

**Incidence and duration of child-parent separation due to international migration.
Selection and integration effects**

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INTRODUCTION

In the process of migration, families undergo profound transformations that are often complicated by extended periods of separation between loved ones -not only from extended family members, but also from the nuclear family. Governments of receiving countries frequently trumpet their concerns about the potential multiplier effect of family-linked migration and periodically implement legal reforms aimed at restricting new immigration grounded on family ties. In contrast, immigrants' associations and officials from the sending countries often complaint about the tedious procedure that relatives left behind have to go through in order to join their kin abroad, and emphasize transnationalism as an increasingly common family arrangement. Both the former and the later, they all provide their audiences with narratives of individual cases that support what they present as an uncontested fact. Yet, the empirical data to support any of these two beliefs is extremely limited and weak. Indeed, we still have little sense of the prevalence of these forms of family separations related to international migration, and of their actual effects on family relations and children's development.

While family separations are present among all country-of-origin groups, there are clear differences between groups in lengths of separations as well as people from whom the youth are separated. However, the underlying reasons for these differences are still not fully understood. After presenting a panoramic overview of the migration-related separations experienced by children in immigrant families in each of our three destination countries in Europe, we will measure in a quite precise way the separations' incidence and duration for Senegalese children over the latest decades, by utilizing the recently released data from the Project "Migrations between Africa and Europe" (MAFE). Our findings indicate that child-parent separation due to international migration is not a negligible issue for the Senegalese population. In 2007, approximately 16 percent of Senegalese children had been separated from one or both parents for extended periods of their childhood as a result of parental international

migration; this percentage goes up to 31 if we focus exclusively on children of Senegalese origin born in Europe.

Next, we describe the diversity of these experiences depending on the children's sex, age, parents' country of immigration, etc., and try to identify the main factors driving the decision to put an end to a child-parent separation among Senegalese migrants who has come to Europe, exploring the extent to which this decision differ depending on whether reunifications take place in Europe or back in Senegal, and depending on the specific country in Europe where the immigrant parents live(d).

1. CHILDREN MIGRATION. THEORETICAL REASONING AND PREVIOUS EVIDENCE WITH A FOCUS ON FRANCE, SPAIN & ITALY

As we said earlier very little have been written about family separations arising out of the immigrant experience. Traditionally, migration was mostly conceived as a temporary male affair in which the father left his wife and children back in origin, worked for a while abroad and came back home after having saved (or remitted) enough money to either buffer the income instability derived from droughts, bad harvests, etc., or to achieve the consumption/investment goal that fuelled the migration decision at first. Yet, the reality of growing immigrant populations in most receiving countries quickly contradicted this picture; what started as a large flow

Immigrant families constitute a growing share of the population living in developed countries. However, our understanding of the processes that resulted in the formation, reunification and settlement of immigrant families in destination areas remains quite flawed. A significant part of these families have been formed at destination (i.e single immigrants who found their partners during their stay abroad, had children with them and settled more or less permanently in the host country). However, as long as immigration remains alive, there are always some families constituted before the migration of one (or more) of their members, which split as a result of these members' moves. Their separation may last for relatively long periods and would end either with reunification at destination or the migrants' return to their country of origin.

While the process of family formation, partner choice and childbearing by immigrants in developed countries have received a lot of attention by demographers, sociologists and economists in the recent decades, a consistent theoretical model accounting for family-linked migration is poorly developed. Family reunification has not been explicitly addressed by either Neoclassical Economics (NE) or New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM). Although some theoretical studies have dealt with family migration decisions (Sandell 1977, Mincer 1978, Stark 1985, Borjas & Bronars 1990), they are mostly focused on the family separation and the circumstances of it, rather than on the process leading to (some) family reunification after a period of physical separation due to international migration.

Indeed, most empirical studies have portrayed family reunification as the reverse of return migration. Accordingly, the factors associated with family reunification at destination are largely assumed to be the opposite of those that increase the likelihood of return. For instance, when interpreting the implications of the NE and NELM tenets regarding return migration, Constant & Massey (2002) stated that family reunification makes little sense in the context of NELM, unless the sponsored relative is an adult willing to work at destination like the spouse. In such a case, reunification is accomplished in order to reduce the number and duration of trips and to increase the probability to return (instead of settling permanently), by enhancing the household's ability to meet a given earnings/savings target. In contrast, these authors argued, in the view of NE, income-maximize migrants are expected to be more willing to endure relatively long separations until the proper arrangements can be made for family reunification in terms of housing, schools and so on.

Following this reasoning, spousal reunification can be explained by both theoretical frameworks, although it would be interpreted as an indication of opposing residential intentions: a clear movement towards permanent settlement at destination for NE's income-maximizing migrants versus an attempt to accelerate return to the home country for NELM's target-earners. Moreover, and for the same reasons, the spouse's reunification is expected to be quicker among target-earner migrants than income-maximizing ones.

In contrast, the reunification of children would make a different case. The presence of children in the household would detract from their parents' work effort (especially the mother's) and thus will reduce their odds of return, which implies that taking the children to the immigration country only makes sense conditionally on settlement intentions. To put it differently, target-earners migrants are expected to reunify with their children only back in the country of origin.

Unfortunately, these assumptions have rarely been put under serious empirical scrutiny, due mainly to data availability issues. However, they suffer from some limitations that we would like to mention here. First of all, it is quite difficult to distinguish income-maximizing from target-earner migrants, especially because the migration plans change over time and the same individual may qualify as one or another at different moments of his migration experience. In relation to this, family reunification and return migration do not need to be mutually exclusive but events occurring at different stages of the migration process, which should be analyzed separately. This is especially the case if repeat migration or circulation is a common practice of immigrants, as the experience of some groups in some countries recently suggested (Constant and Zimmermann 2007).

Secondly, the previous reasoning restricts to the expected dynamics within typical Western nuclear families, which may clearly not fit the functioning of a typical family in other cultural settings to which migrants belong. Namely, there is one dimension of nuclear household decision-making models that deserves critical attention in the context of international migration: the importance of considerations of flexible household

boundaries to intra-household decisions and resource availability, which have already proved to play a key role in explaining differences in nutrition of young children across Latin America and West African countries (Desai 1992), for instance. In cultural settings characterized by what Findley (Findley 1997) called 'the "weakness of the conjugal bond', and where the tasks related to the children childrearing are shared by women within the group of the extended family (or even beyond it), as it is the frequently the case in many African communities, the meaning of parent-child separations and, thus, decisions concerning whether and how to put them to an end, may substantially differ from what both the NE and NELM suggested.

Finally, in the last two decades, many authors have put their emphasis on transnationalism. In spite of the many critics and disagreements this term and the authors that use it have received, we may accept that their main contribution to the literature on migration derives from abandoning 'methodological nationalism' (Winner and Glick Schiller 2003), and shifting the analytical focus from the place of origin and place of destination to the movements involved in sustaining cross-border livelihoods (Sorensen and Olwig 2002). The transnational perspective has precisely been given a powerful impulse by studies of gender and migration that paid attention to the so-called 'global care chain' () and the experiences of transnational motherhood and childhood (Hondegau-Sotelo 1994, Parreñas 2005).

In this literature, transnational families are claimed to be different from the ordinary immigrant family; their defining characteristic being not the act of crossing the border but rather the dispersion of the family across nation states without sacrificing a sense of collective welfare and unity (Bryceson & Vorela 2002). As can be deduced from the simplistic presentation made above in this section, the idea of transnationalism as a long-lasting and stable family arrangement is not compatible with the main predictions that one may derive from the NE model concerning the process of migrants' family reunification. This is not that clear in the case of NELM. Stark and his colleagues never explicitly stated that migration needed to be temporary in order to fit into their theoretical model; thus, long-lasting separations as a way of diversifying risk cannot be discarded. However, they did not explicitly develop the possibility of recurrent circulation or repeated migration, and also considered the reunification in destination as the sign of permanent settlement that would explain, among others, the decay of remittances (Lucas and Stark, 1985).

In more recent years, the substantially lower cost of (potentially frequent) international moves in comparison past decades, have probably encouraged repeated migration and fuelled a myriad of in-depth qualitative case-studies that pay attention to the great internal diversity and fluidity of transnational families, which derives not only from the periodical coming and goings of new immigrants and returnees, but also from the mouldable working and living arrangements of their members (see (Bledsoe and Sow 2008) (Bledsoe 2008) (Riccio 2001) (Riccio 2001) (Rodríguez-García 2006), for examples with African migrants). However, the scarcity of large longitudinal surveys of migrant families have largely prevented to establish so far which are the predominant

patterns of transnationalism among different groups, and which sort of changes in transnational arrangements are more likely to take place as time of separation lengthens. In particular, it is not clear yet when and why some transnational families evolve into reunified immigrant families, and whether or for whom reunification is more likely to be accomplished at the destination or the origin country.

Official data on family reunification or immigration admitted on family grounds are generally restricted to aggregated figures; and they disregard any sort of family-linked migration that does not fit to the categories and procedures established in the immigration law for that goal. In contrast, survey data generally allows to reconstruct the migration trajectory of individuals but not always that of their relatives. This is one of the main reasons why we know very little about prevalence, pace, characteristics and determinants of family-linked migration processes. There are, however, a few exceptions. Velling (Velling 1993) and González-Ferrer (González-Ferrer 2007), for instance, utilised the data from the German Socio-Economic Panel to study both the reunification of spouses and children of foreigners recruited to work in Germany during the sixties. Their analyses concluded that mother's education and parents' joint migration accelerated their children's migration to join them in Germany. On the contrary, the husband's educational level accelerated the wife's reunification but apparently had no impact on the migration of the children. Finally, a larger number of siblings, especially when they were all of preschool ages, substantially reduced the child's chances to migrate to Germany. However, this effect was probably conditional on having potential support from grandmothers at the country of origin to take care of the children, which made family reunification in Germany much more unlikely according to Velling's results.

Other authors have found too that having children at the home country increases the odds of return for male immigrants –especially if they are still young (Velling 1997), whereas having children in the host country reduces those odds (Dustman, 1993; Steiner and Velling, 1994; Schmidt, 1994; Constant and Massey, 2002). Moreover, Dustman (2003) has recently shown that the size of such a negative effect of children on their parents' return varies by the gender of the children, at least for immigrants of Turkish origin; having only daughters in Germany still reduces the odds of their parents' return to their homeland but less than when they have only sons in Germany.

Finally, the economic situation of the migrants at destination were found also important to explain the choice between reunifying the family in Germany and coming back to reunify them back in origin. Higher household income, being remitting and lower unemployment rate at destination reduced the probability of reunifying by return to the home country (Velling 1997). The effect of changes in the context of reception, namely in the access to legal employment permitted for family migrants as well as changes in family allowances granted to foreigners depending on the country of residence of their children, were also found to significantly affect the pace of children's reunification in Germany (González-Ferrer 2007).

Unfortunately, the empirical quantitative evidence available out from the German migration experience is quite restricted. In the US context, analyses have mostly based on official data that cover exclusively legal reunification and offered a very limited set of explanatory variables (Jasso and Roenzweig 1997). More recently, Cornelius et al. (2008) have shown that tougher controls at the border have encouraged longer stays of irregular migrants in the North, longer separations from their families at origin and, consequently, an increase of the percentage of irregular migrants that are women and children trying to join their relatives on the other side of the border. To put it differently, tougher admission policies has probably increased the number of families that reunify their relatives as irregular migrants, although we continue knowing very little about the main determinants of the process of family reunification among immigrants in the US.

2. SENEGALESE FAMILIES AND THEIR MIGRATION TO EUROPE. A SHORT REVIEW

Family system(s) in Senegal

In Senegal, like in almost all sub-Saharan societies, the basic social unit is some form of extended family. According to the latest Census (2002), the average size of Senegalese households was 9.1 persons, which is not surprising if one takes into account, among other things, that polygamy is permitted and relatively extended (25 percent of all marriages are polygamous, Senegal Census 2002, in (Vázquez Silva 2010). Moreover, after marriage, the wife usually moves to her husband's house, where she will take care of the house chores and caring tasks in collaboration with other women of the family – maybe other co-spouses if the husband is polygamous, or her new sisters' in law (Poiret, 1996).

Marrying and moving to the husband's parental home does not necessarily imply a great deal of intimacy between the spouses, at least not in the Western way. According to Findley, in much of Africa, men and women take their meals separately, rarely socialize together, and have marriages where the level of conjugal interaction is quite low (Findley 1997): 121). Indeed, in the Senegalese traditional family model, being in a couple does not necessarily imply to live together in the same place. In Africa there is quite a high proportion of spouses living in distant places for relatively long periods (from 3 to 7 years), frequently as a result of intense internal migration aimed at diversify sources of income and risk across several places (Stark, 1991), but not only (apparently living in different dwellings even when both spouses reside in the same town or village is not totally infrequent). Findley estimated between 43 and 68 the percentage of couples being in this situation at some point during their lives in Senegal (Findley, 1997: 125).

In any case, and regardless of migration, once the newly-wed wife moves in 'her' new household, she becomes under the authority not only of her husband and other old men

in his family but also under the authority of the older women, especially her mother in law. Parents, as elders in general, are devoted a great deal of respect and authority in the Senegalese society as a whole. In many occasions, are still the parents (i.e. fathers) the ones who decide their children's migration, the ones who choose their children's spouses, and the recipients and administrators of at least part of the remittances that their adult migrant children send to Senegal.

In line with this, to take care of her mother in law, especially if she is widowed, is considered one of the most important duties of a 'good' Senegalese wife. In fact, some qualitative studies among Senegalese families in Spain describe how the reunification of the spouse and children in Europe, when the father has migrated, is often delayed if the mother-in-law is old and sick (Vazquez-Silva 2010). In these situations, the migration of the migrant's wife and her children might imply not only receiving less help and care at home in everyday life, but also a risk of receiving fewer remittances from their migrant children abroad. The arrival and settlement of the migrant's nuclear abroad would imply a larger amount of expenses for the migrant and, thus, less money (and incentives) to remit. As a strategy to avoid this risk, it makes perfect sense for the elders in the family to oppose to any form of "family reunification", as conceived in Europe that is, implying the out-migration of wives and children. By keeping their absent sons' wives and children at origin, they would assure that they are still sent remittances, they will increase the workforce available to the extended family (all the more necessary since young men were absent), and it finally guaranteed that migrants would finally come back to the home village. For all these reasons, it was in everyone's interest to contribute to the caring activities for the left behind, especially for the children of the absent migrant, in case the wife wants/needs to go abroad temporarily, as the safest way to assure the migrant continues in touch with the parental home.

On the other hand, and even female migration has been commonly discouraged, the fact the parents-in-law or, more generally, relatives at the husband's parental home are available to take care of the children will substantially reduce both the logistic and social costs of wife's migration, regardless of whether they do it on self-interest or altruism. The circumstances that usually characterize motherhood and childrearing in Senegal largely eliminates the moral sanction that emigration frequently implies for mothers who leave their children behind in other cultures, like in most Latin American countries. As well as for spouses, there is also a certain distance between parents and their children. Co-residence is not a strong social norm for most of them since the children 'belong' to their lineage at least as much as to their parents. Fostering is thus quite frequent, not only in Senegal but in many parts of Africa (according to DHS surveys in Africa, 9% to 35% of the households shelter children who live without their parents, (Pilon and Vignikin 2006)). The fact that extended family is the basic unit of social organization, and that there are always several women at home makes much easier to reorganize the caring tasks when the biological mother is absent. In addition, the participation of several women in the childrearing process weakens the mothers'

moral obligation as the children's unique and legitimate caretaker (Vázquez Silva 2010)¹.

This general description of how family relationships work in Senegal is, however, a little simplistic and has largely neglected the huge ethnic heterogeneity of the Senegalese society. What we have presented here is a quite summarized and simplistic view of the most traditional family model among the Wolof, the largest ethnic group in the region of Dakar and the most numerous one among Senegalese migrants in Europe. Yet, the Serer and the Diola groups, for instance, are known to have traditionally followed a more matrilineal lineage system, which would probably imply a stronger women's bargaining position within their couple and families at large, and will then alter many of the phenomena described above.

Moreover, to the ethnic differences, one must add the specificities derived from various religious affiliations. In the case of Senegal, most Muslims belong to Sufi brotherhoods, mainly Mouride, Tidiane, Khadre and Layène. The Mouride one was founded in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and was originally based in the agricultural rural area. But peanut growers, the traditional social background of the Mouride brotherhood were more and more replaced by urban merchants (Babou 2002). Internationalization of their trading activities is one factor leading to increased out-migration (Riccio 2001), and their strong sense of commitment towards the whole community, which they express in solidarity and development initiatives for the good of all Mourides and their leaders, are frequently mentioned as contributing to the development of dense and helpful support networks for those who migrate to Europe (Schoorl et al. 2000, Herman 2006, De Haas 2007).

Senegalese migration to Europe

The presence of these different ethnic and religious groups among the Senegalese migrants in Europe has changed over time and across countries of destination. The first significant wave of out-migration from Senegal to Europe, to France in particular, started in the early 1960s in the Northern part of the country, among Soninke and Toucouleurs of the Senegal River Valley. Although migration began as a male-affair and family reunification at destination was explicitly discouraged by both communities at the home country and the main receiving state at the time in Europe, the prolongation of family separations, difficulties for frequent visits and circulations derived from the trip high price and the border closing in the mid seventies in Europe, some Senegalese female and children migration linked to family reunification processes started by the late seventies (Timera 1996; Barou 2002).

¹ It is probably worth to mention that who's the 'right' caretaker during the maternal absence may also vary according to the sex of the child; daughters are generally sent with to the mother's parental home and looked after by the grandmother or aunts, while sons remain in the father's household, where he is born.

However, Senegalese families soon came across various difficulties. Polygamous families, if partly reunified in France, frequently faced serious housing difficulties and a whole range of integration problems. On the other hand, the absence of the extended family strongly disrupted the usual forms of social organisation and control: the dominant role of the father and husband started to be contested (Barou 2002). The idea that the French law was too favourable to women spread among the Senegalese community, so that males started to fear family reunification, a feeling fuelled by the elders back in the home village (Azoulay and Quiminal 2002). In 1993, a law forbade reunification of polygamous families in France and the right-wing coalition in office implemented a policy of 'zero immigration', which was translated into a series of restrictive laws known as the 'Pasqua laws'. These laws prohibited foreign graduates from accepting positions with French employers, denied residency permits to foreign spouses who had been in the country illegally prior to marrying, and increased the waiting period for family reunification from one to three years (Hamilton et al. 2002). The main result of the Pasqua Laws was to render legal migration flows illegal. In this context, it is obvious why family reunification at destination might not appear to all Senegalese migrants as an ideal outcome, in contrast to what most European governments and citizens, scared by the risk of an African invasion, seem to believe.

Simultaneously with the toughening immigration context in France, Senegalese flows started to diversify and both Italy and Spain emerged as new attractive destinations in Europe. Although France probably still hosts the largest estimated number of legal Senegalese immigrants within Europe, the recent Spanish and Italian figures are definitely quite close to the French ones. In Italy, the Senegalese legal residents were more than 67,000 at the beginning of 2009 (ISTAT), while the number of Senegalese migrants registered by the 1999 French Census was more than 50,000 (INSEE). The number of Senegalese registered in the Spanish Local Population Register (Padrón Municipal) was approximately 55,000 at the beginning of 2009; however, this figure also includes most of irregular immigrants (INE, Padrón Municipal). Overall, Senegalese living in Europe are estimated to represent between 40 and 50 percent of Senegalese current international migrants.

The more recent origin of Senegalese migration to both Italy and Spain is reflected in the larger sex imbalances shown by official statistical sources in these two countries (15 and 23 percent of Senegalese legal residents in 2008, respectively) in comparison to an almost balanced sex composition in France (46 percent in 2006). Senegalese migrants in these two new European destinations are most of Wolof origin, a patrilineal ethnic group with social norms very similar to the Soninke and Toucouleurs pioneers from the Senegal River Valley who came to France more than forty years ago (even though the traditional systems differ in many ways when entering into details). However, some particularities of these new inflows should be remarked as well. First of all, there is a clear over-representation of members of the Mouride brotherhood in the flow to Italy in comparison not only to the old Senegalese migration to France but also in comparison to the recent migration to Spain; likewise, there are less international students involved

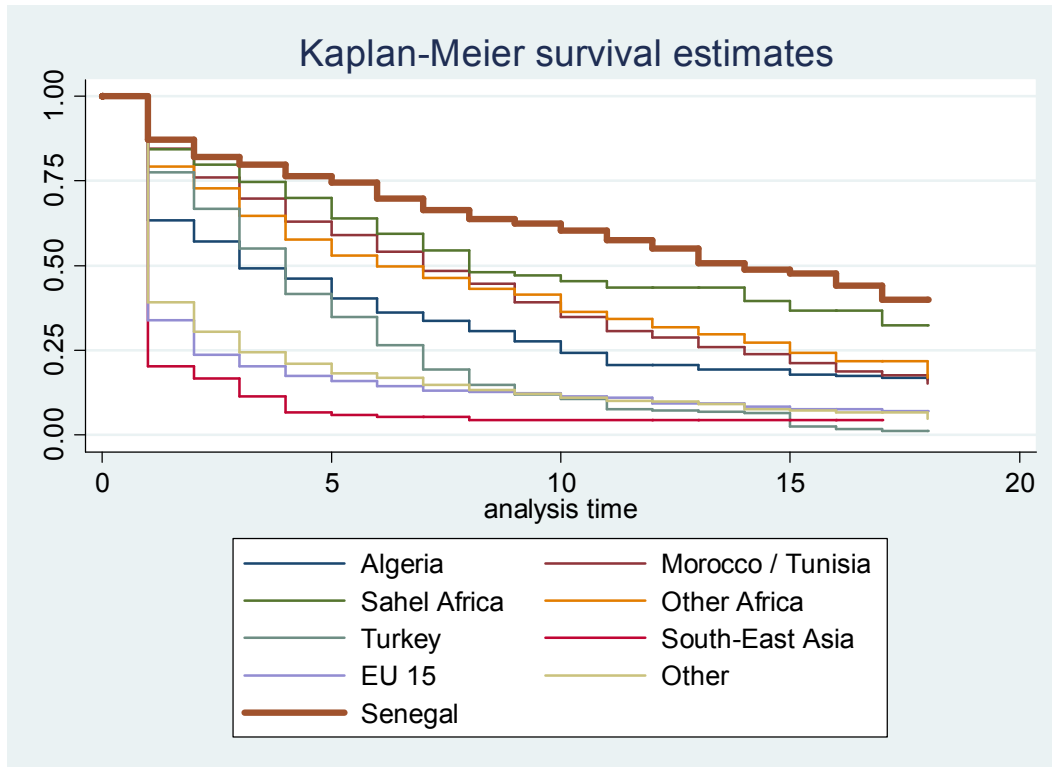
in the flows to these two new countries, especially to Spain, reflecting language differences and different selection processes at work.

Apart from these compositional differences in the ethnic, religious and probably educational distribution of Senegalese flows to their main three destinations in Europe, the new generation of migrants tends to move more frequently without parental permission (Lalou and Ndione 2005; Riccio 2008). In spite of their supposed greater independence in the migration decision making, they have been commonly labelled “transmigrants” by recent socio-anthropological studies, as a way to emphasize their strong attachment to their home country and to describe how they organise their work life so that they can come and go between Europe and Senegal (Riccio 2006) (Rodríguez-García 2006). Moreover, they are told to share some “resistance to family reunification” with their predecessors to France, which is interpreted as a product both of an economic choice (relatives are more expensive to maintain in Europe) and of a social option (Riccio 2008). In fact, not only Riccio but also Bledsoe and Sow (2008) have recently written about cases of African wives and children in Europe being sent back to their home countries, a decision interpreted as resulting from ‘the fear that children may lose their cultural and religious point of reference by living abroad’ (p.22).

Whether this type behaviours and characterisations of recent Senegalese inflows to Italy and Spain, and their intended similarities with the old migrants to France, actually exist or constitute rather anecdotic evidence is difficult to ascertain due to the lack of large scale surveys where Senegalese groups are sufficiently represented. Yet, it seems quite obvious that the longer settlement of the Senegalese population in France, in comparison to more recent destinations in Southern Europe, is expected to be associated with larger numbers of migrants being admitted on the basis of family reunification in the former, as well as with larger number of legal residents. In addition, even if irregular migration to France obviously still exists, these irregular migrants are likely to be more related to increasing restrictions on family reunification provisions (Bèque 2007) than to the pull effect of the informal sector, in contrast to Spain or Italy.

In order to illustrate more accurately the issue of family reunification in the countries where most Senegalese migrants migrate to, we have analyzed the process of children’s reunification in France and Spain, utilizing recent nationally representative samples of immigrants contained in MGIS 1992 and TeO 2010, and NIS 2007, respectively. As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, the process of children’s reunification in France seems almost completed in five years after the migration of the first-mover parent among immigrants from South-East Asia (mostly admitted as refugees) and EU15 (privileged legal regime). Children from Turkey and Algeria were somehow slower in joining their parent(s) in France: approximately 60 percent were in France after five years since the first child-parent separation, and more than 75 percent after 10 years. A third group is made by children from Morocco, Sahel Africa and rest of Africa, for whom approximately 35 percent had joined their parent(s) in France after 5 years since separation started but the incidence of reunification reached almost 75 percent of total number of children in 15 years.

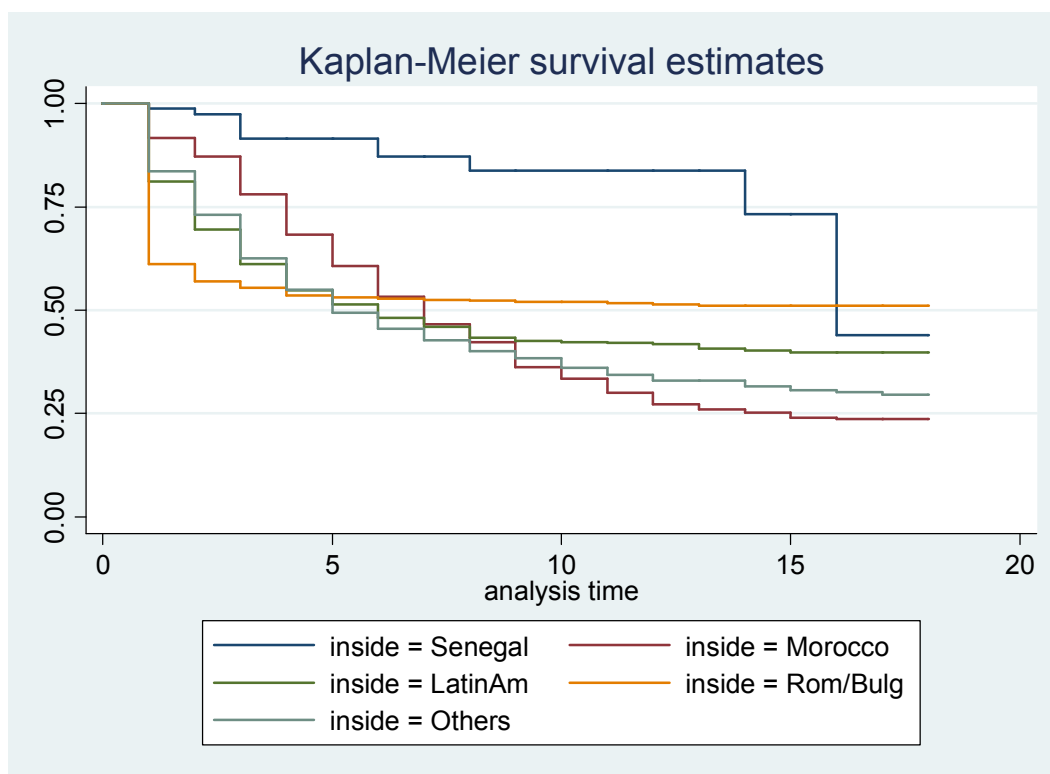
Figure 1. Survival function of immigrant child reunification with their parent(s) in France



Source: TeO 2010, prepared by Tatiana Eremenko.

In Spain, the national origin mix is quite different from the one in France and immigration in general is much more recent. Accordingly, it is not a surprise that a smaller fraction of immigrant children had reunified with their parents at destination by 2007 (time of the survey) than in France. However, approximately 75 percent of children of Moroccan and Other (mainly EU15) origin had already come to Spain after 15 years since separation started. Moreover, in five years since separation almost half of children from this group and also from Romania and Bulgaria (the most recent flow to Spain) had already reunified with their parents at destination.

Figure 2. Survival function of immigrant child reunification with their parent(s) in Spain



Source: ENI 2007. Own elaboration.

However, what matters here the most is the much slower pattern of children's reunification shown by the Senegalese group in both France and Spain, in comparison to immigrants of other origins. Although the reunification process seems to be more advanced in France than in Spain, only 25 percent of children born to Senegalese migrants residing in France had joined them there after 5 years since separation due to the parent(s)'s migration started. In all other groups, including the Moroccans (who are also Muslim and African), the proportion of children reunified at destination by that time was substantially larger. Moreover, after ten years since the migrant parent(s) left the home country, only 35% had joined them in France. The pattern is even more contrasting in Spain, where only 10 percent of Senegalese children left behind had joined their parent(s) after 5 years since separation started.

Although the samples of Senegalese migrants included in these two surveys are too small to draw strong conclusions from the figures graphed above², it seems that one common characteristic of Senegalese immigrants in both countries is the lower incidence of family reunification (children's reunification more exactly) among this community in comparison to any other of the largest origin group in their respective countries of destination. Unfortunately, we lacked of similar data in Italy to perform a

² ENI 2007 included only 74 Senegalese migrants and 100 children born to them. TeO 2010 included 83 Senegalese migrants and 178 children.

comparable analysis. However, Mencarini et al. (Mencarini, Baldoni et al. 2009), in their report on the situation of children in immigrant families in Italy, show that only 29 percent of children of Senegalese origin living in Italy in 2001 had been born abroad (mostly in Senegal). In addition, the same authors stated that their age structure was younger than that of other immigrant groups as a result of “...*low incidence of immigration for family reunification, low rates of immigration among adolescents and more recent immigration flows to Italy*” (p. 13). We also know that between 2001 and 2006 children of Senegalese origin experienced the 4th largest increase among the 15 largest immigrant groups in Italy (after children from Ukraine, Romania and Ecuador), which might be an indication of increasing family reunification.

The previous graphs and figures provide us with a much more informed view of how immigrant families are reunifying, or not, with their children than the one we are used to have. However, they tell us only one part of the story: the one that happens at destination. In fact, this kind of data that only allows the reconstruction of the family migration process in a retrospective manner involves a main drawback: only those families/parents that are still in the country of destination at the time of the survey are considered for the analysis, whereas all family reunification which takes place in the home country is neglected. The latter case cannot be considered just by looking backwards if surveys are taken only at the country of destination. A selection has taken place since all migrants who have chosen the third alternative (return and reunifying at origin) are not in these surveys by definition.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

In this paper, thanks to the newly released MAFE survey we are able to analyze more in detail the incidence, pace and determinants of Senegalese children separations and reunifications with their parent(s), related to international migration, with particular attention paid to the issue of cross-national differences. In addition, we will be able to solve some of the methodological issues previously mentioned without relying in real prospective panel data, but by surveying return migrants in the country of origin and collecting information about their whole migration and family trajectories (see more below).

In sum, in this paper we will analyze the process of child-parent separations due to international migration and their eventual reunification, paying attention to the two possible locations where reunification might occur (either in the country of origin or at destination). According to what has been exposed in the previous section, child-parent separations may be a long lasting situation among Senegalese migrants, and reunification is expected to be as likely in destination as in origin, especially if we give credit to the multiple anthropological empathizing the intense transnationalism of recent Senegalese migrants.

The prevalence and pace of child-parent reunification is expected to be dependent on four major groups of factors: the child's characteristics, the structure of the household and its socio-economic characteristics, the migration experience of other members of the household, and the context of reception and at the country of origin.

With regard to the children's characteristics, the previous review of the empirical evidence available for other migrants group in different countries did not offer a very consistent prediction concerning the potential effect of the child's age on her chances to reunify with their absent parent(s). In contrast, among the Senegalese community, the girls are clearly expected to be 'discriminated' against in the process of child-parent reunifications. First of all, they are probably less likely to be taken to Europe as a way of avoiding Muslim women to spoil by the Western way of life, but also because Senegalese communities in Europe are still strongly male biased, which will be likely considered not the right environment for a girl to be. In addition, it is quite likely that daughters can be of greater help than sons at home in the country of origin if the mother is absent. Secondly, the typical residential arrangements described for periods when the mother is absent in Senegal, in which apparently daughters tend to be sent to their mothers' parental household but not sons, clearly suggests that migrant men are likely to be less attached to them (to the extent they do not live in their parental home).

On the other hand, regardless of gender, reunification in Europe is expected to be delayed the larger the number of siblings, because each sibling entails a potential competitor for a trip ticket, but also because the cost of rearing children in Europe, where extended family networks of support are usually not available, is higher.

The characteristics of the parental couple are expected to be strongly related with different reunification patterns. First of all, in line with the legal prohibitions of polygamous marriages and the aforementioned integration difficulties they are likely to face in European countries, having parents in a polygamous couple is expected to substantially reduce the odds of reunifying with any of them at destination, but not in origin since Senegal can be seen (by the own migrants) as the natural and more kin environment to develop this type of family arrangements. On the contrary, children born to monogamous married couples will enjoy higher chances of being reunified in Europe than children born to consensual unions or not married parents, since the latter ones will have great difficulties to apply for legal family reunification. Finally, we have not a clear prediction about whether children from couples that started at a distance (i.e. while the partners lived in different countries), which represent more than 40 percent of parental couples in our sample, will be more or less likely to reunify with their parents, and where. On the one hand, these can be viewed as families particularly willing to accept long-lasting separations, since family life already started as 'transnational'. On the other, some qualitative research conducted precisely among recent Senegalese migrants in Spain suggested that this type of marriages were quite sought for by female at origin who believed a migrant husbands could provide them with better off economic conditions, especially if they (the wife) remained back in Senegal, but also by young women willing to go abroad.

In addition to the characteristics of the parental couple, we have already seen that extended families and especially parents play a key role in organizing the migratory experience of Senegalese people. Accordingly, we expect shorter separations and more reunifications in Europe when some of the child's grandparents in Senegal have died. On the one hand, this clearly diminishes the family obligations of both the mother and the father to the elders of the family (whether it is caring obligations or economic ones). On the other, to the extent that grandmothers collaborate in the childrearing if the mother is absent, but also when she is not, it seems likely to expect that the death of grandparents living in Senegal will reduce the costs of taking children to Europe.

In contrast, in line with all previous research in the area, we clearly expect a higher probability of being reunified in Europe for children born to first-mover mothers, although they are probably also substantially less likely to ever separate from their parents. Also according to previous evidence in other countries and groups, the mother's level of education is likely to reduce the duration of separations and increase the children's chances to go Europe. However, the effect of mother's education is likely to be conditional on the household socio-economic position, which is a variable we have not been able to introduce in our final models (hopefully for next version).

Finally, we are particularly interested in investigating differences in the child-parent reunification processes across countries in Europe. According to the description of the Senegalese migration experience to the three European countries considered in this paper, we expect a higher rate of reunifications in France than in Spain and, especially, than in Italy. However, these differences might disappear once we neutralize differences in the religious and ethnic composition of Senegalese flows across countries, namely the larger number of Mouride in Italy, along with the expected higher incidence of irregularity in the two more recent destinations. In contrast, we have not a clear prediction with regard to potential differences in the prevalence of child-parent reunifications taking place back in Senegal, depending on the country of destination of the migrant parent. In principle, if transnationalism is truly the dominant migration strategy of Senegalese people to Europe, the same pattern of fewer reunifications in Europe for migrants in Italy and Spain, should be also observed in the country of origin, due to the shorter length of stay abroad and their more likely weak legal status.

We cannot discard, however, the possibility that differences across countries will reveal the effect of different immigration policies applied to Senegalese migrants in general, and to the issue of family reunification in particular, by our three destination countries. However, due to the long period of time under consideration is difficult to say that one country has a tougher immigration policy than the others, or viceversa. Immigration restrictions should, theoretically, reduce the probability of ending a child-parent separation in the European country, although no clear effect can be predicted on the likelihood of reunifying by returning to the country of origin.

4. DATA & METHOD

Data. The MAFE survey

The analyses performed in this paper rely on a new data source extracted from the MAFE-Senegal project (Migration between Africa and Europe)³, which is aimed at filling the gap, largely admitted, in data availability on African international migration (Lucas, 2006; Hatton, 2004).

We collected data both in Dakar and among Senegalese migrants in their main European destinations (France, Italy and Spain) in 2007. For cost reasons, the sample in Senegal (multistage sampling utilizing Senegal Census 2002 as sampling frame) was limited to the region of Dakar, which accounts for approximately a quarter of the national population. We obtained 1,067 individual completed questionnaires there⁴. In addition, 603 Senegalese were sampled in France, Italy and Spain (approximately 200 respectively). The municipal register in Spain (padrón) offered a national sampling frame from which documented and undocumented migrants could be randomly sampled. Respondents in France and Italy were sampled through varied non-probabilistic methods (e.g. snowballing, intercept points, contacts obtained from migrant associations) in order to fill pre-established quotas by sex and age. In all countries, the eligibility criteria for selection into the sample established that individuals had to be between 25 and 75 years of age (to have long enough life histories), born in Senegal (to exclude second generation in Europe) and of present or past Senegalese nationality (to exclude immigrants in Senegal).

The questionnaire was designed to collect longitudinal retrospective information on a yearly basis from birth until the time of survey, for each sampled individual, whatever his/her country of residence at the time of the survey. The data collected include a large range of information on migration and occupation histories of the interviewed persons, as well as on their family history (children, partnerships). Interestingly, the questionnaire includes a specific module on the international migration trajectory of the interviewees' relatives, friends and acquaintances, which would allow us to reconstruct

³ The Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE-Senegal) survey is a project coordinated by INED (France), in association with the Institut de Population, Développement et Santé de la Reproduction of the University of Dakar (IPDSR, Senegal). It also involves the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF, Spain) and the Forum Internazionale ed Europeo di Ricerche sull'immigrazione (FIERI, Italy). The survey was conducted with the support of the Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR, France), the Ile de France Region, the Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD, France), the Centre population et développement (CEPED, France) and the FSP programme entitled 'International Migrations, territorial reorganizations and development of the countries of the South. The MAFE-Senegal project is now being enlarged to Ghanaian and Congolese migrations, and a repeated survey including 400 additional individuals has been recently completed in Spain.

⁴ Response rate was 79.2 percent. The sample was stratified in order to over-represent districts with a higher proportion of migrants (according to the 2002 Population Census) as well as return migrants (197), and migrants' spouses (101).

the family migration experience of, at least, couples and their children⁵. Migrations of family members are only captured if they lasted for at least one year.

Sample of children constructed for our analyses and incidence of parent-child separation due to international migration to Europe

Out of the 1,670 interviewed individuals (including migrants in Europe and return migrants and non-migrants in Senegal), 427 were childless at the time of the survey. The total number of children born to the remaining people in our sample was 4,633. We linked the migration history of each of these children to that of their parents, utilizing the information provided by the parent (either the mother or the father) who was interviewed by the MAFE team. Note here that we only had complete life information on one of the two parents of each children in the sample; for the other parent, we only have some information indirectly reported by the interviewee. In short, we do not have a survey of families, not even a survey of couples but just a survey of individuals who reported some information about their partners and their children. Among this information, we were provided with complete yearly migration histories of every partner and every child the interviewee had (and also of other relatives and friends). In addition from complete migration histories, the questionnaire allowed us to link each child to the interviewee's partner the child was born to and provided basic information on the characteristics of the partner at the time of the beginning of the union (educational level, labor force status, occupational status, nationality and country of birth), and information on whether they ever married or not, and the date of that marriage. For children, we have information on their sex, year and country of birth, nationalities (at birth and later acquired ones) and rank, apart from complete migration histories since their date of birth.

By linking each interviewee's migration trajectory to that of their partners and children from each of these partners, we will reconstruct the periods of child-parent separations due to international migration. After describing in detail the prevalence and duration of these separations from the overall sample of Senegalese children, we will pay attention to the event 'end of separation' that will result from either child migration to the country where their parent(s) has previously migrated to, or from return by the migrant parent to Senegal, where the child was left behind.

Out of the 4,633 children born to Senegalese parents interviewed by the MAFE team either in Senegal or in Europe, only **1,516 children** had at least one parent who had ever migrated out of Senegal. Only 1,067 of these children were separated for at least one year during their childhood (age<18) from (at least) one parent due to the parental migration to France, Italy or Spain.

As can be seen in Table 1, separation from one parent due to international migration affected approximately 16 percent of total children population born in Senegal to

⁵ More information about the survey, including sampling issues, can be found in Beauchemin & González-Ferrer (2011).

parents living the Dakar region in 2007, and 31 percent of children of Senegalese origin born in Europe the same year⁶. It is important to highlight that we are able to measure the importance of this phenomenon quite accurately thanks to the multisite design of our study, which includes a representative sample of the origin population along with the sample of migrants in Europe. Due to the characteristics of Senegalese migration, most separations are separations from the father (15 percent of total children suffered this type of separation versus only 5 percent that separated from their mothers). However, for the subgroup of Senegalese children born in Europe, not only have a higher prevalence of child-parent separations but they are also more equally distributed with regard to the gender of the parent from whom the child was ever separated. In addition, as can be observed in the table as well, separations from both parents are not a much extended phenomenon for children who were born in Senegal (only 3 percent) but it affected approximately 9 percent of the Senegalese children born in Europe.

Table 1. How many children separated from whom? by country of birth of the child

		All children	Born in Senegal	Born in Europe
Ever separated from at least one parent	%	16	16	31
	N	1516	1391	125
Ever separated from the mother	%	5	4	22
	N	442	369	73
Ever separated from the father	%	15	15	26
	N	1342	1245	97
Ever separated from both	%	3	3	9
	N	268	201	31

Source: MAFE Survey. Weighted

In addition, the length of these separations is not negligible (see Table 2). On average, child-parent separations in our sample lasted for more than seven years. Separations were particularly long-lasting among children born in Europe that ever separated from their mothers (almost 9 years), and shortest among children born in Senegal that were ever separated from both parents simultaneously (4 years).

Table 2. Length of child separation by country of birth of the child (mean and standard deviation)

		All children	Born in Senegal	Born in Europe
Length of separation from at least one parent	%	7.6	7.5	8.6
		0.4	0.4	0.5
	N	1516	1391	125
Length of separation from	%	5.5	4.6	8.8

⁶ Our sample in the country of origin

mother		0.4	0.3	1.1
	N	442	369	73
Length of separation from father	%	7.4	7.6	5.6
		0.2	0.3	1
	N	1342	1245	97
Length of separation from both	%	4.8	4.3	7.9
		0.5	0.4	2.3
	N	268	201	31

Source: MAFE Survey. Weighted

Only 221 out of these 1,067 ever-separated children ended up joining their absent parent(s) at some point before their 18th birthday. As summarized in Table 3, exactly half of the child-parent separations ended by reunification in Europe, and other half by reunification in Senegal. In addition, most of these ended separations derived from the father's return to Senegal (47 percent), from the jointly migration of the mother and the child to Europe where the father lived (32 percent), or from the child's migration to Europe (13 percent).

Table 3. Mode of ending child-parent separations

	N	%
Father returns to Senegal	103	47
Mother & child return to Senegal	3	1
Father & child return to Senegal	4	2
Father goes to Europe	4	2
Mother goes to Europe	8	4
Child goes to Europe	29	13
Mother & child go to Europe	70	32
Total	221	100

Methods

First we computed discrete-time survival functions indicating the proportion of children that had reunified with their migrant parent(s) at different moments in time since first separation occurred. Children still living separated from one or both parents at the time of the survey or at their 18th birthday are treated as censored. Pseudo-survival functions (Blossfeld and Rohwer 1995) were computed to account for two possible outcomes: reunification back in Senegal (i.e. the migrant parent comes back to the country of origin after spending more than one year in Europe) or the child migrates to Europe (France, Italy or Spain) where reunification takes place.

Secondly, we performed a multivariate discrete time event history analysis, in which we model time until the child-parent(s) ends. A multinomial specification was used in order to distinguish the two locations where reunification can take place (Senegal versus

European countries). These event history analyses were specified as a logistic regression (Yamaguchi 1991):

$$\ln[P_{ij} / (1-P_{ij})] = \alpha + \beta' X_{ij} + u_{ij}$$

In which P is the probability of child i reunifies with his/her migrant parent(s) by observation (year) j, either in Senegal or in Europe. α is a constant term, X_{ij} is a vector of explicative variables and β denotes the value of the estimated coefficients of the model for every variable. u_{ij} is a residual specific to each observation, assumed to follow the logistic distribution with mean 0 on j for each individual i.

Our dependent variable is end of separation, taking into account the time elapsed since the separation started (measured in years). Note that the separation period may end with the reunification of the child at the country of destination or at the country of origin (depending on the respective locations of parent(s) and children); or with censorship if the child continues living in a different country from the one where his absent parent(S) lives, or if she turns 18 and leaves the risk set. It should be emphasized that our dependent variable does not take into account whether the reunification was achieved by a legal process or not; in other words, our dependent variable includes both legal and “de facto” reunifications.

All the results are weighted and based on robust standard errors obtained by clustering siblings within parents.

Explanatory variables

In Table 4 we present some descriptive information on the explanatory variables included in the analyses. Some of them require a few words of explanation. The variable ‘in marriage’ indicates whether the child’s parents were married or not each year the child was under observation. It is important to mention that in most cases when ‘in marriage’ is 0 parents are in consensual union rather than separated or divorced. The variable ‘polygamy’ indicates whether the mother has co-spouses because she is married to a polygamous man, or not. The variable ‘at distance’ indicates the union between the child’s parents started while they were living in different countries. The variable ‘first mover’ is the last one related to characteristics of the parental couple, and it refers to the ordering of international migration to Europe within the couple and indicates whether the father or the mother preceded the other parent in their trip to Europe, or whether both migrated jointly.

Table 4. Main co-variates included in the multivariate analysis. Definition, values and availability

Variable	Definition	Type	Values	Availability
Sex of the respondent		C	Male, Female	F & M
Time	Number of years since separation	TV	0-17	F & M
Sex of the		C	Male, female	F & M

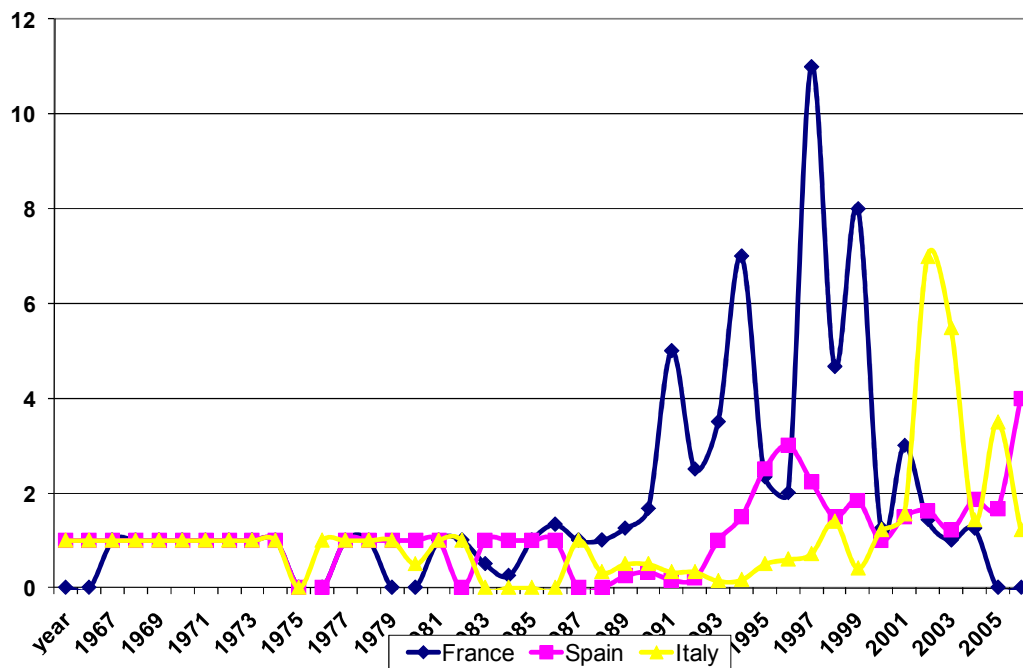
child				
Age of the child		TV	0-17	F & M
Number of siblings	Total number of siblings the child has	TV		F & M
In marriage	Legal marital status of the parents	TV	Married, In consensual union	F & M
Polygamy	Parents in polygamous couple	C		F & M
At distance	Parental union started at distance (while the partners were living in different countries)	C		F & M
First mover	Parent who migrated first to the country of destination in Europe	C	Father, Mother, Both jointly	F & M
Mother's education	Highest level of education achieved by the child's mother	TV		F & M
Father's education	Highest level of education achieved by the child's father	TV		F & M
Destination	Country of parental migration in Europe	C	France, Italy, Spain	F & M
Immigration Policy Index	Toughness of immigration policy for Senegalese per country of destination	TV	Number of migration attempts divided by number of entries per country & per year	F & M
Born in Dakar department	Respondent parent was born in Dakar department	C	No, Yes	Respondent
Serer/Diola ethnic origin	Respondent is of serer or diola origin	C	Serer or Diola versus Others	Respondent
Mouride			Mouride versus Others	Respondent
Grandparents absent	Respondent	TV	No, Yes	Respondent
Individual Economic Situation	Respondent's self-assessment of the extent to which his/her basic needs were sufficiently covered during the period he/she lived in each different dwelling	TV	More than sufficient Sufficient Not sufficient	Respondent
Legal status	Legal status at destination of the migrant parent	TV	0-No, 1-Yes, 2-Unsure	Respondent
Visit	Respondent makes a short return (of less than 1 year duration) to Senegal	TV	0-1	Respondent

We also include two variables measuring the mother's and the father's educational level. Unfortunately, the quality of the information on each parent's education varies depending on who is the respondent. While for the respondent we do have detailed information on her/his highest degree and number of years in school, for the non-respondent parent this information was measured only at the time of starting the union with the respondent. This inevitably implies some imprecision in the results, but adds a key information we cannot omit in the explanatory model. However, we expect this not to be a big problem since Senegalese people do not usually go on with their studies when they marry.

The variable 'destination' refers to the European country (France, Italy or Spain) where the migrant parent(s) lived during the child-parent separation. This variable is also utilized to attach to each child-parent dyad the information contained in the variable 'immigration policy index'. This variable has been constructed by combining the information provided by different modules in the questionnaire and aims at measuring

variations in the toughness of immigration policies in each of our three destination countries in Europe over time. In order to do so, we counted the number of attempts (both failed and successful) that all our interviewees declared to have made to migrate to each of our three destination countries in Europe every year. After summing the number of declared migration attempts per country per year, divided the resulting figure by the number of annual entries to each of our three countries reported in our survey. Note that this information about migration attempts per year and per country were asked to every individual in the survey, regardless of where they were interviewed (Senegal or Europe) and regardless of whether they had ever migrated or not.

Figure 3. Variations in immigration policy toughness, by year and country of immigration (number of migration attempts / number of entries)



Source: MAFE Survey. Own elaboration.

The resulting indicator is graphed in Figure 3. The indicator indicates the number of failed attempts that needed to be made in order to achieve a successful entry (legal or illegal) in each country, year by year for the whole observation period. Note that the information on migration attempts and annual successful entries is collected only from the interviewed individuals, not from their children or any other relative. Consequently, we avoid the risk of including part of our dependent variable (which sometimes involves children's migration to Europe) in the explanatory covariate. In any case, we took the indicator's value in t-1. We decided not to take moving averages because immigration policies at the border change quite rapidly and we know that potential migrants, especially in the latest decades, have a quite well updated information on the practices at the borders.

As we mentioned earlier, ours is not a families' or couples' survey but just an survey of individuals who were asked some information about the respondents' partners, children

and some other family members such as their country and date of birth, current nationalities, sex, migration trajectories, etc. As a result, in the child-parent(s) files constructed for the analyses in this paper we have complete life information for only one of the two parents of every child, the mother or the father depending on whom was the respondent to the individual survey. Some of these variables are the ones listed in Column ‘Availability’ with the label ‘respondent only’: ethnic origin, religion, place of birth within Senegal, date of death of the mother and the father, individual economic situation for each residential period (i.e. the period of time the respondent lived in a different dwelling)⁷, legal status in foreign countries, short returns to Senegal (i.e. visits that lasted less than one year), short stays outside Senegal for vacation, business or other reasons.

Since some of these variables contain information potentially relevant to explain our event of interest (ending of child-parent separations due to international migration), and are crucial to test some of the hypotheses we put forward in the previous sections, we decided to run two different multivariate models, one that includes only the variables available for both the mother and the father of each separated child, and a second one in which some of these additional covariates are added.

In Table 5 we have summarized some of the main characteristics of our sample by country of destination.

Table 5. Mean values (and standard deviations) of main covariates, by country of migration in Europe

	France	Italy	Spain
Sex of the respondent parent	0.4	0.2	0.3
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sex of the child	0.5	0.4	0.4
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Age of the child	8.9	7.9	8.7
	0.1	0.1	0.2
Number of siblings	3.4	1.9	2.3
	0.0	0.0	0.1
Parents' marital status (married)	1.0	0.9	0.9
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parental union started when parents lived in dif. countries	0.5	0.5	0.4
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parents in a polygamous union	0.2	0.3	0.1
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mother was the firstmover parent	0.1	0.0	0.1
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mouride religious affiliation	0.2	0.6	0.4

⁷ The exact wording of the question was: “When you lived in this dwelling would you say that the financial situation of the household regarding the purchase of staple goods was... More than sufficient; sufficient; just sufficient; or insufficient?”.

	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serer or diola ethnic origin	0.1	0.0	0.1
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Born in Dakar Department	0.2	0.3	0.2
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mother's educational level (more than primary)	0.6	0.6	0.4
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Father's educational level (more than primary)	0.6	0.9	0.8
	0.0	0.0	0.0
Migrant parent legal status (illegal)	0.2	0.2	0.2
	0.0	0.0	0.0
legal	0.5	0.6	0.6
	0.0	0.0	0.0
missing	0.3	0.2	0.2
	0.0	0.0	0.0

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To obtain a first glimpse of the process by which Senegalese migrants put their child-parent separations to an end, we calculated discrete-time survival functions indicating the proportion of children that had reunified with their migrant parent(s) at different moments in time since separation occurred. As can be seen in Figure 4, only a fourth of the Senegalese child-parent separations derived from migration to Europe were ended before the child turned 18, which implies substantial and considerably long child-parents' separations, consistently with what already observed utilizing data from immigrants' surveys conducted in France and Spain. Whether these separations are interrupted or not by periodical visits from the migrant parent(s) to the country of origin, and whether their incidence and duration changes vary according to the gender of the migrant parent or the country of destination, seem then something important to investigate.

With regard to differences by country of destination, we can see in Figure 5 that children whose parents migrated to Italy are the ones that join them abroad the least, while Senegalese children with (at least) a parent in either France or Spain are quite similar in the amount of reunifications and length of their child-parent separations. This difference across destination countries is quite unexpected if one takes into account the fact that both Italy and Spain are new and more recent Senegalese destinations where past colonial links are not at work, in contrast to France. Moreover, it contradicts the results drawn from other surveys conducted among Senegalese migrants in France and Spain in 2010 and 2007, respectively.

Figure 4. Survival function of ending a child-parent separation

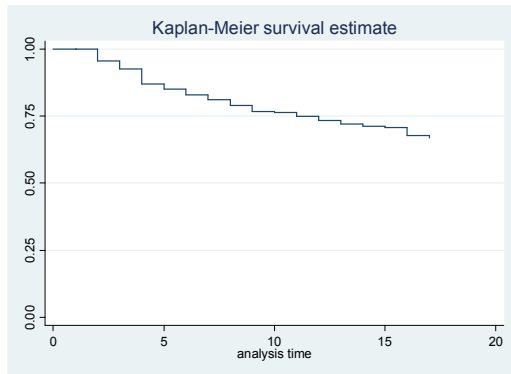
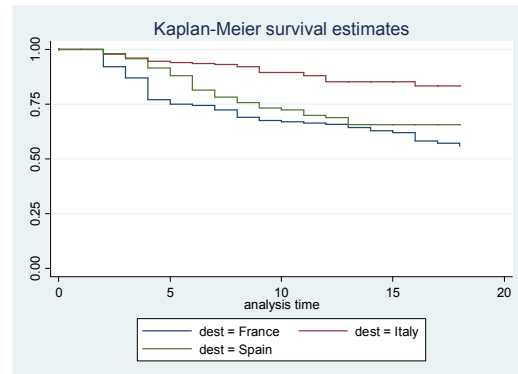


Figure 4. Survival function of ending a child-parent separation by place of parent's migration in EU



It remains to analyze the extent to which this initial difference in the incidence of Senegalese children reunification disappears, or not, once other differences in the selectivity and characteristics of the Senegalese migration to our three different destinations are controlled for in the multivariate analyses; and especially if differences with these other national immigrants' surveys in destination countries derive from the omission of reunifications that occur in the country of origin⁸. We have explored this second possibility in Figures 5 to 8.

⁸ In addition, we must note here that some of the children in our sample are siblings and, therefore, they share an important amount of characteristics such as, probably, their parents' plans regarding their potential migration to Europe. At this point we cannot ascertain the extent to which the varying incidence of children migration to our three countries would remain unchanged once the clustered structure of our sample is accounted for.

Figure 5. Survival function of ending a child-parent separation with reunification in Senegal

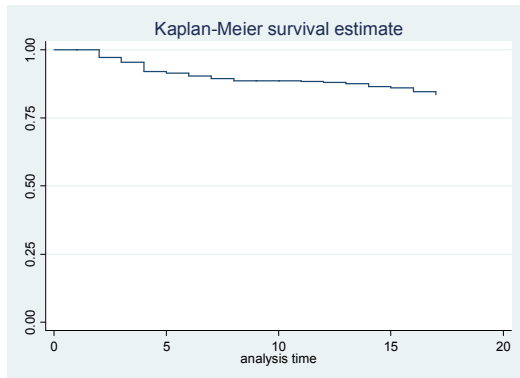
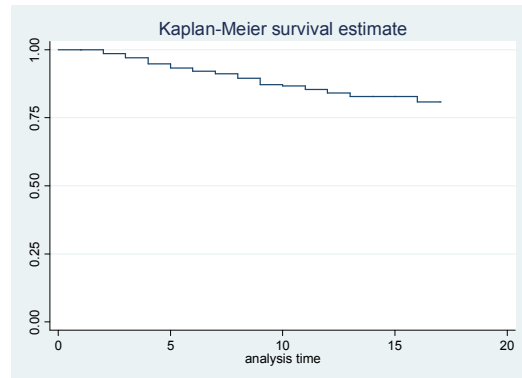


Figure 6 Survival function of ending a child-parent separation with reunification in Senegal



First of all, reunifications with their children by Senegalese migrants seem to be equally infrequent regardless of we focus on reunifications that take place in Europe or back in Senegal (compare Figures 5 and 6). However, Figures 7 and 8 suggest that there are some important differences depending on whether France was the country of destination of the migrant parents, or not. More exactly, it seems that the higher incidence of child-parent reunifications that we observed in Figure 4 among Senegalese migrants to France derives from a higher incidence of reunifications derived from parental return migration to Senegal, rather than from a larger incidence of reunifications in France than in Spain or Italy.

Figure 7. Survival function of ending a child-parent separation with reunification in Europe, by country

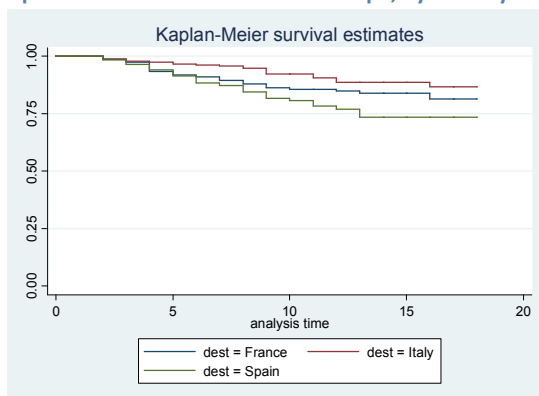
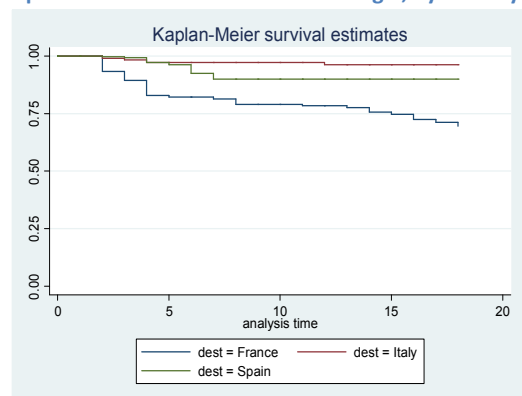


Figure 8. Survival function of ending a child-parent separation with reunification in Senegal, by country



In sum, the survival functions plotted above suggest that child-parent reunifications among Senegalese migrants are not many once separation takes place, regardless of whether we consider reunifications that occur in the countries of immigration or back in origin after the parents' return to Senegal. However, some interesting and partially unexpected differences by country of immigration appear. First of all, the incidence of

reunifications seems more similar for migrants to France and Spain than between Italy and Spain, contrary to our expectations. Secondly, the higher incidence of reunification if migration was to France, instead of Italy or Spain, seems to reflect the higher incidence of return migration among Senegalese migrants in France compared to the Senegalese communities in their more recent destinations.

Multivariate analyses

In table 6, we have summarized the estimates from discrete-time multinomial logit regression of reunifying with one's child after a separation due to international migration to Europe that lasted at least one year. We distinguish reunifications attained in Europe from reunifications accomplished back in Senegal. In model 1, we report estimates from the specification that includes only covariates available for both mothers' and fathers; in model 2, we add information from variables available only from the parent interviewed in the MAFE survey.

First of all, there is no clear temporal pattern in the child-parent reunification process. Although the likelihood of reunifying in Europe seems to increase as time since the separation started, the effect is small and only marginally significant. In contrast, the multivariate analyses confirm the differential incidence of reunification across our three immigration countries, previously observed in the non-parametric survival functions. Senegalese parents involved in migration to Italy are substantially less likely to end separations from their children, either by bringing their children to Italy or by coming back to Senegal. In addition, these differences across countries of destination remain even after controlling for variations in their respective immigration policies over time. As the coefficient for the variable 'immigration policy' indicates, tougher admission policies in Europe substantially delay the reunification in the countries of destination without increasing the probability of the parents' return, to reunify with their children back in origin.

With regard to the children's characteristics, their age appear as quite irrelevant to predict their chances of reunifying with their absent parent, either in Europe or in Senegal, regardless of the age specification (linear, quadratic, preschool age versus older, adolescent versus younger, etc.) In contrast, being a girl consistently delays the chances of reunification both in Senegal and Europe. Moreover, if we run separated models for separations from the mother and separations from the father, the lower probability of reunifying if the child is a girl remained, especially from fathers and for reunifications in Europe in comparison to the option of long-lasting separations. However, we needed to omit some other important variables in these separated models due to sample size's limitations; thus, these results must be interpreted with caution. Finally, a larger number of siblings slightly increase the probability of reunification in the country of origin and, although it reduces the chances of reunifying in Europe, the effect is not significant.

Table 6. Discrete-time estimates of the probability of ending a child-parent separation due to international migration to Europe. Multinomial logit

ref. no reunification yet	Only complete info for both parents MODEL 1		Including asymmetrical information MODEL 2	
	In Europe	In Senegal	In Europe	In Senegal
Sex of the respondent	1.46**	-0.61	3.78***	-3.13**
	-0.54	-0.55	-0.63	-1.07
Years since separation	0.15*	-0.018	0.11	0.094
	-0.091	-0.087	-0.081	-0.094
ref. France				
Italy	-1.37**	-2.84***	-0.96	-2.70***
	-0.48	-0.62	-0.72	-0.76
Spain	-0.17	-1.03	-0.17	-1.11
	-0.5	-0.65	-0.5	-0.83
Immigration Policy Toughness	-0.60**	-0.0067	-0.60**	0.18
	-0.27	-0.28	-0.25	-0.2
ref. boy				
Child is a girl	-0.66**	-0.51**	-0.51*	-0.71**
	-0.28	-0.22	-0.28	-0.26
Child's age	0.086	0.041	0.076	0.024
	-0.091	-0.1	-0.12	-0.12
Child's age sq.	-0.011*	-0.0049	-0.011**	-0.0046
	-0.0055	-0.0049	-0.0054	-0.0058
Number of siblings	-0.098	0.14*	-0.17	0.033
	-0.093	-0.079	-0.11	-0.11
ref. no				
Polygamous parental couple	-1.15*	0.68	-0.61	1.60**
	-0.63	-0.51	-0.46	-0.61
ref. no				
Couple started while living at distance	-0.18	-1.18**	-0.04	-0.046
	-0.43	-0.4	-0.38	-0.61
ref. no				
Parents are married	1.66*	0.63	1.77**	0.67
	-0.91	-0.76	-0.87	-1.05
ref. father				
Mother was first mover to Europe	0.54	-4.10**	-0.54	-6.84**
	-0.98	-1.3	-1.11	-2.18
ref. no				

Mother has more than primary education	0.22	0.67**	0.09	0.79**
	-0.22	-0.27	-0.3	-0.39
ref. no				
Father has more than primary education	0.19	0.40*	0.0087	0.51*
	-0.29	-0.22	-0.23	-0.27
ref. no				
R parent is serer/diola ethnic origin			2.05**	1.26
			-0.66	-0.78
ref. no				
R parent is mouride			0.2	-0.45
			-0.73	-0.74
ref. no				
R parent born in Dakar			-0.31	-2.16**
			-0.56	-0.87
ref. no				
Child's grandparents from R parent are dead			1.75***	0.39
			-0.49	-0.56
ref.no				
Migrant parent has legal status at destination			3.41***	-5.97***
			-0.97	-1.23
Missing info on migrant parent's legal status			-0.46	0.83
			-1.39	-1.00
Constant	-5.73***	-5.94***	-10.1***	-5.82***
	-1.59	-1.18	-1.74	-1.56

Coefficients and standard errors. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$

As expected, parents in polygamous couples and non-married couples are less likely to reunify with their children in Europe, arguably because of the legal restrictions to polygamy in most European countries and the impossibility to apply for the legal procedure of family reunification established in the immigration law of our three countries of destination if partners are not officially married. In addition, in families where the mother was the couple's first mover to Europe, reunification back in origin is much less likely to occur than long-lasting separations. However, having a pioneer mother does not increase the children's chances of being reunified in Europe, which can be interpreted as a clear sign of the complex family arrangements that characterize the typical Senegalese family, in which many women are involved in the tasks of childrearing apart from the mother.

Finally, and contrary to our expectations and the empirical evidence available in other countries for other migrant groups, more educated Senegalese couples are more likely to reunify with their children more back in their country of origin than enduring long-lasting separations. Yet, they are not more likely to reunify at destination as well, as suggested by the non-significant coefficient for the variables measuring the mothers and father's education (more than primary versus less) in the first column of Model 1.

Once we added the information which is available only for the respondent parent, who is not necessarily the migrant one, most of the results obtained in the basic model remain unchanged (the parents' educational level, the gender of the first mover-parent, the marital status of the parents, the sex of the child and the effect of tougher immigration policies). Moreover, most of the added variables displayed the expected effect. Having at least one parent with serer or diola ethnic origin substantially reduced the probability of enduring long-lasting separations, as expected from the more matrilineal lineage system. Having at least one parent who is a legal resident in Europe also increases in a substantial manner the probability of accomplishing the child-parent reunification in destination. On the other hand, this situation also makes very unlikely reunification back at origin, which can be seen as supporting the idea that legal status facilitates more stable transnational arrangements in which families end up enduring long-lasting separations probably encouraged by the conviction that frequent visits and, ultimately, reunification at destination would both be possible if the family members involved in these decisions decide to do so.

The likelihood of reunifying back in Senegal also decreases substantially when the two parents of the respondent parent (i.e. the child's maternal or paternal grandparents) had already died, which may be interpreted as a clear indication of weaker emotional ties of one of the two child's parents with Senegal, regardless of whether the respondent parent is the migrant parent or not.

In spite of these quite consistent results, the effect of two variables changed as a result of adding this asymmetrical parental information to the basic specification in Model 1: both the lower propensity to reunify in Europe if the absent parent has migrated to Italy (instead of France or Spain), and the lower probability to reunify also at destination if parents are part of a polygamous couple disappear in Model 2. Since one of our main interests in this paper was to identify potential cross-national differences in the child-parent reunification patterns among Senegalese migrants, we tried to investigate a little further the reasons why the former effect disappeared. Yet, there not seem to be a single easy explanation for this fact. First of all, the coefficient for being a migrant to Italy still remained significant after controlling for the respondent's ethnic origin and religion, which rejects our hypothesis that the over-representation of the mouride brotherhood – particularly oriented to trade activities and quite transnational- jointly with the under-representation of the serer & diola (characterized by a more matrilineal organization) among the Senegalese community in Italy could be the cause for less reunifications among Senegalese living in that country. In addition, a composition effect with regard to the legal status of Senegalese migrants in Italy can be also discarded as the reason behind their lower propensity to reunify with their children in Italy, since after adding the variable legal status of the respondent, which works in the expected direction, the Italy coefficient remained negative and significant.

On the other hand, the changes in the effect of the variable 'polygamous, which is not does not reduce the probability of reunifying in Europe versus staying separated anymore but turns to strongly predict reunification in Senegal, can be more easily explained. Indeed, these changes mainly reflect the different prevalence of polygamy across different ethnicities and religious affiliations within the Senegalese community in Europe. Once those differences are controlled for, we finally estimate the net effect of being polygamous.

CONCLUSIONS (Incomplete)

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