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Identifying the Factors Driving West African Migration

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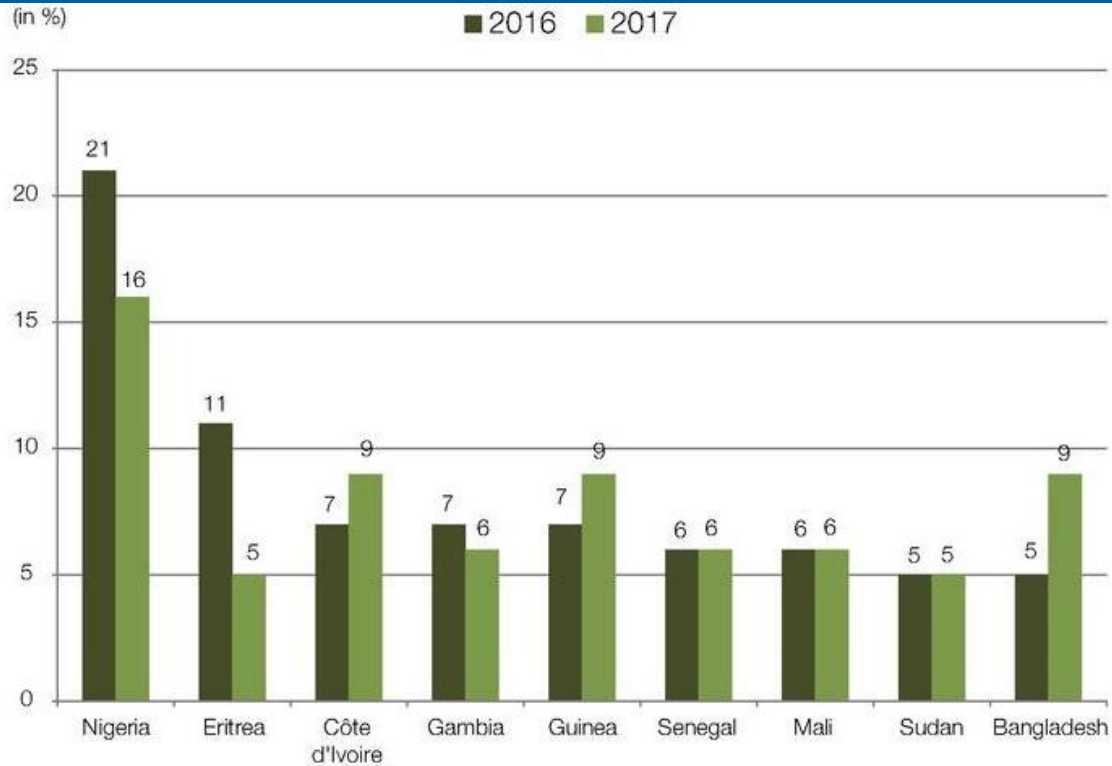


The Context

- Over 600 000 African migrants have arrived in Italy through the perilous Central Mediterranean route since 2014
- This migration pattern has amounted to a humanitarian crisis in Libya and at sea, poses a serious brain drain challenge for the region, and has raised considerable interest from donors as a development and security dilemma
- Recent and systematic data on motivations to migrate helps shed light on this phenomenon and what can be done about it.



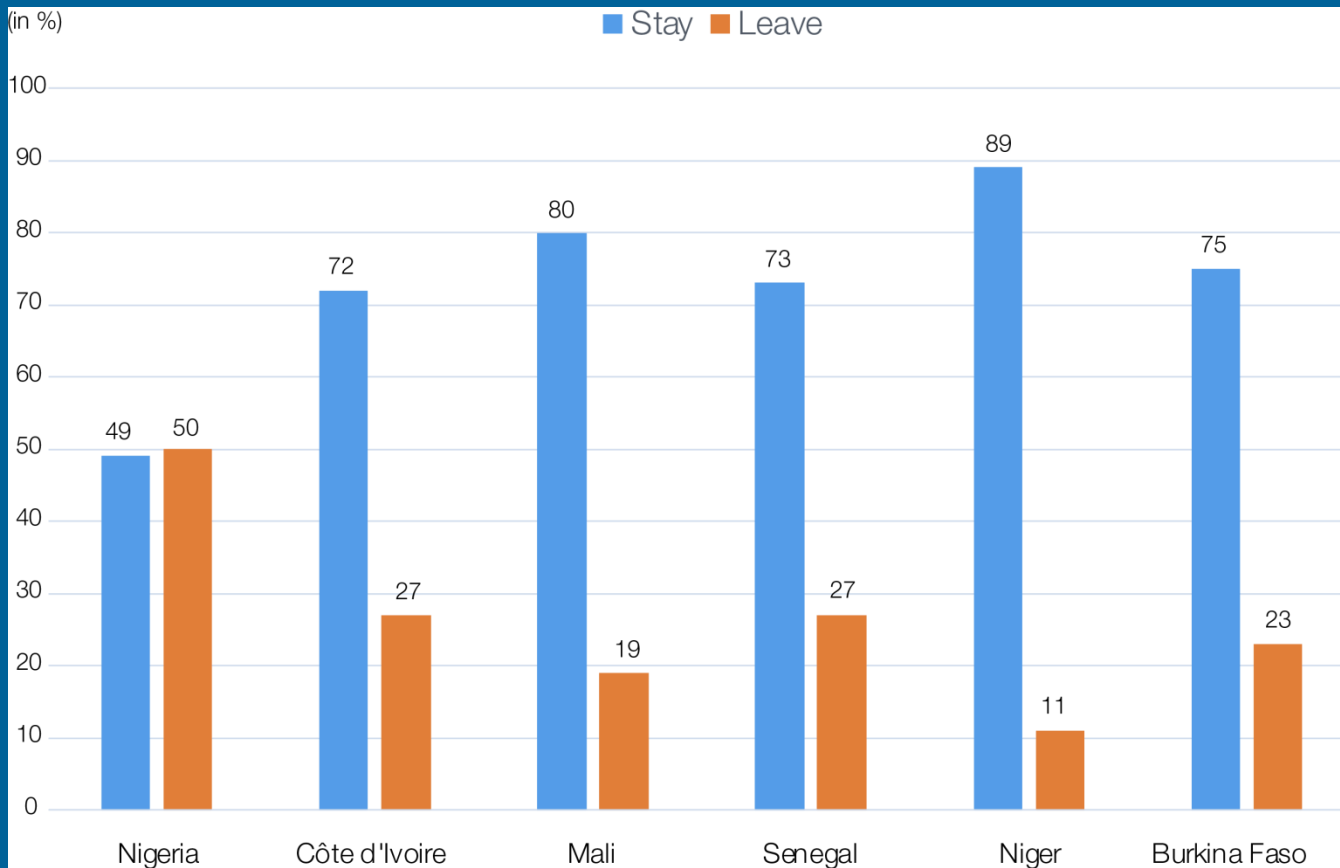
Nationality of migrants who arrived in Italy by boat, 2016-17



Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM). Arrivals by year 2017: 119 369, 2016: 181 436, 2015: 153 842, 2014: 170 100. Total between 2014 and 2017: 624 747.

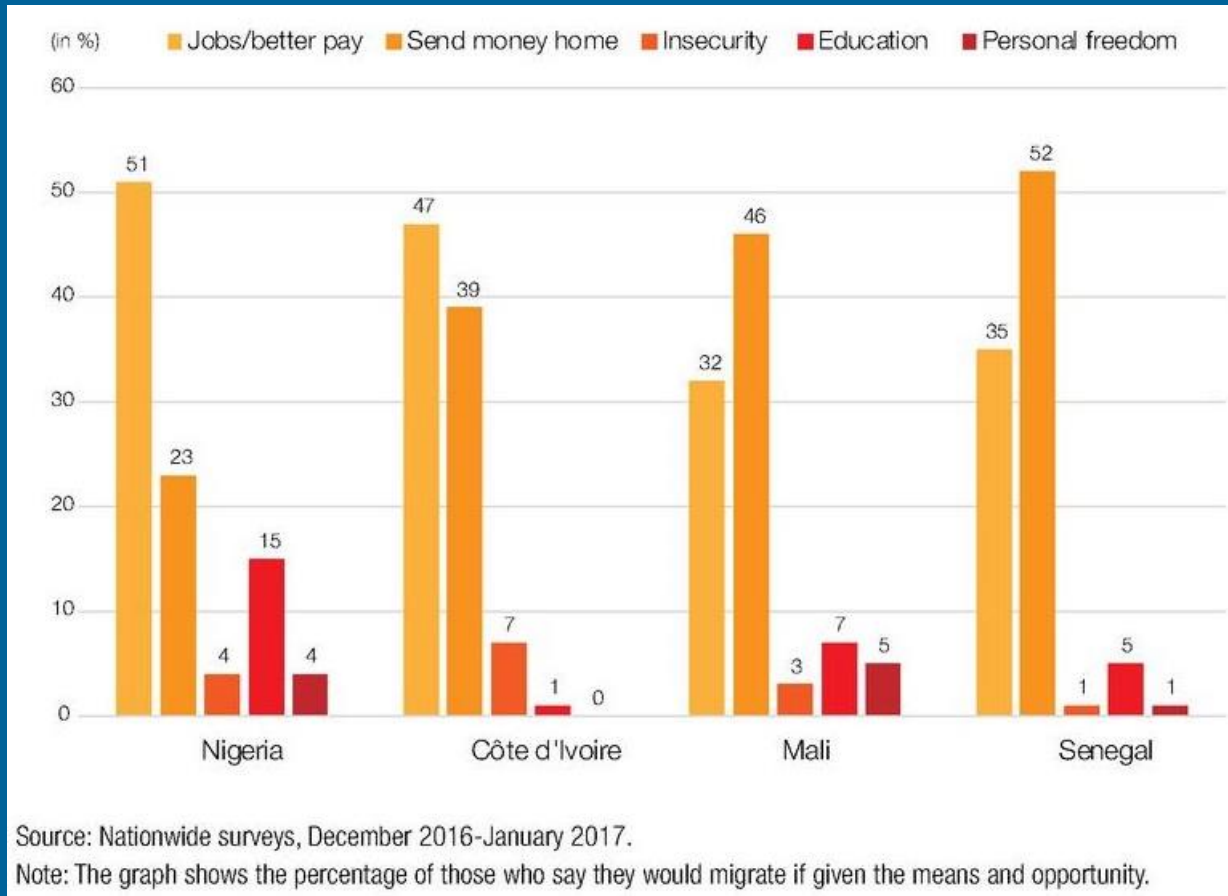


Would you prefer to live and work in another country or stay in your country?



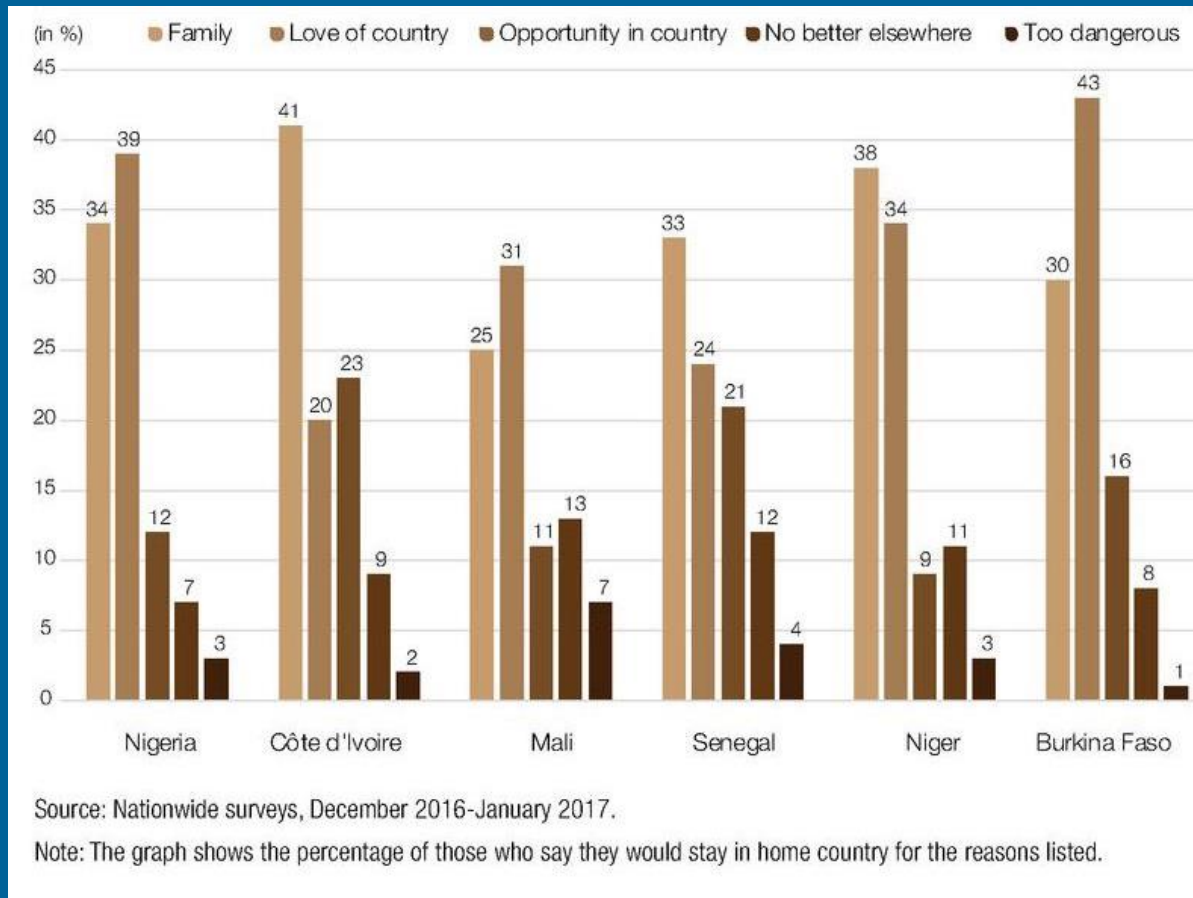


What is the main reason you would migrate to another country?





Why would you prefer to stay in your home country?





The Migration Journey

- **Migrants prepare for their journey carefully**
 - Aspiring migrants spend years planning, saving, selling personal objects, relying on social networks for resources, and using social media (e.g., Facebook, Whatsapp) for information
- **Migrants are aware of the perils of their journey**
 - Many migrants have experienced traumatic events but remain undaunted in their desire to migrate. All have heard many stories of tragic outcomes for aspiring migrants.



The profile of Nigerians who seek to migrate





Factors affecting the desire to migrate from Nigeria

	Political & security factors (1)	Economic factors (2)	Demographic characteristics (3)
Satisfied with democracy	-.361***	-.352***	-.264***
Trust in police	-.359***	-.358***	-.236***
Corruption	.048	.062*	.122**
Ethnic discrimination	-.017	-.020	.044
Service delivery (education)	.011	.019***	-.040
Service delivery (water)	-.183***	-.184***	-.139**
Govt. fighting terrorism	-.144**	-.149***	-.043
Employment		-.049	-.007
Relative economic status		.026	-.056
1-year economic decline		.096*	.154**
Gender			.239
Religion (Muslim)			-.716***
Education level			.087***
Urban/rural			.224**
Lagos			1.431***
Age			-.047***
R-squared	.09	.09	.17
Observations	3598	3525	3523

Note: *<.10, **<.05, ***<.01. Log odds units are reported.

Source: Nationwide survey, December 2016.



Key Takeaways

- The strongest relationships in our model are factors related with **good governance**: satisfaction with democracy and trust in the police
- Meanwhile, a Nigeria's domestic economic status does not have a significant effect on the desire to migrate. The desire to leave Nigeria cuts across economic classes



Conclusions

- As access to resources increases, *more* West Africans will migrate. Understanding motivations to migrate is essential for understanding and addressing future migration
- The desire to migrate has the strongest relationship with Nigerians' concerns about good governance, such as trust in local-level policing and how democracy is working
- While current donor efforts have focused on addressing migration through economic opportunity, this finding points to investing in democracy and governance