

MMC WEST AFRICA - 4Mi Snapshot - October 2018

Aspirations of refugees and migrants from West Africa.

This 4Mi snapshot is a continuation of the snapshot published in September 2018 on [profiles and reasons for departure of refugees and migrants from West Africa](#). It is also based on data collected between 1 January and 31 July 2018.

During this period, 2,184 refugees and migrants were interviewed by 4Mi in West Africa, in Mali (Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu), Niger (Niamey and Agadez) and Burkina Faso (Dori and Bobo Dioulasso).

1. Profiles

66%



34%

Respondents are from more than 18 countries in West and Central Africa. The average age of respondents is 29, ranging from a minimum age of 18 to a maximum of 64 years old.

Figure 1. Gender of respondents¹

2. Preferred final destinations

The main preferred regions of destination mentioned by the respondents were North Africa (46%) and Europe (39%).

Those respondents intending to travel to North Africa mostly mentioned Algeria (35%) and Libya (7%) as their preferred countries of final destination. Among the respondents intending to reach Europe, the main preferred countries of destination mentioned were Italy (12%), Spain (9%), France (7%) and Germany (6%).

7% of respondents reported to be intending to move within West and Central Africa, citing Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger and Mauritania as their preferred countries of destination.²

1. 4Mi monitors are encouraged to identify women to interview: the number of women interviewed should therefore not be considered representative of the number of women along the migration routes.

2. As the 4Mi interviews were carried out in cities located along the central Mediterranean route where refugees and migrants tend to transit on their way to North Africa, the number of people moving intraregionally is probably underestimated in the data collected.

The remaining respondents indicated countries in other regions including the United States of America (3%) and Canada (2%) 2% of interviewees did not yet have a preferred final destination.

3. Factors driving the selection of destination countries

The majority of refugees and migrants interviewed reported that they had chosen their destination country for more than one reason (84%).

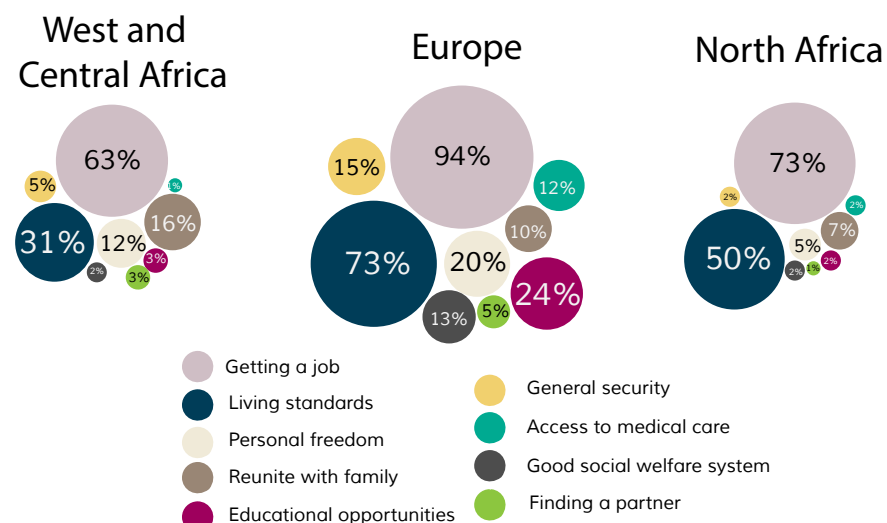


Figure 2. Factors driving the selection of destination countries per region of destination³

3. This is a multiple choice question, respondents could select as many options as they wanted.

Refugees and migrants intending to reach Europe cited to a greater extent educational opportunities (24%), personal freedom (20%), general security (15%), quality of social welfare system (13%), and access to better medical care (12%), compared to those moving towards North Africa and West and Central Africa. Family reunification and personal freedom were also relatively important driving factors for those intending to reach other countries in West Africa or Central Africa.

4. Migration, a long term dream or relatively new idea?

Among all respondents, 65% indicated that migration was a very common phenomenon in their community, while 17% stated that it was quite common and 18% a rare phenomenon.

44% of the male respondents said they had been aspiring to migrate for many years compared to only 25% of women.

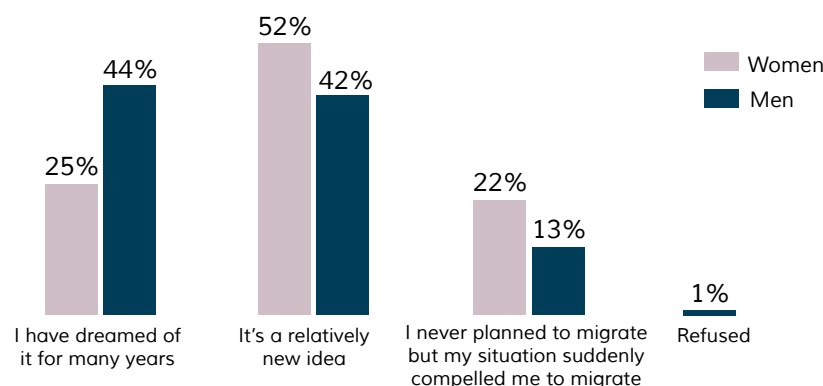


Figure 3. Have you dreamed of migrating for many years or is it a new idea?

This difference could to some extent be explained by the varying motivations for departure between men and women. The women interviewed indicated more personal and family reasons than men (31% of women compared with 13% of men), including a death in the family, domestic violence, escaping a forced or coerced marriage or the intention to join a family member.⁴ This could explain why migration is to a higher extent a relatively new idea for women, triggered by the aforementioned reasons, rather than a long term plan.

Migration of young men from West Africa is also culturally seen as an opportunity for young men to step into adult life and live a formative experience outside their home environment. This is often perceived positively and even encouraged, which is not always the case for women.

5. Temporary and circular migration

The majority of respondents (64%) stated that they did not wish to settle permanently in the country of destination. More men than women indicated that they only wanted to stay temporarily in the country of destination (68% men compared with 55% women).

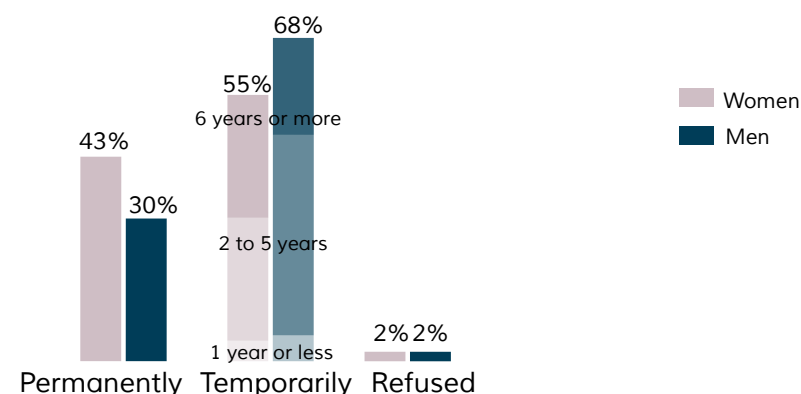


Figure 4. How long do you intend to stay ?

Among the respondents who wish to stay temporarily, most would like to return to their country of origin (72%), while others mentioned that they would like to migrate to another country (28%). These findings illustrate established patterns of circular migration within West Africa, for instance between Niger and Mali and towards North African countries such as Algeria and Libya.

6. Work related aspirations

One of the main aspirations of the refugees and migrants interviewed is to find a job in the destination country. This is consistent with the findings that a majority of refugees and migrants interviewed started their journey for economic reasons, among other factors.

Only 15% of women and 20% of men believe that it is very likely they will find a job within the first six months, while a higher percentage believe that this is somewhat likely (39% of women and 38% of men).

4. 4Mi snapshot on profiles and reasons of departure, MMC West Africa, September 2018

Respondents on the move towards West or Central Africa believe to a greater extent that they will find a job compared to those moving towards North Africa or Europe: 37% of respondents intending to reach West or Central Africa said they were sure to find a job within six months, compared to 16% in North Africa and 15% in Europe.

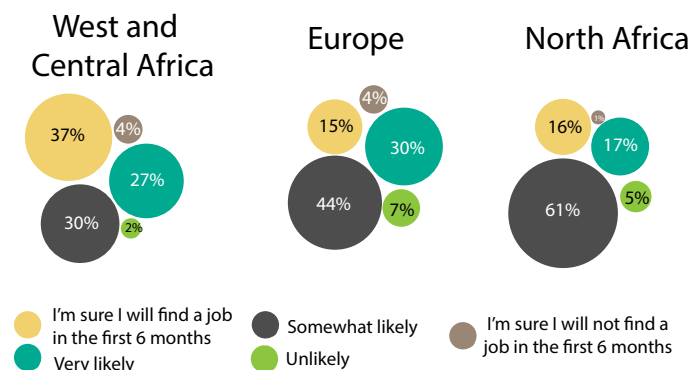


Figure 5. Likelihood of finding a job per region of destination

Among those who believe they will find a job in the destination country, women mostly expect to find employment in domestic work (68%), while men mostly expect to find employment related to manual labor (62%).

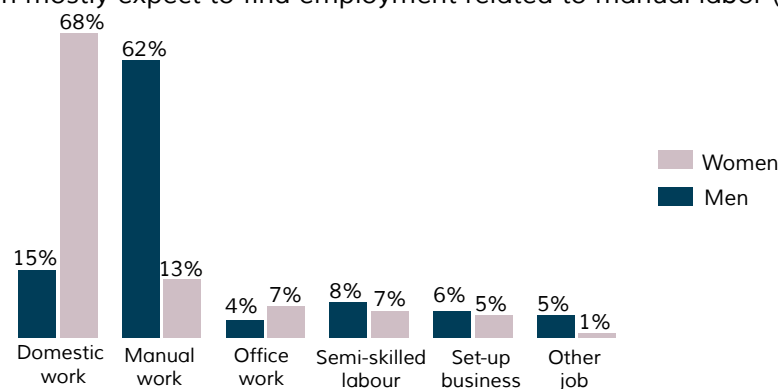


Figure 6. What kind of employment do you expect?

Some respondents mentioned that they already have work opportunities in Europe, through the diaspora, family or friends residing there.

"I have a brother over there (in Italy). He told me to join him, he will give me a job."

21 year old man from Senegal intending to travel to Italy interviewed in Agadez, Niger.

Respondents also reported job opportunities promised by smugglers, including cases of false promises. These cases may be related to human trafficking networks that pledge to provide work in the country of destination, which is a way to entice their victims to start the migration journey.

"The 'coxeur' (person in charge of recruiting migrants) made false promises to me. He said that I would be able to work in a clothes factory in Italy. When I arrived in Agadez, he forced me to pay him back for the trip and I have to work as a prostitute to pay him back".
A 22 year old woman from Nigeria interviewed in Agadez, Niger.

Aspiration to play professional football, a factor driving migration ?

Various cases of young men going to Europe with the aim of finding a job in a football club were identified among the 4Mi surveys. These cases mostly involve young men aged 21 to 26 from Guinea, Ivory Coast and Nigeria. They aspire to travel to Spain, Italy and France to play professionally. Some respondents mentioned that they had received pledges to be hired from clubs in Europe.

"I am a student, I would like to become a professional football player. This is why I dropped out of school. When you are in Europe you have more opportunities to accomplish your dreams through this process. So I will also try my luck whatever the price for this might be."
22 year old man from Guinea, intending to travel to Italy, interviewed in Agadez, Niger

Some are hired by clubs on their way to Europe and this becomes a form of income-generating activity to fund the rest of the journey. For instance in Agadez, one of the major transit hubs in West Africa, a significant number of young men reportedly play football in order to earn money to continue their journey, gain professional experience and obtain a license justifying their experience before leaving for Europe. Those hired by clubs reportedly earn between 40,000 and 70,000 XOF (approximately EUR 60 to 100) per month.

"My main goal is to succeed as a footballer. I met someone here (in Agadez) who promised me that if I stayed and worked in their club, he would pay me to continue the journey."
22 year old man from Cote d'Ivoire intending to reach Belgium, interviewed in Agadez, Niger

7. Intention to be joined by family members

Almost half of the respondents indicated that they had considered the possibility of being joined by family members in their final destination (49% of women and 42% of men). Among those who indicated that they wanted their family to join them, 71% indicated that they would only do so if conditions were favourable in the country of destination, while 29% indicated that they wanted their family to join them at any cost.

8. Intention to request asylum

More refugees and migrants interviewed intending to reach Europe reported to be likely to request asylum in the country of destination (50%) than those moving toward North Africa (41%). Among the respondents, more women expressed an intention to request asylum than men (48% of women compared to 40% of men).

These differences observed between men and women could to some extent be explained by the varying motivations for departure between men and women. More women respondents reported reasons for departure related to violence and general insecurity (13% of women and 8% of men), domestic violence (22% women and 35% men), forced or coerced marriage (20% women) and persecution (7% women and 3% men). They may believe that these could constitute grounds for asylum, regardless of whether they would be eligible for protection.

The Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) is an innovative approach for the collection and analysis of data along major mixed migration corridors, responding to the need for better data on protection issues with regards to asylum seekers, refugees and other people on the move. In Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, 4Mi seeks to help fill the knowledge gaps regarding the nature of the mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move within and from West Africa.

4Mi data, graphics and analysis are based on the accumulated, ongoing data collection by 4Mi field monitors through direct interviews with refugees and migrants on the move. Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. All findings derived from the surveyed sample of migrants/refugees and should not be used to make any inferences about the total population.