


Socioeconomic reintegration of return migrants and the varieties of legal status trajectory in Europe

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Abstract

That migrants' legal status has impacts on their integration in receiving countries is a recognised fact. We further argue that it also affects their reintegration on returning to the home country, although with some significant variations depending on the details of their legal status history. Using data from the Senegalese TEMPER survey, we adopt a life course approach of migrant's status while they were in Europe to identify links between several indicators of reintegration and different patterns of irregular status (moment when they were in an irregular situation and the duration in this situation). The results of our multivariate analyses show that only those migrants whose irregular situations were the most extreme (deported, or irregular throughout their stay in Europe) are at a disadvantage compared to nonmigrants as well as other returnees. This shows that the initial disadvantage of out-migrating from Africa without proper documentation does not turn systematically into a cumulative disadvantage.

KEYWORDS

deportation, irregular migration, legal status, reintegration, return migration, Senegal

1 | INTRODUCTION

Returning irregular migrants at origin has been a cornerstone of European immigration policies since the early 2000s (Cassarino, 2008). The reintegration of return migrants in their home countries is high on the agenda of policymakers trying to connect migration policy with development policy (Scalettaris & Gubert, 2019). Returnees are seen as potential agents for development and innovation in their home countries, since they are likely to have added to their store of know-how, skills, ideas and economic or social resources during their time as migrants. It has been established that the conditions of migrants' reintegration depend both on the resources they were able to accumulate during migration and on their ability to prepare for their return (Cassarino, 2004). Migrants' legal status can affect both these factors, but few studies have

examined its impact on the reintegration process. Those that have been conducted have approached migrants' legal status in a static way by considering either the conditions of their arrival in the host country, with or without a visa (El-Mallakh & Wahba, 2021; Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2009), or the case of involuntary return (Gubert and Nordman, 2008; David, 2017; Mezger Kveder and Flahaux, 2013). But the migrants' legal status often changes over time: they may arrive with no papers and obtain a residence permit later on, or they may have regular status and then lose it at some point (Vickstrom, 2014; Sabates-Wheeler, 2009). This paper contributes to advancing research and the understanding of irregular migration by adopting a life course approach of migrants' legal histories to test the hypothesis that the effects of irregular status on the returnees' reintegration depend on the timing of the irregular status. Senegal is a particularly suitable case to study in this connection. On the one hand, the

Senegal government has demonstrated its wish to make the most of input from its diaspora and return migrants by setting up institutions for that purpose (Adam et al., 2020). On the other hand, the country has a relatively high rate of irregular emigration (Beauchemin et al., 2020) and the government has signed readmission agreements with European countries. The TEMPER survey data (2017–2018) enabled us to compare the socioeconomic situations of nonmigrants with those of return migrants, taking into account the migrants' legal status trajectories in Europe. The results show that only migrants in the most extreme situations of illegality (deported, or irregular throughout their stay in Europe) are at a disadvantage compared to nonmigrants as well as other return migrants. This is partly because they have the greatest difficulty in accumulating social, human, and economic capital while in Europe. We also show that the initial disadvantage of entering Europe without proper documentation does not turn into a cumulative disadvantage that would hamper migrants' reintegration in their home country after they return. Migrants' legal trajectory after entry, and more specifically the disruptive experience of deportation, has a much greater impact on returnees' reintegration. By comparing migrants with nonmigrants, we show that migration can have benefits for those who engage in such an international movement, including when they experience some sort of irregularity, provided that they escape from deportation. This article thus advances our understanding of the consequences of irregular migration by demonstrating the importance of taking into account the complexity and heterogeneity of migrants' legal trajectories. The rest of the article is in four sections. The first reviews the literature on the reintegration of return migrants and the different ways legal status is measured. The second presents the data used in our study and the analytical method employed. The third presents the results, which are discussed in the conclusion.

2 | HOW LEGAL STATUS AFFECTS THE REINTEGRATION OF RETURNING MIGRANTS: A TENTATIVE ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

'Return migration' has taken on a very restrictive meaning in European political discourse and public debate since the early 2000s. Whereas in its academic sense the term refers to any migration back to the home country, whatever the cause, in policy documents it now refers only to the return of irregular migrants, either by deportation or through schemes for undocumented migrants who declare themselves willing to return (Cassarino, 2020; Scalettari & Gubert, 2019)¹. Statistics on return migration in the academic sense, beyond this politically accepted meaning of the term,

are scarce. But they suggest a significant flow that cannot be reduced to the return of irregular migrants. A review of the literature shows that 20%–50% of immigrants leave the host country within 5 years of arrival, either returning to their home country or moving to another one (Dumont and Spielvogel, 2008). So, to study the effects of host countries' repatriation policies, it should be possible to compare return migrants' situations according to their legal status trajectories. Given the scarcity of surveys providing information on return migrants' administrative histories, little has been done to estimate the impact of migrants' legal status in the host country on their reintegration back home.

Existing research has looked at particular moments in migrants' trajectories, ignoring the fact that migrants' legal status is not constant over time (a migrant may get regularised, or may lose their regular status). A few studies have looked at *legal status at the time of return*. Two studies using data from the MIREM project (conducted in 2006–2007 in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia among migrants returning mainly from Italy, France and Spain) provide information about what the authors label as 'forced return', that is, return resulting from deportation, administrative or tax problems or nonrenewal of a residence permit. David (2017) used a composite index combining the desire to leave again, stated difficulties in adjusting to the home country, participation in organised political activities and home ownership; she concluded that migrants forced to return had greater difficulty in integrating socially and culturally than those who had returned spontaneously. She also showed that they are more vulnerable in the labour market: they were significantly more likely to be out of work, both on arriving back and at the time of the survey. This demonstrates the lasting negative impact of forced return. Unwilling returnees are also less likely to become employers or self-employed in the formal economy (Gubert & Nordman, 2008). On the other hand, based on Senegal data from the MAFE project (2009–2010), Mezger Kveder and Flahaux (2013) have shown that 'involuntary' returnees (i.e., those returning home against their will but not necessarily for administrative reasons) are more likely to be self-employed than 'voluntary' migrants, and even more so compared to nonmigrants. However, the authors suggest that this is essentially poorly paid, undeclared work in 'last resort' occupations for people who have not been able to prepare their return. Involuntary returnees are also more likely to have no income. In short, migrants forced to return to their home countries in the Maghreb or Senegal, for reasons of irregular status particularly, find themselves in worse situations than either nonmigrants or other returnees.

Even fewer studies have considered the effect of the migrant's *legal status on arrival in the host country* rather than at the time of their return. In Ghana, Sabates-Wheeler et al. (2007) examined the effect of this on returnees' economic trajectories. They compare the migrants' subjective economic wellbeing before and after migration. They show that return migrants who left without papers are no more likely than regular migrants to be in a worse situation than before, but are significantly less likely to see an improvement. El-Mallakh and Wahba's study (2021) of return migrants in Egypt (mainly from Iraq, Libya, Jordan and the Gulf) concludes that irregular status on arrival

¹The data on the Eurostat website reflect this focus on forced return: the only figures available on return migration are found under the heading of 'Enforcement of immigration legislation statistics' (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Enforcement_of_immigration_legislation_statistics#Returns_of_non-EU_citizens, site visited 3/06/2021).

in the host country has a negative impact on returnees' economic reintegration in the home country: all else being equal, back in Egypt, return migrants who left home without papers earned lower wages than those who were regular migrants, as well as relative to nonmigrants². In this context, migrating without proper documentation seems to totally offset the benefits of migration. However, this article does not explore to what extent this average long-lasting effect of departing undocumented differs according to return conditions, and especially to migrants' potential deportation.

Overall, the empirical literature suggests that migrants' administrative histories can have long-term effects on their economic, social and cultural reintegration in their home countries. Irregular migrants appear to be consistently at a disadvantage compared to regular migrants after returning home. One limitation of the existing literature though is that it observes the migrants' legal status upon entering or leaving the host country and takes no account of any changes in between. Since administrative situations are in fact liable to change, *it may be expected, for example, that migrants who have been irregular throughout their stay would have more difficulty in reintegrating on their return than those who were only temporarily irregular*. This hypothesis rests on the theory, developed by the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM)³, that out-migration is motivated, in anticipation of return, by the prospect of acquiring in the host region different forms of capital that the migrants lacked at home before departure. Focusing mainly on domestic migration, NELM studies ignored the policy context in which international migrants are enmeshed and did not take into account the fact that variations in migrants' legal status histories can induce some heterogeneity in the ability to accumulate various forms of capital at destination and thus to create back home inequalities in the benefits of migration. However, it is likely that migrants who were permanently in an irregular status will have been less able than those who were irregular only at some point (for instance, upon entry) to accumulate during migration the human, social and financial capital that would help them reintegrate after return. Indeed, in receiving countries, irregular status has a negative impact on migrants' income (Fasani, 2015). Goldring & Landolt (2011) also find that legal status on arrival has a lasting impact on job quality while in the host country, and Pan (2012) suggests that irregular status has a negative impact on human capital by slowing the process of learning the host country's language. Moreover, when a migrant's irregular situation is lasting, their home country social capital tends to erode. They cannot make visits home and their low incomes make them less able to send money to their families (Åkesson, 2010; Kossoudji & Cobb-Clark, 2002; Vickstrom & Beauchemin, 2016). This illustrates the possible interactions between different forms of capital, particularly social and economic capital (see Figure 1).

Comparing the moments at which legal status is observed in the literature—on entry to and exit from the host country—it also seems that *deportation puts return migrants in an even more vulnerable situation* (bottom branch in Figure 1). The academic consensus presents deportation as an interruption to the 'migration cycle' at the end of which a migrant is, theoretically, ready to return home (Cassarino, 2004; David, 2017; Flahaux, 2020; Scalettaris and Gubert, 2019). People repatriated against their will, being prevented from making material preparation for their return, are handicapped in their reintegration process. In addition to the subjectively violent experience of deportation, back home there is social stigmatisation in the neighbourhood and in the country's media and political discourse (Bredeloup, 2006, 2017). Deported migrants very often want to leave again (Flahaux, 2012); Schuster and Majidi, 2013). This specific form of forced return may have more marked effects than estimated hitherto in studies that have included deportations in a broader set of 'forced' or 'involuntary' migrations (David, 2017; Gubert & Nordman, 2008; Mezger Kveder & Flahaux, 2013).

In previous studies, comparisons of irregular migrants with nonmigrants have been fewer than studies comparing migrants according to their legal status; and their results are more uncertain. Comparing returnees with nonmigrants is however classic in the literature on migration and development, as a mean to assess the benefits of migration. Comparing irregular migrants with nonmigrants is further useful to better understand the logics of undocumented migration. If one takes for granted that people who decide to migrate without proper documentation are as rational as other members of the population, it is reasonable to hypothesise that irregular migrants rip some benefits from a stay abroad and may even be, after return, in better socioeconomic situation than nonmigrants. Still, the literature suggests that the legal status may have nuanced effects depending on the moment when the legal status is observed. On one hand, the effect of entering Europe without proper documents may not place systematically returnees in a disadvantaged situation relative to stayers because their situation at a destination can evolve over time. On the other hand, deportation may have a detrimental effect that offset the benefits of migration and put migrants in a disadvantaged situation in the home society, not only relative to regular migrants but also to stayers. In other words, the initial disadvantage of moving irregularly out of Africa is not bound to transform into a permanent disadvantage: it will depend on the legal path of migrants after they enter their destination country.

In sum, to study the impact of legal status on returnees' reintegration one should take account both of the migrants' administrative history over time, and of the specific circumstances of their return (deportation or not). Our aim in this article is thus to test the following hypotheses:

1. The different patterns of irregularity that migrants experience entail different levels of disadvantage in their social and economic reintegration in the home country. In particular, we expect the most extreme situations (deportation or permanent irregularity) to put former migrants in a more disadvantaged position than either

²A previous version of Mallakh and Wahba's study (2021) suggested that there was no difference between undocumented migrants and nonmigrants (Jackline Wahba & Nelly El-Mallakh, 2021. 'Return Migrants and the Wage Premium: Does the Legal Status of Migrants Matter?', Working Papers 1133, Economic Research Forum).

³Readers interested in theories of return migration will find a comprehensive review in Cassarino (2004).

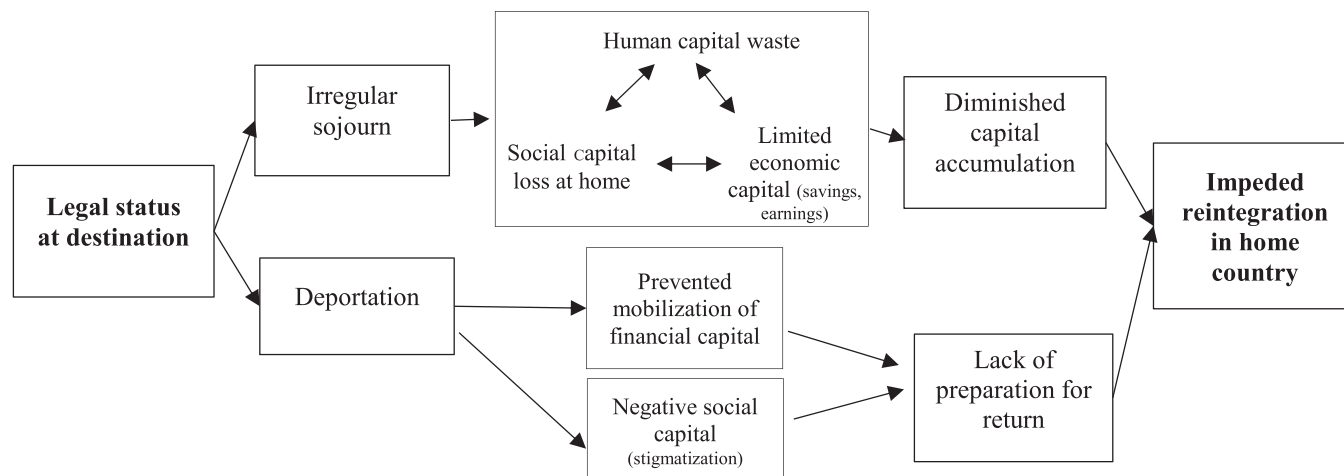


FIGURE 1 Impact of legal status on the reintegration of return migrants: the mechanisms involved

regular migrants or nonmigrants. Correlatively, we hypothesise migrants entering undocumented into Europe may not experience a cumulative disadvantage relative to nonmigrants, provided that their return is not due to deportation.

- The disadvantage associated with irregular migrant status is due to a lack of capital accumulation (or even a loss of capital) during the stay in the host country, to an extent that varies between types of irregular situations. In the case of deportation, we expect the erosion of the migrant's social capital to be especially marked because of the stigma that can weigh on deported returnees.

Senegal offers a particularly promising context for testing both these ideas. Historically, it is one of the sub-Saharan African countries most involved in international migration (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016). Migration beyond Africa has increased, especially migration to Europe and especially male migration (Beauchemin et al., 2020). In 2019, for a resident population of about 16 million, there were 640,000 Senegalese living in other countries, a ratio of 4%. Of these, 45% were in Africa and 48% in Europe, where France, Spain and Italy were the main destinations (UN-DESA, 2019). Qualitative studies suggest that for Senegalese migrants, returning home is an integral part of the migration project Sinatti (2011): they see their departure as a temporary step that will enable them to accumulate know-how and the financial means to improve their and their family's situations, in line with the theoretical model of the new economics of labour migration. Attempts to measure return migration confirm that there is a considerable return flow: about 70% of migrants who left home for another African country between the early 1970s and 2008 were back home 10 years after leaving, and 25% of those who had gone to a developed country (Flahaux et al., 2013). Most of these returnees came back of their own accord. Only a minority returned under administrative constraint: 11% of returnees interviewed in the Dakar region in 2008 said they had had problems with their papers. Indeed, undocumented Senegalese migrants are less likely to return than those with regular status

(Flahaux et al., 2014). Nonetheless, the Senegalese are among the nationalities most affected by deportation from the European countries they head to. In France in 2007, Senegal ranked 8th among the home countries of people against whom deportation orders were issued (2% of all removal orders issued)⁴. More people have been leaving home without papers since 2000: according to the MAFE project data, nearly 40% of migrants arriving in France, Spain and Italy between 2000 and 2008 were undocumented during their first year in Europe (Beauchemin et al., 2020). Those who leave home without papers are likely to be people with few social and economic resources. A survey conducted in Dakar, on intentions to migrate, showed that those who said they were prepared to leave irregularly were less educated than those considering regular migration (Mbaye, 2014). Analysis of actual migration (as distinct from intentions) confirms that the likelihood of leaving for France, Spain or Italy without a visa diminishes as educational level and living standards rise (Vickstrom, 2014).

3 | DATA AND METHOD

3.1 | TEMPER: A survey of return migrants

Our research is based on data from the Senegal TEMPER survey ('Temporary vs. Permanent Migration')⁵. In terms of sample size, this is one of the largest surveys on return migration. The survey was run in 2017–2018. Face to face interviews were conducted with 1102 men, born in Senegal and aged between 20 and 75, of whom 502 were nonmigrants (having never spent longer than 3 months abroad) and 600 were migrants who had spent at least

⁴https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/fr/content/download/118290/948255/file/Rap_2017-L_immigration_irreguliere_Web.xlsm (site visited 3/06/2021).

⁵For more information and access to the data see <http://www.temperproject.eu/>. The methodological documentation of the Senegalese survey can be accessed here: https://archined.ined.fr/view/AX4gHT_UQw0312Hdrln7

3 months in France or Spain⁶. The survey focused on men of working age, and included men who had left Senegal after 1995 and come back since 2000, when they were between 20 and 65 years of age.

Sampling strategy was designed to take into account the unavailability of any sample frame from which return migrants could be directly identified and also their relative scarcity in the general population. We selected the sample in three steps. First we chose the Senegal *départements* that had the highest proportion of return migrants according to the 2013 census. They were concentrated in the regions of Dakar (four *départements*), Thiès (three *dépt.*), Diourbel (one *dépt.*) and Louga (one *dépt.*) covered both urban and rural areas. Next, we randomly selected 35 communes with a view to conducting 30 interviews in each one (15 returnees and 15 nonmigrants). And finally, we identified the returnees, varying our methods so as to limit the possibility of selection bias: 31% of respondents were identified by asking from door to door or in public places; 38% were pointed out by relatives, friends or neighbours, 26% were found through other respondents (snowballing), and the rest were pointed out by institutional informants such as neighbourhood chiefs and associations. The nonmigrants were selected with a view to creating a 'mirror sample': for each return migrant interviewed, we found a nonmigrant of the same age (within 2 years) and living in the same street or neighbourhood⁷.

The TEMPER survey sample cannot be considered in any way representative of the population of Senegal, but it is well suited to making comparisons between return migrants and nonmigrants. The sample was built with no regard to the migrants' administrative histories, but several questions enabled us to track the respondents' legal status trajectories⁸. As shown in Figure 2, less than one-third of the migrants had gone to France or Spain without a visa, and 16% said they had been deported. Between arriving in Europe and returning to Senegal, more than a third of the respondents had been through some combination of periods with regular status and periods without. The rest had either enjoyed regular status throughout their stay (45% of the sample) or had never been regularised (19%).

The legal status is a delicate issue to ask about in a survey. Interviewers received special training to foster a trusting relationship with respondents. Participants were assured that the data would be anonymized and that confidentiality clauses ensured, that only authorised researchers would have access to the data to analyse

them to draw up overall statistics. As their declarations were retrospective and put them in no danger, it can be assumed that the respondents answered sincerely (perhaps more so than when they are interviewed in the host country). Given the potentially stigmatising nature of the question, however, some respondents may have chosen not to report irregular migrant status in their past or even refused to be interviewed.

3.2 | Methods used to compare nonmigrants, regular returnees, and irregular returnees

To test the association between migrants' legal status abroad and their socioeconomic reintegration in the home country, we compare nonmigrants with returnees, differentiating between different patterns of legal status. Our results are drawn from three types of comparison: (i) descriptions of the migrants' and nonmigrants' characteristics; (ii) a set of logistic models for comparing nonmigrants with returnees, controlling for selection effects due to age and socioeconomic variables (education and social origin) (Equation 1 below); and (iii) a set of models applying only to returnees, introducing variables that account for the variety of migration experiences and the different forms of capital theoretically associated with reintegration on return (Equation 2 below).

Our two econometric equations are as follows:

$$\text{Prob}(y_i) = \alpha + \delta \text{MR}_i + \beta_0 X_{0,i} + \varepsilon_i, \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Prob}(y_i) = \alpha + \gamma \text{SL}_i + \beta_0 X_{0,i} + \beta_1 X_{1,i} + \beta_2 X_{2,i} + \beta_3 X_{3,i} + \beta_4 X_{4,i} + \varepsilon_i, \quad (2)$$

where for each individual i , y_i represents a set of integration indicators, α a constant and ε_i an idiosyncratic error term. We ran analyses for four different integration indicators. Acquisition of real estate (1) is a classic indicator of integration that objectively demonstrates the ability to accumulate assets⁹; in Senegal, real estate is both a safe investment and a symbol of success Sinatti (2009); Mezger Kveder and Beauchemin (2015), 'The Role of International Migration Experience for Investment at Home'. Having no objective variable for income, we added two subjective variables to assess the return migrants' economic reintegration: satisfaction with the income level (2) and appreciation of their household's living standard (3)¹⁰. The variable on the desire to stay in the home country for the next 5 years (4) is often viewed as a general indication of the respondent's socioeconomic and cultural integration in the home

⁶The above-mentioned studies were based on surveys whose samples of return migrants ranged between about 200 and 700 individuals: 193 in the Mezger Kveder and Flahaux study, 215 in the Sabates-Wheeler et al. study, 550 in those using MIREM data (David or Gubert and Nordman), and 717 in the El-Mallakh and Wahba study.

⁷The initial plan was to survey 500 returnees and 500 nonmigrants. The difference in size between the two groups (502 nonmigrants vs. 600 returnees) is due to the fact that the matching was primarily done for migrants who had been back home for more than 3 months. However, some returnees who were back from Europe since less than 3 months at the time of the survey were also surveyed by mistake. They were excluded when sampling nonmigrants. However, they were recontacted 6 months after the data gathering. To augment the sample size of returnees, we decided to include in our analysis sample those who were still in Senegal, even though we could not add nonmigrant matches. This recontact operation was just to control the duration since return. No additional information was collected.

⁸The full questionnaire is accessible online: <http://www.temperproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Working-Paper-15-TEMPER.pdf> (site visited 32/01/2022).

⁹The variable takes into account all properties, whatever the moment of acquisition. In the first set of models, we compare returnees with nonmigrants, it is thus not possible to take into account only the properties that would have been acquired during a period of migration. For the sake of consistency, we kept the same variable in the models that exclude stayers. However, we tested the effect of a property variable based on assets acquired during migration. Results were similar. They can be obtained upon request.

¹⁰These two variables complement each other to reflect the respondent's perception of their economic situation. The income satisfaction variable only concerns the 2/3 of our sample who had an occupation; the household income variable was available for everyone in the sample. It has the advantage of taking into account all possible sources of income. However, interpretation is limited by the fact that we do not know the respondent's position in the household.

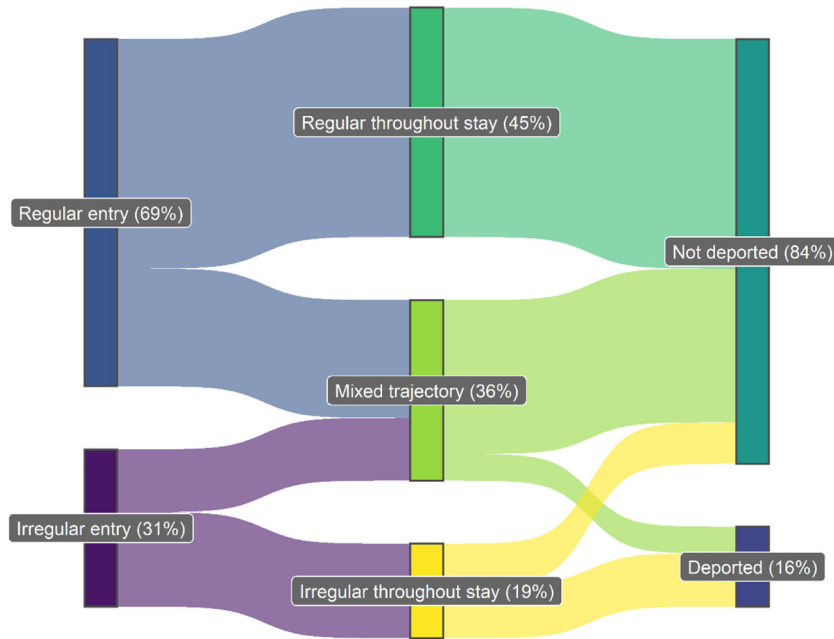


FIGURE 2 Legal status trajectories of migrants in the sample

society. This view, based on the assumption that well-integrated people are more likely to want to stay than to migrate again, is subject to questioning Kuschminder (2017) and discussed further in the rest of the paper¹¹.

MR_i is migrations status (nonmigrant, regular returnee, and irregular returnee), and SL_i represents legal status in the equation where nonmigrants are excluded from the analysis. To test our first hypothesis, on the effects of the most extreme irregular situations, we varied the specifications of legal status as measured by MR_i and SL_i . We tested the effects of time-specific irregularity variables (entry without a visa, deportation at exit) and of a variable for the migrant's entire administrative trajectory, which could be regular throughout, irregular throughout or alternating between the two (mixed trajectory, Figure 2).

$X_{0,i}$ and $X_{1,i}$ are vectors representing the respondent's premigration and migration characteristics. With these variables we can test the robustness of the link between former legal status in Europe and reintegration in Senegal (hypothesis 1), controlling as far as possible for the selection effects connected with migration on the one hand and return on the other. The main point here is to take account of the fact that some characteristics that distinguish nonmigrants, regular migrants and irregular migrants even before migration may explain some differences in socioeconomic reintegration in Senegal. The variables used in the models are the living standard of the migrant's household at age 15 and their educational level (before first migration in the case of returnees)¹². Selection effects for return are controlled

for by a set of variables concerning the migrant's stay in Europe (destination country, duration of stay in Europe, time since returning to Senegal, repeat migration or not) and by the following vectors in the equation.

$X_{2,i}$, $X_{3,i}$ and $X_{4,i}$ represent social, human and economic capital, which are assumed to reflect the effects of legal status on a returnee's reintegration. Human capital is measured by the acquisition in Europe of higher education qualifications or technical skills (occupational, linguistic, computer or business skills). Economic capital is assessed by the skill level of the last job held in Europe (being under-employed or not) and the frequency of money transfers to Senegal in the year before coming back. The social capital variables reflect the emotional and practical support that migrants received from family or friends immediately on their return (for finding a place to live, e.g.). For each integration indicator (y_i) considered, we present a set of nested models in which the vectors of variables $X_{2,i}$, $X_{3,i}$ and $X_{4,i}$ are gradually introduced. This is to test hypothesis 2, that the disadvantage associated with irregular migrant situations is due to insufficient capital accumulation during the period in Europe.

Our strategy of comparing between nonmigrants, regular returnees and irregular returnees has at least two limitations. One is to do with the selection effects in operation for both departure and return. Although we introduced a number of variables to control for selection effects and our sampling method maximised the similarity between returnees and nonmigrants in terms of age and neighbourhood, measurement of the relationship between legal status and reintegration may still be blurred by selection effects¹³. So our results

¹¹In another ongoing study, we analyse specifically the effects of legal status trajectories on the occupational status of return migrants. That is why this indicator of integration is not covered in the present article. For a preliminary version of this study, see: Vandebunder et al. (2021).

¹²For nonmigrants, we took level of education at age 28, which was the average age on departure for Europe in our sample.

¹³The better to control for selection effects, we also tried adding a variable to take account of individuals' readiness to take risks. For reasons of parsimony, we have not kept it in our models because it gave no significant results in relation to legal status.

should be read more in terms of associations than of causal relations. The other limitation is to do with the subjective nature of the integration indicators. The differences between individuals of different migrant status may reflect objective differences in their respective situations at the time of the survey, but it may also be that the returnees' perceptions have been altered by their migration experience. So returnees' income satisfaction levels and assessments of living standards may be affected by the living standards and wages they enjoyed in their European host country; nonmigrants have no such means of comparison. The desire to stay in Senegal or leave is no doubt even more influenced by the fact of already having lived abroad. Returnees have much more information than nonmigrants from which to form a judgement. And the nature of their experience could be decisive in their choice of response. Interpreting the desire to stay is even more uncertain for returnees who have been irregular migrants, especially if they were deported. In that case, not wanting to leave again may indicate not wanting to repeat a painful experience, as much or more so than indicating good reintegration (Kuschminder).

4 | RESULTS

As a first approach, the descriptive findings in Table 1 support our hypothesis that the apparent effects of irregular status vary according to when that status arose and how long it lasted. The table shows clearly that the most extreme situations (deportation or permanently irregular status) put irregular migrants at a marked disadvantage compared to regular migrants and nonmigrants alike. Whichever integration indicator we take, deported migrants are, on average, in a markedly worse socioeconomic position than the other two groups. The most striking gap is in real estate ownership: only 9% of deported migrants own at least one property, versus 47% of migrants who came home freely and 24% of nonmigrants. Migrants whose status was irregular throughout their stay are also disadvantaged in comparison to nonmigrants and all other migrants and, there too, the biggest gap is in property ownership. However, this group is slightly more likely than nonmigrants to want to stay in Senegal over the next 5 years (44% vs. 39%). How should we read this result? As suggested above, men who have been through a long period as irregular migrants may be rejecting the idea of leaving again rather than signalling satisfactory integration in Senegal. Irregular migrants who have been in less extreme situations (entering without visa, mixed trajectories) suffer less disadvantage. Unsurprisingly, on average, their integration indicators are less favourable than those of regular migrants (entering with visa, regular status throughout). However, they seem to be in a distinctly better socioeconomic position than nonmigrants: they are more likely to own real estate, more often satisfied with their economic situation and more ready to say they want to stay in Senegal.

Our first hypothesis is tempered by the results of the multivariate analyses, which incorporate selection variables. Table 2 shows the results of models incorporating nonmigrants and returnees

TABLE 1 Integration indicators by legal status (descriptive statistics)

Dependent variables	Attributes	Legal status on entry		Legal status on leaving		Legal status trajectory		
		Irregular entry (%)	Regular entry (%)	Deported (%)	Not deported (%)	Always irregular (%)	Mixed trajectory (%)	Always regular (%)
Satisfaction with work income	Satisfied	80	90	69	91	76	86	93
Real estate ownership	At least one property	24	48	9	47	15	44	51
Household's living standard	Satisfactory	71	91	61	91	69	87	93
Wants to stay for next 5 years	Wants to stay	39	56	35	57	44	58	55

Note: Sample: age = 20–75; Return migrants: men aged between 20 and 65; last host country France or Spain; return to Senegal between 3 months and 17 years before survey. Nonmigrants: no experience of migration lasting more than 3 months.

Interpretation: 39% of nonmigrants want to stay in home country for the next 5 years, compared to 35% of deported returnees and 55% of migrants who had regular status throughout their stay.

Source: Temporary versus permanent migration survey (TEMPER), 2018.

TABLE 2 Results of models comparing nonmigrants with migrants according to details of legal status (odds ratios) (Equation 1)

	Want to stay in Senegal	Household living standard satisfactory	Satisfied with work income	Possess real estate
Set 1—Status on arrival in Europe				
<i>Nonmigrant</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Regular entry	1.791***	4.057***	1.942***	3.009***
Irregular entry	1.754***	1.625**	1.166	1.316
Set 2—Status on leaving				
<i>Nonmigrant</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Not deported	2.012***	4.361***	2.337***	3.064***
Deported	0.962	0.775	0.644	0.323***
Set 3—Legal status trajectory				
<i>Nonmigrant</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Always regular	1.654***	5.436***	2.963***	3.370***
Mixed	2.154***	3.283***	1.489	2.644***
Always irregular	1.486*	0.968	0.878	0.614
Other independent variables				
Control: age and selection variables (education, social background)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>N</i>	1073	1087	834	1087

Note: Interpretation: nondeported return migrants are 2.01 times more likely than nonmigrants to want to stay in Senegal for the next 5 years.

Source: Temporary versus permanent migration survey (TEMPER), 2018.

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

(Equation 1). For each dependent variable, the table summarises the results of three sets. Each set corresponds to a specific definition of the legal status, the control variables being identical in all sets. The first set tests for the effect of status on entry to Europe, the second for the effect of deportation and the third for the effect of the trajectory as a whole.

The results show that regular migrants have a clear advantage over nonmigrants. Whatever the reintegration variables or legal status characteristics considered, regular migrants have significantly positive odds ratios: they are more likely than nonmigrants to own real estate, to be satisfied with their work income and living standard and to want to stay in Senegal.

The effects of extreme forms of irregular status (deportation, always irregular) vary according to the indicator considered. Deported migrants (set 2) are far less likely than nonmigrants to own real estate (68% less likely than nonmigrants), whereas returnees who have not been deported are three times more likely to own real estate (set 2). On the other hand, deportees are no more or less satisfied with their work income and living conditions than nonmigrants, and no more or less likely to want to stay in Senegal. The results are slightly different for migrants who never had a residence permit (set 3): they are no more or less likely than

nonmigrants to be satisfied with their economic situation and no more or less likely to own property. But they are more likely than nonmigrants to want to stay in Senegal. Once again, this result, decorrelated from other integration indicators, suggests that the reason why fewer of them want to leave is that they want to avoid repeating a long and difficult migration experience.

In agreement with our hypothesis, migrants who were only temporarily irregular (mixed trajectory, set 3) are far better off than nonmigrants: they are 2.6 times as likely to own real estate, 3.3 times as likely to say they are satisfied with their household's living standard and twice as likely to want to stay in Senegal. The results for migrants who entered Europe without visas (set 1), though less significant, show somewhat the same pattern. On one hand, they are more likely to declare they prefer to remain in Senegal than nonmigrants (+75%). On the other hand, they are rather better off than those who never migrated. While there are no significant differences between them as for personal income satisfaction and real estate property, migrants who departed without papers are more likely to be satisfied of their household living standard than stayers (+62%).

In short, the experience of irregular migrant status has different effects depending on type. It mainly seems to attenuate the positive

effects of migration. Though regular migrants are better placed than nonmigrants in all respects, the results for irregular migrants are mixed. The only clear-cut disadvantage is for deported irregulars, in that they are less likely than nonmigrants to own property. For the rest, an extreme experience of irregular status puts migrants on an equal footing with nonmigrants. And those who have been regularised in Europe are rather better placed than nonmigrants.

We now focus our analysis entirely on the returnees, to take better account of the different types of migration experience. Table 3 shows the results of the Equation (2) models. Again, we compare situations in various ways. Set 1 compares migrants according to their status on entry to and exit from Europe, while set 2 compares legal status trajectories. We gradually introduce into these models the premigration selection variables (M1), migration experience variables (M2) and proxy variables for the economic, social and human capital that migrants can accumulate in the host country (M3–M6). The table only shows the odds ratios of the legal status variables¹⁴ and Figure 3 graphically shows the odds ratios of these variables for the most complete model (M6). The results for set 1 confirm our first hypothesis even more strongly. Deportation has a significant negative effect for all four dependent variables, with the strongest impact on property ownership (Figure 3). Conversely, irregular entry has not significant effect on any of the three socioeconomic dependent variables. When deportation and irregular entry are introduced in the same model, deportation absorbs much of the effects of legal entry that were visible in the previous table, especially as regards property ownership and satisfaction with household income. We mentioned above that deported migrants were more likely to say they wanted to stay in Senegal than nonmigrants, the reference category for the models in Table 2. Here the results show unambiguously that deported migrants are only half as likely to want to stay in Senegal as migrants who came back of their own free will (model 2). The results for having irregular status throughout the stay (set 2) show the same trend as the results for deportation¹⁵. For example, always-irregular migrants are 74% less likely than always-regular migrants to declare a living standard sufficient to cover their household's essential needs. In short, although the intensity of the results varies according to the pattern of legal status, all extremely irregular trajectories have a strongly negative effect, and deportation most of all (hypothesis 1).

From the differing results of models 1–6 we can see the processes by which legal status affects return migrants' reintegration. In the first place, the very slight differences between the odds ratios of models 0 and 1 suggest that the predeparture social selection variables (social background, education) have a slight mediating effect. However, incorporating variables describing the migration experience in Europe (destination country, length of stay, whether

more than one departure, time elapsed since return in Model 2) absorbs the negative effects of the less extreme irregular trajectories (irregular entry, mixed trajectory): the results that were significant cease to be so from model 2 on. In other words, what happens during the stay in Europe has a marked impact on the effects of irregular entry. Beyond model 2, we can use the results to test our second hypothesis, that is, that the socioeconomic disadvantage of returnees who have been irregular migrants may be due to a lack of capital accumulation during their migration period, and even an erosion of their social capital on their return, especially if they have been deported. There is some support for this hypothesis; incorporating these capital variables bit by bit absorbs the negative effect of irregular status: comparing models 2 and 6 shows that the odds ratios associated with irregular situations are almost invariably closer to 1 when we incorporate all the model's capital variables. But the absorption effect is small. Deported migrants (set 1), for example, are 83% less likely to own real estate in model 2 (with no variable for capital linked to migration), versus 79% less likely in model 6, which incorporates all the capital variables. The differences found between models 2 and 6 are similar for all the other integration indicators except satisfaction with income. The results are similar when we look at the effect of the complete legal status trajectory rather than the specific moment of irregularity (set 2).

Do some forms of capital play a more important role in explaining (mediating) the effect of legal status on returnees' reintegration? Comparing model 2 (no capital variable) with models 3, 4 and 5 (incorporating, in turn, the variables for social, human and economic capital) shows few specific effects. All in all, the odds ratios associated with deportation and with an always-irregular trajectory are closely similar in models 3, 4 and 5, whichever indicator is considered (they are even strictly identical, at 0.32***, for household living standard in set 1). However, two mediators stand out. One is economic capital, which is more important for access to property ownership (the odds ratio goes from 0.32*** in model 2 to 0.38*** in model 5, set 2). The other is human capital, which affects the desire to stay in Senegal (the odds ratio goes from 1.2 in model 2 to 1.67* in model 4, set 2). We expected the erosion of social capital in cases of deportation to have a strong mediating effect, explaining the negative effect of deportation on the different integration indicators. Our models do not bear this out. The practical and/or emotional support received on arriving in Senegal is a significant explanatory factor for all four integration indicators considered¹⁶, but taking it into account in the models does not notably alter the negative impact of deportation on these indicators.

5 | CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to analyse the effects of migrants' legal status on their reintegration in the home country. To our knowledge, this is the first study to consider legal status in a life

¹⁴The results of the other control variables can be found in: Beauchemin et al. (2021).

¹⁵One might think that this effect of an 'always irregular' trajectory is due to the effect of being deported. We tested this idea in complementary models in which deported migrants were re-categorised as a fourth mode. The results (not shown) suggest that the effect of always having irregular status is the same whether the migrant was deported or not.

¹⁶Results not shown. For more details see: Beauchemin et al. (2021).

TABLE 3 Integration indicators—results of Equation 2 models (odds ratios)

		M0	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Set 1—Status on entry to and exit from Europe								
Property ownership (N = 582)	<i>Regular entry</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Irregular entry</i>	0.61**	0.63**	0.72	0.74	0.73	0.74	0.75
	<i>Not deported</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Deported</i>	0.13***	0.13***	0.17***	0.16***	0.19***	0.19***	0.21***
Satisfied with income level (N = 435)	<i>Regular entry</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Irregular entry</i>	0.83	1.02	1.19	1.16	1.19	1.12	1.07
	<i>Not deported</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Deported</i>	0.25***	0.27***	0.38**	0.40**	0.38**	0.36**	0.36**
Household living standard satisfactory (N = 582)	<i>Regular entry</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Irregular entry</i>	0.59*	0.57*	0.64	0.58	0.68	0.66	0.65
	<i>Not deported</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Deported</i>	0.20***	0.20***	0.30***	0.32***	0.32***	0.32***	0.36**
Wants to stay in Senegal (N = 573)	<i>Regular entry</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Irregular entry</i>	1.04	1.26	1.37	1.50*	1.56**	1.43	1.72**
	<i>Not deported</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Deported</i>	0.39***	0.46***	0.43***	0.41***	0.49**	0.44***	0.47**
Set 2—Legal status trajectory								
Property ownership (N = 582)	<i>Always regular</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Mixed</i>	0.77	0.80	1.01	1.00	0.93	1.01	0.93
	<i>Always irregular</i>	0.17***	0.19***	0.30***	0.29***	0.34***	0.38***	0.37***
Satisfied with income level (N = 435)	<i>Always regular</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Mixed</i>	0.47**	0.52*	0.62	0.70	0.60	0.67	0.72
	<i>Always irregular</i>	0.24***	0.34***	0.53	0.56	0.51	0.53	0.52
Household living standard satisfactory (N = 582)	<i>Always regular</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Mixed</i>	0.53**	0.57*	0.71	0.86	0.72	0.69	0.88
	<i>Always irregular</i>	0.18***	0.16***	0.26***	0.29***	0.29***	0.29***	0.35**
Wants to stay in Senegal	<i>Always regular</i>	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	<i>Mixed</i>	1.17	1.36	1.55**	1.51*	1.79***	1.50*	1.74**
	<i>Always irregular</i>	0.65*	0.93	1.20	1.23	1.67*	1.23	1.66
Other independent variables								
Age and selection variables (education and social background)		-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration experience		-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social capital		-	-	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
Human capital		-	-	-	-	Yes	-	Yes
Economic capital		-	-	-	-	-	Yes	Yes

Note: Control variables: age, level of education, social background, last host country, total time spent in the EU, time since last return, whether more than one migration cycle in EU, qualifications and skills acquired during migration, emotional support from family and friends on last return, frequency of money transfers during last year abroad, not being overqualified for last job before return.

Source: Temporary versus permanent migration survey (TEMPER), 2018.

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

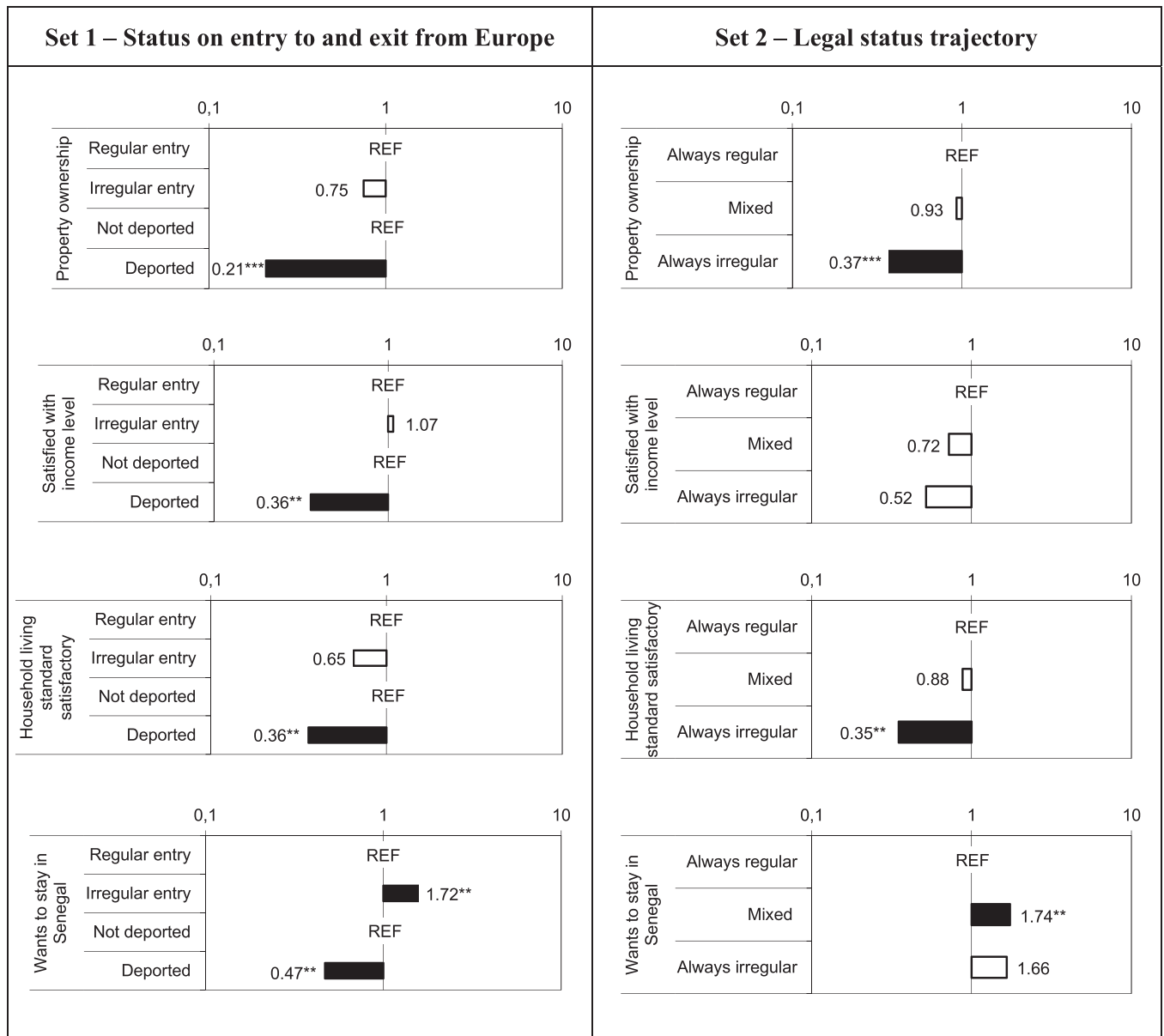


FIGURE 3 Effect of the legal status trajectories on integration indicators (odds ratios of Equation 2 models). Values on the graph are odds ratios from Table 3, M6. Black bars are for significant results, while white bars indicate that the odds ratios are not significant. 'REF' indicates the reference category. Odds ratios above 1 indicate a positive effect of a given modality, while values inferior to 1 indicate a negative effect

course approach: entry and exit conditions (e.g., entry with no visa, forced return) and any change of status in between. Our findings suggest that this approach was justified: the effect of irregular status varies considerably according to the timing of that status. Our analyses support the intuition that only extreme situations of irregular status create the conditions for a clear socioeconomic disadvantage on return. While a comparison between returnees and nonmigrants shows that regular migrants have a very marked advantage (whether regular on entry to Europe, or on leaving, or throughout their stay), they also show that irregular status rarely puts migrants at a disadvantage compared to those who never left home. Only deportation does so, in terms of a lesser likelihood of owning real estate. Migrants who have only temporarily been without papers

(mixed trajectory) are better placed than nonmigrants, even when the model controls for socioeconomic background. In other words, while being in an irregular situation in the host country can be a disadvantage for reintegration on return, our results suggest that migrants can overcome that disadvantage if their irregular status is temporary. Migration, even irregular migration, seems to bring an advantage in terms of socioeconomic integration compared to nonmigrants, except for the most extreme cases of irregular status such as deportation. Out-migrating without a visa does not systematically lead to a durable disadvantage.

Results comparing return migrants with each other (rather than with nonmigrants) also support the idea that the effects of irregular status vary depending on whether it applies to the time of departure

from the home country or the moment of return. While irregular entry into Europe has no significant effect in the most comprehensive models (except as regards the likelihood of wanting to stay in Senegal), deportation routinely puts migrants in a significantly worse socioeconomic position than other returnees. Returnees who were deported are much less likely to own real estate, to be satisfied with their income and household living standard, or to want to stay in Senegal. The results for the duration of irregular status lead to similar conclusions: migrants who have been irregular for only part of their stay in Europe do not differ from those who always had a residence permit (again, except that more of them want to stay in Senegal), while those who were never documented are at a disadvantage on two of the four indicators (less likely to own a property or to be satisfied with their standard of living).

It is clearly the deported migrants who are the most consistently disadvantaged: to a significant degree they report strongly negative values for all the models' specifications, and they also score negatively for all the integration indicators. However, it is possible that our analysis underestimates this strongly negative effect. The literature reports that deportation is both traumatic and stigmatising (Bredeloup, 2017). This could lead to it being under-reported in survey interviews. If this is the case with the TEMPER data, our study may have counted some deportees among the nondeportees. That would narrow the gap between the migrant status groups in our results. That said, and without denying the stigmatising nature of deportation, our results show that deportees' lack of socioeconomic integration is only weakly linked to a lack of material or emotional support from social contacts. This suggests that the disadvantage is due to causes other than erosion of social capital connected with forced return. Overall, however, our results show that the variables for accumulation (or erosion) of social, human and financial capital during migration only weakly mediate the effects of legal status. This seems surprising, but it may be that the variables in our models are not the best proxies for the various forms of capital affected by irregular migrant status in Europe. Similarly, the effects of legal status are not much altered by factoring in the social selection variables usually associated with irregular migration (social background and education). But it is difficult to completely control for selection effects and they may be underestimated in our models.

In this study, rather than creating a composite indicator of integration, we looked at the effects of legal status on four different indicators, treated separately. The results justify this approach for at least two reasons. First, when considering the migrant's economic situation, we were able to distinguish between results based on objective measures (ownership of real estate) and those based on subjective measures (economic wellbeing variables). Our findings show similar results for both types of measure, but the objective measure gives more sharply differentiated results. So the observed disadvantages of migrants with the most extremely irregular migration history cannot be reduced to bias in responses to subjective questions. Second, by disaggregating the integration indicators, we were able to confirm the ambivalence of the 'desire to stay in Senegal' variable. Unlike the other dependent variables, for

which the effects of different types of irregular status are constant (always tending in the same direction though varying in significance), the likelihood of expressing a desire to stay in Senegal differed markedly between types of irregularity. In the most complete models comparing only returnee categories, irregular entry to Europe or a partly irregular trajectory reduced the desire to migrate again, whereas deportees were more likely than voluntary returnees to envisage migrating anew. This variability suggests that a returnee's desire to stay in the home country cannot be regarded simply as indicating reintegration and that it is worth to study this indicator separately Kuschminder.

Apart from this methodological issue, the effects of the different forms of legal status on returnees' desire to migrate again raises questions of policy. That migrant forced to return by the host country authorities are more likely than voluntary returnees to want to migrate again is not a surprising finding; previous studies have shown how important it is, for return migrants, to have carried their migration project through (Flahaux, 2020; Cassarino, 2004). But the finding does call into question the effectiveness of deportation, one of the pillars of European immigration policy. Further, the fact that returnees who were irregular for part of their time in Europe are more inclined to want to stay in Senegal raises questions as to the effects of regularisation policies on return migration. They might facilitate returnees' socioeconomic reintegration without reducing the number of migrants returning home; other studies have shown that in comparison to irregular migrants, those with papers are just as likely to return, if not more so (Flahaux et al., 2014; González-Ferrer et al., 2014). These points suggest the need for more research on at least two subjects. First, the effects of regularisation should be tested more precisely. In this article, it is treated only as part of a mixed trajectory, and the TEMPER sample is not large enough to allow more detailed analysis. Second, measuring intentions is a complex undertaking (Carling, 2021) and the mere expression of a desire to migrate within the next 5 years (the criterion used in this study) may give quite different results to a practical criterion concerning steps already taken to prepare for departure. Until such research is carried out, we can at least confidently note that migrants' legal status trajectories while in Europe have a powerful impact on their reintegration conditions in the home country.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data can be accessed upon request at: Amparo González Ferrer (amparo.gonzalez@cchs.csic.es).

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