International migration from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe has generated increasing public and policy attention. The flotilla of boats bringing would-be migrants to the Canary Islands, and attempts to reach Spanish territory in Ceuta and Mellila have drawn a rapid response from Europe in the form of new policy measures. Yet the scope, nature and likely development of Sub-Saharan African migration to Europe remains poorly understood, and, as a result, European polices may be ineffective. A major cause of this lack of understanding is the absence of comprehensive data on the causes of migration and circulation between Africa and Europe.

MAFE wants to overcome the lack of understanding by collecting unique data on the characteristics and behaviour of migrants from Sub-Saharan countries to Europe. The key notion underpinning the project is that migration must not only be seen as a one-way flow from Africa to Europe. We argue that return migration, circulation and transnational practices are significant and must be understood in order to design better migration policy. The MAFE project focuses on migration flows between Europe (Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK) and Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ghana, which together account for over a quarter of all African migration to the EU. In each of these 'migration systems', our research seeks to address four key areas:

- Patterns of migration: trends, migrants' characteristics, migratory routes
- Determinants of Migration: poverty, education, gender, policies…
- Migration and economic integration: remittances, investments, integration and reintegration of migrants
- Migrations and families: family construction, structure and formation, families over time and space

MAFE investigates three "migration systems" built around the migration processes of three African populations.

In Africa, these migrants constitute three major "new African diasporas": according to OECD data, they represent three of the four largest sub-Saharan populations in Europe. They offer contexts that allow interesting comparisons: they have different histories, and especially different colonial backgrounds; their political situations are very

diverse varying from Senegal which is a very stable country to DRC which is a post-conflict country; their official languages also vary; and finally, the three countries differ in their ecological and economic conditions.
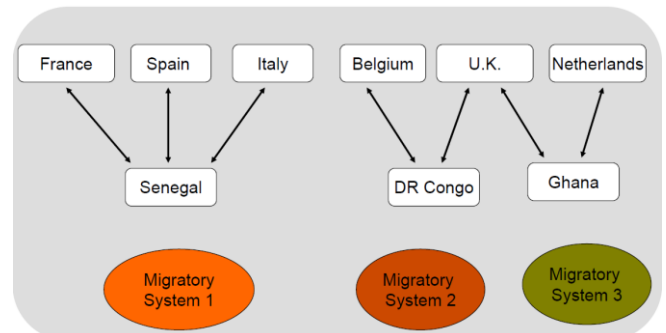
In Europe, the countries include both old and new host countries that offer quite contrasting contexts. The former apply more restrictive policies towards African migration, while the latter practice large-scale regularizations in a context where migrants are needed to fuel labour-intensive regional economies.

For each African origin, one of the destination countries corresponds to the former colonial state (UK for Ghana, France for Senegal, Belgium for Congo). The other destination country(ies) have been

chosen because of the contrasts they offer in terms of receiving contexts (language, integration and migration policies, work opportunities).

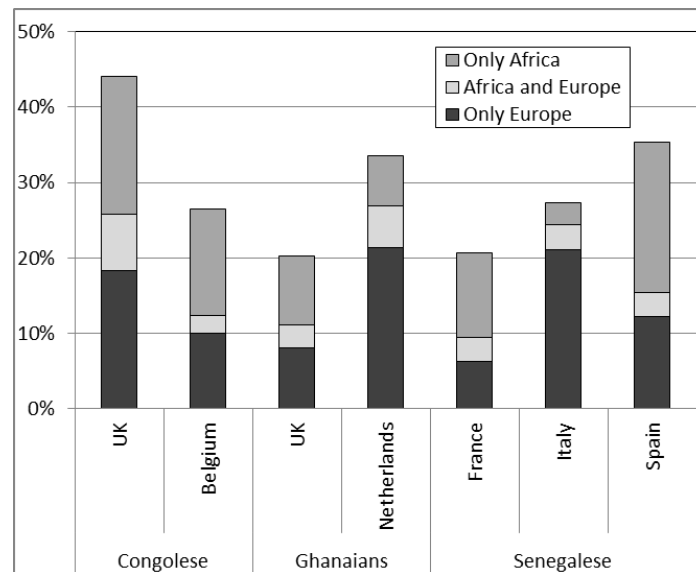## 1. Main results achieved with regard to objective "overcoming lack of data":

The creation of a new dataset on African migration is the foundation stone of the MAFE project. Comparable data have been collected in both sending and destination countries. Importantly, these data are longitudinal – including retrospective migration, education, work and family histories for individuals – and multi-level – linking individual histories to other contextual data in both origin and destination countries. The methodology used in the MAFE project is built upon existing experience. It replicates a survey applied to study Senegalese migration (MAFE-Senegal project, with data collected in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain) on new populations, i.e. Congolese and Ghanaians (with data to collected respectively in DR Congo, Belgium, UK; and in Ghana, UK and Netherlands). For financial reasons, samples are not nationally representative, though the project is built upon a progressive strategy, which will make it possible to enlarge the samples in the future.
The data is collected and workable data sets have been used by the research teams. They will be released to general users in January 2014.

2. Main results achieved with regard to objective "advancing knowledge on Afro-European migration":

Leaving and returning – the changing dynamics of African migration
- MAFE research suggests that despite restrictive immigration policies in Europe, migration rates to Europe have increased in two of the three African countries studied by the MAFE Project. These policies have also coincided with increasing irregularisation of migrants and – for two countries – decreasing rates of return. However, immigration policies are not the only factors that shape migration; conditions in the country of origin and opportunities in other African countries are also important.
- Although the overall probability of Africans migrating internationally has increased over the past 35 years, there has not been a consistent rise in the likelihood of migration to Europe. In the case of Senegal and Ghana, the proportion of migrants moving to Europe has increased since the 1970s. However, migration to Europe from the Democratic Republic of Congo has stagnated since the 1990s.
- Return migration from Europe to Africa appears to be on the decline. The probability of migrants returning from Europe has steeply declined in DR Congo and Senegal since 1975, whilst in Ghana return probability decreased drastically in the 1990s before increasing again between 2000 and 2008.
- Although the majority of African migrants are legally resident in Europe, irregular migration appears to be on the increase. This is particularly so in the case of Senegal and DR Congo, less so in the case of Ghana and – importantly – also varies according to different European destination countries.
- African migrants to 'new' European destination countries tend to have different profiles than those who move to more 'traditional' European destination countries. Specifically, they are more likely to be less educated and undocumented.
- Transit migration is much more common for migration to 'new' European migration destinations, and a significant proportion of migrants appear to be moving within Europe itself, particularly from traditional receiving countries to 'new' destinations.
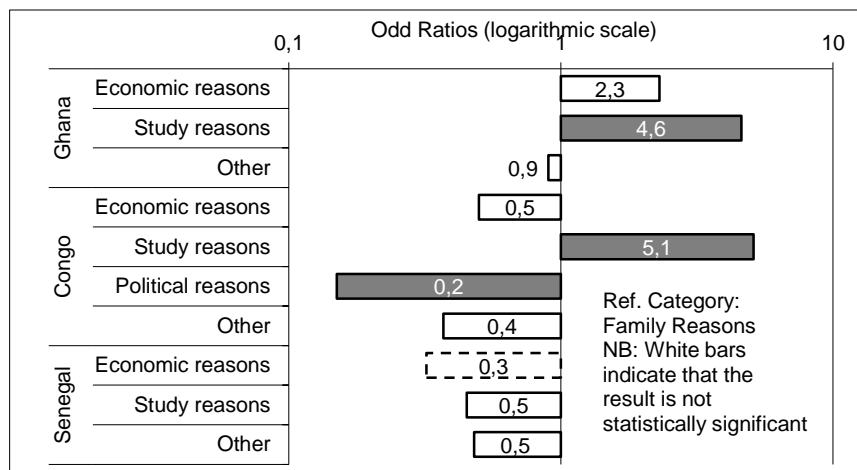
FIG. PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS WHO TRANSITED VIA ANOTHER COUNTRY BEFORE ARRIVING IN COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE, BY REGION OF TRANSIT (1975-2008)

Chart axis labels: 50%, 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0%

Legend:
- Only Africa
- Africa and Europe
- Only Europe

X-axis labels: UK, Belgium (Congolese); UK, Netherlands (Ghanaians); France, Italy, Spain (Senegalese)

Investigating the role of individual, household and contextual factors

- MAFE research shows that Africans with at least some tertiary education are more likely to migrate to Europe. However, education levels apparently have little impact on the probability of return.
- Migration from Africa is selective on the basis of age and sex, but not consistently across all countries. In Senegal and Ghana, those aged under 35 have a higher likelihood of migrating to Europe, but this is not true in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Senegal, men are more likely to migrate to Europe than women, but there is no significant difference between men and women in Ghana or DR Congo.
- Initial migration is often affected by the location of family members, friends and acquaintances, re-affirming previous research findings about the importance of social networks in facilitating mobility. Having an adult relative – especially a partner – in Europe was found to substantially increase the probability of migration. However, the significance of nuclear family links should not be overstated as one-quarter of Africans who moved to Europe were single at the time of their migration.
- The likelihood of return migration among African migrants in Europe is often linked to reasons for initial migration. For example, migrants from Ghana and DR Congo who went to Europe to study were over five times more likely to return than migrants who left for other reasons, whereas those who left DR Congo for political reasons were extremely unlikely to return.
- In instances where migrants retain strong links with their country of origin, this is not a guarantee of imminent return migration. Indeed, Congolese and Senegalese migrants who had sent remittances to or visited their country of origin were found, paradoxically, to be more likely to delay return.

FIG . THE EFFECT OF REASONS FOR INITIAL MIGRATION ON THE PROBABILITY OF RETURN TO THE HOME COUNTRY

Odd Ratios (logarithmic scale)

Ghana	Economic reasons	2,3
	Study reasons	4,6
	Other	0,9
Congo	Economic reasons	0,5
	Study reasons	5,1
	Political reasons	0,2
	Other	0,4
Senegal	Economic reasons	0,3
	Study reasons	0,5
	Other	0,5

Ref. Category: Family Reasons
NB: White bars indicate that the result is not statistically significant

Labour outcomes for migrants and returnees

- The employment profiles of migrants upon arrival in Europe vary considerably between flows from different origin countries, and between 'traditional' and 'new' destination countries, with the latter generally attracting more low-skilled migrants.
- The employment trajectories of African migrants in Europe are also diverse, reflecting different educational profiles, ease of integration, and access to jobs that match migrants' skills.
- There is a significant link between studying for a higher degree in Europe and access to highly skilled positions thereafter. Migrants were much more likely to enter skilled work if they studied after arrival in Europe than if they arrived from a skilled occupation in Africa.
- Migrant women are less likely to be economically active than men, with the largest gap existing between male and female Senegalese migrants and the smallest between Ghanaian male and female migrants.
- Economic contributions of migrants to their country of origin through remittances, contributions to hometown associations, and the purchase of property increase according to time spent in Europe.
- The economic re-integration of migrants from all three countries is broadly positive after return. However, origin countries tend to experience a 'brain re-gain' rather than a 'brain gain', as the occupational level of returnees mainly reflects their initial position before migrating.

FIG. LABOUR MARKET RE-INTEGRATION OF RETURNEES: COMPARING STATUS BEFORE MIGRATION TO EUROPE; PRIOR TO RETURN FROM EUROPE; IN FIRST YEAR AFTER RETURN; AND AT TIME OF MAFE SURVEY
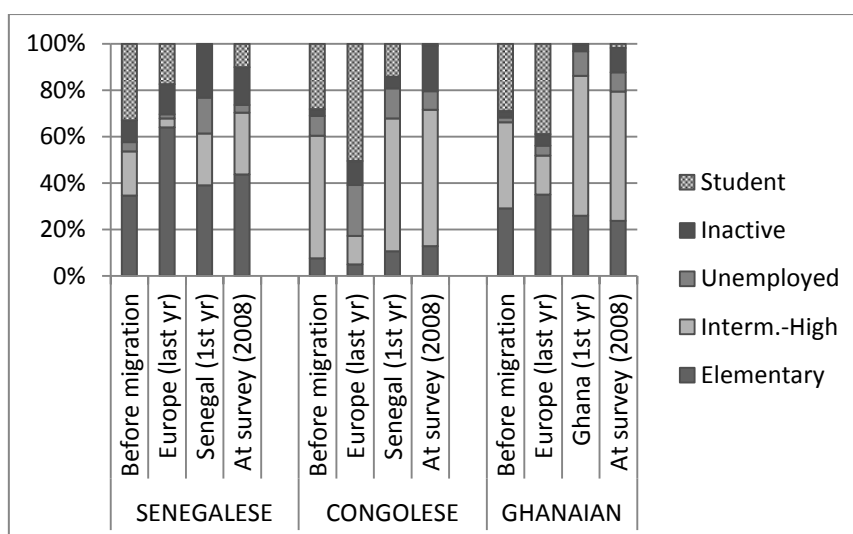
Family life between Africa and Europe

- Three-quarters of the migrants interviewed in the MAFE Project were part of a nuclear family, meaning that they had a spouse and/or children. For two out of five of these migrants, migration led to the creation of a transnational family structure, where at least one member of the nuclear family was living in another country. The proportion of transnational families was especially high for Senegalese migrants, but less so for Congolese and Ghanaian migrants.
- Across all destinations, migrants with transnational family arrangements had typically been in Europe for less time than those in unified or re-unified families. Amongst Senegalese migrants in Europe, men were more likely to have transnational families than women, and for all three African groups undocumented migrants were more likely to have them than documented migrants.
- Of those migrants with families, reunification in Europe was far from universal, with one quarter of Ghanaian and one third of Congolese migrants being reunified at the time of the survey. Reunification was even less prevalent amongst Senegalese families.
- Contrary to policy assumptions, African migrant families did not always reunify in Europe; in fact, a significant number of all family reunification took place in the country of origin.
- Households in Africa typically did not contribute to the financial costs of migration for their members with only one fifth of Ghanaian households, and one quarter of Congolese and Senegalese households making a contribution. In all cases, children of household heads were the most frequently supported.
- A high proportion of households in Africa had access to international social networks and received remittances. Spouses, children and siblings of the household head were the most frequent remitters, but in some cases more extended kin also sent remittances.

FIG . URBAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH LINKS TO A FAMILY MEMBER ABROAD
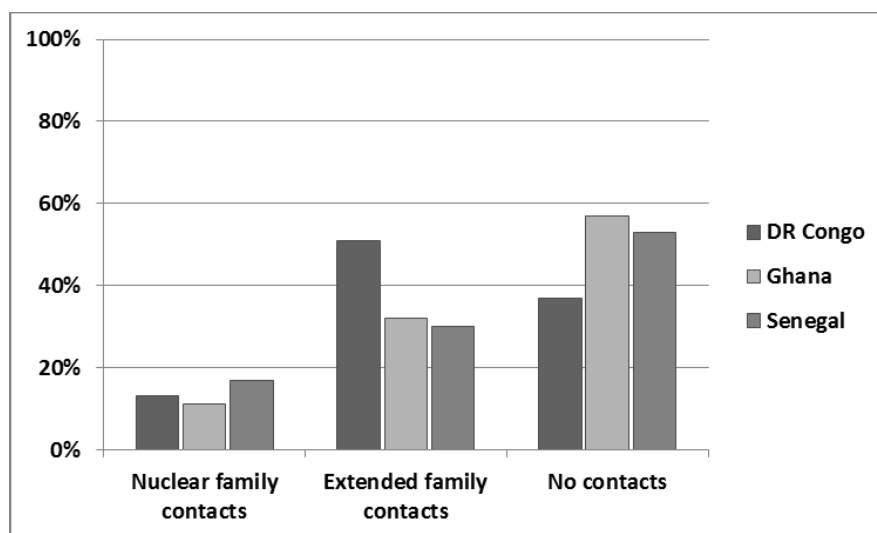
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3. Expected final results and their potential impacts and use

African migration has become a major concern for European policy-makers. New policy measures are under development, but are not always based on a good understanding of the underlying causes, nature and consequences of African migration. The Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) Project produced data to increase the understanding of Afro-European migration and collected and analysed a new and unique set of quantitative data.

National and international policy-makers have been paying increasing attention to African migration over the past decade. In 2005, the European Council adopted the Global Approach to Migration; this was followed both by a regional dialogue, the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, which builds on the Rabat, Tripoli and Lisbon declarations, and bilateral dialogues with 'priority' countries in sub-Saharan Africa. However, data upon which to develop a good understanding of the factors, trends and implications of Euro-African migration remain very limited. In the case of African migration, conflicting accounts about the overall volume of migration (over 50 million according

to the African Union in 2006, whereas UNDP and ILO estimate just under 20 million for 2010) within and from Africa reflect the paucity and poor quality of data sources. At the international level, large datasets capture measures of international migration by collating static national-level census data, such as the Docquier–Marfouk dataset on international migration by gender and educational attainment based on OECD's Database of Immigrants in OECD Countries (DIOC); the UN Population Division's Trends in the Total Migration Stock; and the Global Migrant Origin Database assembled by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty (Migration DRC). Whilst these are very useful, such data give poor insights into the causes and consequences of migration. At the other end of the spectrum, a wealth of qualitative data has been produced on migration flows or migrant groups. But data from qualitative studies often lack comparability and are obtained from non-representative samples.

However, some relatively rare large-sample micro-data (data relating to individuals) collection initiatives have generated very interesting results, both in advancing collection and analysis methodology, and in generating insightful findings. These include the Mexican Migration Project (which began in 1982), now being extended with the Latin American Migration Project (since 1998), and the Eurostat-funded project on Push and Pull Factors of International Migration which looked at migration from Africa to Europe (which began in 1997).

The MAFE Project builds on these advances in international micro-data collection and analysis, and adapts them to the study of migration between Africa and Europe.

The MAFE dataset is the first large-scale dataset on migration between Africa and Europe of its kind. It compiles approximately 6,000 individual (1,500 each in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana & Senegal, and 1,500 in total of Congolese, Ghanaians & Senegalese migrants across six European destination countries) and 4,500 household records (1,500 each in DR Congo, Ghana & Senegal). Moreover, the dataset has the potential to be extended to include a wider range of places both in origin and destination.

In Africa, the samples in the current version of the MAFE dataset are representative of migrant and non-migrant populations in major cities (Dakar, Kinshasa and Accra), although surveys were also conducted in the region of Kumasi in Ghana, which includes rural areas. All these locations constitute major departure points for international migration and are therefore particularly useful study sites.

Comparative analysis of the data will enable researchers to disentangle general processes from national specificities. For instance, whereas overall a greater share of African migrants go to other African rather than to European countries, clear differences appear when comparing DR Congo and Senegal. Most Congolese emigrants stay on the African continent, whereas the Senegalese tend to go further afield to Northern countries, in particular to Europe and North America.

In the scientific field, MAFE made available to the scientific community a new quantitative data-set on migration according to a design that has rarely been enforced.

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