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# Take Me "Home": Determinants of Return Migration Among Germany's Elderly Immigrants

**Jenjira J. Yahirun**

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# TAKE ME "HOME": DETERMINANTS OF RETURN MIGRATION AMONG GERMANY'S ELDERLY IMMIGRANTS[1]

**JENJIRA J. YAHIRUN**
***University of California – Los Angeles***

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the determinants of return migration as foreign-born individuals approach old age in Germany. Return migration in later life engages a different set of conditions than return migration earlier on, including framing return as a possible retirement strategy. Using data from the German Socioeconomic Panel, results suggest that later-life emigrants are "negatively selected" on the basis of economic resources. However, family resources such as spousal characteristics and ties to kin in "home" and "host" countries also shape decisions to return. Results from this paper highlight the broader importance of framing return migration within the processes of international migration and immigrant incorporation.

Keywords: return migration, elderly migrants, immigrant families, GSOEP

## Introduction

Over the past half century, immigrants played a key role in the economic development of countries in North America and Western Europe. Facing a shortage of domestic labor and rapid economic growth following World War II, Germany in particular recruited a large number of guest workers to fill this gap. Together with ethnic Germans, who immigrated after the end of the Cold War, these foreign-born individuals changed the composition of the country's population. Non-Germans presently constitute 8.9% of the total population; and a growing number of immigrants are now over the age of 65 (Destatis, 2008; Deutscher Bundestag, 2006).[2]

Despite the policy relevance, little is known about the foreign-born elderly beyond what aggregate statistics describe. In particular, factors immigrants consider in deciding where to spend their later life remain largely unknown. Their choices are consequential for both Germany and immigrants' countries of origin, especially as foreign-born individuals leave the labor force, enter into retirement and potentially increase their reliance on public services. Returning to the country of origin may not be viable for certain immigrants, but may be possible and even preferable for others. Although a growing body of literature is devoted to understanding the determinants of return migration *earlier* in life (Dustmann, 2001; Constant and Massey, 2003), migration at younger life stages is often shaped by parents and siblings (Stark, 1991) and is therefore different from later-life migration, when the influence of spouses and children is stronger.

To examine the determinants of returning "home" for individuals who spend a significant share of their lives abroad, I focus on the emigration of middle- and old-age foreign-born

[2] The term "Non-German" distinguishes individuals who do not hold German citizenship from those who do. By definition, this also includes native-born individuals who have yet to naturalize. The German Statistical Office does not provide publically available data on the number of foreign-born individuals residing in Germany. Thus, the designation of non-citizen is a proxy for the foreign-born, even though this category often includes native-born offspring of immigrants.

individuals using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP). I investigate how social and economic resources accrued over the life course affect immigrants' risk of return. Three sets of determinants are examined: 1) the context of initial migration including country of origin and era of immigration, 2) individual characteristics such as economic resources and labor force patterns, and 3) family resources including wife's characteristics and children's birthplace, as well as economic and family ties to the "home" country. I begin by contextualizing German immigration history in the post-war period and discuss how immigrants from different countries vary in their access to economic and social resources. Next, I point to previous research on economic resources and its relation to classical debates of selection and return migration. I then review the role of family relationships in immigrants' decisions to return. This is followed by a description of my data, methods and results. Finally, I discuss how models of return migration in later life add to the literature on immigrant families and international migration.

**Immigration to Germany**

Germany, like the United States after 1965, witnessed dramatic changes in immigration policy during the post-war period. Three waves of migration define this period. In the 1950s and 1960s, West Germany responded to rapid economic expansion by importing unskilled labor through a series of bilateral guest-worker recruitment agreements.[3] With the weakening of rotation principles, which exchanged trained foreign workers with new, untrained workers every few years, guest workers remained in Germany longer than their short-term contracts originally stipulated. Official guest worker recruitment ended with the energy crisis in 1973, but spouses and children continued to arrive through family reunification policies.

[3] West Germany signed bilateral agreements first with Italy in 1955, then with Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Portugal (1964), and the former Yugoslavia (1968). East Germany also signed bilateral agreements with North Vietnam (1968) and other communist countries, although migration flows were not at all comparable to those of West Germany.

Between 1973 and 1989, the main path of entry into Germany was through family reunification, asylum and refugee policies. However, the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union prompted a new wave of migration to Germany. The right to "return," a right guaranteed through German Basic Law, was intended to redress the losses of Nazi victims who had fled Germany during WWII and of those who had suffered retaliation for being German in the aftermath of the war. Thus, the end of the Cold War prompted dramatic and unexpected increases in the number of Jewish immigrants and ethnic Germans, *Aussiedler* or *Spätaussielder,* to Germany.[4]

The contrast between earlier and later waves of migrants and the consequences of their varying contexts of reception could not be more obvious. While guest workers were generally expected to return to their countries of origin, *Aussiedler* or *Spätaussielder* had already returned "home." On one hand, guest workers were well integrated into the labor force by virtue of their labor contracts, but their political and social integration was inhibited by expectations of a short-term stay. A lack of clear-cut pathways to citizenship was, and despite reforms in 2000, remains a solid barrier to political and social integration. On the contrary, *Aussiedler* and *Spätaussielder* were not economically well-integrated upon arrival despite automatic citizenship rights, which granted them immediate access to the labor market and other social advantages (Joppke, 2005). In the United States, previous literature has pointed to the importance of context of reception for immigrants' social and economic integration (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). The initial context of reception may also shape decisions to return by influencing the degree to which immigrants are socially and economically incorporated into the host society.

[4] *Spätaussielder* refer to ethnic Germans from post-Soviet countries who arrived in Germany after 1993 and were born between December 31, 1923 and January 1, 1993 (BMI, 2006: 70). The term differentiates this group from earlier *Aussiedler,* who were historically defined as ethnic Germans living abroad and whose immigration to Germany preceded 1993. The term also distinguishes the policies under which *Spätaussielder* immigrated, which were stricter than the requirements for earlier arrivals.

A separate outcome of earlier migration policies is the size of the immigrant community itself. Depending on the initial number of migrants, as well as subsequent demographic patterns, immigrants from different countries of origin may also have access to a small or large set of social resources depending on the size and density of co-ethnic networks. For example, elderly Spaniards in Switzerland are more likely to prefer returning "home" after retirement because of the lack of social support and community resources available to them (Bolzman et al., 2006). Italians, on the other hand, are less likely to prefer emigration than their Spanish counterparts because of the larger Italian community and greater social resources. This pattern underscores how social networks are consequential not only for immigrants' initial incorporation into the host society (Waldinger and Lichter, 2003), but are also influential in providing social support later on, once immigrants leave the labor force (Bolzman et al., 2006). Similar patterns may be found in Germany, where certain ethnic communities (e.g., Turks) are larger and share greater social and economic resources than others (e.g., Spaniards).

**Economic Resources, Selection and Return Migration**

For elderly immigrants living in Germany, economic circumstances are generally characterized by low levels of earnings, savings and more frequent spells of unemployment compared to their native-born counterparts (Clark and York, 2001). Human capital theorists posit return migration in two opposing ways. When migration is undertaken as a permanent move, return migrants are those who have failed in the destination country's labor market. Indeed, Borjas and Bratsberg (1994) claim that the characteristics of those who return are opposite of the characteristics selected upon initial immigration. For example, if initial immigrants are more "able" than those left behind, the least able among the initial immigrants will return. A separate approach conceptualizes initial migration as temporary; migrants move to overcome short-term

economic constraints, achieve a targeted amount of savings, and return is inevitable for all. This approach ignores the experiences that migrants accrue once they arrive, including the "rooting" of oneself through children born in the new country and the adoption of lifestyles that assimilate one into the host country's culture. This perspective also disregards a myriad of social and economic barriers to returning "home" for many immigrants.

Based on the empirical literature, the likelihood of return migration among younger and middle-aged adults is greater for those who are less economically successful with respect to earnings, income and homeownership (Jensen and Pedersen, 2007: 106; Bellemare, 2004; Constant and Massey, 2002; Gundel and Peters, 2008).[5] Yet the selection among older immigrants may differ from younger individuals if return migration is framed within a broader retirement strategy. In fact, studies from Sweden and Switzerland suggest that when elderly immigrants retire, those with greater economic resources are more likely to emigrate than those with fewer resources (Klinthäll, 2006; Bolzman et al., 2006). This suggests that in later life, labor force characteristics of the home and host country may lose significance; however, the quality of life one can achieve given a more finite set of economic resources may increase in importance. In short, return migration appears to be "negatively" selected for younger immigrants and "positively" selected for the elderly, at least with respect to economic resources.

Two findings throw a wrench into this interpretation. First, unemployment and generally unstable employment patterns increase the odds of return among the elderly as well as those at younger life stages (Bolzman et al., 2006; Constant and Massey, 2002). One reason may be that economic inactivity decreases feelings of legitimacy in the "host" country, thus encouraging return migration beyond a "retirement effect" (Bolzman et al., 2006; Sayad, 1991). Second,

[5] Home-ownership may reflect a commitment to staying in Germany that was decided long before a home was purchased. Thus, home-ownership status may be understood as more than a straightforward investment or a marker of economic status.

higher education is correlated with emigration for immigrants throughout the life course in Germany and for younger foreign-born individuals living in the United States (Gundel and Peters, 2008; Reagan and Olsen, 2000). As a more stable indicator of socioeconomic status, any debate of "positive" versus "negative" selection in later life is incomplete without a better understanding of how education relates to return.

Research on immigrants' use of government subsidies parallels research on how economic resources affect return migration. According to Reagan and Olsen (2000), "If immigrants avail themselves of social insurance benefits, the welfare system itself may encourage immigration and discourage subsequent emigration among the foreign-born who have the lowest earnings potential in the United States" (340). Reagan and Olsen (2000) found that immigrants who had received Aid to Families with Dependent Children payments in the previous year were less likely to return to their country of origin in the following year, although this result was not statistically significant. Findings from Denmark suggest that having received unemployment benefits discourages return migration, although gaining access to unemployment benefits requires a high degree of labor market attachment in the first place (Jensen and Pedersen, 2007). Including social service recipiency in the German context is especially important given that non-naturalized immigrants are eligible for virtually the same public benefits as citizens, including housing, unemployment, disability and social security benefits (Kurthen, 1997).

Drawing on disability benefits and unemployment insurance are common paths to retirement for many individuals in Germany, immigrants included (Börsh-Supan et al., 2004). In the former case, workers are eligible for disability benefits once they reach age 60, provided that they cannot be employed for health or occupational reasons. Unemployment benefits may be

drawn on before age 60 and employees may be encouraged to do so through unofficial employer incentives (e.g., the employer agrees to an early retirement and pays the difference between the employee's previous salary and unemployment insurance as a way to usher in younger cohorts of workers). Although unemployment and disability benefits require residence in Germany, social security payments may be transferred abroad, albeit with a 30% reduction. The existence of a strong social safety net as well as the penalty to social security benefits taken abroad may deter emigration for individuals from countries with relatively poor public services (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2007).

In summary, evidence for the return of "failed" migrants (with respect to earnings, income and other financial investments) at younger life stages and "successful" migrants in later life is ambiguous. The inability to theoretically predict whether older immigrants are "positively" or "negatively" selected for return further suggests that factors beyond economic circumstances may also influence decisions to emigrate.

**Family Ties and Social Resources**

Ties to Germany and connections to the country of origin through family members are important determinants of emigration for the elderly. First, the location of immediate or extended family in the "host" and "home" country may matter for decisions to emigrate. For the foreign-born elderly, those in the "host" country are more likely to be members of the family of procreation; whereas those left behind likely belong to the family of origin. Data from France suggest that the location of family of origin and family of procreation are conflicting forces in migration decisions (de Coulon and Wolff, 2006). For example, children's residence in France increases the probability that foreign-born elderly parents prefer to stay. On the other hand, the location of siblings and parents, many of whom do not reside in France, increases the desire to

return permanently or to commute "back-and-forth" (de Coulon and Wolff, 2006). Studies from Switzerland suggest that although the location of parents and siblings in the country of origin slightly modifies the desire to return, it is the location of children that matters the most (Bolzman et al., 2006). An immigrant's preference to stay may be linked to parents' expectations that children will provide physical and financial care in later life (Ganga, 2006). Alternatively, parents may feel compelled to stay close to their German-born children and grandchildren; providing them with proximate social and financial support.

Second, not only does the location of family members matter, but the characteristics of kin will also shape decisions to return. For example, individuals who marry native-born Germans establish "roots" in the new country; both through their spouse and their in-laws. On the other hand, immigrants who marry native-born Germans may have intended long ago never to return. Where children are born and raised may also establish a sense of belonging, with a similar effect of "rooting" the family in the new country when children are born in Germany.

Third, family economic resources also shape where immigrants choose to spend their later life. Particularly important here is the way in which multiple-income households make decisions. Because immigrants generally earn less than their native-born counterparts, a family's economic well-being may require economic contributions from all family members (Clark and York, 2001). Thus, when both husbands and wives work, joint decisions regarding whether to return may be the norm. Past research that attempts to incorporate household characteristics apply a variety of summary measures, such as household income and household welfare use. Yet earnings, labor force participation and education levels may differ between spouses, leading to divergent outcomes depending on family and specifically, couple composition.

Finally, a large body of work that does touch upon the selective effects of return migration is found in the literature on migration and health. Return migrants are thought to be less healthy than immigrants who remain in the host country, a phenomenon commonly known as the "salmon effect" (Abraído-Lanza et al., 1999). Support for this idea has been put forth by Palloni and Arias (2004), who found that older return migrants living in Mexico were less healthy than older Mexican immigrants living in the United States. Evidence from Germany also suggests that for men from all life stages, migrants who self-rated their health as "very poor" were more likely to return than those with "very good" health (Sander, 2007). The deterioration of health conditions for many older individuals suggests that models of return migration in later life must control for immigrants' health characteristics.

**Data and Methods**

I use longitudinal data from the public-use files of the German Socio-economic Panel (GSOEP) to investigate how context of migration, economic circumstance and family resources influence the risk of return in later life. I use both individual-level data and couple-level data to gain a more comprehensive picture of the factors that drive emigration. The GSOEP began in 1984 as a study of individuals and households (Wagner et al., 1993). Since then, annual waves of data were collected. The public-use file used in this analysis contains 23 years of data spanning 1984 to 2007. Two features of the data make it particularly attractive for an analysis of return migration. First, the GSOEP over-sampled non-German households in earlier waves of data collection, which specifically targeted household heads from the former guest worker recruitment countries. Over time, the panel was attentive to changes in migration policies: new samples were added continuously. Second, the survey includes a specific question on migrations

abroad. This is answered by persons who did not leave the household, or by neighbors in the event that an entire household leaves (see Wagner et al., 1993).

I use a discrete-time hazard model with time-varying and time-invariant covariates to examine the likelihood of return migration among foreign-born men aged 50 and over. I focus on men because they constitute the majority of immigrants in Germany who have reached age 50; these are men who belong to the earliest wave of guest workers. Although women often followed as wives and children, an analysis of women's return requires a different set of considerations, including how to frame immigrant women's rate of labor force participation, which is generally considered low in Germany, in models of return. Because women's labor force histories may play a smaller role in their own return, models of women's emigration should be more sensitive to family obligations both "upward" and "downward", requiring data that are unavailable here.

The data are arranged in person-year files. Age in this analysis serves as the "clock" on which the hazard of return is based. Entry into the sample requires two conditions. First, individuals must be foreign-born and have arrived in 1949 or afterwards, when German borders and borders for Western European countries were generally more stable. Second, individuals must be age 50 or above to enter the sample. I start the analysis then because aggregate statistics show that labor force participation begins to decrease for both native and foreign-born persons at age 50 (Deutscher Bundestag, 2006). As the dependent variable, I distinguish between individuals who migrate abroad from those who remain in Germany. Migrations abroad are interpreted as returning to one's country of origin, which is consistent with previous studies that used the GSOEP to examine return migration (Constant and Massey, 2002; Dustmann, 2001). In fact, Dustmann and Kirchkamp (2002) followed a sub-sample of individuals who had previously participated in the GSOEP and had subsequently moved abroad; they found that most individuals

had indeed returned to their countries of origin. This analysis is limited to individuals who return to their countries of origin after 1984, which was the start of panel data collection. The paper is thus limited to a potentially select group of migrants who may have endured longer-than-usual stays in Germany.

The observations are censored on the right by individuals who die or drop out of the survey. Preliminary analysis indicates that immigrants are no more likely to drop out of the survey than native-born individuals. The analysis has two parts. I first examine the individual-level determinants of return for all men in the sample, regardless of their marital status. Second, I ask how wives' characteristics influence husbands' risk of return. In this husband-anchored analysis, men enter at age 50. Their co-resident wives, however, may enter at any age; wives as well as wives' characteristics vary over time. This means, for example, that even if a husband divorces, he will contribute to the analysis with spousal characteristics if he re-marries during the period under observation. I include a dummy variable that controls for whether the husband separated and re-partnered while under observation.

I adjust for individual-level clustering and estimate all models with robust standard errors. In addition, I lag all of the time-varying substantive covariates for individuals by one year, but do not lag the variables for wife's characteristics.[6] Because wives are anchored to husbands in this analysis and only enter into the sample as the co-resident wives of married men, lagging wives' characteristics may actually pick up characteristics of two different women. I do not include weights in the analysis because observations are drawn from different samples starting in different years. However, I do control for household-level characteristics from which sample weights were generated. This includes the household's current state of residence and

[6] I compared results based on variables that were not lagged, those lagged by one year and those lagged by two years. The magnitude of the coefficients differed substantially for only two variables in the analysis. Among these variables, no change in significance level was detected; I therefore use the standard convention and lag by one year.

number of persons in a household. State of residence is operationalized as a dichotomous variable for individuals living in the most immigrant-populous states, Berlin and Hamburg (Destatis, 2007). In addition, I include controls for a number of characteristics that may predispose immigrants to leave: health status, whether the respondent moved within Germany in the past two years and an indicator for whether the individual experienced a gap (left and returned) during the panel.

**Measuring the determinants of return migration**

Context of Immigration

Indicators of the context of immigration to Germany include the immigrant's era of migration and country of origin, both of which are time invariant characteristics of individuals. For conceptual as well as practical reasons, I divide immigrants' arrival into three periods: 1) 1949-1973 (guest worker migration), 2) 1974 -1989 (family reunification) and 3) 1990-2007 (migration under the "right of return" and family reunification). Country of origin in this analysis consists of dummy variables marking individuals from the five major source countries of labor immigration: Turkey, Spain, Italy, Greece and the former Yugoslavia, as well as additional categories for migrants from Eastern and Central Europe, Western Europe and all other countries. This variable not only describes the relations between the country of origin and destination upon immigrants' arrival, but also captures differences in co-ethnic community resources to which certain immigrants may have access. This variable also picks up change in the social and economic environment in "home" countries during immigrants' residence in Germany. Finally, I also include a time-varying indicator for German citizenship.

Economic Resources

Indicators of individual resources include educational attainment and labor force participation. Observed at age 50, educational attainment is a time invariant proxy for class status, compared to time-varying indicators of income and labor force participation. Education is divided into four categories: having completed less than elementary school, having received an elementary school education, completing vocational or high school (which includes the German *Abitur,* the academic high school diploma*)* and having completed some degree of higher education. This variable does not distinguish between education completed in the country of origin, Germany or elsewhere.

Labor force participation and employment are combined into one variable marking time spent outside of the labor force, time spent in the labor force while unemployed, employed part-time, or employed full-time. Because individuals may leave their jobs in preparation for retirement and emigration abroad, current labor force participation may not be an accurate indicator of individual work history. For this reason, I include time-varying indicators that capture two characteristics of previous work history: the *total number of unemployment spells* and the *total duration of unemployment* for individuals as of the current survey year. Unemployment spells differ from unemployment duration, for example, because one unemployment spell may last anywhere from one to fifteen years. The total duration of unemployment captures the entire time an individual spends unemployed, regardless of how many spells it consists of. These data are part of the GSOEP's work history records that include participants' labor force participation before he/she entered the panel study, extended as far back as the age of 15. This includes information that spans borders: unemployment spells may have occurred before or after immigration to Germany. As a final measure for individual economic characteristics, I also include logged individual earnings. All indicators of earnings and income

are measured in current year Euros (Grabka, 2008). All labor force participation variables are lagged by one year.

At the household level, time-varying dummy variables indicate whether or not the individual owns or rents his current dwelling. Finally, program participation is also distinguished here as a separate time-varying economic resource. I include dummy variables to mark individuals who receive three forms of public support: 1) unemployment benefits, 2) old-age or disability benefits and 3) subsidized housing. These forms of support differ from one another in the stipulations and qualifications necessary for participation.

Family Ties and Social Resources

Measures of the availability and support provided by kin can be conceptually divided into four groups. To capture the location of spouses, I include an indicator of respondent's time-varying marital status. I distinguish between single migrants (including those who never married, are widowed or divorced), migrants who are married with co-resident spouses, and those with absent spouses. The second indicator pertains to whether an individual/couple has children who were born in Germany. For women in the GSOEP, this is easily determined using year of migration and available fertility histories. Father's status is a less well-defined measure, since fertility histories were only asked of men entering the panel in 2000 or later. Instead, I define men as fathers of German-born children based on their marital histories and the birthplace of children recorded in their wives' fertility histories. This is a time-varying indicator that is carried through to subsequent years whenever a man's wife records giving birth to a child in Germany. Third, I include a time-varying dummy variable for remittances sent to family members abroad. This serves as a proxy for close ties to potential family and friends in the country of origin. However, these results should be interpreted with caution as not all immigrants send remittances,

given the level of income required to do so. In addition, not all individuals have kin who were left behind. In some cases, family members may have joined the respondent in Germany, in other cases; kin may have moved elsewhere or have passed away. In the couple-level analysis, I include several characteristics of wives, including wives' labor force histories and participation, educational attainment and country of origin. These provide another assessment of whether family resources in the host country also matter for return.

Controls

Lastly, I control for time-varying health status, which may be related to return (Sander, 2007; Palloni and Arias, 2004). The health measure used here is based on a ten-point scale where the respondent is asked to self-rate their own physical health, ranging from least satisfied to extremely satisfied. Although more accurate measures of health status were later included, self-rated health is the only measure that is consistently available across all years of the survey. Finally, I also include whether the respondent moved in the past two years to capture individuals who tend to move frequently.

**Descriptive Results**

Table 1 presents the percentages and means of variables used in the first part of the analysis. Column 1 presents descriptive statistics from the first person-year of all observations in the sample. Column 2 shows means and percentages when all person-years are taken into account. In general, Table 1 presents well-known characteristics of the foreign-born elderly in Germany. Immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe constitute the largest share of persons and person-years in the sample. Turkey, however, is the most common country of origin. Socioeconomic traits from the sample are in line with micro-census data and other previous studies (Tesch-Römer et al., 2006). Most immigrants have received some type of vocational

training, or have graduated with a high school degree. The majority of person-years were spent by individuals working full-time. Likewise, at least for the first year in the sample, the majority of immigrants had no previous unemployment experience. Most immigrants spent their years living with co-resident spouses, and approximately one-third of those years were spent as the parent of a German-born child. The majority of individuals did not send money abroad to family members or friends while under observation.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics from the person-year files used to estimate the hazard of return among married respondents with co-resident wives. Means and percentages follow a similar pattern to that in Table 1. The majority of observations in the sample are represented by men who arrived during the era of guest-worker recruitment. Half of their wives also arrived during this era, but 18% also arrived between 1973 and 1989. In addition, 15% of the married men spent their years under observations married to German-born women, even though marriages matched on ethnicity are the most prevalent union in the data (not shown here). Compared to their husbands, wives were less well-educated. Approximately 50% of wives married to men with vocational degrees had an elementary school education or less. Only 4% of wives married to men with vocational degrees had a higher degree (not shown here). Wives also spend a greater share of their time outside of the labor force. Perhaps for this reason, most wives have no history of unemployment and experience fewer spells of unemployment while under observation.

[Table 2 about here]

In this study, 228 individuals moved abroad. 75% were married in the previous year and approximately 90% of these individuals had spouses who moved with them (not shown here).

Characteristics of men who moved abroad can be found in Appendix A. The median age for return is 61. I test for violations of the assumption of proportional hazards by marital status and country of origin and find that the proportionality assumption is not violated. To test this, I plot survival probabilities by county of origin to see if the lines are parallel (see Cleves et al., 2002). In the multivariate analysis, I also test for the statistical significance of the interaction between marital status and age and between country of origin and age. Neither are significant at conventional levels, supporting earlier tests that indicate a non-violation of the proportionality assumption by country of origin and marital status (not shown here).

**Multivariate Results**

Part 1: Analysis of All Men's Sample

In the first part of the analysis, I estimate models for all men, regardless of marital status. Table 3 presents three models. Model 1 includes variables relevant to the context of migration, holding constant the effects of age. Model 2 incorporates socioeconomic characteristics and family characteristics, while model 3 adds in control variables. In general, Model 1 suggests that country of origin matters for return migration and that some men, for example, Greeks and Spaniards, are more likely to return than Turkish men. Immigrants from Western Europe are less likely to return than Turks, as are men from Central and Eastern Europe, many of whom are ethnic Germans. Possessing German citizenship also significantly reduces the odds of return. However, having arrived in Germany after 1990 significantly increases the likelihood of emigration compared to those who arrived during the guestworker recruitment era. Age effects are also significant; while men aged 62-74 are more likely to return than men aged 51-55, men aged 75 and older are less likely to return. The results point to a potential retirement effect, given

that the ages in which men are most likely to return overlap with the ages in which individuals are also likely to retire.

Model 2 incorporates several socioeconomic and family characteristics. Four important findings emerge from this model. First, although most country of origin estimates remain significant, being from Eastern/Central or Western Europe no longer significantly determines the odds of return. This suggests that some socioeconomic and family characteristics included in the model account for the variation between men from the non-guest workers countries in Europe. Second, estimates of socioeconomic characteristics provide general evidence for the "negative" selection of elderly return migrants based on education, labor force participation and the total amount of time spent unemployed.

For men's education, a non-linear pattern exists, with the odds of return greatest for men with an elementary school and higher education (although neither coefficient is significant); men with vocational or high school degrees have the lowest odds of return migration. In general, these results differ from previous findings in the United States where return migrants at younger ages are more likely to be highly educated (Reagan and Olsen, 2000).[7] One reason may be the diminished returns to higher education for immigrants in Germany. Additionally, if vocational and high school degrees are more closely matched with available labor market opportunities, then individuals without these degrees may be less likely to secure long-term, stable jobs. Not surprisingly, men who had recently worked full-time in the labor force are less likely than those not in the labor force to emigrate. Yet results based on unemployment duration and the total number of unemployment spells paints a contradictory picture. Men who experience long durations of unemployment (five or more years) are 30 percent more likely to return than

[7] I initially included an indicator for attending school in Germany to examine a more qualitative aspect of schooling. The coefficient was not statistically significant in any of the models and did not alter the magnitude of the education coefficient; I therefore dropped it from the analysis.

individuals who were never unemployed, although this estimate does not reach statistical significance. On the other hand, men who experience five or more spells of unemployment, holding constant duration effects, are less likely to leave than those who experience no unemployment. These results suggest that the number of unemployment spells and total unemployment duration may shape decisions to emigrate differently.

Third, there is mixed evidence that social service recipiency deters return. Receiving old age/disability payments is not a statistically significant predictor of return, but receiving subsidized housing payments does reduce the odds of emigration. On the other hand, receiving unemployment benefits actually *increases* the odds of emigration. Here, the odds are more than 1.5 times greater for men who receive unemployment benefits than men who do not. This occurs even after unemployment status and total time spent unemployed are taken into account.[8]

Fourth, family ties are also significant predictors of return migration. Married persons are more likely to emigrate than individuals who are widowed, single or divorced. Because wives' characteristics are not included in this analysis, this finding likely reflects the fact that couples on average possess greater economic resources and more social incentives to return than single men. Men may be married to wives with extensive work histories, therefore meeting the economic resources necessary for return. In addition, men married to women of the same ethnicity (which constitute approximately 80% of men's person-years in the sample) may be more likely to emigrate because of their wives' familial ties to those left behind. This is in addition to any ties that men themselves may already possess. An important point to make here is that joint migrations are also common. This is empirically shown in the data, where approximately 90% of

[8] Labor force status and unemployment benefits were correlated at -.09, which was low enough to keep unemployment benefits in the model. Another analysis, not shown here, investigated whether the coefficient for unemployment status changed once unemployment benefits were removed from the model. The coefficient for unemployment increased in magnitude, but did not reach statistical significance. This suggests that unemployment status and unemployment benefits may pick up different types of disadvantage.

all men who emigrated in the couple analysis returned with their partners (not shown here). With regards to children, fathers in general are less likely to return than men with no children; however, fathers of German-born children are the least likely to return when compared with fathers of only foreign-born children. As expected, men who sent money abroad in the previous year were more likely to return than men who did not, although this effect was not statistically significant.

Finally, model 3 adds substantive and design controls to the model. Significant results from model 2 are virtually unchanged in model 3. Many of the controls are also not significant, with the exception of having moved within the previous two years. These results suggest that men who moved within the past two years are less likely to return to their country of origin than those who did not.

[Table 3 about here]

Part 2: Analysis with Spousal Characteristics

In Table 4, I present results from the second step of the analysis. The two right-hand columns present results when only the husbands' characteristics are included (model 1) and the two left-hand columns show results when wives' characteristics are added to the model (model 2). Model 2 includes time-varying covariates of spouse's educational attainment, labor force participation and unemployment histories in addition to respondent's own socioeconomic characteristics.[9] It also includes dichotomous variables indicating differences between spouses' country of origin and age.

[9] Education is constant for all men in the analysis. However, because wives and wives' characteristics are time-varying for this husband-anchored sample, references to wives' time-varying educational attainment refer to this time-varying characteristic of spouses.

Three important points emerge from this step of the analysis. First, the inclusion of wife's country of origin adds an important component to the model. For husbands whose wives were born in Germany, the odds of return are drastically reduced compared to couples where the wife is from the same country of origin. Second, wives' economic characteristics slightly modify the odds of return for husbands. By adding wife's education, husband's own education is no longer a statistically significant predictor of return. Wife's education, however, matters such that men whose wives hold vocational/high school degrees or an elementary school education are less likely to return than men whose wives posses less than an elementary school education. Men's employment status, however, remained significant even after including wives' labor force characteristics, none of which reached statistical significance.[10] Overall, evidence for the "negative" selection of return migration based only on men's socioeconomic characteristics is not greatly modified by the addition of wives' socioeconomic traits. Finally, men who experienced a divorce or a loss of spouse and later re-married while under observation were more likely to return than men who did not, although this result is not statistically significant.

[Table 4 about here]

**Discussion**

Based on this analysis, results suggest that theories of return migration in earlier life stages may not accurately predict emigration in later life. In addition, the story of what determines return migration differs depending on whether characteristics of the husband or both husband and wife are examined. At the individual level, economic resources are significant, but in unexpected ways. The results generally suggest that return migrants are "negatively" selected on the basis of labor force attachment and perhaps education. Older immigrants who return to

[10] None of the effects of husbands' and wives' socioeconomic characteristics are significantly different from one another (analysis not shown here).

their countries of origin are generally less well-educated and have weaker attachments (but not the weakest) to the labor force than their better-educated, full-time counterparts.[11] These findings conflict with previous research suggesting that wealthier and more economically integrated immigrants are more likely to express a preference for return and to return once they have reached retirement (Tesch-Römer et al., 2006; Klinthäll, 2006; Bolzman et al., 2006). The results suggest that immigrants who have more successfully assimilated into the German labor market and have established credentials that allow for gainful employment in Germany are more likely to stay.

Certain types of program participation predict whether migrants stay or leave Germany. In particular, receiving unemployment benefits significantly *increases* the odds of return for individuals across all samples. Three explanations help clarify this apparent anomaly. For European Union (E.U.) immigrants, unemployment benefits can officially be transferred to other E.U. countries for a period of up to three months (Botschaft BRD Madrid, 2006). Although some might consider the transferability of unemployment benefits an incentive to emigrate, the short-term nature of this arrangement is unlikely to be a major factor in decisions to return permanently. A second explanation is that individuals leave the labor force and draw on unemployment benefits as a retirement strategy that eventually leads to emigration. Native-born Germans also draw on unemployment benefits as a first stage of retirement; thus immigrants may in fact be using similar strategies in preparation for return migration.

A third explanation is that individuals who receive unemployment benefits represent those who are the most economically disadvantaged from the start. Once individuals no longer qualify for unemployment benefits, either because of age limits or other programmatic

[11] One reason for this may be the low representation of higher education among some country of origin groups. However, at least 1% of all country of origin groups had a higher education.

requirements, other sources of income may be insufficient to remain in Germany. An additional indicator of this are the opposing ways in which total spells of unemployment and the duration of time spent unemployed affect the odds of emigration. Individuals with long durations of unemployment are likely to suffer from some type of disadvantage that either occurs from or through being rejected in the labor market. This in turn could compel emigration when immigrants feel that they no longer legitimately belong in the host country (Sayad, 1991). On the other hand, individuals who experience a frequent "churning" of jobs may psychically benefit from feeling wanted on the labor market (even if these are 'lateral' and not 'vertical' moves).

Furthermore, it is clear from the analysis that certain immigrant groups are more likely to return than others. Men from a few former E.U. guest worker countries, including Greece and Spain, are more likely to return than immigrants from Turkey. One reason may be that economic conditions in Greece and Spain have drastically improved since the time these men immigrated. E.U. membership and the permeability of borders within the European Union, compared to Turkey, might encourage return migrations for older persons from Greece and Spain. On the other hand, immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe rarely leave. These results highlight the importance of context of reception; whereas ethnic Germans were politically integrated from the start, for example through automatic citizenship rights, guest workers may be more likely to leave because they were initially denied these rights. In addition, the results suggest that the size and resources of the ethnic community may also matter. As Turks constitute the largest immigrant population in Germany, formal and informal institutions may provide social and economic support for the elderly that cannot be found in other ethnic communities.

The results presented here demonstrate that family ties matter for decisions to return. Married persons with co-resident spouses are more likely to emigrate than widowed or single

men, whether because of financial or familial reasons. However, the results conflict with Klinthäll's finding that widowed men are more likely to emigrate than their married counterparts (2006). On the other hand, fatherhood and especially fathering a German-born child significantly decreases an immigrant's likelihood of return. Being married to a wife who was born in Germany has a similar effect of "rooting" men in the new country.

Although the analysis presented here includes several characteristics of the family of procreation, there is little information on how traits of the family of origin, most likely to be those who are, if at all, left behind, affect decisions to return. I include remittance data as a proxy for ties to family members left behind, even though the indicator is imperfect given that not all immigrants have enough money to send home and not all individuals have family members left in the country of origin. Although the results are not statistically significant, they do suggest that those who send transfers abroad are more likely to return. This finding underscores the relevance of the family of origin and highlights the importance of including data on kin across borders in future surveys of migration and families.

Although much emphasis was given to the way in which health affects patterns of return, the measures used here cannot provide an adequate test of the salmon effect - whether less healthy immigrants return "home." The main reason is that self-rated health indicators are generally less informative than other health measures, such as biomarkers, in assessing health status. However, I included self-rated health measures because they were the only health indicator consistently available throughout the survey. Future data collection efforts should include more accurate measures of health.

I highlight again the precaution readers should take in interpreting these findings given that the sample is limited to immigrants who left Germany after 1984, when the GSOEP began.

This is most relevant for migrants who arrived during the guestworker era, many of whom left before 1984. It is unknown whether the determinants of return among these earlier migrants differed, if at all, from the sample studied here. However, there is reason to believe that social conditions have greatly improved for the foreign born in Germany over the past 20 years, whereas economic contexts have deteriorated with post-industrialization. Thus, the effect of these factors on decisions to return may have differed for men who left before 1984 from those who were captured in the survey.

To conclude, as the share of foreign-born elderly increases in North American and Western Europe, older immigrants will grapple with the decision of whether to return to their country of birth or to live out their twilight years in the adopted country. These decisions will be based on several factors, including the economic and social resources made available through co-ethnic and family networks in late life. Yet researchers know little about the interactions between parents and children beyond adolescence; we also know little about the relationship between couples themselves at this age. This paper highlights the importance of disentangling potential economic strategies of couples in immigrant families, underscoring how the actual and potential sharing of resources, both social and economic, affects decisions concerning where to spend later life. It also hints at the complexity of family in later life, when immigrants have ties to kin across borders. Future research should examine not only how the location of family members matters for later-life emigration, but also how obligations between parents and children factor into these choices too.

Lastly, this paper presents a more holistic depiction of how immigration affects individuals across the life cross, and by doing so underscores the process, rather than the act of emigration. Theories concerning why individuals immigrate are rife in the social sciences, yet

models of return migration are underdeveloped. This paper offers one perspective on return migration that incorporates the initial context of immigration, the economic and social resources accrued while in the new country, and family ties established and kept while abroad. In this way, emigration is one component situated within the broader processes of international migration and immigrant incorporation.

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| Table 1: | Descriptive Statistics for first Person-Year and all Person-Years: | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Foreign-born Person-Years aged 50 and older** | | |
| | | First Person-Year at Risk | All Person-Years at Risk |
| **Immigrant status** | | | |
| Country of origin (%) | | | |
| | Turkey | 19.35 | 20.71 |
| | Yugoslavia | 10.45 | 10.21 |
| | Greece | 10.53 | 12.00 |
| | Italy | 12.38 | 13.95 |
| | Spain | 7.49 | 6.14 |
| | Other Eastern/Central European | 26.61 | 27.04 |
| | Western Europe | 5.71 | 4.98 |
| | Other | 7.49 | 4.96 |
| Era of migration (%) | | | |
| | 1949-1973 | 64.12 | 73.74 |
| | 1974-1989 | 10.82 | 9.37 |
| | 1990-2007 | 10.38 | 8.52 |
| | Missing | 14.68 | 8.37 |
| German citizenship (%)† | | 28.32 | 27.19 |
| **Socio-economic status** | | | |
| Educational attainment (%) | | | |
| | Less than elementary | 19.20 | 16.90 |
| | General elemantary | 21.79 | 24.49 |
| | Vocational/vocational plus Abitur | 46.55 | 49.06 |
| | Higher education | 12.45 | 9.55 |
| Average natural log of monthly earnings **† | | 7.68 | 5.91 |
| | | (4.21) | (4.91) |
| Labor force/employment status (%)† | | | |
| | Out of labor force | 17.64 | 34.74 |
| | Unemployed | 10.60 | 11.74 |
| | Part-time | 2.74 | 3.54 |
| | Full-time | 69.01 | 49.98 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (%)† | | | |
| | 0 years | 65.83 | 57.35 |
| | Less than 5 years | 28.47 | 33.19 |
| | 5 Years or more | 5.71 | 9.46 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (%)† | | | |
| | No spells | 66.94 | 57.27 |
| | One spell | 18.90 | 23.71 |
| | Two spells | 9.34 | 10.36 |
| | Three spells | 2.74 | 4.96 |
| | Four spells | 1.56 | 2.27 |
| | Five spells or more | 0.52 | 1.43 |
| Homeowner (%)† | | 21.35 | 22.85 |

cont. from Table 1, above

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Program Participation** | | | |
| Receives unemployment benefits (%)† | | 7.93 | 7.93 |
| Receives disability/old age pension (%)† | | 13.94 | 33.24 |
| Receives subsidized housing (%)† | | 14.31 | 15.11 |
| **Family Characteristics** | | | |
| Marital Status (%)† | | | |
| | Single, Widowed, Divorced | 7.93 | 9.35 |
| | Married, Spouse not present | 6.97 | 4.52 |
| | Married, Spouse present | 85.10 | 86.13 |
| Parenthood (%)† | | | |
| | No children | 25.43 | 17.68 |
| | Father of at least one German-born child | 31.58 | 36.39 |
| | Father of non-German born child(ren) only | 42.99 | 45.94 |
| Sent Transfers to family member abroad (%)† | | | |
| | No | 57.01 | 67.72 |
| | Yes | 30.02 | 23.44 |
| | N/A | 12.97 | 8.84 |
| **Demographic Characteristics** | | | |
| Health (%)† | | | |
| | Less Satisfied | 16.16 | 18.38 |
| | Satisfied | 31.21 | 37.74 |
| | Very Satisfied | 52.63 | 43.88 |
| Average age **† | | 55.30 | 60.18 |
| | | (6.49) | (7.32) |
| **Controls** | | | |
| Moved within past years† | | 16.01 | 12.29 |
| Ever missing in panel† | | 5.86 | 13.66 |
| Average number of persons in household **† | | 3.24 | 2.95 |
| | | (1.62) | (1.55) |
| Bundesland (%)† | | | |
| | Other State | 95.55 | 95.98 |
| | Berlin/Hamburg | 4.45 | 4.02 |
| **Sample Size (N)** | | **1,349** | **10,534** |
| **Standard deviation in parenthesis | | | |
| †Indicates time-varying covariates lagged by one year | | | |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | |

| Table 2: | Descriptive Statistics for Husband-Anchored Analysis | |
|---|---|---|
| | | All Person-Years at risk |
| **Respondent's Immigrant Status** | | |
| Country of Origin (%) | | |
| | Turkey | 21.30 |
| | Yugoslavia | 9.98 |
| | Greece | 12.86 |
| | Italy | 13.41 |
| | Spain | 5.53 |
| | Other Eastern/Central European | 26.84 |
| | Western Europe | 5.22 |
| | Other | 4.87 |
| Era of Migration (%) | | |
| | 1949-1973 | 73.64 |
| | 1974-1989 | 9.10 |
| | 1990-2007 | 8.71 |
| | Missing | 8.55 |
| German Citizenship (%)† | | 26.25 |
| **Wife's Immigrant Status** | | |
| Country of Origin (%)‡ | | |
| | German | 15.52 |
| | Turkey | 20.95 |
| | Yugoslavia | 8.81 |
| | Greece | 12.19 |
| | Italy | 9.63 |
| | Spain | 4.54 |
| | Other Eastern/Central European | 23.04 |
| | Western Europe | 1.68 |
| | Other | 3.64 |
| Era of Migration (%)‡ | | |
| | German born | 15.52 |
| | 1949-1973 | 50.88 |
| | 1974-1989 | 18.14 |
| | 1990-2005 | 9.61 |
| | Missing | 5.86 |
| **Respondent's Socio-economic Status** | | |
| Education (%) | | |
| | Less than Elementary | 16.44 |
| | General Elemantary | 25.36 |
| | Vocational/Vocational plus Abitur | 48.59 |
| | Higher Education | 9.61 |
| Average natural log of Monthly Earnings**† | | 5.91 |
| | | (4.91) |

cont. from Table 2, above

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Labor Force/Employment (%)† | | |
| | Out of labor force | 34.81 |
| | Unemployed | 11.91 |
| | Part-time | 3.42 |
| | Full-time | 49.87 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (%)† | | |
| | 0 years | 57.29 |
| | Less than 5 Years | 33.47 |
| | 5 Years or More | 9.23 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (%)† | | |
| | No spells | 57.68 |
| | One spell | 23.92 |
| | Two spells | 9.94 |
| | Three spells or more | 8.46 |
| **Wife's Socio-economic Status** | | |
| Education (%)‡ | | |
| | Less than Elementary | 25.84 |
| | General Elemantary | 34.47 |
| | Vocational/Vocational plus Abitur | 33.92 |
| | Higher Education | 5.77 |
| Average natural log of monthly earnings **‡ | | 4.20 |
| | | (4.68) |
| Labor Force/Employment (%)‡ | | |
| | Out of labor force | 51.95 |
| | Unemployed | 6.84 |
| | Part-time | 16.57 |
| | Full-time | 24.64 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (%)‡ | | |
| | 0 years | 62.87 |
| | Less than 5 Years | 32.05 |
| | 5 Years or More | 5.07 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (%)‡ | | |
| | No spells | 62.44 |
| | One spell | 22.99 |
| | Two spells | 9.59 |
| | Three spells or more | 4.98 |
| **Household Economic Characteristics** | | |
| Homeowner (%)† | | 24.64 |
| HH Receives Unemployed Benefits (%)† | | 11.61 |
| HH Receives Disability/Old Age pension (%)† | | 38.44 |
| HH Receives Subsidized Housing (%)† | | 14.79 |

cont. from Table 2, above

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Family Characteristics** | | |
| Parenthood (%)† | | |
| | No children | 8.68 |
| | Father of at least one German-born child | 40.87 |
| | Father of non-German born child(ren) only | 50.46 |
| Sent Transfers to family member abroad (%)† | | |
| | No | 69.39 |
| | Yes | 21.94 |
| | N/A | 8.67 |
| Separated from partner and re-partnered (%)† | | 0.73 |
| **Respondent's Demographic Characteristics** | | |
| Health (%)† | | |
| | Less Satisfied | 17.95 |
| | Satisfied | 38.07 |
| | Very Satisfied | 43.98 |
| Average age **† | | 60.01 |
| | | (7.01) |
| **Spouse's Demographic Characteristics** | | |
| Health (%)‡ | | |
| | Less Satisfied | 18.68 |
| | Satisfied | 41.03 |
| | Very Satisfied | 40.29 |
| Average age **‡ | | 55.99 |
| | | (8.55) |
| **Controls** | | |
| Moved within past years† | | 11.95 |
| Ever missing in panel† | | 13.05 |
| Average number of persons in household **† | | 3.15 |
| | | (1.49) |
| Bundesland (%)† | | |
| | Other State | 96.30 |
| | Berlin/Hamburg | 3.70 |
| **Sample Size (N)** | | **9,010** |
| **Standard deviation in parenthesis | | |
| † Indicates time-varying covariates lagged by one year | | |
| ‡ Wife's characteristics vary by year with the respondent; these variables are not lagged | | |
| because they may pick up characteristics of different women | | |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | |

| Table 3: | Odds Ratios of Return Migration between 1984 and 2007, Foreign-Born Men aged 50 and older | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Model 1 | | | | Model 2 | | | | Model 3 (full model) | |
| | | $e^{\beta}$ | | Z-score | p | $e^{\beta}$ | | Z-score | p | $e^{\beta}$ | Z-score |
| **Respondent's Migration History** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Country (base=Turkey) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Yugoslavia | 1.308 | | 1.08 | 0.279 | 1.337 | | 1.07 | 0.283 | 1.301 | 0.95 |
| | Greece | 1.607 | ** | 2.36 | 0.018 | 1.726 | *** | 2.61 | 0.009 | 1.644 ** | 2.28 |
| | Italy | 0.858 | | -0.64 | 0.525 | 1.054 | | 0.20 | 0.838 | 1.002 | 0.01 |
| | Spain | 3.053 | *** | 4.72 | 0.000 | 3.623 | *** | 5.25 | 0.000 | 3.422 *** | 4.76 |
| | Central & Eastern Europe | 0.340 | *** | -2.64 | 0.008 | 0.508 | | -1.56 | 0.118 | 0.488 | -1.63 |
| | Western Europe | 0.288 | *** | -2.61 | 0.009 | 0.518 | | -1.24 | 0.214 | 0.487 | -1.35 |
| | Other | 0.460 | | -1.31 | 0.189 | 0.662 | | -0.69 | 0.488 | 0.659 | -0.70 |
| Era of migration (base=1949-1973) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1974-1989 | 1.583 | | 1.37 | 0.172 | 1.606 | | 1.37 | 0.171 | 1.604 | 1.37 |
| | 1990-2007 | 3.854 | *** | 2.98 | 0.003 | 3.747 | *** | 2.52 | 0.012 | 4.001 *** | 2.56 |
| | Missing | 0.988 | | -0.04 | 0.965 | 0.940 | | -0.21 | 0.835 | 0.912 | -0.30 |
| German citizenship (base=other)† | | 0.116 | *** | -4.73 | 0.000 | 0.112 | *** | -4.23 | 0.000 | 0.106 *** | -4.26 |
| **Socio-economic Status** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Education at age 50 (base=less than elementary school) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Elementary | | | | | 0.852 | | -0.91 | 0.365 | 0.839 | -0.98 |
| | Vocational | | | | | 0.505 | *** | -3.52 | 0.000 | 0.490 *** | -3.63 |
| | Higher Education | | | | | 0.655 | | -1.06 | 0.288 | 0.638 | -1.11 |
| Natural log of earnings† | | | | | | 1.037 | | 1.35 | 0.176 | 1.037 | 1.37 |
| Employment status (base=not in labor force)† | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Unemployed | | | | | 0.780 | | -0.81 | 0.419 | 0.780 | -0.80 |
| | Part-time employed | | | | | 0.577 | | -1.20 | 0.232 | 0.592 | -1.13 |
| | Full-time employed | | | | | 0.263 | *** | -4.30 | 0.000 | 0.263 *** | -4.19 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (base=No U/E)† | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Less than 5 years | | | | | 0.967 | | -0.11 | 0.910 | 0.956 | -0.15 |
| | 5 Years or more | | | | | 1.338 | | 0.78 | 0.435 | 1.339 | 0.78 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (base=0)† | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | One spell | | | | | 0.906 | | -0.32 | 0.751 | 0.909 | -0.31 |
| | Two spells | | | | | 1.103 | | 0.26 | 0.795 | 1.084 | 0.21 |
| | Three spells | | | | | 1.059 | | 0.13 | 0.896 | 1.073 | 0.16 |
| | Four spells | | | | | 0.629 | | -0.75 | 0.455 | 0.631 | -0.74 |
| | Five spells or more | | | | | 0.165 | ** | -1.96 | 0.049 | 0.165 ** | -1.96 |
| Homeowner† | | | | | | 0.553 | ** | -2.21 | 0.027 | 0.562 ** | -2.10 |
| **Program Participation** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Receives unemployment benefits† | | | | | | 1.685 | ** | 1.94 | 0.052 | 1.686 ** | 1.93 |
| Receives disability/old age pension† | | | | | | 1.115 | | 0.42 | 0.672 | 1.112 | 0.40 |
| Receives subsidized housing† | | | | | | 0.573 | ** | -2.32 | 0.020 | 0.567 ** | -2.35 |

cont. from Table 3, above

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Family Characteristics** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Marital status (base: Widowed/Single/Div)† | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Married, spouse present | | | | | 4.507 | *** | 4.07 | 0.000 | 4.624 | *** | 4.10 |
| | Married, spouse not present | | | | | 1.724 | | 1.42 | 0.157 | 1.783 | | 1.47 |
| Parenthood (base=not)† | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Father of at least one German-born child | | | | | 0.455 | *** | -2.73 | 0.006 | 0.463 | *** | -2.57 |
| | Father of non-German born child(ren) only | | | | | 0.627 | * | -1.71 | 0.088 | 0.630 | * | -1.64 |
| Transfers to family abroad (base=not)† | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Sent transfers | | | | | 1.224 | | 1.07 | 0.286 | 1.195 | | 0.92 |
| | N/A | | | | | 1.162 | | 0.34 | 0.738 | 1.174 | | 0.35 |
| **Controls** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Rated Health (base: Less satisfied)† | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Satisfied | | | | | | | | | 0.936 | | -0.35 |
| | Very satisfied | | | | | | | | | 0.888 | | -0.60 |
| Moved within past two years (base=not)† | | | | | | | | | | 0.670 | * | -1.84 |
| Ever missing (base=no missing years)† | | | | | | | | | | 0.934 | | -0.30 |
| Number of persons in household† | | | | | | | | | | 0.961 | | -0.80 |
| Berlin/Hamburg (base=Other state)† | | | | | | | | | | 0.788 | | -0.78 |
| **Age in Cubic Splines** (Base= 51-55)† | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 56-61 | 0.893 | | -1.58 | 0.115 | 0.867 | ** | -1.94 | 0.053 | 0.863 | ** | -2.00 |
| | 62-74 | 4.282 | *** | 3.71 | 0.000 | 3.729 | *** | 3.22 | 0.001 | 3.750 | *** | 3.22 |
| | 75+ | 0.031 | *** | -4.01 | 0.000 | 0.046 | *** | -3.42 | 0.001 | 0.046 | *** | -3.41 |
| Log-liklihood | | | | -982.292 | | | | -906.581 | | | | -904.299 |
| **Sample Size (N)** | | | | **10,534** | | | | **10,534** | | | | **10,534** |
| †Indicates time-varying covariates lagged by one year | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *** significant at 1%; ** significant at 5%; * significant at 10% | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Table 4: Odds Ratios of Return Migration between 1984 and 2007, Husbands and Co-resident Wives | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Model 1 | | | | Model 2 (Full Model) | | |
| | | $e^{\beta}$ | | Z-score | p | $e^{\beta}$ | | Z-score |
| **Respondent's Migration History** | | | | | | | | |
| Country (base=Turkey) | | | | | | | | |
| | Yugoslavia | 1.953 | ** | 2.07 | 0.039 | 2.285 | ** | 2.35 |
| | Greece | 2.489 | *** | 3.43 | 0.001 | 2.956 | *** | 3.86 |
| | Italy | 1.295 | | 0.87 | 0.387 | 1.626 | | 1.53 |
| | Spain | 5.103 | *** | 5.22 | 0.000 | 6.130 | *** | 5.40 |
| | Central & Eastern Europe | 0.664 | | -0.91 | 0.363 | 0.849 | | -0.35 |
| | Western Europe | 0.788 | | -0.45 | 0.656 | 1.453 | | 0.63 |
| | Other | 0.823 | | -0.27 | 0.785 | 1.203 | | 0.25 |
| Era of Migration (base=1949-1973) | | | | | | | | |
| | 1974-1989 | 1.749 | | 1.50 | 0.133 | 1.893 | | 1.63 |
| | 1990-2005 | 5.004 | *** | 3.00 | 0.003 | 3.989 | ** | 2.40 |
| | Missing | 0.854 | | -0.42 | 0.672 | 1.043 | | 0.13 |
| German Citizenship (base=other)† | | 0.062 | *** | -4.33 | 0.000 | 0.066 | *** | -3.93 |
| **Wife's Migration History** | | | | | | | | |
| Spouse's Country of origin (base=matched)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Different country of origin if wife is migrant | | | | | 0.361 | | -1.41 |
| | German-born spouse | | | | | 0.336 | ** | -2.38 |
| **Respondent's Socio-economic Status** | | | | | | | | |
| Education at age 50 (base=less than elementary school) | | | | | | | | |
| | Elementary | 0.852 | | -0.78 | 0.438 | 1.109 | | 0.43 |
| | Vocational | 0.488 | *** | -3.12 | 0.002 | 0.712 | | -1.31 |
| | Higher Education | 0.598 | | -1.12 | 0.263 | 1.258 | | 0.47 |
| Natural Log of Earnings† | | 1.057 | * | 1.87 | 0.062 | 1.050 | | 1.59 |
| Employment Status (base=not in labor force)† | | | | | | | | |
| | Unemployed | 0.722 | | -0.99 | 0.320 | 0.686 | | -1.15 |
| | Part-time employed | 0.363 | * | -1.82 | 0.069 | 0.407 | | -1.61 |
| | Full-time employed | 0.255 | *** | -3.80 | 0.000 | 0.275 | *** | -3.62 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (base=never)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Less than 5 Years | 1.153 | | 0.41 | 0.681 | 1.137 | | 0.39 |
| | 5 Years or More | 1.646 | | 1.10 | 0.273 | 1.577 | | 1.03 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (base=0)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | One Spell | 0.899 | | -0.29 | 0.768 | 0.886 | | -0.36 |
| | Two spells | 1.184 | | 0.37 | 0.709 | 1.242 | | 0.51 |
| | Three spells or more | 0.848 | | -0.34 | 0.736 | 1.119 | | 0.24 |
| **Wife's Socio-economic Status** | | | | | | | | |
| Education at age 50 (base=less than elementary school)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Elementary | | | | | 0.664 | * | -1.86 |
| | Vocational | | | | | 0.418 | *** | -2.85 |
| | Higher Education | | | | | 0.649 | | -0.79 |
| Natural Log of Earnings‡ | | | | | | 1.002 | | 0.05 |

cont. from Table 4, above

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employment Status (base=not in labor force)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Unemployed | | | | | 1.095 | | 0.32 |
| | Part-time employed | | | | | 0.842 | | -0.42 |
| | Full-time employed | | | | | 0.818 | | -0.50 |
| Total time spent unemployed as of current year (base=No U/E)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Less than 5 Years | | | | | 0.716 | | -0.98 |
| | 5 Years or More | | | | | 0.734 | | -0.58 |
| Total number of unemployment spells as of current year (base=0)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | One Spell | | | | | 1.684 | | 1.57 |
| | Two spells | | | | | 1.791 | | 1.37 |
| | Three spells or more | | | | | 1.025 | | 0.04 |
| **Household Economic Characteristics** | | | | | | | | |
| Homeowner† | | 0.489 | ** | -2.31 | 0.021 | 0.601 | | -1.55 |
| HH Receive Unemployed Benefits† | | 1.735 | ** | 2.23 | 0.025 | 1.709 | ** | 2.18 |
| HH Receive Disability/Old Age Pension† | | 1.377 | | 1.28 | 0.201 | 1.380 | | 1.23 |
| Receive Subsidized Housing† | | 0.726 | | -1.32 | 0.188 | 0.770 | | -1.04 |
| **Family Characteristics** | | | | | | | | |
| Parenthood (base=not)† | | | | | | | | |
| | Father of at least one German-born child | 0.392 | *** | -2.78 | 0.005 | 0.322 | *** | -3.16 |
| | Father of non-German born child(ren) only | 0.526 | ** | -2.08 | 0.038 | 0.496 | ** | -2.11 |
| Changed partners over course of survey (base=no)† | | | | | | 1.172 | | 0.16 |
| **Respondent's Demographics** | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Rated Health (base: Less Satisfied)† | | | | | | | | |
| | Satisfied | 0.977 | | -0.10 | 0.919 | 0.946 | | -0.24 |
| | Very Satisfied | 0.898 | | -0.46 | 0.649 | 0.890 | | -0.51 |
| **Wife's Demographics** | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Rated Health (base: Less Satisfied)‡ | | | | | | | | |
| | Satisfied | | | | | 1.083 | | 0.40 |
| | Very Satisfied | | | | | 0.885 | | -0.56 |
| Husband 5 years or more older than wife‡ | | | | | | 1.070 | | 0.37 |
| **Controls** | | | | | | | | |
| Moved within Past Two Years (base=not)† | | 0.509 | ** | -2.18 | 0.030 | 0.523 | ** | -2.08 |
| Ever Missing (base=no missing years) | | 0.971 | | -0.11 | 0.909 | 0.936 | | -0.25 |
| Number of persons in household† | | 0.977 | | -0.35 | 0.726 | 0.950 | | -0.76 |
| Berlin/Hamburg (base=Other State)† | | 0.913 | | -0.23 | 0.819 | 0.790 | | -0.57 |
| **Age in Cubic Splines** (Base= 51-55)† | | | | | | | | |
| | 56-61 | 0.851 | * | -1.81 | 0.070 | 0.832 | ** | -2.06 |
| | 62-74 | 4.061 | *** | 2.78 | 0.005 | 4.335 | *** | 2.91 |
| | 75+ | 0.039 | *** | -2.92 | 0.003 | 0.035 | *** | -3.04 |
| Log-liklihood | | | | -683.906 | | | | -667.080 |
| **Sample Size (N)** | | | | **9,010** | | | | **9,010** |
| †Indicates time-varying covariates lagged by one year | | | | | | | | |
| ‡ Wife's characteristics are not lagged because they may pick up characteristics of different w omen | | | | | | | | |
| *** significant at 1%; ** significant at 5%; * significant at 10% | | | | | | | | |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | | | | | | |

APPENDIX A

| TABLE A1: | NUMBER OF RESIDENCE SPELLS ENDING IN EMIGRATION, BY AGE FOR PERSON-YEARS AGED 50+ | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Moved | Stayed | Total |
| 50 | 0 | 682 | 682 |
| 51 | 12 | 724 | 736 |
| 52 | 5 | 727 | 732 |
| 53 | 9 | 717 | 726 |
| 54 | 10 | 696 | 706 |
| 55 | 11 | 680 | 691 |
| 56 | 12 | 653 | 665 |
| 57 | 6 | 641 | 647 |
| 58 | 4 | 621 | 625 |
| 59 | 6 | 591 | 597 |
| 60 | 10 | 561 | 571 |
| 61 | 27 | 517 | 544 |
| 62 | 13 | 464 | 477 |
| 63 | 24 | 420 | 444 |
| 64 | 19 | 377 | 396 |
| 65 | 15 | 336 | 351 |
| 66 | 13 | 297 | 310 |
| 67 | 5 | 274 | 279 |
| 68 | 6 | 224 | 230 |
| 69 | 5 | 199 | 204 |
| 70+ | 16 | 1,256 | 1,272 |
| Total | 228 | 485 | 11,885 |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | |

| TABLE A2: | NUMBER OF RESIDENCE SPELLS ENDING IN EMIGRATION, BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN FOR PERSON-YEARS AGED 50+ | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Moved | Stayed | Total |
| Turkey | 51 | 2,392 | 2,443 |
| Yugoslavia | 29 | 1,187 | 1,216 |
| Greece | 53 | 1,353 | 1,406 |
| Italy | 31 | 1,606 | 1,637 |
| Spain | 43 | 705 | 748 |
| Cen/EastEu | 13 | 3,195 | 3,208 |
| W.Europe | 5 | 597 | 602 |
| Other | 3 | 622 | 625 |
| Total | 228 | 11,657 | 11,885 |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | |

| TABLE A3: | NUMBER OF RESIDENCE SPELLS ENDING IN | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | EMIGRATION, BY ERA OF MIGRATION | | | | |
| | FOR PERSON-YEARS AGED 50+ | | | | |
| | Moved | Stayed | Total | | |
| Missing | 934 | 147 | 1,081 | | |
| 1949-1973 | 7,545 | 1,088 | 8,633 | | |
| 1974-1989 | 1,005 | 128 | 1,133 | | |
| 1990-2007 | 940 | 98 | 1,038 | | |
| Total | 10,424 | 1,461 | 11,885 | | |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | | | |

| TABLE A4: | COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BY ERA OF MIGRATION FOR INDIVIDUALS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AGED 50+ (N=1,351) | | | | |
| | 1949-1973 | 1974-1989 | 1990-2007 | Missing | Total |
| Turkey | 216 | 16 | 4 | 25 | 261 |
| Yugoslavia | 122 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 141 |
| Greece | 127 | 3 | 1 | 11 | 142 |
| Italy | 140 | 16 | 0 | 11 | 167 |
| Spain | 99 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 101 |
| Cen/EastEu | 110 | 74 | 89 | 87 | 360 |
| W.Europe | 30 | 16 | 6 | 25 | 77 |
| Other | 21 | 16 | 35 | 30 | 102 |
| Total | 865 | 146 | 141 | 199 | 1,351 |
| Source: GSOEP, 95% Public Use File, 1984-2007 | | | | | |