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The influence of migration policies in Europe on return migration to Senegal

Marie-Laurence Flahaux

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Abstract

Over the past decade, return migration has generated increasing policy and public attention. It is often believed that African migrants travel to destination countries and generally do not return home. Policy makers in European countries have adopted policies designed to encourage or force African migrants to return. European countries have also designed policies intended to control access and stay of migrants in their territory. These policies have become increasingly restrictive over time towards most categories of African migrants, and they are sometimes invoked to explain the reluctance of migrants to return, since they prevent circulation.

Due to the lack of data however, the influence of the different migration policies on return migration remains poorly understood. This paper aims to fill this gap by analysing transnational and biographical data of the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) surveys as well as data of the DEMIG POLICY and DEMIG VISA databases, which cover major changes in migration policies across a large range of destination countries. I implement event history logistic regressions to study the effect of migration policies on the return of Senegalese who migrated to France, Italy and Spain between 1960 and 2008. The results reveal that the policies aiming at controlling the stay and encouraging or forcing the return of migrants do not significantly affect return, but that Senegalese migrants are less likely to return when the entry restrictions have become important. This suggests that barriers intended to reduce the flow of African migrants actually prevent those who are already in Europe from returning. The results show that the preoccupation of migrants is not only the return, but also the possibility of a new migration after the return.

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1 Introduction

In Europe, African migrants are often perceived as people fleeing wars and misery, and believed to remain permanently in their destination countries (de Haas 2005; Lessault and Beauchemin 2009). Therefore, according to public discourse, these migrants will generally not return to their origin countries unless they are encouraged or forced to do so. Return migration has generated increasing policy attention over the past decade, and for policy makers concerned with the management of international migration it has become a priority (Cassarino 2008). In particular, the European Union has implemented return support mechanisms targeting migrants from Africa as it was identified as “the first geographic priority” (Flahaux and Kabbanji 2013). The European Commission, through its Global Approach to Migration, encourages the return of migrants who are able to contribute to the development of their origin country, but highly recommends the return of irregular migrants (Sinatti, 2014). For this purpose, European governments have increasingly signed re-admission agreements, implemented removals, and developed ‘voluntary’ return programmes.

At the same time, European countries have also implemented migration policies to control the access and stay of migrants from ‘third countries’. These policies are generally assumed to have become more restrictive over time, although research has shown that this depends on the destination country and the migrant category (Geddes 2003, de Haas et al. 2014b). These entry restrictions may also have an effect on the circulation of migrants between their origin and destination countries.

The impact of different policies on return migration remains poorly understood due to the lack of individual data to study return migration and data assessing the restrictiveness of policies. This paper aims to fill this gap by focusing on Senegalese migrants in France, Italy and Spain, and using the transnational and biographical data from the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) survey as well as the DEMIG policy and travel visa databases. These datasets enable us to analyse the effectiveness of different types of migration policies, namely those implemented to control the access of migrants to the destination country, those affecting their integration and those aiming at encouraging or forcing them to return. In addition, variation in the level of restrictiveness over time, differences between destination countries and categories of migrants (irregular, high skilled, low skilled, asylum seekers and students) are taken into account.

The first section reviews the literature on the evolution of Senegalese migration and on the influence of migration policies for return migration. The second section presents the datasets used and the methods employed. The third section provides descriptive analyses of the sample of migrants and return migrants and demonstrates the evolution of the level of restrictiveness of migration policies. It is followed by the results in the fourth section on the influence of migration policies on return migration to Senegal.

2 General background and main hypotheses

2.1 History of Senegalese migration

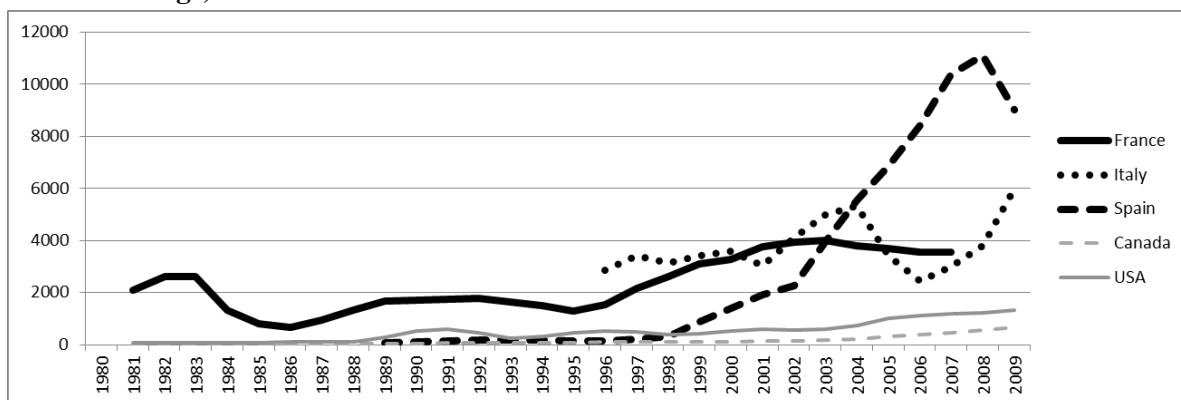
After independence in 1960, international migration from Senegal was mainly directed to West African countries and to France. Countries such as Ivory Coast and Ghana offered opportunities to work in the cocoa and coffee crops, and the previous colonial State France in its developing automobile industry (Pison et al. 1997; Robin 1996). At that time, the Senegalese presence in France was mainly men coming from the region of the Senegal River Valley, working in industry and having left their families behind

in their village (Guilmoto 1998; Timera 1996). This migration took place in the context of the deterioration of living conditions in rural areas experiencing severe drought, was decided by the elders and was temporary (Quiminal, 1991). Many migrants returned to their country of origin and were replaced by a younger people from the same community, according on the system of the noria (Barou 2001).

After European states implemented migration restrictions in 1974, this replacement migration effectively ended (Barou 2001). Migrants had to choose between staying longer in France and returning to live permanently in Senegal. Some of them chose to bring their spouse(s) and children to Europe.

During the 1990's, Senegalese increasingly migrated to new destinations in Europe (Ma Mung 1996), with Italy and Spain emerged as new destinations (Robin 1996). Migration to Italy intensified after the introduction of a travel visa requirement in France in 1987 and a policy of regularisation in Italy in 1986. When Italian visas became obligatory in 1991 however, these movements rapidly decreased (Bredeloup 1995). Senegalese traders also migrated to the United States (Dia 2009) and Spain attracted more and more migrants given the opportunities it offered in agriculture and its informal labour market, even if their legal status and employment remained precarious (Suarez Navaz 1995). Using the DEMIG C2C database on migration flows, figure 1 shows the evolution of Senegalese flows to France, Italy, Spain, Canada and the United States. It highlights that Senegalese migration to Spain significantly increased at the end of the 1990's but decreased since the economic crisis in 2009, and that American destinations are much lower.

Figure 1. Evolution of Senegalese flows to specific countries in Europe and America (3-years smooth average)



Source: DEMIG C2C database, using the criteria of country of citizenship to define international migrants (except for migration to the USA, where the criterion of country of birth was used).

Note: The years appearing in this table were chosen due to data limitations.

The qualitative literature that mainly focuses on the Senegalese presence in Italy and Spain, highlights the importance of the links new generations of Senegalese migrants continue to have with their origin country. Their objective is to improve their socio-economic situation and that of their family. During their migration they save money to invest in income-generating activities in Senegal. Owning a house or business in Senegal is therefore a prerequisite for their return. For Senegalese, successful migration is associated with an improvement in living conditions and a definitive return to Senegal (Sinatti 2011). Many of them distinguish themselves from other groups of migrants who left their country of origin to settle permanently in Europe (Hernandez Carretero 2012). As Castagnone et al. (2005) assert, in Senegal, migration is seen as a heroic act and return as a key objective. Although return is central in the migration project of many Senegalese, they often encounter difficulties during their

migration, arising from the fact that they are expected to share their savings with their family in Senegal. This explains why they often have to postpone their return (Hernandez Carretero 2012). Nevertheless, this qualitative literature on the question of return for Senegalese migrants has not addressed the role of migration policies for return.

2.2 The role of migration policies

Jeffery and Morison (2011) argue that migrants' mobility strategy related to return depends not only on their experience, on the opportunities available to them, but also on the state structure they are in. Highlighting the influence that the 'structures' can have on the 'agency' of individuals is essential to understand the role that migration policies can play on return migration. Indeed, structural factors, such as migration policies may affect migrants' choices related to the possibility to return.

In the same way as de Haas (2011) proposes to regard migration as a function of individual's aspirations and capabilities to migrate, it is also possible to conceive return according to migrants' aspirations and capabilities to return. It is important to consider the intention to return of migrants for the realisation of return, as it reflects their aspirations, that is to say what they consider as the best situation for them and their family in the future. Meaning that migrants will return if they perceive good opportunities in their origin country, but they must also have the capability to return. The capability to return may however be limited by factors such as insufficient earnings, or migration policies. Migration policies implemented by destination countries may – directly or indirectly – prevent individuals from returning, which de Haas (2011) calls reverse substitution effects,¹ as well as encourage or force them to return.

Some studies reveal that migration policies may play a crucial role for return migration, but this phenomenon has rarely been deeply studied due to the lack of individual data and migration policy data. Some hypotheses can however be drawn from the qualitative literature aiming at understanding return migration (Carling 2004; de Haas and Fokkema 2010; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Massey et al. 2002; Reyes 2004), as well as the quantitative literature studying migration outflows (Czaika and de Haas 2014), and the intention and the realisation to return (Flahaux 2013). We distinguish the role of three types of migration policies according to their objective: (1) to control the access of migrants to their territory; (2) to control the stay of migrants on their territory; and (3) to encourage or force migrants to return.

Table 1 summarises the three main hypotheses derived from the literature that will be tested in this paper.

Table 1. Hypotheses about the influence of the three types of migration policies on return

Policy type	Effect expected of more restrictive policy on return migration
Policies to control access of migrants to their territory	Negative
Policies to control the stay of migrants in their territory	Ambiguous effect
Policies encouraging or forcing migrants to return	Ambiguous effect

¹ Reverse flow substitution effects occur when immigration restrictions decrease return migration flows.

2.2.1 Policies to control access of migrants

Some scholars have argued that restrictive migration policies aimed at controlling the access of migrants to the territory of the destination country discourage return migration and therefore push migrants into permanent settlement. Meaning if immigration restrictions decrease inflows, they may simultaneously also decrease return flows. This phenomenon has been described for ‘guest worker’ migration in European countries, where many temporary workers settled after the post 1973 recruitment ban (Böcker 1994; Castles and Miller 2009; Entzinger 1985). Similarly, qualitative research on Capverdian (Carling 2004), Moroccan (de Haas and Fokkema 2010) and Mexican (Cornelius 2001; Marcelli and Cornelius 2001; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Massey and Liang 1989; Massey et al. 2002; Reyes 2004) migration, suggest that migrants may postpone or cancel their return project because of immigration policies becoming increasingly restrictive in destination countries.

A quantitative study on the intention and realisation of return to Senegal and DR Congo (Flahaux 2013) also suggests the unexpected effect of restrictive immigration policies. It shows that lower initial intentions to return and lower likelihood of return among migrants in Europe since 1990 (in comparison with those who migrated before 1990) may be related to the fact that it has become increasingly difficult to migrate to Europe. The rationale is that: given the restrictive immigration policies, migrants know it will be difficult to migrate again should they return and their re-integration process is problematic. In the same vein, findings also indicate that Congolese and Senegalese who took complex routes to reach Europe, are less likely to initially intend to return, and that Congolese who took complex routes are less likely to realise a return.

The study reveals that the harder it is to migrate to Europe, the less migrants intend to return and effectively do so (Flahaux 2013). The results of a macro-level quantitative analysis testing the effect of introducing visa requirements on bilateral migration flows between various countries, seem to go along the same lines: the results suggest that travel visa requirements significantly decrease outflows (Czaika and de Haas 2014). Although the results of these studies suggest that there is an increase in permanent settlement of migrants in developed countries because of an increasing difficulty to have access to the territory of destination countries in Europe and America, the effect of migration policies in particular has not been studied.

2.2.2 Policies to control the stay of migrants

There is little evidence on the effect of migration policies aimed at regulating the stay of migrants in destination countries, but the effects can be considered as two types. One that when policies tend to reduce migrants’ freedom or opportunities in terms of work and living conditions, migrants may decide to leave and to return to their origin country as the situation in the destination country was not as they expected. For example, if migrants face obstacles attaining a work permit due to restrictive migration policies, they may decide to return.

The other type in line with the New Economy of Labour Migration Theory, is that migrants return slower than expected or postpone their return due to the restrictions they cope with to integrate, because they will need more time to accumulate the resources required before returning (de Haas and Fokkema, 2011). In this regard, quantitative research shows that Senegalese who migrated to improve their living conditions had high probabilities of intending to return when they arrived in Europe, but low propensities to return in reality. This result is interpreted in reference to the difficulties migrants face integrating in Europe due to restrictive policies regulating their stay, for example access to the

labour market. Therefore, they will in reality need more time than expected to save the prerequisite money to return (Flahaux 2013).

2.2.3 Policies to encourage or force migrants to return

Policies encouraging or forcing migrants to return are expected to have a positive impact on returns. Some studies however, question the effectiveness of such policies. It appears that the impact of voluntary return programmes is limited because they are not attractive for migrants (Majidi 2010), and do not correspond to their needs (Linares 2009). These programmes, even when offering €7,000 to assist migrants' economic re-integration in their origin country, seem derisory compared to migrants' sacrifices and projects they want to carry out over the long term. In other words, migrants know that the money would be spent quickly and cannot compensate for the shortfall of the migration (Linares, 2009). Furthermore, this type of programme and deportation mainly targets undocumented migrants, who realise it will be difficult to migrate to Europe again if they return. A quantitative survey showed that undocumented Congolese migrants are less likely to return than those who are documented (Flahaux 2013). This suggests that restrictive immigration policies have not a positive effect on the migrants' return.

3 Methodology

3.1 Data requirements

The objective of this study is to evaluate the influence of migration policies on return migration for Senegalese migrants to Europe. Such analysis requires different data types: individual and contextual data. Individual data allows the study of the event of return for Senegalese who migrated to Europe. A transnational sample is needed that includes both Senegalese migrants in Europe, and migrants who returned to Senegal. Furthermore, a proper analysis of return migration requires time-varying data to understand the characteristics of migrants each year migration, given they are likely to return each year spent abroad. Contextual data is needed to assess the level of restrictiveness of migration policies by category of migrants, by destination country, and for every year. Indeed, the level of restrictiveness evolves over time, varies from one destination country to another, and differs from one category of migrants to another. It is therefore important to use a dataset that accounts for these factors. Finally, data that assesses the situation in Senegal each year needs to be considered, as it may impact the decision to return.

3.2 Data

Few individual datasets present the required features to study the determinants of return migration. The biographic MAFE-Senegal survey (part of the Migration between Africa and Europe project)² is one of the few quantitative sources allowing such analyses thanks to two main methodological characteristics. Firstly, it is a transnational dataset from surveys in both European countries—603 Senegalese migrants were surveyed in Europe (about 200 in France, Italy and Spain)—and in Senegal—1,067 interviewees in the Dakar region including non-migrants and returnees.³ Secondly, the data is time-varying by nature as it results from individual life-histories collected in biographical questionnaires. The data provides details of the respondents' life, such as family formation, education and employment, housing, assets,

2 For information, see: <http://mafeproject.site.ined.fr>

3 Surveys carried out in Europe contain a few return migrants (those who migrated again to Europe after a return to Senegal).

their own migration trajectory as well as those of their personal network, etc. The data was collected annually, from the birth of individuals until the year of the survey (in 2008) (Beauchemin 2012). Detailed information on each stay of at least one year in a destination country is available, including the migration duration expected at the time of arrival and the final destination expected if any, which indicates the initial intention to return to the origin country or to settle abroad (Flahaux 2013).

For this paper we use data collected in Senegal, France, Italy and Spain, including both current and return migrants who have lived in these destination countries for at least one year. The migrants considered in the sample were all born in Senegal; have or had Senegalese citizenship; emigrated from Africa at age 18 or older for a stay of at least one year; and do not have European citizenship. The sample includes 628 individuals, 675 migration episodes, 6892 person-years and 91 events of return, and is detailed in section 3. Return migration refers to a return with a long-term perspective to the country of origin, and not to a short stay (visit). In this paper, return is defined as a stay in Senegal for at least one year, or less than one year but with the intention to settle.

The contextual information on migration policies comes from the DEMIG POLICY database (de Haas et al. 2014a), a new database tracking major changes in migration policies of 45 countries—including France, Italy and Spain—constructed as part of the Determinants of International Migration (DEMIG) project. This database rests on a systematic review of all reports of the OECD's Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI reports, since 2006 commonly known as the OECD's International Migration Outlook) published annually between 1973 and 2013, the national migration profiles compiled by the Migration Policy Institute, key academic articles on the countries migration policy evolution, as well as national official documents and homepages, original legal texts and reports or overviews compiled by international organisations, think tanks and NGOs. In addition, every country dataset was reviewed by a national migration policy expert, which had the advantage of including additional literature in the national language, as well as to provide a quality-check of the database.

The DEMIG POLICY database includes not only border control and entry policies, but also integration and exit policies. It distinguishes between policies targeting different categories of migrants (i.e. all migrants; all migrant workers; family members; international students; investors, entrepreneurs and business people; irregular migrants; low skilled migrants; high skilled migrants; refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable people). The objective of this database is to assess the effectiveness of migration policies in affecting the different targeted migrant categories. With this aim in mind, the DEMIG POLICY database evaluates any change in restrictiveness of each new policy measure introduced compared to the existing situation.

As such, it is assumed that a policy change represents an increase or decrease in restrictiveness when rights granted to the migrants of the targeted category decrease or increase respectively. Measures intending to restrict the rights of a migrant group are coded +1 (creating a more restrictive situation than before), while measures intending to increase the rights of a migrant group are coded -1 (creating a less restrictive situation than before). It is important to stress that DEMIG POLICY does not provide an assessment of the absolute level of restrictiveness of a specific policy within a country and over time, but it is an ordinal variable assessing the relative change in restrictiveness in a specific policy field.

This information does not allow a perfect comparison of the level of restrictiveness of migration policies for each category of migrants between countries, but is a good proxy to evaluate the number of policy measures implemented over time to control or ease migration for each category of migrants in each country. In addition to the DEMIG POLICY database, the DEMIG VISA database details the years travel visa were introduced for Senegalese to France, Italy and Spain after 1973. For the analysis of

return, the information contained in DEMIG POLICY and DEMIG VISA were recoded to distinguish between policies aimed at (1) regulating the access of migrants to the destination country; (2) controlling the stay of migrants on their territory; and (3) encouraging or forcing migrants to return. Table 2 shows the policies considered for this purpose.

Table 2. Policies regulating the entry, stay and return of migrants, and examples of specific migration policies used for the analysis of return

Policies regulating the entry of migrants to Europe	Policies regulating the stay of migrants in Europe	Policies regulating the return of migrants in their origin country
<p>Travel visa Ex: Introduction of travel visa = +1 for all migrants</p> <p>Carrier liabilities Ex: Increased penalties for carriers of undocumented migrants = +1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Surveillance technologies Ex: Creation of border surveillance system = +1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Work permit Ex: Reduction of catalogue of occupations in short supply and of recruitment at source = +1 for high-skilled and low-skilled workers</p> <p>Quota/target Ex: Introduction of quota for non-EU workers in firms = +1 for low-skilled workers</p> <p>Recruitment/ assisted migration programme Ex: Labour agreement with Gambia, Guinea and Senegal = -1 for low-skilled workers</p>	<p>Detention Ex: Detention in prison introduced for irregular migrants = +1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Surveillance technology Ex: Series of laws that reduce rights of foreigners and introduce more control and sanctions = +1 for all migrants</p> <p>Employer liabilities Ex: more control of employers and sanctions for irregular work = +1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Entry visa/stay permit Ex: simplification of asylum procedures = -1 for asylum seekers</p> <p>Regularisation Ex: Regularisation programme = -1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Free mobility rights Ex: End of preferential treatment of free circulation for nationals of African countries = +1 for all migrants</p> <p>Access to permanent residency Ex: grounds for withdrawing residency permit limited = -1 for all migrants (excepted irregular)</p> <p>Language, housing and cultural integration programmes Ex: widening of housing and funding for foreign workers beyond Algerians = -1 for all (excepted irregular)</p> <p>Access to citizenship Ex: new requirements for naturalisation = +1 for all migrants (excepted irregular)</p> <p>Access to social benefit and socio-economic rights Ex: Access to social system granted to legal and irregular migrants = -1 for all migrants</p>	<p>Expulsion Ex: Stronger link between asylum refusal and expulsion = +1 for asylum seekers</p> <p>Readmission agreement Ex: Readmission agreement with Gambia, Guinea and Senegal = +1 for irregular migrants</p> <p>Reintegration and return program Ex: Voluntary return and resettlement aid launched = +1 for irregular migrants, unskilled and skilled workers</p>

For this study, only policies implemented after 1900 are considered, and the restrictiveness of migration policies is assessed for five categories of migrants: irregular migrants, high skilled migrants, low skilled migrants, asylum seekers, and international students. The evolution of the level of restrictiveness for each of these categories of migrants is presented in next section.

Annual GDP growth of Senegal data, computed from GDP estimates of the Maddison project,⁴ is used to measure the economic situation in the origin country over time. Data from 1950 to 2010 was available.

3.3 Methods

Discrete-time event history analysis was used to estimate the effects of different types of migration policies on the likelihood of return among Senegalese who migrated to France, Italy and Spain. This method divides time into discrete intervals of one year and estimates the probability of observing the event within each interval, given that it has not yet occurred (Allison 1982). In this case, as the event studied is the return to Senegal, every year spent by Senegalese in France, Italy and Spain is taken into account. Using the respondents' detailed migration histories, a time-varying dichotomous measure indicating whether a return event occurred in the current year is constructed. Individuals are considered likely to return at the time of their arrival in one of the three destination countries and are followed until they leave or until the survey date, whichever occurs first. Their individual characteristics can vary over time.

As the variable on the level of restrictiveness can also differ by year, by category of migrants, and by destination country, the database from the DEMIG POLICY and TRAVEL VISA databases were merged with the sample of the MAFE-Senegal data on the basis of the year, destination country and migrant category. A migrant is considered an 'asylum seeker' when in a process of an asylum application; 'irregular' when undocumented (neither residence permit nor European citizenship); 'student' when the main occupation is related to studies; 'high skilled' when having studied more than three tertiary years; and 'low skilled' when not classified in one of the previous categories.⁵ Once a migrant acquires European citizenship they are excluded from the sample as they are no longer affected by migration policies.

As we have information on the characteristics of the migrants year by year, their classification can change over time. In some cases, a migrant could be considered in several categories in the same year, in which case, the most relevant category regarding the policies aimed at regulating the migrant's situation is kept. For example, for a migrant both high skilled and irregular during the same year, the irregularity would take precedence because the migration policies targeting irregular migration will be more important for regulation. The following 'priority rule' was then implemented:

Asylum seeker > Irregular migrant > Student > High skilled migrant > Low skilled migrant

In sum, each migrant is affected each year spent in Europe, with three scores reflecting the restrictiveness of migration policies targeting each category in the destination country at that time. Table

⁴ <http://www.gdc.net/maddison/maddison-project/home.htm>

⁵ The category of family migrants is not included given the fact that this category is difficult to define and to implement in the analyses (Who are the individuals affected by migration policies related to families? The migrants or their families? Those having a family in Europe or in the origin country?). Moreover, given the categories have to be exclusive for the analyses, it was decided not to take them into account. Therefore, the policies targeting family migration are not taken into account.

3 shows an example of migrant X who arrived in Spain in 2000 and is irregular during the four first years of migration. At that time, the level of restrictiveness of migration policies is quite high regarding the ‘access’ to Spain for irregular Senegalese migrants (level of ‘7’). In 2004, migrant X attained legal status and is then categorised a ‘low-skilled’ migrant, where the level of restrictiveness of migration policies regulating the ‘access’ to Spain is lower (level of ‘0’ in 2004 and 2005). In 2006, Spain implements more liberal migration policies regarding the entry of low-skilled migrants, causing the level of restrictiveness to become ‘-1’. This example also shows that ‘stay’ and ‘return’ policies also vary over time.

Table 3. Migrant X example

Ident	Destination country	Year	Category	(1) ‘Access’ policies	(2) ‘Stay’ policies	(3) ‘Return’ policies
Migrant X	SPAIN	2000	Irregular	7	0	0
Migrant X	SPAIN	2001	Irregular	7	0	1
Migrant X	SPAIN	2002	Irregular	7	0	1
Migrant X	SPAIN	2003	Irregular	7	0	1
Migrant X	SPAIN	2004	Low-skilled	0	-4	0
Migrant X	SPAIN	2005	Low-skilled	0	-5	0
Migrant X	SPAIN	2006	Low-skilled	-1	-5	0
Migrant X	SPAIN	2007	Low-skilled	-1	-5	0
Migrant X	SPAIN	2008	Low-skilled	-1	-5	1

Note. Scores reflect the level of restrictiveness for the three types of migration policies for each year ‘migrant X’ lived in Europe (positive values=more restrictive; negative values=less restrictive).

A logistic regression is used to estimate the likelihoods of return, and results are presented as odds ratios. The variables related to the three types of migration policies are inserted separately in the model (a total of three models). These variables are categorical since they were recoded. Each modality of reference refers to negative and 0 scores, which corresponds to non-restrictive levels of restrictiveness in migration policies. Other modalities are compared with this modality of reference (scores from 1 to 4; and scores from a level of 5). Weights and replication (Jackknife) were used in order to take into account the sampling design and make the results more robust.

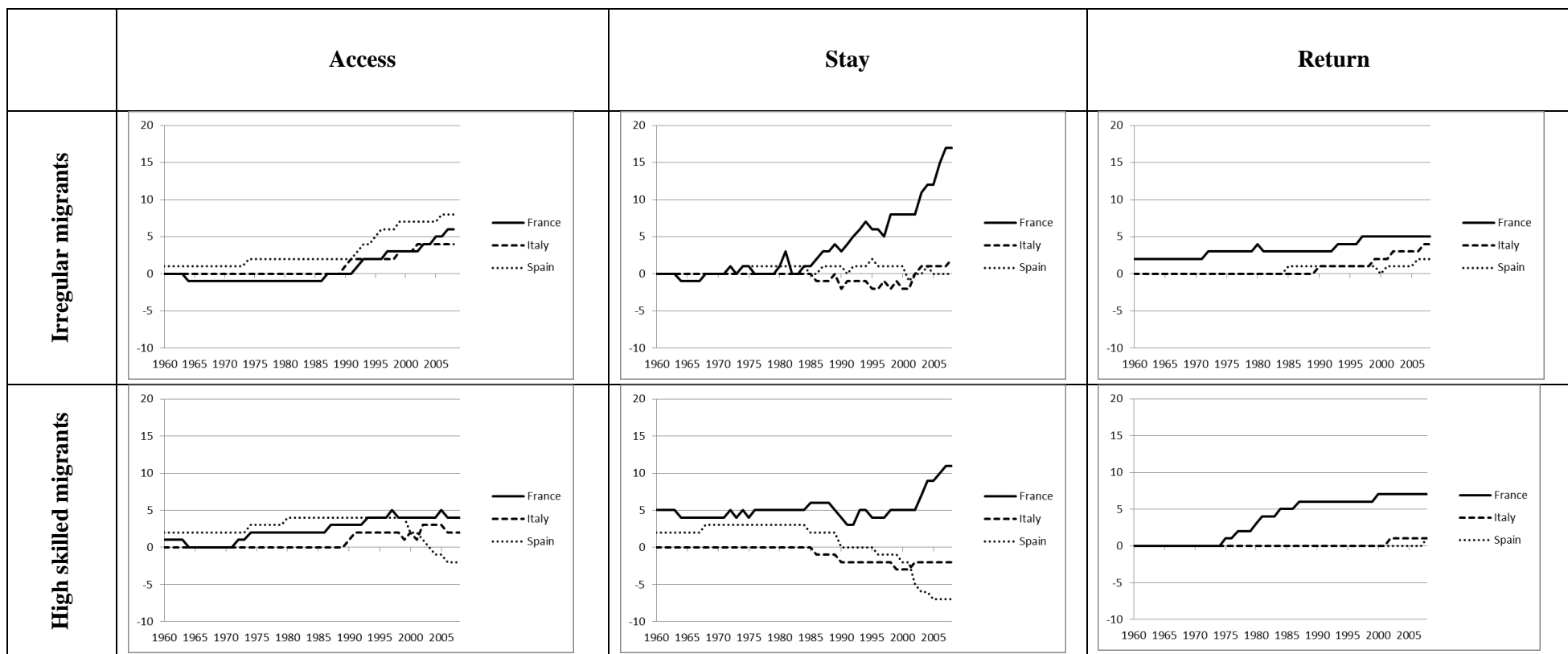
4 Descriptive analysis

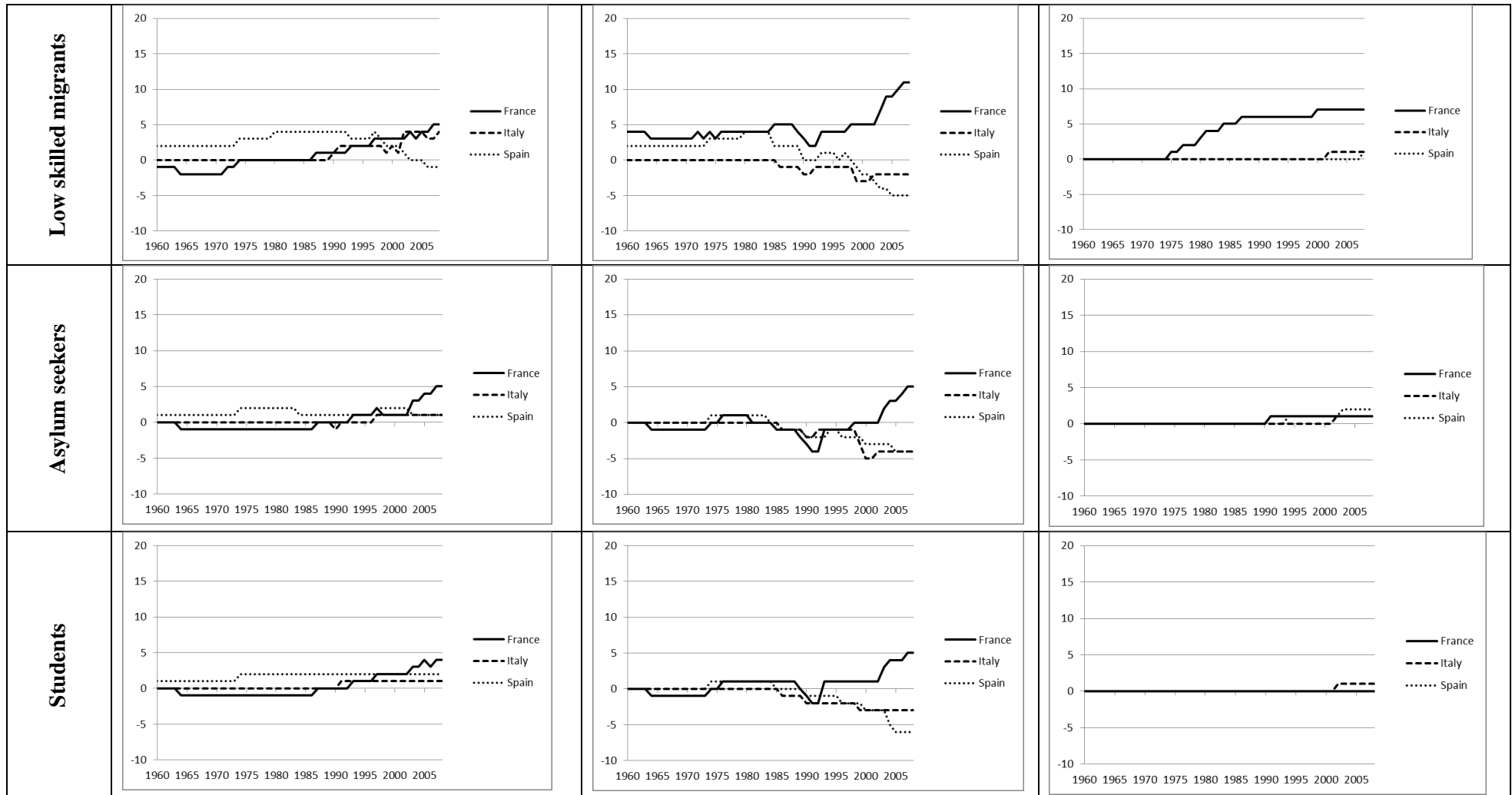
4.1 Restrictiveness of migration policies

Table 4 shows that France, Italy and Spain have increasingly restricted access of Senegalese migrants to their territories over time, although to varying degrees across different categories of migrants.⁶ In all these countries, one can observe a tendency towards stricter policies to prevent the arrival of irregular migrants, particularly since 1990. Migration policies regulating the arrival of workers (both skilled and unskilled) have evolved differently: they have become relatively more restrictive since the 1970’s, but have been liberalised in Spain in the middle of the 1990’s, reflecting the need of foreign labour in this country at that time.

⁶ See also Annex 1, showing the evolution of the level of restrictiveness in entry, stay and return policies targeting the different categories of migrants, by country of destination.

Table 4. Level of restrictiveness in entry, stay and return policies targeting by category of migrants and by country of destination. x axis = years ; y axis = level of restrictiveness (the higher the value is, the more restrictive the level is).





Source: DEMIG POLICY and VISA databases, according to the recodification of the author.

Regarding the regulation of the stay of migrants in these three countries, Table 4 shows that there is considerable variation due to the different timing and extent of policies. France appears to have implemented increasingly restrictive policies over time, especially for irregular migrants after 1980, and workers, students and asylum seekers after 1990. In comparison, the policies implemented by Spain and Italy to regulate the stay of migrants have been less restrictive. Especially for workers after the mid-1980s, and particularly in Spain. The level of restrictiveness of these policies has also decreased in Italy and Spain in the 1990's for asylum seekers and students.

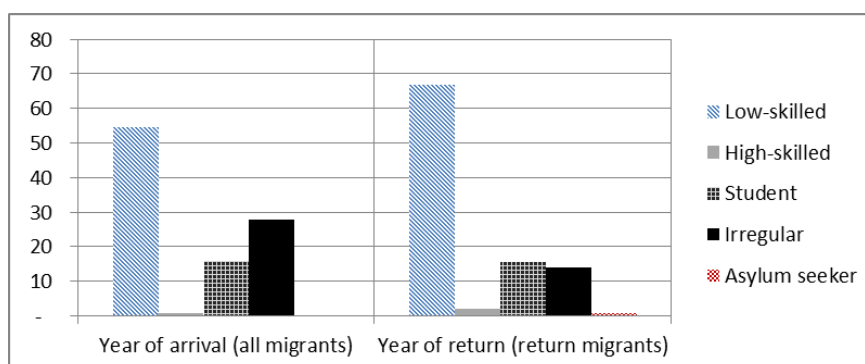
The variable reflecting policies of return shows that the three destination countries have increasingly tried to force or encourage irregular migrants to return, especially in France, but also in Italy since the 1990's, and to a lesser extent in Spain. Foreign workers in France have also been encouraged to return since the 1970's and since 2000 in Italy, while this has not been the case in Spain. Finally, policies of return have not specifically targeted students or asylum seekers.

4.2 Migrant and return migrant characteristics

As figure 2 shows, more than half of Senegalese migrants are in the low-skilled category the year of their arrival in France, Italy or Spain. While 28% of migrants are irregular, 16% are students, and high-skilled and asylum seekers represent a minority of 1% each.

Figure 2 also reveals that most return migrants were in the category of low-skilled workers before returning (67%), followed by students (16%). Irregular migrants represent 14% of return migrants, but it does not mean that they have been encouraged or forced to return. Indeed, previous research indicates that irregular migrants return to Senegal spontaneously (Flahaux, 2013). Finally, there are very few migrants in the high-skilled and asylum seekers categories.

Figure 2. Proportion (%) of migrants and return migrants by category, the year of their arrival and the year of their return (if they returned) (results weighted).



N= 675 migrants the first year of the migration; 91 return migrants (the year of their return).

Source: MAFE-Senegal, biographic survey, 2008.

The detailed characteristics of migrants are reported in table 5, and those of return migrants in table 6. These descriptive analyses suggest that Senegalese migrants have returned spontaneously and not under constraint. Indeed, while only 3% had studied more than 3 years at the tertiary level at the time of their arrival, 10% had at the time of return. Likewise, among migrants who returned, 63% initially intended to return, compared to 43% in the total sample of migrants the year of their arrival. In addition, while only 18% of migrants had a property in Senegal at the time of their arrival in Europe, 40% of those who returned have a property. Of return migrants 56% have a family in Senegal, compared

to 40% in the total sample of migrants the year of their arrival. These results suggest that migrants return generally voluntarily to Senegal, after having acquired human and financial capital in Europe.

Table 5. Descriptive analysis of (a) migrant sample the year of their arrival in France, Italy or Spain, and (b) return migrant sample the year before their return to Senegal (results weighted)

Variables	Modalities	(a) %	(b) %
Age	18-29 years	65	30
	30-44 years	32	59
	45 years and more	3	11
Sex	Men	70	66
	Women	30	34
Education level	No education, primary or secondary	97	89
	Superior	3	11
Motive for migration	Family reason	20	15
	To improve living conditions	53	36
	Professional reason	4	6
	To study	14	29
	Other/missing	9	13
Intention to return	No	47	32
	Yes	43	63
	Do not know	10	5
Migration row	Not first migration	10	27
	First migration	90	73
Visit(s)	No visit	93	85
	At least one visit	7	15
Family situation	Family in Senegal	40	56
	Family at destination	10	4
	Single without children	40	22
	Family for at destination and origin	6	7
	Family elsewhere	4	10
Material situation	Property in Senegal	18	42
	Property at destination	1	1
	No property	81	56
Professional situation	Active (and not underemployed)	46	46
	Active (but underemployed)	17	14
	Inactive	20	24
	Student	17	16
Economic situation	Resources more than sufficient	18	22
	Resources not more than sufficient	81	72
	Missing	1	6
N		675	91

5 Results: The role of migration policies in return

5.1 Determinants of return

Table 7 shows the results of the ‘control’ variables of the first model.⁷ It appears that return is likely to occur for Senegalese migrants having a certain attachment to Senegal and having acquired resources in Europe. Indeed, those who intended to return at the beginning of their migration are also more likely to return than those who intended to settle permanently in Europe. Moreover, those who have a family in Senegal have higher likelihood of return than those living with their families in Europe. Furthermore, the duration of the migration, which might reflect the time needed to acquire resources, influences return: migrants who spent more than two years in Europe are more likely to return.

Migrants who have not returned for a short stay in Senegal during their migration are also more likely to return than those having visited Senegal. This suggests that Senegalese who want to return prefer not to visit Senegal during their migration as they prefer to save money for their project of reintegration after return, while those visiting Senegal for short stays may have to postpone their return. Results also highlight that Senegalese who are inactive in Europe are more likely to return, which is contrary to the discourses about unemployed migrants staying in Europe to take advantage of social security. Finally, Senegalese migrating for the second time to Europe are more likely to return. It shows that a first return may give rise to another migration with the intention to return permanently, probably because the new migration occurs to save enough money to return permanently to Senegal.

Table 7. Results of the logistic regression on return to Senegal from France, Spain and Italy: Effects of control variables (odds ratio)

Variables	Modalities	Nets effects
Age	18-29 years (ref)	1
	30-44 years	1,14
	45 years and more	1,06
Sex	Men (ref)	1
	Women	1,84
Education level	No education, primary or secondary (ref)	1
	Superior	0,32
Motive for migration	Family reason (ref)	1
	To improve living conditions	0,93
	Professional reason	1,18
	To study	5,67
Migration row	Not first migration in Europe (ref)	1
	First migration	0,31***
Duration	1 - 2 years (ref)	1
	3 - 5 years	2,44**
	6 years and more	2,43**
Visit(s)	No visit (ref)	1
	At least one visit	0,18***
Initial intention to return	Intention to settle permanently in Europe (ref)	1
	Intention to return	2,38**

⁷ These results are those of the model including the variable on policies controlling the access of migrants to Europe, but the two other models have given very similar results.

Variables	Modalities	Nets effects
Destination: France	Yes (ref)	1
	No	1,43
Destination: Italy	Yes (ref)	1
	No	0,60
Destination: Spain	Yes (ref)	1
	No	1,00
Family situation	Family in Senegal (ref)	1
	Family at destination	0,05***
	Single without children	0,58
	Family for at destination and origin	0,27
	Family elsewhere	2,26
Material situation	Property in Senegal (ref)	1
	Property at destination	0,15
	No property	0,52
Professional situation	Active (and not underemployed) (ref)	1
	Active (but underemployed)	1,16
	Inactive	4,63**
	Student	0,50
Economic situation	Resources more than sufficient (ref)	1
	Resources not more than sufficient	0,92
Annual GDP growth in Senegal		0,93
Number of events		91
Number of observations (person-years)		6894

5.2 Effect of migration policies

Controlling for the above variables, Table 8 (1) shows that policies controlling the access of migrants to Europe have an effect on return migration to Senegal. When migrants face high level of restrictiveness in ‘access’ policies, they are less likely to return compared to periods of lower restriction. Consistent with the initial hypothesis, it shows that restrictive migration policies in France, Italy and Spain aiming at limiting immigration discourage Senegalese to return and push them into a longer settlement. Indeed, when ‘access’ migration policies are very restrictive, thinking about the possibility of returning, migrants are aware that it will be difficult to migrate again to Europe if their re-integration process in Senegal is problematic. Therefore, they prefer not to take the risk of returning. Even if ‘access’ or ‘entry’ policies do not always correspond to ‘re-entry’ policies, it is assumed to be a good proxy.

Table 8 (2) also reveals that the level of restrictiveness of policies regulating the stay of migrants in Europe does not affect the return of migrants. Facing restrictive policies to live in Europe, it is possible that some Senegalese migrants decide to return due to the difficulty to integrate in destination countries, while other migrants postpone their return because the context prevents them to accumulate resources required for the return. In the end, a high level of restrictiveness of ‘stay’ policies may push some migrants to return and others to stay.

Table 8 (3) shows that, when the level of restrictiveness of policies encouraging or forcing migrants to return is high, migrants are less likely to return than when this level is low. This level of

high restrictions corresponds only to the situation of irregular migrants in France since 2000. The result of the negative effect is unexpected, but can be explained by reversed causality. It is for instance possible that France started to implement more restrictive return policies because of the very fact that irregular migrants do not return. Otherwise, Table 8 does not show differences between times of slightly restrictive policies and non-restrictive policies related to the return of migrants, which is in line with the initial hypothesis.

Table 8. Results of the three logistic regressions on return to Senegal from France, Spain and Italy: effects of the policy variables (odds ratio)

(1)

Variables	Modalities	Odd ratios
Policies regulating the access of migrants to Europe	Negative and 0 scores (non-restrictive) (ref)	1
	Scores of 1 to 4 (slightly restrictive)	0,98
	Scores of 5 and more (very restrictive)	0,04***
N		6892 (person-years)

***: p<0.01 ; ** : p<0.05 ; * : p<0.10

(2)

Variables	Modalities	Odd ratios
Policies regulating the stay of migrants in Europe	Negative and 0 scores (non-restrictive) (ref)	1
	Scores of 1 to 4 (slightly restrictive)	0,95
	Scores of 5 and more (very restrictive)	0,79
N		6892 (person-years)

***: p<0.01 ; ** : p<0.05 ; * : p<0.10

(3)

Variables	Modalities	Odd ratios
Policies regulating the return of migrants from Europe	Negative and 0 scores (non-restrictive) (ref)	1
	Scores of 1 to 4 (slightly restrictive)	0,60
	Scores of 5 and more (very restrictive)	0,39**
N		6892 (person-years)

***: p<0.01 ; ** : p<0.05 ; * : p<0.10

6 Conclusion

Migration policies in France, Italy and Spain have become more restrictive over time for Senegalese migrants, although it depends on the categories of migrants and on the destination countries. Based on the conceptualisation of return migration as a function of individual's aspirations and capabilities to return, this study aims to analyse the effect of the different types of migration policies on return among Senegalese who migrated to France, Italy and Spain.

The results show that the aspirations of migrants, referring to what they consider as the best for them and their family, determine their return. Indeed, those having the intention to return or having a family in Senegal are more likely to return. Migrants however, need the capabilities to return. In line with the qualitative literature on Senegalese migration (Hernandez Carretero 2012, Sinatti 2011,

Castagnone et al. 2005), the results show that migrants are more likely to return to Senegal when they have acquired resources to prepare their return. By preparing their return, they avoid risks of failure of their reintegration (Flahaux, 2013). Moreover, the preoccupation of migrants is not only the return, but also the possibility of a new migration after the return. In this vein, the results reveal that Senegalese migrants are less likely to return when entry restrictions have become important. It suggests that policies aiming at limiting immigration discourage migrants to return and push them into a longer settlement in destination countries.

Although some studies have suggested that restrictive migration policies had a negative effect on return migration, it had not been empirically tested using both micro data on migrants' life histories and contextual data assessing the restrictiveness of migration policies for the different categories of migrants. Using data of the MAFE-Senegal biographic survey as well as data of the DEMIG policy and travel visa databases, this study is thus innovative. By distinguishing the effect of different types of migration policies on return, this paper shows that policies aiming at controlling the stay and encouraging or forcing the return of migrants do not really affect return to Senegal, while restrictive policies regulating arrivals of migrants to France, Italy and Spain clearly reduce return.

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Annex

Evolution of the level of restrictiveness in entry, stay and return policies targeting the different categories of migrants, by country of destination. x axis = years ; y axis = level of restrictiveness (the higher the value is, the more restrictive is the level of restrictiveness).

