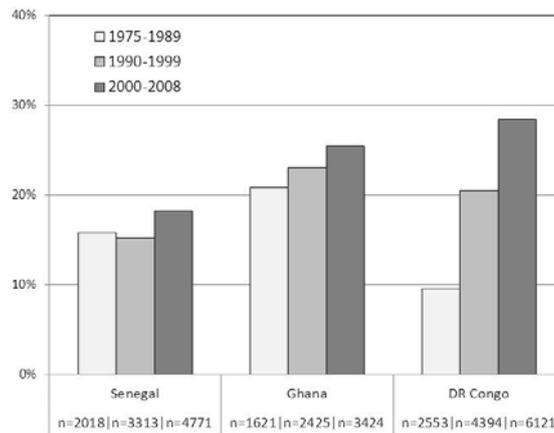
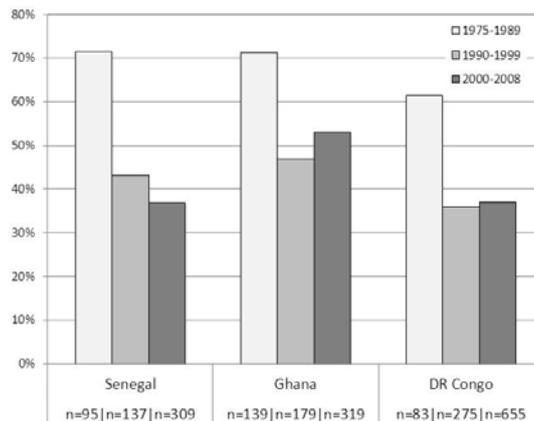


FIGURE 2: PROBABILITY OF RETURNING WITHIN 10 YEARS OF FIRST DEPARTURE, (1975-2008). HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.



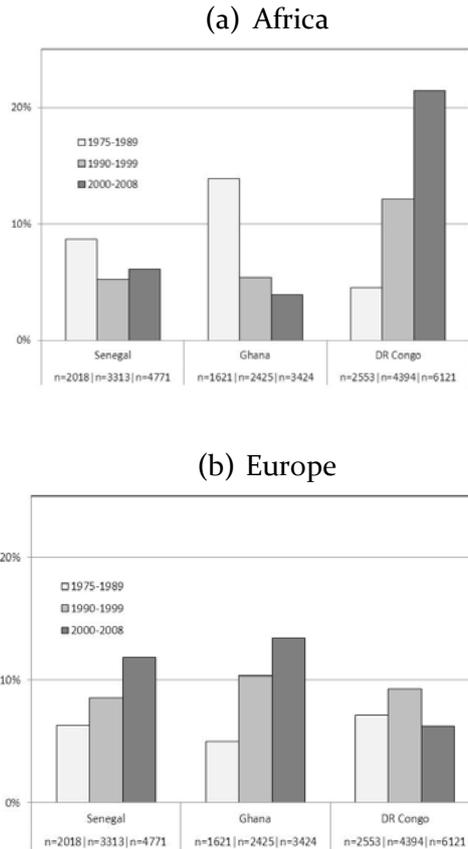
<sup>5</sup> For the sake of simplicity, we will use the name of the countries. However, the data were collected in cities are not representative of the countries.

In all three countries also, returns have also decreased considerably since the 1980s (Figure 2). In the 1970s and 1980s, between 60 and 70% of migrants returned within 10 years of their first departure; in the years 2000, less than 40% of Congolese and Senegalese, and just over 50% of Ghanaians return within 10 years. The large drops occurred in the 1990s in the three countries, in a context of rapid economic and political changes in both origin and destination countries. Again, it is necessary to examine returns separately by destinations to better understand these patterns. Increasing rates of departures, decreasing rates of returns, and population growth of the origin countries translate into growing stocks of Senegalese, Congolese, and Ghanaian migrants worldwide.

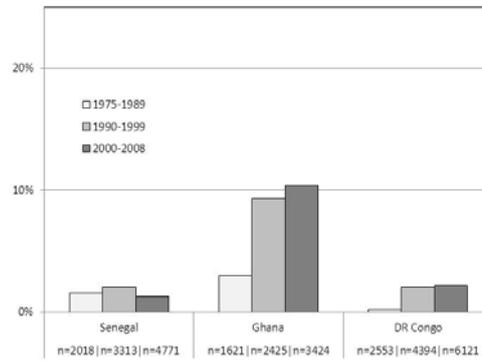
THE CHANGING GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN MIGRATIONS

Global trends in departure and returns mask major shifts in destinations, as well as remarkable differences in return trends by destinations (Figure 3). Senegal and Ghana have both witnessed an increase in migration propensities to Europe (and for Ghana, to North America), accompanied by a decrease in migrations to Africa. In contrast, Congolese migration to Europe did not really take off, but migrations to other African countries exploded.

FIGURE 3: LIFETIME PROBABILITY OF MIGRATION (BETWEEN AGE 18 AND 70) FROM AFRICA, (1975-2008), BY DESTINATION. HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.

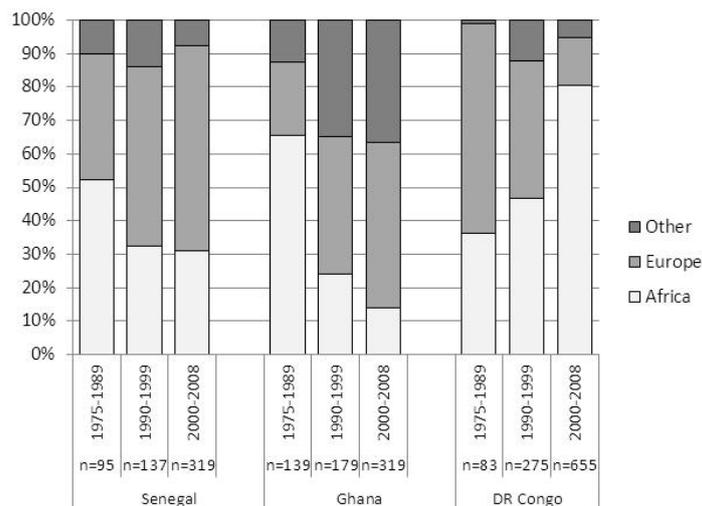


(c) Other destinations (mainly North America)



As a result of these diverging trends by destination, the geography of migrations has considerably changed. In Ghana, the share of migrations to Europe has grown from around 20% to 50%, and from 40% to 60% in Senegal. In contrast, the share of European migration dwindled to less than 20% in Congo (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF FIRST MIGRATIONS BY DESTINATION, BY PERIOD OF DEPARTURE (1975-2008). HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.



These changes result from a mix of opportunities and constraints: changing economic and political conditions in potential destinations, changing policies in receiving countries, as well as changes in social networks in destinations. As discussed in the literature review, opportunities in Africa for Senegalese and Ghanaian migrants have reduced sensibly since the 1970s. In the 1970s and early 1980s, Nigeria used to be a major destination for Ghanaians. The oil boom attracted many West African migrants (Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1992), and notably Ghanaian migrants. The deterioration of the economic context led to massive expulsions of immigrants from Nigeria (in 1983 and 1985). Nigeria was no longer an option for Ghanaians, and no countries in the region offered significantly better opportunities. As a result, Europe and North America became the preferred destinations of Ghanaian migrants. Senegalese were also many to migrate to flourishing economies in Francophone Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, notably Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. These countries were also hit by economic crises and developed anti-immigrant policies in the 1990s. Most other countries in the regions were

experiencing economic difficulties, and no other African destination offered an attractive alternative<sup>6</sup>. European countries became the first choice for Senegalese migrants. So, paradoxically, even though migration was becoming more difficult because of increasingly restrictive policies, the lack of opportunities in African destinations and the growing demand for cheap labor – notably in Mediterranean countries (Spain, Italy) - contributed fuelling migration from Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>7</sup>. Italy and Spain progressively became major destinations of Senegalese migrants (Table 1). Ghanaian migrants increasingly migrated to the UK, as well as to the US and to new European destinations (Germany, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands). As explained later, the profiles of migrants to these new destinations differ significantly from the migrants to the ‘traditional’ destinations (France for the Senegalese, UK for Ghana).

TABLE 1: TOP 5 DESTINATIONS AMONG SENEGALESE, GHANAIAAN AND CONGOLESE MIGRANTS, BY PERIOD OF FIRST DEPARTURE

Country of origin	Period			1975-2007
	1975-1990	1990-1999	2000-2007	
Senegal	France (30%)	France (35%)	Italy (23%)	France (28%)
	Côte d'Ivoire (13%)	USA (12%)	France (23%)	Italy (13%)
	Mauritania (10%)	Italy (12%)	Spain (10%)	Mauritania (7%)
	China (9%)	Gabon (8%)	Mauritania (7%)	Côte d'Ivoire (7%)
	Gabon (7%)	Côte d'Ivoire (6%)	Guinea (5%)	USA (6%)
N	188	158	240	586
Ghana	Nigeria (39%)	UK (25%)	UK (27%)	UK (21%)
	USA (8%)	USA (22%)	USA (27%)	USA (20%)
	UK (7%)	Nigeria (8%)	Italy (7%)	Nigeria (15%)
	Libya (6%)	Germany (6%)	Nigeria (5%)	Italy (4%)
	Gabon (6%)	Japan (6%)	South Africa (4%)	Germany (4%)
N	237	187	296	720
DR Congo	Congo (24%)	Angola (33%)	Angola (35%)	Angola (33%)
	Angola (20%)	Congo (21%)	Congo (21%)	Congo (22%)
	Switzerland (11%)	France (10%)	South Africa (15%)	South Africa (9%)
	Belgium (11%)	Canada (5%)	France (5%)	France (7%)
	France (7%)	Belgium (5%)	Belgium (4%)	Belgium (5%)
N	164	330	565	1059

Household data. Weighted percentages.

The story of Congolese migration is very different. Unlike what happened for Senegalese and Ghanaians, new opportunities opened up in the region for Congolese migrants. The end of the apartheid regime gave a boost to migration to South Africa from the mid-1990s (Steinberg, 2005; Sumata, 2002). The end of the Angola war in the early 2000s and the unprecedented economic development in the country also attracted many Congolese. Maybe as a result of the competing opportunities in Africa and of stricter migration policies in Europe, Congolese migration to Europe did not really take off. Mediterranean countries – which attracted many low educated Senegalese migrants and increasing numbers of Ghanaians – have not attracted sizeable numbers of Congolese migrants.

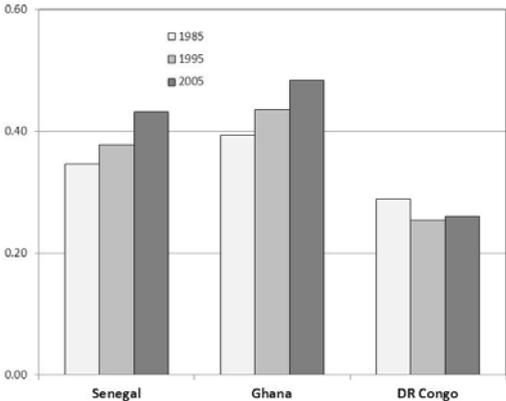
<sup>6</sup> South Africa did attract some Senegalese migrants from the mid-1990s (Robin et al., 2001), but the bulk of them moved to Europe.

<sup>7</sup> Family reunification also contributed to the increasing migration to Europe and migration for studies have also been a major way of entry for Ghanaian migrants in the UK.

The contrasting trends in departures from the three countries also point to a positive correlation between development and migration to Western countries. In both Senegal and Ghana, chances of migration to Western countries increased considerably between the 1980s and the years 2000, whereas it stalled for Congolese over the same period. By the years 2000, Ghanaians had the highest propensity of migration to Europe<sup>8</sup>, followed by Senegalese and Congolese. Interestingly, Ghana also has the highest level of development among the three countries in 2005, and Congo had the lowest (Figure 5). In addition Ghana and Senegal have both made continuous progress in term of development, whereas Congo’s indicators have not improved since the 1980s (Figure 5).

Although counterintuitive, the positive correlation between development and migration to Europe is not surprising. As argued by de Haas (2007, p.832), more development – at least the ‘slow type’ of development observed in Ghana and Senegal (Hatton, 2002) - is likely to induce more migration. Reasons are varied, including the changing aspirations of people with development, as well as the greater financial means available for travelling. These results are not an empirical test of the development-migration relationship, but they provide another illustration that more development does not translate into less migration to developed countries.

FIGURE 5: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX IN SENEGAL, GHANA AND DR CONGO (1985, 1995, 2005)



DIMINISHING RETURNS BUT LARGE DISPARITIES

In all three countries, returns have diminished substantially since the 1980s. But these trends that are broadly similar in the three countries mask wide disparities by origins and destinations (Figure 6). On average, returns from African countries have been frequent, and have also been quite stable for Ghanaian and Congolese migrants. Since the 1970s, about half of the Congolese migrants and 75% of the Ghanaian migrants in Africa have returned within 10 years of their departure. Returns from Africa to Senegal have been less stable, but have also overall remained relatively high (on average around 60%). In contrast, returns from Europe have declined drastically for Congolese and Senegalese migrants. Returns concerned almost 80% of the Congolese migrants in Europe in the 1980s, whereas nowadays less than 10% of them return within 10 years. Returns have dropped from around 50% to 20% for Senegalese over the same period. The pattern for Ghanaian migrants is somewhat different: A strong decline was observed between the 1980s and 1990s (from about 60% to 30%), but was followed

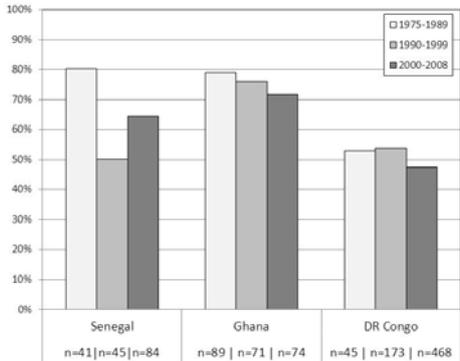
<sup>8</sup> And by far the highest propensity of migration to Western countries, including North America).

by a rebound in the years 2000<sup>9</sup>. Returns from other regions (mainly North America) are not very reliable, because of the very small samples of Senegalese and Congolese migrants in North America. It is worth noting however, that returns of Senegalese and Congolese migrants have decreased since the 1980s, while returns of Ghanaians have remained very stable but low (around 30% of returns within 10 years).

The decrease in returns from Europe among Congolese and Senegalese has occurred in a context of great uncertainty for African migrants, both in origin countries and in Europe. In DR Congo, the late 1980s-early 1990s were marked by intense political and economic troubles (Schoumaker et al., 2010). In Senegal, that period was also characterized by the structural adjustment programs, and deteriorating economic conditions. The decreasing returns also occurred at a time of growing concerns about illegal migration and more restrictive immigration policies in Europe (Robin et al., 2000). This has probably encouraged the permanent settlement of migrants (de Haas, 2007). People may have done huge sacrifices to come to Europe (and to integrate), and are unlikely to return if they have not secured the right to come again to Europe. This is especially the case for Congolese migrants, where the chronic political and economic instability makes a return to DRC all the more risky. While the prospects for return migrants were good in the 1970s and early 1980s, the deterioration of the economic and political context has had a serious impact on opportunities in DR Congo. For Congolese, return indeed no longer seems an option. For Senegalese, returns have also sensibly diminished, but remain higher than in Congo. Prospects of reintegration are probably better in Senegal than in DR Congo, but still insufficient to justify massive returns.

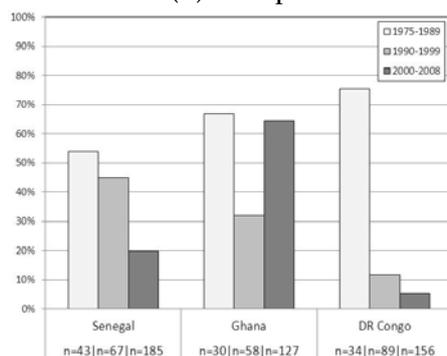
FIGURE 6: PROBABILITY OF RETURNING FROM WITHIN 10 YEARS OF FIRST DEPARTURE (1975-2008), BY REGION OF RESIDENCE. HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.

(b) Africa

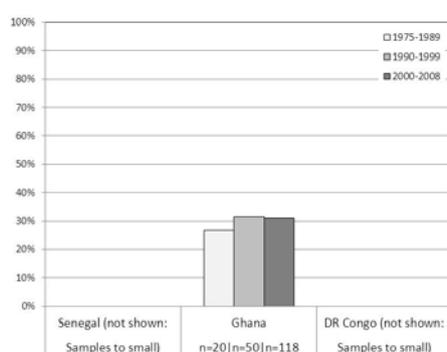


<sup>9</sup> Data on intentions of duration of stay at arrival collected in the biographic surveys show similar trends: the percentage of people intending to stay less than 10 years has sensibly decreased for Congolese and Senegalese migrants, whereas a rebound is visible for Ghanaian migrants in the years 2000.

### (b) Europe



### (b) others (mainly North America)



Ghana's story is different. Returns decreased in the 1990s, and then went up in the years 2000s. Actually, trends computed by single years indicate that returns starting decreasing in the early-mid 1980s and increased from the early-mid 1990s (results not shown). The decreasing returns in the 1980s occurred in a period of economic crisis and dictatorship. The democratization in the early 1990s, the improved political stability, and Ghana's economic recovery have probably played a role in attracting return migrants from Europe in the years 2000. However, no similar trend is observed neither among Ghanaian migrants in the US, nor among Ghanaians in Africa (Figure 6). Part of the explanation must be specific to Ghanaian migrants in Europe. In fact, several indicators suggest that the profiles of migrants to Europe in the 1990s were different from the 1980s and the 2000s. Basically, migrations for study reasons were lower in the 1990's, and migrants were less likely to knowing someone in the destination country. These migrants also wished to stay longer at arrival. The compositions of migrants in the years 2000 came back to a situation close to the one observed in the 1980s. In short, the changing composition of migrants is part of the explanation in the return trends.

## HERE AND THERE? MIGRANTS' CIRCULATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA

Circulation between destination and origin countries is sometimes posited as an emerging trend in migration, and part of the transnational practices of migrants. Circulation could act as a substitute for return migration, allowing migrants to "live" in several spaces (Lututala, 2005). Do African migrants living in Europe travel regularly to their home country? MAFE data collected information on short and long returns to the origin country. Table 2 shows the percentage of migrant who returned within 5 years of their first arrival.

TABLE 2: PROPORTION OF PEOPLE LIVING IN EUROPE WHO HAVE DONE AT LEAST ONE (LONG) RETURN MIGRATION OR A VISIT (SHORT RETURN) WITHIN 5 YEARS OF THE FIRST ARRIVAL IN EUROPE (KAPLAN MEIER ESTIMATES), BY PERIOD OF FIRST ARRIVAL AND COUNTRY RESIDENCE

Origin country	Country of residence	1975-1989	1990-1999	2000-2008	1975-2008
Ghana	United Kingdom, Netherland,	27.1	28.9	52.6	37.7
	N	82	109	216	407
Senegal	France, Italy, Spain	53.3	58.8	48.2	53.5
	N	108	208	272	588
DR Congo	Belgium, United Kingdom	17.7	9.1	10.9	11.1
	N	73	144	194	411

Sample includes migrants living in the European MAFE countries at the time of the survey, who were born in their origin country and left at age 18 or older, in 1975 or later.  
Biographic data, weighted percentages.

Overall, visits are not very frequent, and their frequency varies a lot across origin countries. Approximately half of the Senegalese migrants visit their home countries within 5 years, whereas only 10% of the Congolese do so. On average, a little over a third of Ghanaian migrants visit Ghana within five years. The very low percentage of Congolese migrants visiting DRC, along with the very rare returns, suggest Congolese migrants have to some extent broken their links with their home country. Low investments in DRC (see chapter 11), as well high relatively frequent family reunification (see chapter 15) also suggest that Congolese settle in Europe and do not maintain as strong links with their home country as other African migrants. Their administrative situation may also limit their mobility, as many Congolese migrants arrive as asylum seekers. Senegalese migrants in contrast are very likely to visit Senegal, and are more likely to engage in transnational activities. Even though their propensity to return for a long stay has also decreased drastically, they maintain stronger links with their home country, notably by investing in Senegal (see chapter 13). Family reunification is also lower among Senegalese than among Congolese, and transnational families are more frequent (see chapter 14). Ghanaians have intermediate profiles, and have experienced rapid changes. While visits were not frequent until the years 2000s, their propensity to visit Ghana is now like that of Senegalese migrants.

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## CHANGING PROFILES OF MIGRANTS TO EUROPE

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Departures and returns from Europe have changed in a dramatic way. The profiles of migrants have also changed significantly. In this section we describe major changes in terms of gender, education, legal status, and social capital at destinations.

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### FEMALE MIGRATION AND EDUCATED MIGRANTS

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Network theories suggest that, with the declining costs and risks of migration associated with the growing networks of family members and friends in destination countries, migrations flows become less selective, and tend to be more representative of the sending country (Massey et al., 1993). This should lead to a growing percentage of female migrants in Europe, as well as a change in the level of education of migrants. Political and economic troubles may also influence the composition of migration flows, with migration being less selective in times of crises (Massey and Capoferro, 2006).

FIGURE 7: PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE MIGRANTS AMONG FIRST MIGRANTS TO EUROPE, BY PERIOD OF DEPARTURE. HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.

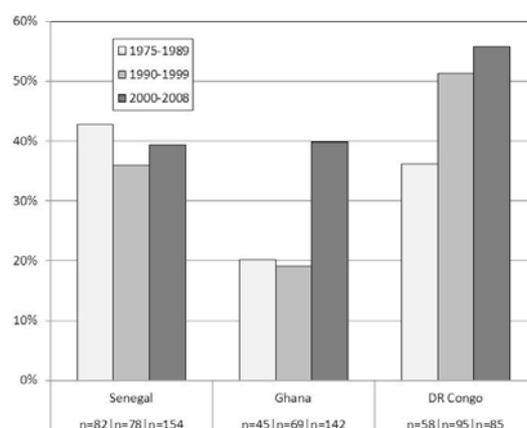


Figure 7 shows that the percentage of females among migrants to Europe has increased among both Ghanaians and Congolese, but has remained stable among Senegalese. Females are now a little more numerous than males among Congolese migrants to Europe. In Ghana and Senegal, females are still less numerous than men, but they nevertheless represent around two fifths of the migrants. The increase of female migrants among Ghanaians was very sharp in the years 2000. The change was more progressive among Congolese migrants, and notably reflects the transformation of Congolese migrations from temporary migrations to migrations of settlement, and the increasing place of family reunification. Interestingly, the stability in Senegal masks the feminization of migration flows to France and Italy<sup>10</sup>. However, the growing weight of Spain and Italy in the total number of migrants, combined with the lower proportion of females in these countries compared to France, translates into a stable percentage of women among migrants.

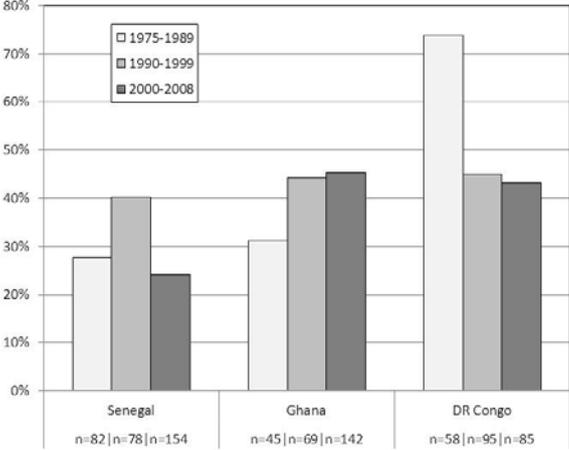
The picture for education profiles is more complex, and contrasting trends are observed across origin countries (Figure 8). Among Congolese, the share of educated migrants decreased drastically between the 1980s and the 1990s. Congolese migration to Europe was traditionally a migration of elites, but the characteristics of the flows were profoundly affected by the economic and political troubles in the 1990s. The share of migrants with higher education, over 70% in the 1980s, dropped to a little over 40%. In Ghana, the share of highly educated migrants increased between the 1980s and the 1990s, and has remained stable after the 1990s – at the same level as Congolese migrants. This increase both reflects the increase in the level of education in Ghana, as well as the greater selectivity by education. Finally, Senegalese migrants to Europe are currently much less educated than their Congolese and Ghanaian counterparts, but this was not the case in the 1990s. The Senegalese case again illustrates the changing profiles of migrants associated with the changing destinations. Migrants to France are overall much more educated than migrants to Italy and Spain<sup>11</sup>, and used to be the most numerous among Senegalese migrants to Europe. However, the share of migrants to France among Senegalese migrants to Europe has decreased. As a result, the average level of education of

<sup>10</sup> In France, the percentage of female migrants grew from 44 to 52% from the 1980s to the years 2000, and from 4% to 22% in Italy. For Spain, the numbers of migrants in the household survey are much smaller, and do not allow measuring trends in the percentage of female migrants.

<sup>11</sup> Around 30% of Senegalese migrants to France in the 1980s, and 50% in the 1990s and 2000s, had higher education. In contrast, only around 10% of Senegalese migrants to Spain and Italy had high levels of education.

Senegalese migrants to Europe has been pulled down in the years 2000s by the growing weight of migrants to Italy and Spain.

FIGURE 8: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG FIRST MIGRANTS TO EUROPE, BY PERIOD OF DEPARTURE. HOUSEHOLD DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.



GROWING IRREGULAR MIGRATION

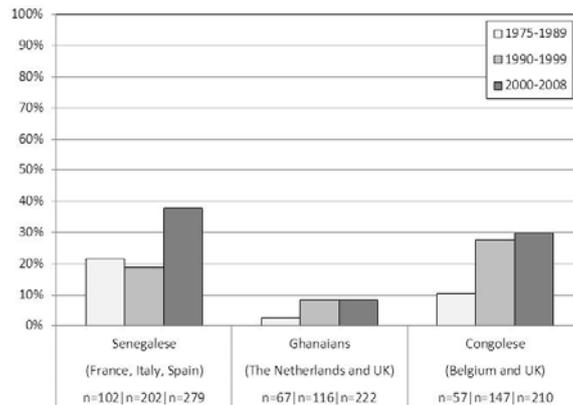
Research suggests that restrictive immigration policies may have curbed legal migration, but “have also generated the unintended effect of encouraging irregular migration and pushing migrants into permanent settlement [...]” (de Haas, 2007, p. 824). A previous section provided evidence of decreasing returns and increasing long-term settlement in Europe among Congolese and Senegalese. This section looks at the development of irregular migration among Congolese, Senegalese, and Ghanaian migrants.

Before discussing the results, one should note that irregular migration is not easily defined. A typical image of irregular migrants is the one of people crossing the sea from Africa and reaching Spain or Italy in small boats or pirogues. Migrants may enter legally in a country (for instance with a visa tourist), and overstay their visas. In this section, we consider as irregular migrants all the migrants who mentioned they did not have a residence permit at some point in time during their first year in the destination country. It will not only include people entering clandestinely, but also people entering a country legally and overstaying their visas.

Figure 9 shows that there has been an increase of irregular migration for migrants from all three countries. However, the situations and evolutions are very diverse. The percentages are quite high for Congolese and Senegalese people (30-35% of irregular migrants in the years 2000), and have increased significantly since the 1980s. In contrast, percentages are much lower for Ghanaian migrants, where less than 10% of the migrants were undocumented their first year of stay in UK or the Netherlands<sup>12</sup>. Overall, these data provides clear evidence of growing irregular migration – an expected result of the restrictive immigration policies. However, most migrants are regular migrants.

<sup>12</sup> As shown later, these averages by origin countries mask very wide differences by destination countries; for instance, Ghanaian migrants are much likely to be irregular in the Netherlands than in the UK. More generally, irregular migrants are more frequent in new destinations than in traditional destinations.

FIGURE 9: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WITHOUT RESIDENCE PERMIT DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR IN THE COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE, BY PERIOD OF FIRST ARRIVAL (1975-2008). BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.



Irregular migration takes various forms depending on the origins, and the strategies have also varied over time. Senegalese migrants going to Spain have to a large extent used *pateras* to arrive by sea (24% on average, and 33% since 2000). Virtually all the Congolese migrants moving to Europe travel by plane, but some of them used false documents or someone else's documents (14% of all Congolese migrants of the sample). Ghanaians also arrive by plane, and few of them are undocumented at arrival. However, the percentage of undocumented migrants is much higher in the Netherlands than in the UK. It should also be emphasized that people entering illegally may (sometimes quickly) obtain papers, and that, in all the countries, percentages of undocumented migrants at the time of the survey are lower than at their arrival (Table 3).

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE OF UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS AT ARRIVAL AND AT SURVEY TIME, BY ORIGIN.

Country of origin	Country of destination	At arrival	At time of survey	N
Ghana	UK, The Netherlands	8.5	6.2	402
DR Congo	Belgium, UK	29.8	11.1	414
Senegal	France, Italy, Spain	28.4	16.1	583

Legal status is defined by the type of residence permit during the first year. Undocumented migrants at arrival are those who declared that, during the first year in the country of residence, they did not have a residence permit at some point. This is not synonymous for illegal entry: a person may have entered legally, with a visa that expired.  
Biographic data, weighted percentages.

Interestingly Ghanaian migrants are both less likely to arrive as undocumented migrants, and are also more likely to return. As shown in chapter 6, return is much more likely among documented migrants than among undocumented migrants. Their higher propensity to return may thus be linked to the fact that they are more likely to be documented. This would illustrate the idea that restricting legal migration may limit people's ability and willingness to return.

## DIVERSITY OF PROFILES BETWEEN OLD AND NEW DESTINATIONS

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MAFE data show that migrants living in traditional destinations (former colonial powers) have different profiles from migrants living in new destinations (Spain and Italy for the Senegalese, UK for the Congolese and the Netherlands for the Ghanaians). Overall, migrants to new destinations are more likely to be less educated, are less likely to arrive directly to their destination countries (more likely to transit through other countries), and are more likely to be undocumented at arrival. To a certain extent, migrants classified by old/new destinations are more similar, than migrants the same origin country. In other words, Ghanaians in the UK and Congolese in Belgium have more similar profiles than Congolese in Belgium and Congolese in the UK. Said differently, population from the same origin country and living in different European destination countries appear to be relatively distinct populations. This suggests that new destinations have attracted new populations – rather than the same populations diversifying their destinations.

TABLE 4: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS BY ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

Country of Origin	Country of residence	Higher education diploma	Arrived directly	No residence permit at arrival	% males	N
Congolese	Belgium	60.6	69.6	13.8	44.5	278
	UK	41.0	55.0	43.3	45.5	149
Ghanaians	UK	68.6	75.8	5.0	53.3	149
	Netherlands	34.8	65.0	19.2	48.9	273
Senegalese	France	30.3	79.2	9.1	53.5	200
	Italy	12.6	68.9	37.9	88.9	203
	Spain	2.6	63.8	48.9	45.9	200
Biographic data, weighted percentages.						

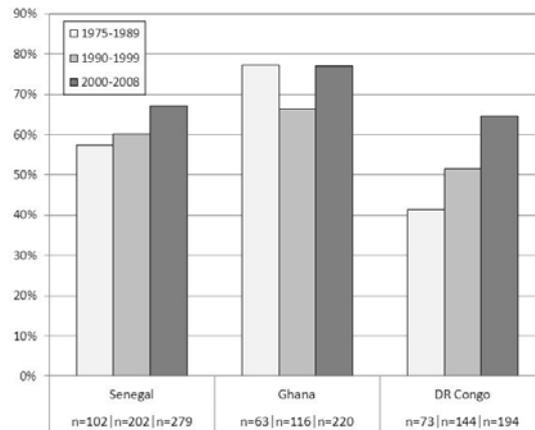
## NETWORKS AT DESTINATION

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The percentage of people knowing someone in the destination country before migrating is overall quite high (Figure 10). These figures show that the majority of migrants are not arriving in countries without knowing anybody. The nature of social and family networks differs across countries, but knowing someone in the destination country is common. It is also a strong determinant of migration (see chapter 6) and is also one of the major motives of choice of destination. As shown on Figure 12, between a third and half of the migrants who arrived in the years 2000 mentioned having family and friends in the destination country as their motive for choosing that country.

Overall, the percentage of migrants who knew someone in the destination country before migrating to Europe has increased in Senegal and in DR Congo. At the same time, having family and friends in destinations has become a more common motive of choice of destination among Senegalese and Congolese. In contrast, knowing someone in destination countries did not increase among Ghanaians, and the role of networks in the choice of destination lost some importance.

FIGURE 10: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS KNOWING AT LEAST ONE PERSON IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY BEFORE MIGRATING, BY PERIOD OF DEPARTURE. BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.



The composition of the networks also changed. The percentage of migrants who had a spouse/partner in the destination countries evolved in different ways for the three origin countries (Figure 11). It doubled among Congolese migrants, from around 10% in the 1980s to 20% in the years 2000s. This is in line with the other changes of Congolese migration: more females are moving, and returns have become rare, with increasing family reunification. In Senegal, it slightly decreased, whereas the share of other family members and friends increased. In Ghana, it did not change much between the 1980s and the years 2000, and remained at overall higher levels than in the other countries.

FIGURE 11: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS HAVING A SPOUSE/PARTNER IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY BEFORE MIGRATING, BY PERIOD OF DEPARTURE. BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.

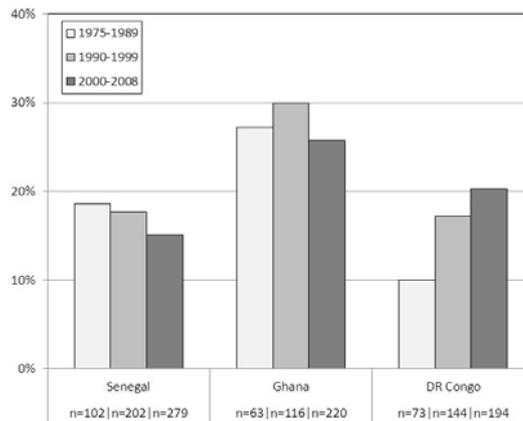
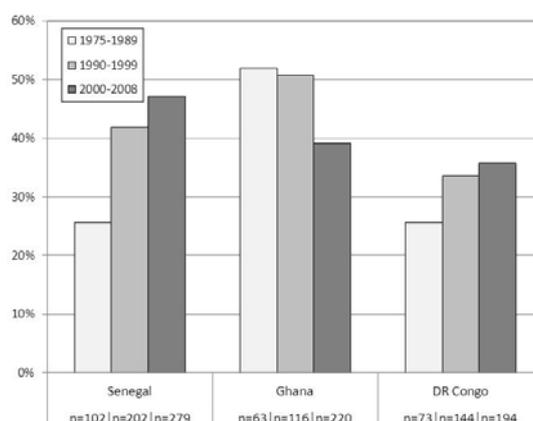


FIGURE 12: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS MENTIONING FAMILY AND FRIENDS AS A MOTIVE OF CHOICE OF DESTINATION. BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.



## STRATEGIES AND ROUTES OF MIGRATION TO EUROPE

The question of migration routes is central in the migration policies of the European Union (EC, 2008). The “fight against irregular migration” (EC, 2008, p.5) is one of the key aspects of the Global approach to migration of the European Union, and involves acquiring “timely and updated information on changes in migratory routes towards the EU...”. Policies aiming at limiting migrations from Africa to Europe are thought to have profoundly affected migration routes (Streff-Fénart and Segatti, 2012).

The MAFE data allow reconstructing complete migration routes, including short and long stays in intermediate countries, for Ghanaian, Senegalese and Congolese migrants currently living in Europe. A migration route is defined here as the succession of countries through which people passed before reaching the ‘final’ destination, i.e. their country of residence at the time of the survey. Because of the way data were collected people currently ‘in transit’ between Africa and Europe at the time of the survey are not included in our samples. The MAFE surveys thus provide a partial picture of the phenomenon, describing routes of people who succeeded to reach Europe. They are furthermore limited to 6 destination countries and 3 origin countries. Despite these limitations, these data allow nuancing some the common assertions regarding migration routes.

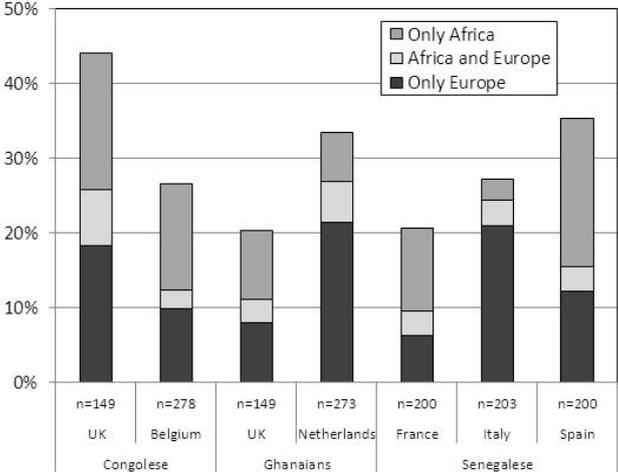
### MIGRATION ROUTES: RELATIVELY SIMPLE...

First, migrations routes are in their majority simple, and most migrants arrive directly in their destination country (Figure 13). Those who passed through other countries before arriving in their current country of residence represent between 20 and 45% of the migrants living in Europe. In other words, in all the MAFE countries, the majority of migrants arrived directly from their origin country. Figure 13 also shows that migrants moving to traditional destinations are more likely to arrive directly (UK for the Ghanaians, Belgium for the Congolese, France for the Senegalese), while people moving to new destinations are more likely to have transited in one or several other countries before settling in their country<sup>13</sup>. For instance, more than 40% of

<sup>13</sup> See also Table 4 and, because only indirect migrations through Africa or Europe are represented on Figure 13.

Congolese living in the UK had transited by another country, in Europe, in Africa, or in both regions, and around 35% of Ghanaians in the Netherlands and Senegalese in Spain had transited in another country. In contrast, around 20-25% of migrants in old destinations had transited through other European or African countries. These differences are notably due to the fact that migrations to new destinations are more recent – and that routes have become more complicated since the 1990s (see below). Very few people have transited through other regions (the maximum is 3.2% among Ghanaians in the UK).

FIGURE 13: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WHO TRANSITED (SHORT OR LONG STAY) IN ANOTHER COUNTRY BEFORE ARRIVING IN THE CURRENT COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE, BY REGION OF TRANSIT (1975-2008). BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES.



Overall, people are as likely to transit through African countries as through European countries, except among Senegalese migrants in Italy, and Ghanaians in the Netherlands, more likely to come through other European countries. The percentage of migrants who transited through other European countries varies from around 10% (Senegalese in France, Congolese in Belgium, Ghanaians in the UK) to 25% (Congolese in the UK, Ghanaians in the Netherlands, Senegalese in Italy). Transits through other European countries are more frequent for migrants living in new destinations than for those living in traditional destinations. Around 18% of Senegalese in Italy passed through France, and one Ghanaian out of seven in the Netherlands came through Germany or Italy (very few through the UK). France and Belgium are also two common transit countries among Congolese in the UK, illustrating the “Euro-Congolese” wave of migrants (Pachi, Barrett and Garbin, 2010). These results indicate that new destinations are clearly not the gates to old destinations, and that even though migrants in new destinations are more likely to have come through another European country, the large majority of them do not come through other European countries. Transits in African countries are also not that common. Except among Congolese in the UK and Belgium, and among Senegalese in Spain, less than 15% of migrants passed through another African country before reaching their current place of residence.

Because of small numbers, describing in details the specific routes and their changes over time is not very reliable. Some routes are used by only a handful of migrants in the sample, and their occurrence in the sample is to some extent due to chance. However, the top 3 routes (Table 5) illustrate both the relative simplicity of routes, and the diversity of the common transit countries.

TABLE 5: TOP-3 ROUTES (1975-2008)

Country of Origin	Country of residence	1st	2nd	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Congolese	Belgium	DRC-Belgium (69.6%)	DRC-Angola-Belgium (4.3%)	DRC-France-Belgium (4.1%)
	UK	DRC-UK (55.0%)	DRC-Belgium-UK (8.0%)	DRC-France-UK (6.7%)
Ghanaians	UK	Ghana-UK (75.8%)	Ghana-Nigeria-UK (3.9%)	Ghana-Germany-UK (3.0%)
	Netherlands	Ghana-Netherlands (65.0%)	Ghana-Germany-Netherlands (6.4%)	Ghana-Italy-Netherlands (5.2%)
Senegalese	France	Senegal-France (79.2%)	Senegal-Spain-France (3.6%)	Senegal-Morocco-France (2.9%)
	Italy	Senegal-Italy (68.9%)	Senegal-France-Italy (14.7%)	Senegal-Spain-Italy (3.8%)
	Spain	Senegal-Spain (63.8%)	Senegal-Morocco-Spain (8.8%)	Senegal-Italy-Spain (4.3%)

Biographic data, weighted percentages.

### ...BUT GROWING MORE COMPLEX

Describing changes in migration routes with small samples is not reliable. However, measuring the diversity of routes and their diversification over time is possible. Two indicators are used. The first one is simply the percentage of migrations that are direct, that is migration where people move directly from the origin country to the destination country with passing (for at least one night) through another country. The second indicator measures the diversity of routes: the number of different migration routes used by 90% of the sample. The larger the number of routes, the more they are person-specific.

Table 6 shows that direct migrations have decreased over time, even though they remain the most common type of migration route (between 56 and 76% in the years 2000-2008). The decrease in the percentage of direct migrations was strong between the 1980s and the 1990s (on average 10%), but small, or reversed, between the 1990s and the years 2000. In other words, the 1990s mark a clear change in the percentage of indirect migrations, but no clear evolution is visible after the 1990s. The diversity of routes has also mainly increased between the 1980s and the 1990s. Overall, migrants arriving in Europe in the 1980s used simple and similar routes. For instance, 90% of the Ghanaians arriving in the UK before the 1990s used only two routes: either directly or through Nigeria. In the years 2000, six different routes covered 90% of the cases<sup>14</sup>, and 6 routes also covered 90% of the cases in the years 2000. Senegalese in France used only 3 routes in the 1980s, 8 in the 1990s, and 6 in the years 2000s. The number of routes of Congolese migrants (to Belgium and to the UK) is very diverse and has also greatly increased. The greater diversity among Congolese probably partly reflects to some extent the greater distance to Europe as well as the larger size of the country (and hence the greater number of possible routes) – but may also be linked to the more individualistic nature of Congolese migration. The routes in the years 2000 were also different from the routes in the years 1990s.

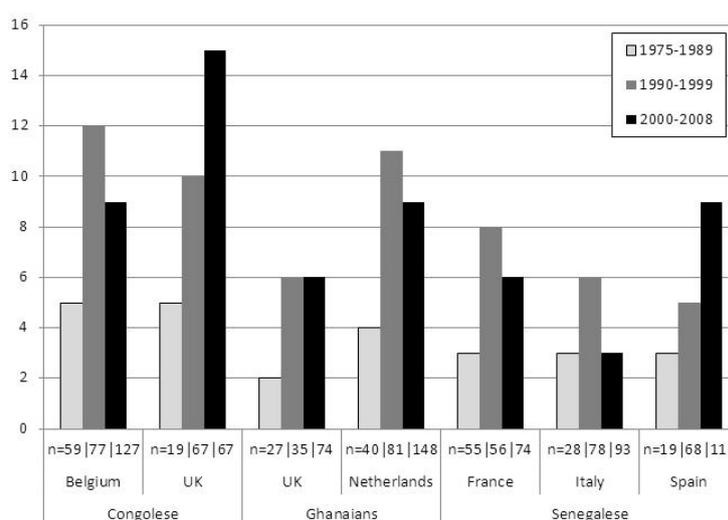
<sup>14</sup> (1) Directly from Ghana, (2) through Germany, (3) through Nigeria, (4) through Togo, (5) through Switzerland, (6) through Nigeria-Germany-France.

TABLE 6: PERCENTAGE OF DIRECT MIGRATIONS BY PERIOD OF FIRST ARRIVAL

Country of Origin		1975-1989	1990-1999	2000-2008	1975-2008
Congolese	Belgium	80.1	64.4	69.9	69.6
	N	59	77	127	263
	UK	-	54.7	56.8	55.0
Ghanaians	N	14	67	67	148
	UK	(83.7)	67.9	76.8	75.8
	Netherlands	66.3	64.4	64.9	65.0
Senegalese	N	40	81	148	269
	France	85.2	74.8	76.5	79.2
	N	55	56	74	185
	Italy	77.5	65.9	68.2	68.9
	N	28	78	93	199
Spain	(79.0)	67.2	61.3	63.8	
	N	19	68	112	199

Biographic data, weighted percentages.

FIGURE 14: NUMBER OF ROUTES USED BY 90% OF THE MIGRANTS, BY PERIOD OF ARRIVAL (1975-2008). BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.



Finally, how do migrants travel? Figure 15 and 16 show that the large majority of African migrants travel by air. Most of them in fact simply fly from their country of origin to their destination. However, a significant proportion of migrants from Senegal to Spain and Italy do travel by sea. Almost 40% of the Senegalese who arrived in Spain in the years 2000s arrived by sea, and on average more than 10% of the Senegalese in Italy also arrived by sea. These data clearly show that it is not a marginal phenomenon among Senegalese migrants in Southern Europe, but also that the situation of these migrants and the way they travel cannot be generalized to African migrants as a whole.

FIGURE 15: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WHO TRAVELLED BY AIR AT SOME STAGE IN THE JOURNEY FROM AFRICA TO THE COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE AT THE TIME OF THE SURVEY, BY PERIOD OF ARRIVAL (1975-2008). BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES.

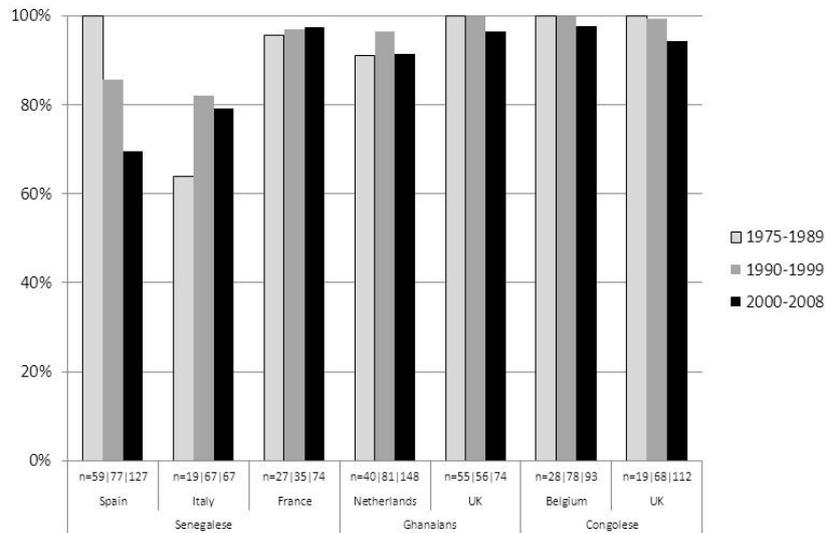
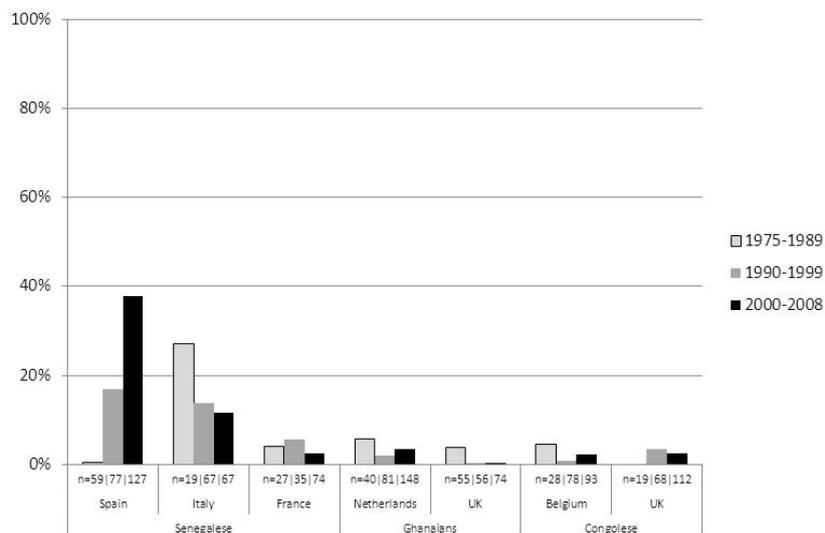


FIGURE 16: PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WHO TRAVELLED BY SEA AT SOME STAGE IN THE JOURNEY FROM AFRICA TO THE COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE AT THE TIME OF THE SURVEY, BY PERIOD OF ARRIVAL (1975-2008). BIOGRAPHIC DATA, WEIGHTED FIGURES. (N: SEE

TABLE 6)



## CONCLUSION

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This report has shown a few major transformations in African migrations from three countries (Ghana, Senegal, DR Congo). It confirms some known aspects of African migrations (e.g. the diversification of destinations), but also provides new data on some topics that are little documented (e.g. return migrations), and sometimes highly debated (e.g. irregular migration). It also nuances some knowledge (e.g. feminization of migration), and contradicts messages that are sometimes conveyed by the media or policymakers (e.g. that most African migrants arrive by sea). The data used in this report are limited to a few origin and destination countries, and the results cannot be generalized to African migration. However, one thing can certainly be generalized: diversity is a key aspect of African migration. For instance trends in departure for Congolese migrants are completely different from Senegalese and Ghanaian migrants. Trends in returns from Europe of Ghanaians are very different from trends among Senegalese and Congolese. And within Europe, we also find a considerable heterogeneity between populations living in old and new destinations, in terms of education, legal status, migration routes.... Policy-makers must absolutely have this in mind.

While the objective of this report was not to identify determinants of migration (see Gonzalez, Kraus et al., 2013), the transformations in departures, returns, profiles and routes can to some extent be traced to economic, political and policy changes in origin and destination countries. Yet, the links are neither obvious nor clearcut. For instance, despite increasingly restrictive policies in Europe, migration to Europe has increased among Senegalese and Ghanaians, illustrating that push and pull factors can be sufficiently strong to overcome barriers to migration. The complexification of migration routes and the growing numbers of undocumented migrants are just two illustrations of people's motivations to reach Europe, and are likely consequences of more stringent policies<sup>15</sup>. Decreasing returns among Congolese and Senegalese are other possible (unintended ?) effects of more restrictive immigration policies, contributing to the growing size of the African population in Europe.

Despite the restrictive policies, the size of African populations in Europe is likely to continue growing. The growing size of the African population in Europe may to some extent facilitate further immigration, through network effects. African migration to Europe may also result from the demand for cheap labour (de Haas, 2006), although the current economic crisis may impact the demand for cheap labour. The development of African countries may also further fuel migration to Europe. While this has long been acknowledged by migration researchers, the idea that development may stimulate migration from Africa to Europe has not completely percolated among "politicians, officials and the public [who] still believe that if we can only work out and tackle the so-called 'root causes' of international migration, we can *drastically reduce it*" (Castles, 2008, p.1). The MAFE data are provide an illustration that increasing migrations from Senegal and Ghana to Europe continued despite (or because) a slow development.

In sum, African migration is diverse and in constant evolution, but does not appear to respond in very predictable ways to policies. Recognizing that African immigration is likely to be an integral part of Europe's demographic future may be a necessary step for migrants, host societies and origin countries to fully benefit from these flows.

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<sup>15</sup> However, migrations to Europe are far from being limited to irregular migration. Most migrants enter Europe legally, notably for pursuing higher education and for family reunification.

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TABLE ANNEX 1: MOST FREQUENT TRANSIT COUNTRIES

Country of Origin	Country of residence	1st	2nd	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Congolese	Belgium	France (6.3%)	Angola (5.5%)	Burundi (2.5%)
	UK	France (12.5%)	Belgium (11.4%)	South Africa (5.0%)
Ghanaians	UK	Nigeria (5.5%)	Germany (3.0%)	Netherlands (2.9%)
	Netherlands	Germany (8.2%)	Italy (5.5%)	Nigeria (3.1%)
Senegalese	France	Mauritania (5.2%)	Spain (4.0%)	Morocco (3.4%)
	Italy	France (18.4%)	Spain (8.7%)	Morocco (2.8%)
	Spain	Morocco (10.5 %)	France (7.9%)	Italy (7.4%)

TABLE ANNEX 2: NUMBER OF TRAJECTORIES COVERING 90 % OF CASES

Country of Origin		1975-1989	1990-1999	2000-2008	1975-2008
Congolese	Belgium	5	12	9	15
	UK	5	10	15	19
Ghanaians	UK	2	6	6	8
	Netherlands	4	11	9	11
Senegalese	France	3	8	6	7
	Italy	3	6	3	4
	Spain	3	5	9	9