

The Link between Family Formation Dynamics and Migration. The Case of Senegalese Migrants in Europe.

Elisabeth K. Kraus

elisabeth.kraus@upf.edu

Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)

Department of Political and Social Sciences

--- DRAFT: Please do not cite or quote ---

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between individual migration experiences and family formation events of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Europe. It builds on two theoretical approaches that link migration with fertility and nuptiality, namely the disruption and the interrelation of events hypotheses. The aim is not to provide a static description at one point in time, but over a certain period of time. Thus, the objective is to examine associations between different family formation trajectories and migration, rather than finding a causal relationship between them. I use longitudinal life history data from Senegalese migrants in Spain, France and Italy collected in the framework of the survey "Migrations between Africa and Europe" (MAFE-MESE-Senegal). Applying sequence analysis techniques (Optimal Matching) and distinguishing between genders, I compute the distances between different life course sequences in terms of childbearing and union formation during the immediate time before and after migration. Individuals are grouped into different clusters according to the (dis-) similarities in their family formation trajectories. The results indicate that for both men and women union formation and childbearing are strongly linked with migration processes. The paper contributes to existing theories on family formation and migration and applies them to the case of Sub-Saharan migrants in Europe.