Multiple-origin and multiple-destination: the fertility of migrant in Europe

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Abstract

Studies on migrant fertility typically compare migrants and natives or different migrant groups in the same destination, but rarely migrants of the same origins in different destination countries. In this paper we look at migrants from multiple origins in multiple destination countries simultaneously. The idea behind this approach is that fertility of immigrants may be affected by the country from which they come ("origin effect"), the country to which they migrate ("destination effect"), and the specific relations between origins and destinations ("community effect"). We will combine the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and the European Social Survey (ESS) to compare immigrants (men and women) from 10 areas of origin in 11 destination countries in Europe.

Introduction

Immigrant fertility has become an increasingly important issue, not only for demographers, but also for policy makers in Europe. To a large extent this is because births to immigrants help to ameliorate population age structures that would otherwise be even more dominated by the impact of aging and the elderly. But immigrant fertility is also important because it can tell us much about the process of integration and how a new social context shapes individual's lives. Parenthood is a critical step in the transition to adulthood. Moreover, the timing and number of births can reflect social inequalities as well as reproduce them, with respect to both the life course of mothers and their children. In this way, fertility of migrants is both a determinant and a consequence of integration. Fertility behavior is strongly influenced by social and cultural norms as well as by welfare policies. When it comes to immigrant fertility, norms may carry over from origin country or be reshaped at destination while policy influences occur only at destination.

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Additionally, very few studies have focused on the fertility of immigrant men. Migration patterns are quite different between men and women; and how the different migratory projects may have a diverse effect on fertility of immigrant men has still not been studied.

Research strategy will account for the effect of destination country environment and cultural norms with comparative survey data, more specifically we will combine the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and European Social Survey (ESS). We compare immigrants from 10 areas of origin in 11 destination countries in Europe. The different contexts of origin reflect differences in cultural background, which can be maintained after migration (Coleman 1994;

Gabrielli et al., 2007) and influence fertility patterns; while the country of destination offers new social norms and policy contexts. Looking at exposure to destination, spatial integration should also be taken into account (Andersson and Malmberg, 2016). Both as exposure of different attitudes, norms, and practices in relation to families and children as well as opportunities such as 'marriage markets' (Forste and Tienda, 1996).

Thus comparing the same immigrant groups in different migration countries will contribute to embrace the European Commission definition of integration as a two-way process and go beyond the only individual effect on studying fertility of migrants. Looking at the effect of different destinations will account for "the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place" (European Commission 2003: 17). Our approach looks simultaneously at multiple origins in multiple destinations, suggesting that the fertility of immigrants may be affected by individual characteristics as well as by the contextual characteristics of the country to which they migrate as well as by the compositional differences associated with the countries of origin.

Data and methods

We created a large dataset combining 11 waves of the European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS 2005-2015) and 6 waves of the European Social Survey (ESS 2004-2014). This allowed to study fertility behaviours of migrants settled in 11 countries, chosen according to their fertility rate, welfare regime and labour market regulation: Switzerland (CH), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Netherlands (NL), United Kingdom (UK), Finland, Sweden and Norway (grouped together in Scandinavian countries (Scan), because of small sample size). The analytical sample included 2,332,857 men and 2,418,710 women, from age 20 to 45.

The dependent variable was the total number of children, born in the host country or abroad, living in the household. Only ESS included direct information on the number of children in the household, whereas we were obliged to apply the 'own-child method' (Bordone *et al.* 2009) for EU-LFS data. This procedure links children to their (supposed) mothers (or fathers) in the same household, assuming that minor children recorded in a household comprise all the children born, and still alive, to the parents in that household, even if the relationship is not directly specified. Of course, this technique enables only detection of those children still living, at the time of the interview, with at least one parent. By including in our analysis only those individuals aged between 20 and 45 years old, we could assume that there were no children living outside the household, and we were able to reconstruct the actual number of children indirectly.

The independent variable was geographical origin, distinguishing immigrants from the native population according to the country of birth, except for Germany where we used nationality because descendants of German grandparents are automatically granted German nationality even when they are born abroad. Migrants were divided in 10 categories, following the highest detail available: 1) Western Europe (EU15); 2) Eastern Europe (NMS13); 3) Outside EU28 (EFTA and residual European countries); 4) North Africa; 5) South and Central Africa; 6) Near and Middle East; 7) East Asia; 8) South and South-East Asia; 9) North America and Oceania; and 10) Latin America.

We included the following control variables in the analysis: a) educational attainment (lower-secondary or less, upper-secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary); b) employment condition (operationalised through the ISCO-08 code at 1 digit of the occupation, including also

two additional categories for the unemployed and the inactive); c) marital status (single, married, widowed or divorced). Models also controlled for year of the survey and age group (five 5-years dummies).

We estimated OLS regression models separately by gender, dividing the analytical strategy in two steps. The first studied the effect of migration status on the total number of children focusing on the pooled sample, whereas the second analysed the fertility patterns of migrants across different destinations, including an interaction term between geographical origin and destination. The second step, hence, primarily aimed at investigating the origin, destination and community effects.

Preliminary Results

Preliminary results suggest that migrants from developed countries (EU15 and North America) have lower (or equal) fertility than natives in all destinations. However, 'penalties' are higher in destination countries with higher fertility, confirming that the fertility rate of the destination country is important to explain differences between migrants and natives: "destination effect".

Men and women from Eastern Europe have lower fertility than natives in all destinations, for this group of migrants there is a clear origin effect. An origin effect appears for African women as well, who have higher fertility than natives in all destinations. On the contrary, African men have lower fertility than natives in Germany and Southern Europe. This might be considered as a destination effect, presumably related to the welfare state and the labour market structure.

Migrants from Asia have lower fertility than natives in all destinations, except in Southern Europe. A community effect might appear for Chinese women in Italy, who migrate to this country for having a higher number of children (community effect can be considered as a selection effect). Final results will be available in time for the EPC meeting.

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