

The Complexity of Migration Decisions within Migration Corridors

Applying Insights from EUMAGINE and THEMIS Studies to the Link4Skills Project

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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Conceptual frameworks of the EUMAGINE and THEMIS-studies	3
3. Methods of the EUMAGINE and THEMIS-studies	5
4. Empirical findings.....	7
4.1. Origin countries findings.....	7
4.2. Destination countries findings	12
5. Five conclusions and insights for Link4Skills.....	19
References	21
Appendix	23

<http://link4skills.eu>



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1. Introduction

Europe is currently facing significant skill shortages in crucial sectors of the labour market, and this trend is expected to continue in the near future. One strategy to address these shortages is to utilize labour migration from non-EU countries. The Link4Skills project explores this approach, alongside automation, re/upskilling of established populations (including non-active populations), and raising wages.

The Link4Skills project uses ‘skill migration corridors’ as a sensitizing concept, relevant for both empirical research and developing fair labour migration policies. We are examining various skill migration corridors between Austria, Canada, Germany, Poland, and The Netherlands on one side, and Ghana, India, Morocco, The Philippines and Ukraine on the other. These corridors focus on labour migration for high-skilled and medium-skilled work in sectors such as health, construction, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Additionally, the Link4Skills project is interested in exploring the possibilities of circular labour migration.

Beyond skill migration corridors as an analytical concept, a second foundational aspect is the importance of integrating macro-level factors (i.e., broader social, economic, political, and cultural conditions at origin and destination) with meso-level factors (i.e, social networks, migration infrastructures) and micro-level factors (i.e, the decision-making processes of migrants within the context of their family and household). To understand (circular) labour migration and develop fair labour migration policies, it is essential to consider a multitude of factors. A classic economic push-pull model is relevant but insufficient because it disregards relevant non-economic factors (Carling, 2024; Bartolini, Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2016).

Given these two foundational aspects, it is valuable to reassess the international research project EUMAGINE, which attempted to use a macro-meso-micro model to analyse the formation of migration aspirations to come to Europe among people from four non-EU countries (Morocco, Senegal, Turkey, and Ukraine).¹ This project aimed to account for the fact that, in addition to economic considerations, a range of other factors (in particular human rights) influence the formation of migration aspirations. Additionally, it is relevant to reassess the international THEMIS project, which employed a similar macro-meso-micro conceptual framework and introduced the concept of ‘migration corridors’. This research analysed twelve migration corridors between Brazil, Morocco, and Ukraine on one side, and Portugal, Norway, the UK, and The Netherlands on the other, examining the factors influencing migration processes within these corridors.²

The EUMAGINE and THEMIS studies are also relevant as they interviewed large numbers of medium- and high-skilled migrants. Unfortunately, we do not have insight into the exact work they performed in the origin or destination country. In this working paper, we will briefly discuss the conceptual frameworks of both studies, their key findings, and their relevance to the Link4Skills project.

¹ See for most important findings <http://www.eumagine.org/>. See also: Timmerman et al., 2014a & 2014b; Van Mol et al., 2018

² The main findings of the THEMIS-project are in Bakewell et al. 2016. See also: Dekker & Engbersen, 2014; Dekker, Engbersen & Faber, 2016

2. Conceptual frameworks of the EUMAGINE and THEMIS-studies

Both the EUMAGINE-study and the THEMIS-study aim to understand how migration aspirations, and subsequently migratory behaviour, arise in a broad social context. Starting point in both projects is that migration aspirations and migration decisions do not only result from economic considerations of potential migrants, but from a broad spectrum of micro-, meso- or macro-level factors. The EUMAGINE-project limits itself to explore the rise of migration aspirations in origin countries. The THEMIS-project goes a step further and explores both the rise of migration aspirations in origin countries and the actual migration behaviour of migrants in destination countries.

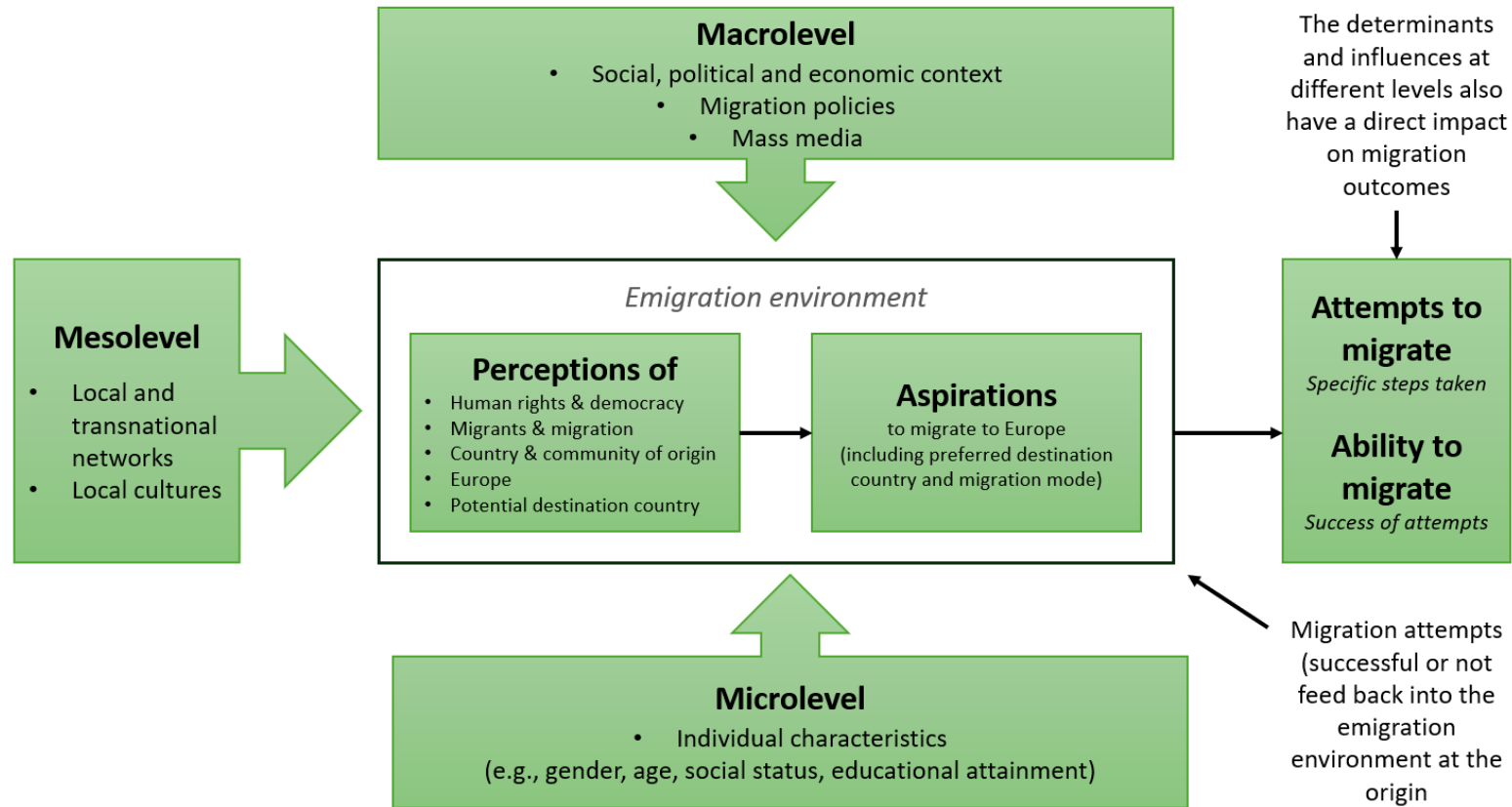
The EUMAGINE-study

The “Imagining Europe from the outside” (EUMAGINE)-project studies how general perceptions of European societies affect the migration aspirations and migratory behaviour of non-Europeans. The ‘ultimate goal of the project’ is “...to study the relation between perceptions of migrant and non-migrant individuals from source countries on human rights and democracy at the local, regional, national and international level on the one hand and migration aspirations and migration decision-making on the other” (Timmerman et al., 2010: 1). The authors underline that these perceptions are culturally embedded: political debates, media attention, but also the stories and implicit ‘messages’ of previous migrants and return migrants all influence the perceptions of Europe of residents in the origin country. Particularly in regions with a long tradition of out-migration, this may result in “cultures of migration” in which out-migration becomes deeply rooted into people’s behavioural repertoires and migration becomes a self-sustaining process (Massey et al., 2005; De Haas, 2010).

Theoretically, this project builds on the cumulative causation-theory of international migration of Massey (1990). The core idea of this approach is that migration induces changes in the social and economic structures of origin societies that make additional migration more likely. For instance, adequate information and support of previous migrants make migration cheaper, and thus more attractive. The rise of migration cultures in origin communities makes migration the ‘normal-thing-to-do’, particularly for young, enterprising individuals. The ‘messages’ of previous migrants make non-migrants in origin communities feel ‘relatively deprived’, which also contributes to the wish to leave. Massey’s cumulative causation-approach acknowledges the economic causes of migratory behaviour, but situates the economic considerations in a broader, social and cultural context. The limitation of this approach, Timmerman et al. (2010: 5) state, is that it “...only incorporates past migration’s accelerating effects, without conceptualizing the possibility of negative feedback-loops”. As De Haas (2010) argued, migration-related discourses (e.g., media attention for harsh migration policies, reports from previous migrants about experienced discrimination, etc.) may also create ‘migration undermining feedback’. This observation is one of the starting points of the THEMIS-project.

The EUMAGINE-study starts from the conceptual model written below (see Figure 1). Perceptions about origin and destination countries and migration aspirations as well as migration decisions and actual migration arise in a broad context involving micro-, meso- and macro-level factors. Macro-level factors include the social and economic context in both the origin and destination countries (including the economic opportunity structures of migration), migration policies of the destination countries, and discourses spread by the mass media. Meso-level factors include social networks between migrants in destination countries and non-migrants in origin communities. Migrants may stimulate migration aspirations and migratory behaviour by broadcasting an attractive image of living abroad, but also by giving actual support and information to potential migrants. Migration cultures in origin communities are also a meso-level factor affecting migration aspirations and actual migration. Finally, individual characteristics (e.g., gender, age, social status, educational attainment, etc.) make some people more receptive to all these macro- and meso-level influences than others and increase the likelihood of developing and realizing migration aspirations.

Figure 1: EUMAGINE Conceptual Framework



The THEMIS-study

The “Theorizing the Evolution of Migration Systems in Europe” (THEMIS)-project starts with De Haas (2010) observation that migration studies primarily explain why migration flows develop and accelerate, and not so much why migration flows may also decline at some moment or why the acceleration of migration in some cases does not occur: The central aim of the THEMIS-study is “...to explain how and why migration between particular origins and destinations waxed and waned. Why is it that sometimes the movement of a few people to a new destination heralds the beginning of a new pattern of migration that may expand and become well-established? (...) Under what conditions do such patterns start to break down? Or why do we sometimes see no such patterns being formed” (Bakewell et al., 2016: 3).

‘Feedback’ is a central notion in the THEMIS-study (Mabogunje, 1970). The authors distinguish ‘direct’ and ‘indirect feedback’. The former relates to the workings of social networks: previous migrants provide information and support to potential new migrants, which reduce the costs and risks of migration, and thus make it more likely. Indirect feedback concerns the ways in which macro-factors influence the feedback distributed through migrant networks and also the ways in “which migration transforms the broader social, cultural and economic contexts in sending and receiving communities, which, in turn, affect the propensity of migration” (De Haas, 2010: 1591; Engbersen et al., 2016). The notion of indirect feedback goes beyond the focus in migration studies on social networks and draws attention to the role of institutional actors (e.g., state agencies, employers, traditional and social media, etc.) in migration processes. Furthermore, the study distinguishes ‘migration facilitating’ and ‘migration undermining’ forms of feedback (Engbersen et al., 2016: 235; De Haas, 2010). Feedback may stimulate migration, but also deter migration. For instance, reports from previous migrants about strict migration regimes and rising racism in European destination countries may limit or change migration aspirations in countries of origin (Snel et al., 2016).³

Since the THEMIS-project did research in three origin countries (Brazil, Morocco, and Ukraine) and in four destination countries (Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the UK), the study was able to explore migration in specific ‘migration corridors’, that is (potential) migration between specific countries of origin and destination. The authors see migration corridors as frames of observation, not as empirical phenomena. Migration corridors are independent of the level of activity within them. Migration corridors can be empty or nearly empty when there is limited migration activity between both ends of the corridor. Or they can be full, when there is much migration between both ends. Moreover, migration corridors do not have a predetermined direction. There can be migration in both directions in specific corridors, thus including both out-migration from sending countries and return migration (Carling & Jolivet, 2016: 19).

3. Methods of the EUMAGINE and THEMIS-studies

Both the EUMAGINE- and the THEMIS-study consist of both qualitative and quantitative surveys; here, we only consider the quantitative surveys of both projects. The quantitative research of the EUMAGINE-project consists of a survey in four origin countries (Morocco, Senegal, Turkey, and Ukraine). The fieldwork took place in four research areas in each origin country. The research areas were selected to include both high migration and low migration areas in order to explore the effect of mass emigration on the perceptions of those left behind (here, we will not explore possible differences between different research areas within the origin countries). The data were collected in 2011. In each research area, 500 respondents aged 18-39 were interviewed, resulting in 2000 interviewees per origin country (n=8000).

Given the lack of reliable administrative population registers in most research areas, the respondents were selected through stratified cluster samples with random walks. To minimise the influence of interviewers on the selection of respondents the random walk was done by local field work coordinators. They first selected specific homogenous clusters of about 5000 people per specific

³ Negative feedback may induce a process of ‘reverse cumulative causation’ (Engbersen et al., 2016) or ‘negative cumulative causation’ (Riosmena, 2024).

research area. This could be neighbourhoods of larger communities or several smaller villages. Within each cluster, households were selected at systematic intervals, not side-by-side. Subsequently, the interviewers had to select an interviewee. This could be the person the interviewer talks to if he or she is in the relevant age category (18-39 years old) or another household member in this age category. This selection strategy aimed at creating a random sample of research respondents.

The THEMIS-study conducted quantitative surveys in both the four destination countries (Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the UK) and the three origin countries (Brazil, Morocco, and Ukraine). The respondents of the destination countries' surveys were first or second generation migrants originating from one of the relevant origin countries. The respondents of the destination countries' surveys were selected by 'respondent driven sampling', a research method to reach specific populations for which sampling frames are not available or are hard to reach. Typical for this method is that respondents receive a (financial) incentive for both participating in the survey and recruiting another participant from the same population. Respondents contact potential recruits directly, without interference of the researcher. As recruits receive coupons with unique numbers, the researcher is able to track recruitment chains. The survey started with selecting a limited number of initial respondents ('seeds'), who were well connected with the relevant migrant community. The recruitment chains grew as each following respondent recruited a specified number of peers. In all, this resulted in a random sample of 2859 respondents with a migration background from Brazil, Morocco or Ukraine in one of the four destination countries (Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, UK).

The surveys in the origin countries were done in two high-migration areas in each origin country (Brazil, Morocco, Ukraine). The selection of respondents was organized in a similar way as the EUMAGINE-project with stratified cluster samples with random walks. In total, 1246 respondents were interviewed in one of the three origin countries. Educational level is a crucial variable in our re-analyses of the data of both studies. Educational level is measured somewhat differently in both studies. Here, we will distinguish three educational levels: lower, medium, and higher educational level. Lower educational level is defined in the THEMIS study as 'no formal schooling or less than primary school completed' or 'primary school completed'. The EUMAGINE study uses not less than five different labels which can be headed under 'lower educational level': 'none', 'pre-school', 'only koranic school', 'only basic literacy of national language', and 'primary/ elementary'. Medium educational level is defined in the THEMIS study as 'lower' or 'upper secondary school completed' or 'post-secondary vocational training' (at least one year). Medium educational level is defined in the EUMAGINE study as 'lower secondary/college' or 'higher secondary/Lycée'. Higher educational level is defined in the Themis study as 'undergraduate' or 'postgraduate tertiary education'. The EUMAGINE study defines higher education simply as 'university/superior'.⁴

⁴ These definitions are different from the ones used in the Link4Skills project, which follows the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to define skill. In the Link4Skills Navigator and Migrant survey, medium-skilled migrants are defined as those with post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4) as well as short-cycle tertiary education (ISCED 5). Highly skilled migrants are those with a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and higher (ISCED 6, 7, 8).

4. Empirical findings

4.1. Origin countries findings

Which factors contribute to potential and actual migration?

We begin with a brief overview of the respondents from both studies, focusing on their countries of residence and educational levels. The THEMIS study interviewed respondents in three countries (Brazil, Morocco, and Ukraine), which partially overlap with the fieldwork countries of the EUMAGINE study (Morocco, Turkey, Senegal, and Ukraine). Regarding educational level, we used a simple three-tier classification, distinguishing between low, medium and high educational level. Having no formal schooling, primary education or less is defined as lower education. Having completed lower or upper secondary education and/or having completed post-secondary vocational training is defined as medium education; and having completed undergraduate or postgraduate tertiary education is defined as higher education.

Examining the educational levels of our respondents, we observe a relatively large proportion of lower-educated individuals among the Moroccan respondents. This trend is even more pronounced in the EUMAGINE survey than in the THEMIS survey. The difference between the two surveys may be attributed to the fact that the THEMIS survey was partly conducted in the capital, Rabat, where there may be a higher concentration of well-educated individuals compared to typical out-migration areas where the EUMAGINE survey was conducted. It is noteworthy that the share of lower-educated respondents was even higher in Senegal. In Ukraine, conversely, we find the highest proportions of highly educated individuals and very few low-educated respondents in both studies (see Table 1).

Table 1. Countries of origin and educational level

	THEMIS-survey				EUMAGINE-survey			
	Low	Medium	High	Total	Low	Medium	High	Total
Brazil	117	196	112	425				
	27.5%	46.1%	26.4%	100.0%				
Morocco	129	142	130	401	885	761	354	2000
	32.2%	35.4%	32.4%	100.0%	44.3%	38.1%	17.7%	100.0%
Turkey					679	747	574	2000
					34.0%	37.4%	28.7%	100.0%
Senegal					1039	373	587	1999
					52.0%	18.7%	29.4%	100.0%
Ukraine	9	236	175	420	1	846	1153	2000
	2.1%	56.2%	41.7%	100.0%	0.1%	42.3%	57.7%	100.0%
All groups	255	574	417	1246	2604	2727	2668	7999
	20.5%	46.1%	33.5%	100.0%	32.6%	34.1%	33.4%	100.0%

Sources: THEMIS origin country survey, EUMAGINE-study

A crucial question in both the EUMAGINE and THEMIS origin country surveys is whether respondents would like to go abroad to live or work if they had the opportunity, or if they would prefer to stay in their respective origin country. Table 2 presents the outcomes for both studies. In the EUMAGINE survey, a small majority of respondents (54%) indicated they would go abroad if they had the opportunity.

In the THEMIS survey, only a significant minority of respondents (43%) expressed a desire to migrate. The main reason for these different outcomes is presumably the selection of target countries in both studies. The THEMIS project conducted surveys in Brazil, where two-thirds of respondents stated they would rather stay in their country. Conversely, the EUMAGINE project conducted surveys in Senegal, where no less than three-quarters of respondents reported an aspiration to migrate. The

proportions of Moroccan and Ukrainian respondents with or without migration aspirations do not differ much between the two studies.

Table 2. Migration aspirations by country of origin and educational level

	THEMIS		EUMAGINE	
	Stay in the country	Go abroad	Stay in the country	Go abroad
Total	702 56.6%	538 43.4%	3678 46.0%	4321 54.0%
Origin country				
Brazil	287 67.7%	137 32.3%	- -	- -
Morocco	188 47.4%	209 52.6%	868 43.4%	1132 56.6%
Senegal	- -	- -	553 27.7%	1447 72.4%
Turkey	- -	- -	1199 60.0%	801 40.1%
Ukraine	227 54.2%	192 45.8%	1058 52.9%	941 47.1%
Educational level				
Low	159 62.6%	95 37.4%	1161 44.6%	1443 55.4%
Medium	311 54.5%	260 45.5%	1272 46.6%	1455 53.4%
High	232 55.9%	183 44.1%	1244 46.6%	1423 53.4%

Sources: THEMIS origin country survey, EUMAGINE-study

Table 2 also provides information about the shares of respondents with or without migration aspirations by educational level. Here, we see some differences in the outcomes in both studies. In the EUMAGINE-study, the majority of the respondents at all educational levels report migration aspirations. Furthermore, there is hardly any difference in outcomes between the various educational levels. In the THEMIS-study, most respondents report a preference to stay in their country of origin. This difference results probably, again, from the selection of target countries of both studies. Another difference is that in the THEMIS-study only one-third of the lower educated respondents prefer to migrate, significantly less than both categories of higher educated respondents. An obvious explanation may be, that the lower educated fail to have the economic resources, not only for actual migration, but also even imagining the possibility to migrate (i.e., lower self-efficacy). Migration aspirations vary depending on whether respondents have previous migration experience. Respondents who had not lived abroad before, are significantly more likely to prefer staying in the origin country.

Unfortunately, neither the EUMAGINE nor the THEMIS surveys asked for the motivations behind respondents' desires to go abroad or stay. However, both studies did inquire about respondents' opinions on the social and economic situations in both the origin and potential destination countries. This allows us to examine whether those who wish to migrate have different perceptions of the origin and destination countries compared to those who prefer to stay. We only report findings here that statistically differ between those aspiring to stay or leave. A complete overview of how aspiring stayers and leavers view the social and economic situation in the origin and destination country can be found in the Appendix.

We begin with the outcomes of the THEMIS study. Respondents with and without migration aspirations sometimes differ in their opinions about the origin country (Table 3, see also Table 1 in Appendix). For instance, those who want to go abroad are more likely to disagree with the statement that it has become easier to find a job in the origin country compared to those who want to stay. Additionally, those who wish to migrate are more likely to disagree with the statement that universities are providing increasing opportunities to study. They are also more likely to agree with statements such

as "people in the region are becoming poorer" but acknowledge that "crime and violence are decreasing."

Table 3. Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about the origin country

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
It has become easier to find a job**		
Agree	267 (40.8%)	164 (31.6%)
Disagree	388 (59.2%)	355 (68.4%)
People are increasingly having the opportunity to study at university*		
Agree	475 (71.6%)	341 (66.0%)
Disagree	188 (28.4%)	176 (34.0%)
In general, people in this region have become poorer*		
Agree	247 (38.1%)	220 (44.4%)
Disagree	402 (61.9%)	275 (55.6%)
Crime and violence are decreasing*		
Agree	121 (18.0%)	114 (22.8%)
Disagree	552 (82.0%)	387 (77.2%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

The THEMIS-survey also asked the respondents about their opinions about Western Europe as potential destination countries (Table 4, see also Table 2 in Appendix). Here, we see larger differences between those who want to go and those who prefer to stay. Respondents with migration aspirations significantly agree more often than those who want to stay with the statements that Western Europe has good economic opportunities, less corruption, a legal system which treats people equally and equal access to health care.

Table 4 Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about Western Europe

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
In Western Europe, there are good economic opportunities**		
Agree	415 (66.0%)	402 (79.1%)
Disagree	214 (34.0%)	106 (20.9%)
Corruption is not very widespread in Western Europe**		
Agree	342 (62.0%)	326 (73.4%)
Disagree	210 (38.0%)	118 (26.6%)
The legal system treats everybody equally in Western Europe**		
Agree	332 (60.1%)	346 (73.9%)
Disagree	220 (39.9%)	122 (26.1%)
In Western Europe, everybody has access to health care**		
Agree	424 (74.8%)	410 (84.2%)
Disagree	143 (25.2%)	77 (15.8%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

The EUMAGINE-survey also asked respondents about their opinions about both the country of origin and Western Europe as potential destination country. Starting with the perceptions about the origin country (Table 5, see also Table 3 in Appendix), we find that respondents with migration aspirations more often think that there is a lot of corruption in the country than those without migration aspirations. Those with migration aspirations also more often disagree with statements such as it is easy to find a job in the origin country, women have the same opportunities as men, and people in the origin country can get ahead by working hard. In general, respondents who would go abroad are more negative about the origin country than those who prefer to stay, although the differences in perceptions are not very large.

Table 5. Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about the origin country

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
There is a lot of corruption in this country**		
(Strongly) agree	2918 (80.1%)	3572 (83.2%)
Neither agree or disagree	458 (12.6%)	413 (9.6%)
(Strongly) disagree	265 (7.3%)	310 (7.2%)
It is easy to find a good job in this country**		
(Strongly) agree	607 (16.5%)	574 (13.3%)
Neither agree or disagree	680 (18.5%)	771 (17.9%)
(Strongly) disagree	2381 (64.9%)	2966 (68.8%)
in this country women have the same opportunities as men*		
(Strongly) agree	1538 (42.0%)	1827 (42.4%)
Neither agree or disagree	733 (20.0%)	956 (22.2%)
(Strongly) disagree	1392 (38.0%)	1520 (35.3%)
People in this country can get ahead by working hard**		
(Strongly) agree	2212 (60.3%)	2438 (56.5%)
Neither agree or disagree	570 (15.5%)	624 (14.5%)
(Strongly) disagree	886 (24.2%)	1252 (29.0%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: EUMAGINE-study)

Respondents with and without migration aspirations also differ in their perceptions about Western Europe as potential destination country (Table 6). Those with migration aspirations think more often that work in Europe is a good experience for both men and women, that people in Europe become rich, and that they gain valuable skills in Europe. Respondents who prefer to stay, on the other hand, more often perceive that people from the origin country are treated badly in Europe. So, here again, we see that respondents with migration aspirations have a more positive image of Europe as possible destination than those who prefer to stay in the origin country. Interestingly, there are statistically significant differences in how aspiring stayers and leavers perceive Western Europe across all surveyed items.

Table 6. Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about Western Europe

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
People from this country are treated badly**		
(Strongly) agree	1631 (45.2%)	1695 (39.8%)
Neither agree or disagree	972 (26.9%)	1091 (25.6%)
(Strongly) disagree	1009 (27.9%)	1475 (34.6%)
Work in Europe is a good experience for women**		
(Strongly) agree	1534 (42.2%)	2641 (61.7%)
Neither agree or disagree	871 (23.9%)	836 (19.5%)
(Strongly) disagree	1232 (33.9%)	806 (18.8%)
Work in Europe is a good experience for men**		
(Strongly) agree	2216 (60.8%)	3332 (77.7%)
Neither agree or disagree	807 (22.2%)	713 (16.6%)
(Strongly) disagree	619 (17.0%)	245 (5.7%)
People who work in Europe become rich**		
(Strongly) agree	1430 (39.2%)	2402 (56.0%)
Neither agree or disagree	978 (26.8%)	1041 (24.3%)
(Strongly) disagree	1237 (33.9%)	845 (19.7%)
People who work in Europe gain valuable skills**		
(Strongly) agree	1915 (52.7%)	2881 (67.3%)
Neither agree or disagree	957 (26.3%)	911 (21.3%)
(Strongly) disagree	763 (21.0%)	492 (11.5%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

Another issue is the relation of migration aspiration and transnational social contacts. Generally, migration theory assumes a positive relationship between the two. Transnational social contacts may not only stimulate migration aspirations by giving the example of a successful migration experience, they can also support potential migrants – with adequate information and actual support – which reduces the costs of migration, thus making it more likely. However, the THEMIS-study also examined the possibility of negative feedback in the sense that transnational social contacts undermine potential migration aspirations – for instance, by telling negative stories about the destination country (Engbersen et al. 2016). Therefore, the THEMIS-survey not only explored the contacts of respondents with people in Western Europe, but also whether these transnational contacts made respondents more or less interested in moving to Europe.

Table 7. Transnational social contacts and migration aspirations

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
How often do you communicate with people in Western-Europe?*		
Once a week	105 (15.0%)	153 (28.5%)
Every month	72 (10.3%)	94 (17.5%)
Less than once a month or never	525 (74.8%)	290 (54.0%)
Do these contacts make you more or less interested in migration?*		
More interested	15 (4.2%)	154 (40.4%)
Less interested	42 (11.7%)	25 (6.6%)
It makes no difference	301 (84.1%)	202 (53.0%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

Table 7 illustrates that intensive transnational social contacts have a positive effect on migration aspirations. Although the majority of respondents, regardless of their migration aspirations, rarely or never communicate with people living in Western Europe, those with migration aspirations tend to have more extensive transnational contacts. For most respondents without migration aspirations, these transnational contacts do not make any significant difference. When transnational contacts do impact those without migration aspirations, they more often decrease rather than increase their interest in migrating, which can be seen as an example of negative feedback. Conversely, for a significant majority of respondents who aspire to migrate (40%), transnational social contacts increase interest in migration, which suggests that they provide positive feedback.

A final topic concerns the reasons for actual return migration. The THEMIS-survey also included a question whether respondents had lived abroad for at least three months, and why they had returned to their origin country. Family reasons were most often named as reason for return, followed by ‘having achieved the migration target’, ‘returning to the familiar lifestyle of the origin country’ and ‘changing family circumstances’. More economic drivers like ‘New economic opportunities in the origin country’ or ‘unemployment in destination’ are also mentioned as reasons for return, but much less frequently than social factors (see also Table 4 in Appendix for a complete overview).

4.2. Destination countries findings

Which factors contribute to prolonged residence, return migration or onward migration?

The THEMIS-project also conducted a survey among first-generation migrants from the three origin countries (Brazil, Morocco, Ukraine), currently living in one of the four destination countries (Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, UK).

We start, again, with an overview of our respondents. In total, we interviewed 2849 respondents. Most of them were either medium or higher educated. Ukrainian respondents were even more often higher educated than those from Brazil. Among the respondents from Morocco, on the other hand, we found a large share of lower educated individuals. Apparently, we interviewed a large share of first-generation guest workers, originating from Morocco, who were recruited to work in Europe in low-skilled jobs specifically.

Table 8. Respondents by country of origin and educational level

	Low	Medium	High	Total
Brazil	72 6.9%	546 52.6%	421 40.5%	1039 100%
Morocco	504 56.9%	300 33.9%	82 9.3%	886 100%
Ukraine	4 0.4%	400 42.9%	529 56.7%	933 100%
Total	580 20.3%	1246 43.6%	1032 36.1%	2858 100%

Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted **

Two items in the THEMIS-survey are of particular interest for the Link4Skills study. On the one hand the factors that motivated respondents to leave their country of origin and to migrate to Europe in the past, and on the other hand their future residence plans. Do they intend to stay in their current country of residence, to return to their home country, or to move elsewhere? And which decision-making factors are associated with these future intentions?

Table 9. Motivations to move to destination country and to leave the origin country by origin

	Brazil	Morocco	Ukraine
Motivations to move to destination country			
Experiencing the culture and life of another country	205 20.0%	59 6.8%	60 6.6%
Opportunities for work [in destination]	322 31.4%	379 43.4%	543 59.6%
Opportunities for studying [in destination]	144 14.0%	53 6.1%	101 11.1%
Learning a language [in destination]	119 11.6%	12 1.4%	16 1.8%
Being with family or others you care about [in destination]	237 23.1%	371 42.4%	191 21.0%
Total	1027 100%	874 100%	911 100%
Motivations to leave the origin country			
Lack of opportunities for work or professional development in [origin]	250 29.0%	368 56.2%	387 44.3%
Political oppression in [origin]	11 1.3%	16 2.4%	12 1.4%
Violence or crime in [origin]	168 19.5%	6 0.9%	13 1.5%
Anything related to the social or cultural environment in [origin]	101 11.7%	34 5.2%	62 7.1%
Difficulties within your family in [origin]	64 7.4%	29 4.4%	34 3.9%
Earning money to send back to [origin]	269 31.2%	202 30.8%	366 41.9%
Total	863 100%	655 100%	874 100%

Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted **

The most common motivation of respondents for having left their home country and having migrated to Europe is clearly economic (Table 9). Between one-third and almost two-thirds of all respondents

indicated that they came to Europe (sometimes decades ago) for work opportunities (upper part of Table 9). The lack of job opportunities in their home country or the desire to earn money abroad for their family were the most common reasons for leaving. The responses from Brazilian participants were somewhat more diverse compared to those from other origins. In addition to economic reasons, Brazilian respondents also cited the desire to learn the language (particularly in the UK) and to experience the culture of another country as motivations. Violence and various aspects related to Brazilian culture and society were also mentioned as factors influencing their decision to leave the country. Beyond these general differences, which are statistically significant, specific variations are also apparent across different migration corridors (see Table 5 in Appendix for details).

Table 10. Motivations to move to destination country and to leave the origin country by educational level

	Low	Medium	High
Motivations to move to destination			
Experiencing the culture and life of another country	30 5.3%	146 11.9%	148 14.7%
Opportunities for work [in destination]	270 47.4%	619 50.3%	355 35.1%
Opportunities for studying [in destination]	17 3.0%	80 6.5%	201 19.9%
Learning a language [in destination]	6 1.1%	44 3.6%	97 9.6%
Being with family or others you care about [in destination]	247 43.3%	342 27.8%	209 20.7%
Total	570 100%	1231 100%	1010 100%
Motivations to leave the origin country			
Lack of opportunities for work or professional development in [origin]	207 47.0%	427 38.7%	370 43.6%
Political oppression in [origin]	5 1.1%	15 1.4%	19 2.2%
Violence or crime in [origin]	9 2.0%	80 7.3%	98 11.6%
Anything related to the social or cultural environment in [origin]	20 4.5%	52 4.7%	125 14.7%
Difficulties within your family in [origin]	24 5.5%	71 6.4%	32 3.8%
Earning money to send back to [origin]	175 39.8%	458 41.5%	204 24.1%
Total	440 100%	1103 100%	848 100%

Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted **

Table 10 shows the various motivations for leaving the origin country and migrating to Europe based on the educational level of the respondents. When asked about their reasons for leaving their origin countries, respondents from all educational levels emphasized economic motivations, such as the "lack of opportunities for work in the origin country" and "earning money abroad for the family at home." "Opportunities to work" were frequently mentioned as a pull factor for coming to Europe. Additionally, lower-educated respondents often mentioned migrating to Europe to "be with family or others they cared about". Higher-educated participants cited studying comparatively more often as their main motivation for coming to Europe. These findings highlight the importance of family and study migration, in addition to labour migration.

The other main question in the THEMIS destination countries survey concerns the future plans of the respondents. Where do they intend to live in the future? Tables 11 and 12 present the future residence preferences⁵ of our respondents, by origin country and educational level respectively.

Table 11. Future preferences of respondents by origin country

	Brazil	Morocco	Ukraine	Total
Continue living in destination country	197	390	256	843
	19.1%	46.0%	28.2%	30.2%
Move back to origin country	292	149	131	572
	28.3%	17.6%	14.4%	20.5%
Partly live in destination and origin	380	268	382	1030
	36.9%	31.6%	42.0%	37.0%
Live elsewhere	161	41	140	342
	15.6%	4.8%	15.4%	12.3%

Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted) **

Table 12. Future preferences of respondents by educational level

	Low	Medium	High	Total
Continue living in destination country	258	325	258	841
	49.7%	27.1%	24.4%	30.3%
Move back to origin country	86	295	188	569
	16.6%	24.6%	17.8%	20.5%
Partly live in destination and origin	159	450	417	1026
	30.6%	37.5%	39.4%	36.9%
Live elsewhere	16	130	195	341
	3.1%	10.8%	18.4%	12.3%

Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted) **

Note: This table is based on a slightly smaller sample due to missing observations.

Somewhat less than one-third of the respondents intend to remain in their current country of residence, although this varies by migrant group and educational category. Participants with a Moroccan background and a lower educational level (partly overlapping categories) are more likely to intend to stay in their current destination country. One in five respondents intend to return to their origin country, with those of Brazilian background expressing this intention somewhat more often than other migrant groups. Over one-third of respondents prefer to live partly in both the origin and destination countries, with Ukrainians showing this preference slightly more often than other groups. Similarly, higher-educated respondents are more inclined toward this option compared to lower-educated respondents. Onward migration to another country appears to attract primarily higher-educated respondents. This finding aligns with the transnationalism literature, which suggests that migrants with more resources (in terms of secure income, legal status, and travel opportunities) have more possibilities to lead a transnational life than those with fewer resources (Erdal & Carling, 2021; Engbersen & Snel, 2021). Moreover, onward migration to another country also attracts primarily higher-educated respondents. This finding is consistent with the migration literature indicating that higher-educated migrants tend to be more mobile (Czaika, 2018)

⁵ Respondents were asked the following question: “If you think about where you might want to live in the future, would you prefer to...? 1) continue living in [the destination country], 2) move back to the [country of origin], 3) live partly in the [country of origin] and partly in [the country of destination, or 4) live elsewhere?”

Regression analysis

For a more in-depth analysis of the drivers of future migration preferences, we ran multinomial logistics regression (MNL) (Hooijen et al., 2017; Reinold & Siegel, 2024). Having the preference to continue living in the destination country is set as the base category. Table 13 presents the results of our MNL. We report relative risk ratios (RRR), which are below 1 of respondents are more likely to choose for the base category (i.e., preferring to stay in the destination country), rather than the focal category (i.e., moving back to the country of origin; living partly in the country of origin and destination; or living elsewhere). The independent variables in the model are included because our descriptive analysis has shown that there are significant differences between migrants in terms of origin or educational level (Tables 11-12; see Tables 5-8 in Appendix) or because we know from the literature on the drivers of migration that they are important to control for (Bartolini et al., 2017; Hooijen et al., 2017; Reinold, 2023).

The model in Table 13 was run with the entire sample. Compared to the base category, continue living in the destination country, respondents were 48.6 % more likely to prefer returning to the country of origin, if they were medium skilled ($p < 0.1$) rather than low skilled.⁶ They were 77 % and 70 % less likely to prefer return if they originated from Morocco and Ukraine respectively, compared to the base outcome Brazil ($p < 0.01$). In addition, female respondents were 25% less likely to prefer return compared to males ($p < 0.1$). In comparison to respondents who moved to the destination country for cultural reasons, those who came for work are 68.3 per cent more likely to prefer return, and those who came to study are even more than twice as likely to prefer return (both $p < 0.05$). Those who perceive economic opportunities in the destination country as good are 38.7 % less likely to prefer return. Those who communicate with people in the origin country more often, are 24.4 per cent more likely to prefer return ($p < 0.05$). With increased improvements in the perceived quality of life, respondents are 38 % less likely to prefer return ($p < 0.01$). Respondents who believe that children can better be raised in the destination country, are 80.4% less likely to prefer return over staying in the destination country and those who believe that children can be raised equally good in origin and destination, are 58.8% less likely to prefer return.

Column 4 and 5 of Table 13 compare the likelihood of preferring to remain in the destination country with the preference to partly live in the origin and destination country. Compared to low skilled participants, the medium and highly skilled are 68.6 % and 83.2 % more likely to prefer transnational living respectively ($p < 0.01$).⁷ Respondents from Morocco and Ukraine are 73.7% and 40.1% less likely to prefer transnational living over staying in the destination country compared to Brazilians ($p < 0.01$). Females are 20.1 % less likely to prefer living transnationally ($p < 0.1$). Increased time spent in the destination country increases the likelihood of preferring transnational living by 2.6 % ($p < 0.01$). Compared to respondents who migrated for cultural reasons, those who moved for family reasons are 46.8% more likely to prefer transnational living ($p < 0.1$). The more respondents think that their quality of life improved with migrating, the less likely they are to prefer transnational living (20.2%; $p < 0.01$). Finally, respondents are 67.2% less likely to prefer transnational living if they think that the destination country is a better place for raising children ($p < 0.01$) and 38.5% less likely if they think children can be raised equally well in both the country of origin and destination ($p < 0.01$) compared to those who think that it is better to raise children in the country of origin.

Table 13: Multinomial logistics regression of migrants' future preferences (base category: continue living in the country of destination)

	Return	Live transnationally	Live elsewhere
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⁶ If we change the base category of the independent variable educational level, we see that the medium-skilled are more likely to prefer return also compared to the highly-skilled. In fact, they are 32.7% more likely to prefer return over staying in the country of destination ($p < 0.1$).

⁷ Changing the base category to high skill, shows that there are no significant differences between medium- and high-skilled migrants.

	RRR	RSE	RRR	RSE	RRR	RSE
Education (base: low)						
Medium	1.486*	0.328	1.686***	0.299	2.200**	0.792
High	1.076	0.284	1.832***	0.378	3.073***	1.222
Origin (base: Brazil)						
Morocco	0.230***	0.050	0.263***	0.050	0.273***	0.089
Ukraine	0.300***	0.067	0.569***	0.105	0.755	0.196
Female	0.750*	0.113	0.799*	0.102	0.768	0.134
Years spent in destination	0.997	0.010	1.026***	0.008	0.961***	0.013
No previous migration experience	0.760	0.128	0.879	0.126	0.560***	0.105
Reason for migration (base: culture)						
Work	1.683**	0.399	1.374	0.275	0.562**	0.142
Study	2.058**	0.604	1.159	0.307	0.837	0.252
Language	1.345	0.471	1.210	0.384	0.542	0.207
Family/ other social ties	1.451	0.372	1.468*	0.322	0.589*	0.160
Perceived good economic opportunities in destination country	0.613***	0.92	1.012	0.137	0.443***	0.082
Perceived good economic opportunities in origin country	2.058	0.176	0.906	0.101	1.162	0.229
Communication	1.244**	0.110	1.107	0.078	0.852	0.089
Positive view of men	0.789	0.122	1.020	0.139	0.635**	0.116
Economic situation improved	0.947	0.065	1.046	0.066	1.052	0.095
Quality of life improved	0.620***	0.042	0.798***	0.049	0.737***	0.060
Better raise kids (base: origin country)						
Destination country	0.196***	0.196	0.328***	0.054	0.601**	0.144
Both equally good	0.412***	0.412	0.615***	0.106	0.972	0.237
Constant	10.647***	6.243	2.602**	1.270	12.856***	9.138
Observations	2079					
Pseudo R2	0.108					
AIC	4994.5					
BIC	5332.9					

Note: Relative risk ratios (RRR) and robust standard errors (RSE) are presented. The dependent variable measures spatial preferences distinguishing between (1) the preference to stay in the destination country, (2) the preference to return to the country of origin, (3) the preference to live in the country of origin and destination, and (4) the preference to live elsewhere. Staying is set as the base category. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Finally, column 6 and 7 of Table 13 compare the chances that respondents prefer living elsewhere (onward migration) over staying in the destination country. Compared to low skilled respondents, medium and highly skilled respondents are more than two ($p < 0.05$) and three times ($p < 0.01$) more likely to prefer onward migration over staying in the destination country.⁸ Compared to Brazilians, Moroccans are 72.7 % less likely to prefer onward migration over the base category continuing to live in the destination country ($p < 0.01$). Years spent in the destination country and not having previous migration experience decreases the likelihood of preferring to move onwards by 5.9% and 44.0% respectively (both $p < 0.01$). Compared to those who came to the destination country for cultural reasons, those who came for better work opportunities, are 43.8 per cent less likely to prefer living elsewhere ($p < 0.05$). Those who migrated for family reasons are 41.1% less likely to prefer transnational living ($p < 0.1$). Similarly, perceived better economic opportunities in the destination country decrease the chances that respondents have preferences to live elsewhere by 55.7 % ($p < 0.01$). Respondents who agree that people in the destination country see men from their country of origin in a positive way are 36.5 % less likely to prefer onward migration ($p < 0.05$). Finally, respondents are 39.9 % less likely to prefer moving elsewhere if they think children can better be raised in the destination country ($p < 0.05$).

In general, our findings are in line with what we know from the literature. They highlight the positive association between educational level and mobility. Overall, lower educated migrants are more likely

⁸ Again, if we change the base category of the independent variable educational level to high-skilled, we see that there are also statistically significant differences between medium-and highly skilled migrants, with the medium-skilled being 28.3 % less likely to prefer living elsewhere over staying compared to the highly skilled ($p < 0.1$).

to prefer staying in the country of destination. Similarly, there are important differences depending on migrants' country of origin. Brazilians seem to be more mobile than Moroccans and Ukrainians, although there are no significant differences between Ukrainians and Brazilians when it comes to comparing preferences to stay or move onward. A closer descriptive analysis of the 12 migration corridors mapped by THEMIS, reveals more nuances in terms of significant variations between different corridors (see Table 5 in the Appendix). Figure 2 of Table 5 in the Appendix illustrates that in two corridors (Netherlands-Brazil; Ukraine-UK), more than half of all respondents prefer transnational living. In the Brazil-Norway corridor, this preference reaches 47%. Furthermore, except for the Portugal-Morocco corridor, no other corridor shows a clear majority preferring to stay permanently in the destination country.

Being female is associated with decreased mobility preferences, although these findings are only marginally significant. Time spent in the destination is associated with immobility preferences as well as transnational living, implying that the costs of leaving the destination country (entirely) increase with increased duration of stay (see also Table 6 in the Appendix). In addition, there is a positive association between previous migration and onward migration to third countries. Future residential preferences also vary depending on the reasons why individuals migrated to the country of destination in the first place although the interpretation here is less straightforward. In comparison to cultural migration, labour migration is associated with return or onward migration preferences. Neoclassical theory offers possible explanations for these findings: For example, it is possible that future returnees have reached their economic or employment goals and therefore prefer to return. This would be in line with the debatable notion that "successful" migrants return (De Haas, Fokkema & Fihri, 2015). Onward migration could be an indicator for perceived better economic or career opportunities elsewhere.

To find out more about the mechanisms at play here, it would be necessary to combine information about the reason for migration with more details related to migrants' employment situation (e.g., employment conditions, employment satisfaction, etc.) (Bartolini et al., 2017), an aspect that we will be able to further explore using the Link4Skills Migrant survey. In line with the literature, migrants who came for education are also more likely to return (Hooijen et al., 2017). Migration for family reasons is associated with less mobility, suggesting that migrants continue to prefer staying close to their loved ones either in the country of destination or origin. Zooming in on the different corridors again, three of them show a clear majority citing job opportunities as the primary reason for migrating (UK-Ukraine; Portugal-Morocco; Portugal-Ukraine). In two other cases, nearly half of respondents identify work opportunities as the leading motivation (Netherlands-Ukraine; Norway-Ukraine). Similarly, in two other corridors, nearly half point to family reunification or the desire to be with significant others as the main reason for migrating (Netherlands-Morocco; Norway-Morocco). In the remaining seven cases, no single factor accounts for more than 40% of responses (See Figure 1 of Table 5 in the Appendix).

Better perceptions of economic opportunities in the destination country are associated with retention, which can also be explained by neoclassical theory as the costs of leaving would likely outweigh the benefits. At the same time, respondents who prefer to return less often believe that their economic situation has improved since migration (see also our descriptive analysis in Table 7 of the Appendix). This outcome aligns with the assumption that less successful migration experiences explain return migration. Similarly, improved quality of life through migration (Bartolini et al., 2017) and the perception that it is best to raise children in the destination country are important driver of retention, emphasising the role of non-economic factors in migration decision-making. Our descriptive analysis (see Table 8 in the Appendix) reveals that three-quarters of the respondents who prefer to stay report that their quality of life has improved since migration, compared to approximately half of the respondents who prefer to return to the origin country. Similarly, more than half of the respondents who prefer to stay believe that the destination country is the best place to raise children, a perception that is shared by only one-third of the respondents who prefer to return (see Table 8 in Appendix). The perception that people from the country of destination see men from the origin country in a positive way can reduce onward migration intentions. While not included in our MNLR, our descriptive analysis shows that potential returnees are gloomy in terms of how they think women from the origin country are viewed by people from the destination country (see Table 7 in Appendix). This highlights the

importance of softer, subjective and intangible factors like feeling welcome or experiences of discrimination in retaining migrants (Reinold & Siegel, 2024). Finally, more communication with people in the country of origin is associated with return (see also Table 8 in Appendix), aligning with the return migration literature, which suggests that maintaining contacts with people in the country of origin ensures better preparation for returning (Cassarino, 2004).

In conclusion, the findings reveal a high level of diversity, highlighting the complexity of factors that drive migration and influence future residence preferences across different corridors. This diversity is likely shaped by a combination of micro- and meso-level factors, as well as macro-level conditions in both the origin and destination countries.

5. Five conclusions and insights for Link4Skills

When applying the empirical Insights from the EUMAGINE and THEMIS studies to the Link4Skills Project, we can draw five conclusion:

1. The complexity of migration decisions within migration corridors

The re-analysis highlights the importance of recognizing the complexity of migration decisions, whether they involve migration to Europe or return migration. Beyond economic factors, other elements also play a role to varying degrees, and this mix of factors differs for each migration corridor. In Link4Skills, we specifically focus on labour migration, following the assumption that economic motives would be central for (potential) labour migrants. However, it is essential to also acknowledge the significance of non-economic factors. Furthermore, factors in the country of origin significantly influence both outmigration and return migration. The relative importance of economic, social, cultural, and other factors varies across different migration corridors, each characterized by its unique combination of influences. Within corridors we see different motivations for migration, different educational profiles, differences within spatial aspirations (stay, return, onward migration and transnational living). Recognizing this complexity is crucial when developing fair labour migration policies. This includes policies aimed at retaining skilled migrants as well as those focused on return or circular migration.

2. Economic opportunities

Economic opportunities are a significant driver of migration. The availability of better job opportunities in destination countries is the primary motivator for migrants. Many individuals move abroad due to the lack of employment opportunities in their home countries and the prospect of earning higher wages abroad. Migrants who perceive significant economic improvement in their destination countries are more likely to stay. Conversely, the emergence of new economic opportunities in the home country can attract return migration. Improvements in the local economy or new job prospects can incentivize migrants to return. Those who feel their economic situation has not improved might consider returning to their home country or moving elsewhere. In the Link4Skills-project we will combine information about the reason for migration with systematic information on migrants' employment situation (e.g., employment conditions, employment satisfaction, etc.).

3. Skilled migrants

Education level is positively associated with mobility (return, onward migration, transnational living). We observe differences among low-skilled, medium-skilled, and high-skilled respondents. Low-skilled migrants are most likely to prefer staying in the destination country, reflecting limited aspirations for further mobility or return. Medium-skilled migrants are more likely than low-skilled migrants to prefer returning to their origin country. Medium- and high-skilled migrants are significantly more likely to prefer transnational living compared to low-skilled migrants. Medium-skilled migrants have moderate migration aspirations, driven by the prospect of better job opportunities and economic stability. They are motivated by the potential for professional growth and, in some cases, the opportunity to further their education and enhance their skills. Medium-skilled migrants tend to return to their home countries after achieving their migration goals, such as saving money or gaining experience, or when new opportunities arise in their familiar cultural environments. High-skilled migrants exhibit the highest migration aspirations, motivated by professional development opportunities, higher earning potential, and an improved quality of life in destination countries. Their actual migration is driven by the desire for significant career advancement and access to better health care, education, and overall living conditions. High-skilled migrants may return to their home countries for better professional opportunities or family reasons. They are also influenced by perceived improvements in the quality of life in their home countries.

4. Social and cultural factors

Social and cultural factors play a crucial role in migration decisions. Negative perceptions of corruption and poor governance in the origin country can push individuals to migrate, while positive perceptions of the legal and social systems in destination countries can pull migrants towards them. The desire to gain valuable skills or pursue higher education abroad is a significant pull factor, especially for higher-educated individuals seeking to enhance their qualifications and career prospects. Additionally, perceived improvements in the quality of life in the destination country, such as better living conditions, health care, and education, encourage prolonged stays. Those who do not experience an improvement in quality of life are more likely to return to their origin country. Negative experiences, such as discrimination, strict migration regimes, or an inability to integrate into the destination country's society, can lead to return migration or onward migration to another country.

5. The role of positive and negative feedback from family and social networks

Family and social networks play a vital role in migration decisions. Many migrants move to be with family members or others they care about. This social factor influences the decision to migrate or to return to the origin country. Transnational social contacts and networks significantly influence migration decisions. Positive feedback from friends and family already abroad encourages others to migrate. These networks provide information, reduce migration costs, and offer support systems that facilitate migration. Negative feedback discourages potential migrants to migrate.

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Appendix

Table 1: Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about the origin country

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
It has become easier to find a job**		
Agree	267 (40.8%)	164 (31.6%)
Disagree	388 (59.2%)	355 (68.4%)
Corruption has become less		
Agree	108 (16.6%)	97 (19.0%)
Disagree	541 (83.4%)	414 (81.0%)
Women are increasingly having the same opportunities as men		
Agree	479 (72.5%)	375 (72.8%)
Disagree	182 (27.5%)	140 (27.2%)
People are increasingly having the opportunity to study at university*		
Agree	475 (71.6%)	341 (66.0%)
Disagree	188 (28.4%)	176 (34.0%)
In general, people in this region have become poorer*		
Agree	247 (38.1%)	220 (44.4%)
Disagree	402 (61.9%)	275 (55.6%)
People can get their children into better schools		
Agree	345 (51.3%)	269 (51.7%)
Disagree	327 (48.7%)	251 (48.3%)
Access to health care has improved		
Agree	213 (31.2%)	140 (26.9%)
Disagree	470 (68.8%)	380 (73.1%)
Crime and violence are decreasing*		
Agree	121 (18.0%)	114 (22.8%)
Disagree	552 (82.0%)	387 (77.2%)
Politicians and public authorities in origin have become more accountable		
Agree	171 (26.1%)	117 (23.1%)
Disagree	483 (73.9%)	390 (76.9%)
It has become easier to travel around the country		
Agree	502 (74.8%)	381 (74.0%)
Disagree	169 (25.2%)	134 (26.0%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

Table 2: Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about Western Europe

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
In Western Europe, there are good economic opportunities**		
Agree	415 (66.0%)	402 (79.1%)
Disagree	214 (34.0%)	106 (20.9%)
In general, people in Western Europe have a friendly attitude towards immigrants		
Agree	261 (44.2%)	234 (48.9%)
Disagree	329 (55.8%)	245 (51.1%)
Corruption is not very widespread in Western Europe**		
Agree	342 (62.0%)	326 (73.4%)
Disagree	210 (38.0%)	118 (26.6%)
In Western Europe, immigration policies are very strict		
Agree	494 (82.1%)	409 (84.7%)
Disagree	108 (17.9%)	74 (15.3%)
The legal system treats everybody equally in Western Europe**		
Agree	332 (60.1%)	346 (73.9%)
Disagree	220 (39.9%)	122 (26.1%)
In Western Europe, everybody has access to health care**		
Agree	424 (74.8%)	410 (84.2%)
Disagree	143 (25.2%)	77 (15.8%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: THEMIS origin country survey)

Table 3: Perceptions of respondents with and without migration aspirations about the origin country

	Stay in the country	Go abroad
There is a lot of corruption in this country**		
(Strongly) agree	2918 (80.1%)	3572 (83.2%)
Neither agree or disagree	458 (12.6%)	413 (9.6%)
(Strongly) disagree	265 (7.3%)	310 (7.2%)
Politicians in origin do what is best for the people in this country		
(Strongly) agree	565 (15.5%)	684 (15.9%)
Neither agree or disagree	749 (20.6%)	865 (20.1%)
(Strongly) disagree	2328 (63.9%)	2745 (63.9%)
It is easy to find a good job in this country**		
(Strongly) agree	607 (16.5%)	574 (13.3%)
Neither agree or disagree	680 (18.5%)	771 (17.9%)
(Strongly) disagree	2381 (64.9%)	2966 (68.8%)
It is dangerous to walk down the street at night		
(Strongly) agree	1887 (57.2%)	2279 (58.0%)
Neither agree or disagree	626 (19.0%)	703 (17.9%)
(Strongly) disagree	786 (23.8%)	942 (24.0%)
in this country women have the same opportunities as men*		
(Strongly) agree	1538 (42.0%)	1827 (42.4%)
Neither agree or disagree	733 (20.0%)	956 (22.2%)
(Strongly) disagree	1392 (38.0%)	1520 (35.3%)
in this country people can say whatever they want in public		
(Strongly) agree	1599 (43.8%)	1878 (43.6%)
Neither agree or disagree	800 (21.9%)	894 (20.8%)
(Strongly) disagree	1255 (34.3%)	1532 (35.6%)
People in this country can get ahead by working hard**		
(Strongly) agree	2212 (60.3%)	2438 (56.5%)
Neither agree or disagree	570 (15.5%)	624 (14.5%)
(Strongly) disagree	886 (24.2%)	1252 (29.0%)

**p< .01 *p< .05 (Source: EUMAGINE-study)

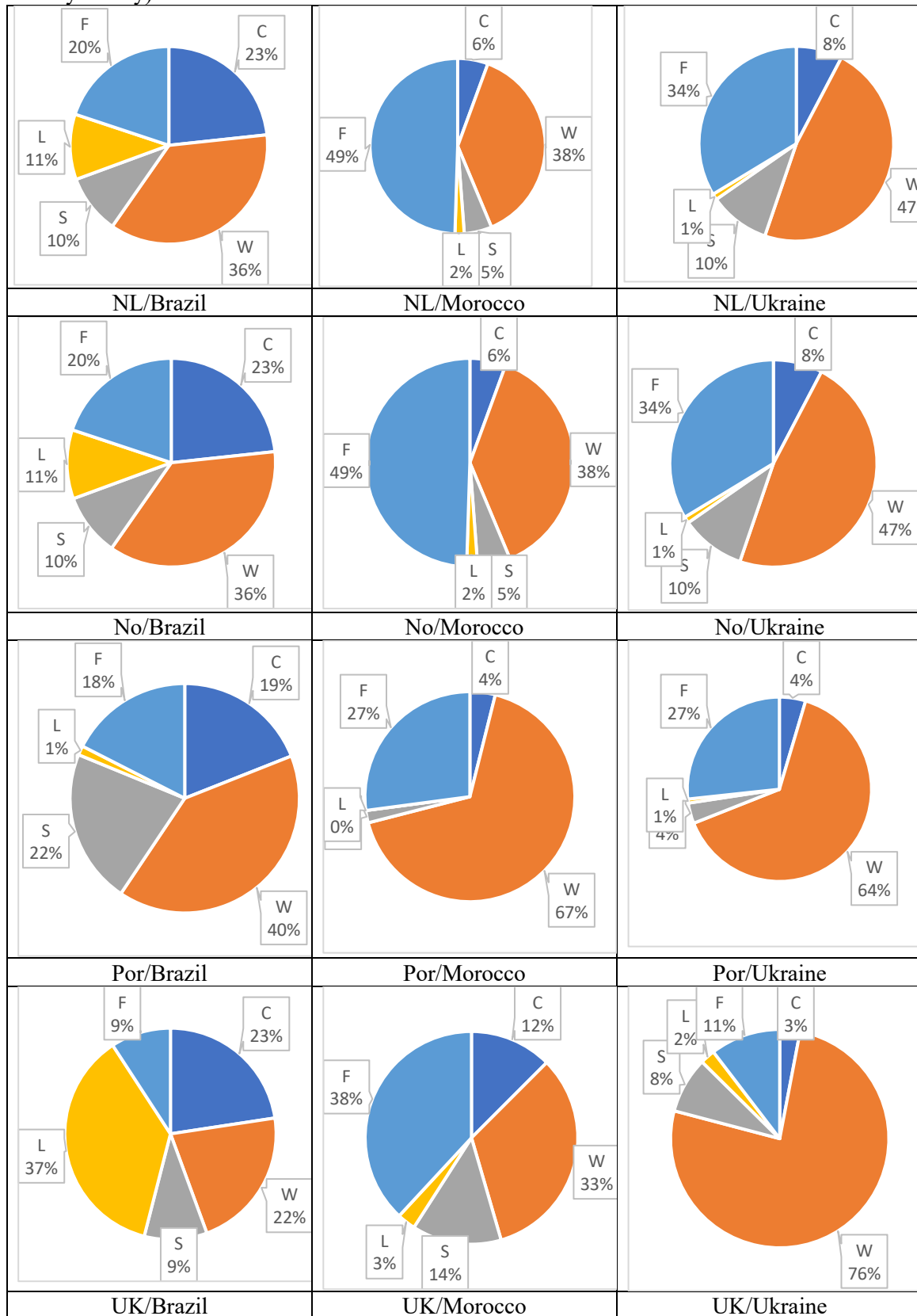
Table 4: Reasons for returning to the origin country (respondents could indicate several reasons)

	n	%
Being with family members or people you care about in origin	121	24.2
Achieving what you wanted to do abroad	94	18.8
Returning to the familiar lifestyle	85	17.0
Changing family circumstances	82	16.4
New economic opportunities in origin	54	10.8
Being unemployed in destination	36	7.2
Education for children in origin	29	5.8
Total	501	100.0

Source: THEMIS origin country survey

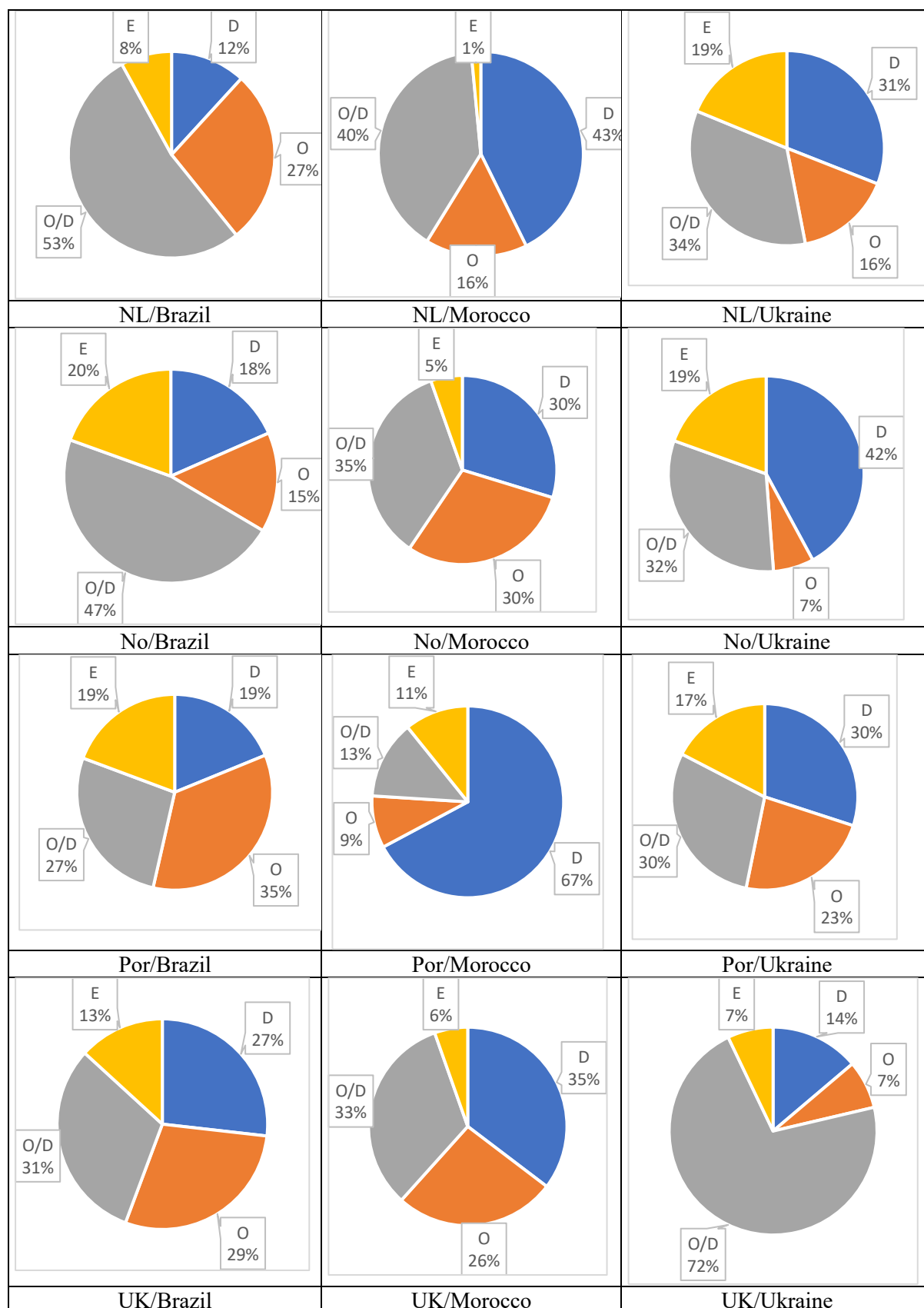
Table 5: Exploring 12 migration corridors

Figure 1: Most important reason to come to destination country by corridor (THEMIS destination country survey)



C= Experiencing the culture and life of another country; W= Opportunities for work; S= Opportunities for studying; L= Learning a language; F= Being with family members or other people you care about

Figure 2: Future preferences of migrants by corridor (THEMIS destination country survey)



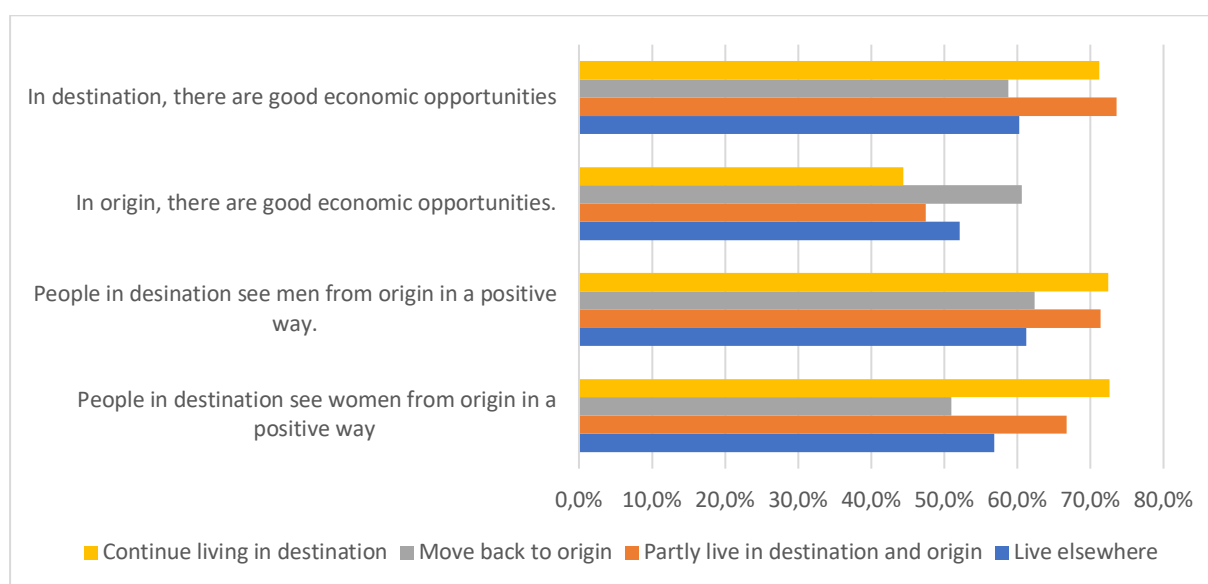
D= Stay in destination; O= Return to origin; O/D= Partly live in origin and destination; E= Live elsewhere

Table 6: Future preferences of respondents by years spent in destination country

	Less than 5 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-20 years	More than 20 years	Total
Continue living in destination country	258 27.2%	173 25.4%	172 30.7%	64 44.1%	175 38.9%	842 30.2%
Move back to origin country	224 23.6%	143 21.0%	113 20.18%	13 9.0%	79 17.6%	572 20.5%
Partly live in destination and origin	310 32.6%	275 40.4%	206 36.7%	56 38.6%	183 40.7%	1030 37.0%
Live elsewhere	158 16.6%	89 13.1%	70 12.5%	12 8.3%	13 2.9%	342 12.3%

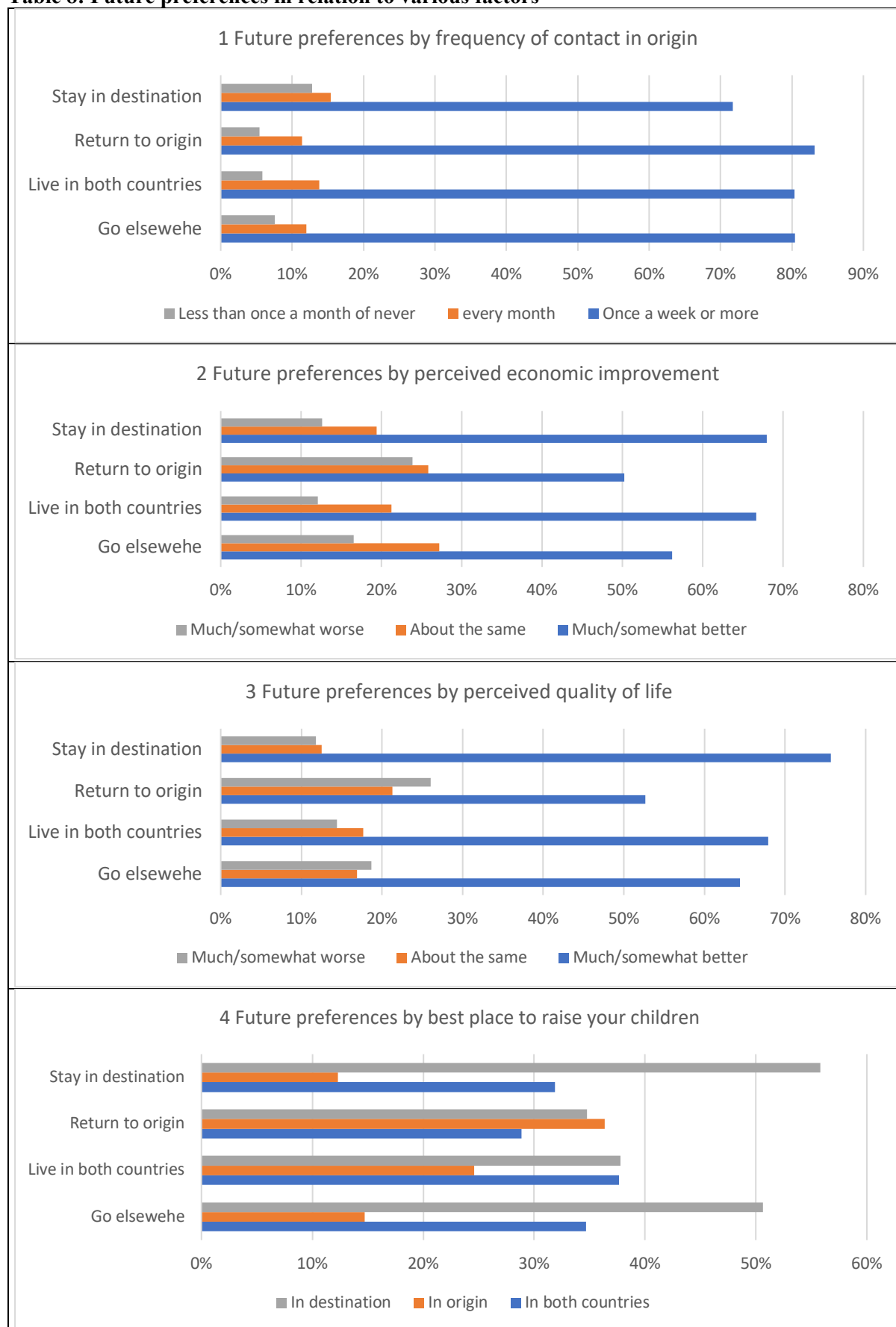
Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted) ***

Table 7: Future preferences of respondents in relation to opinions about the origin and destination countries



Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted) **

Table 8: Future preferences in relation to various factors



Source: THEMIS destination country survey, weighted

Input for Deliverable No. 4.1
Concept Paper of Migration Skill Corridors and Historical Synthesis
Task 4.2 Re-analysis of Data from Earlier Migration Skill Corridors

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