

T.R.
ISTANBUL SABAHATTIN ZAIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

**REMIGRATION OF EXPATRIATE MUSLIM
MINORITIES IN THE WEST: A CASE STUDY OF
FRENCH MUSLIMS**

Ph.D. DISSERTATION

Salim Refas

Istanbul

July-2025

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Istanbul

July-2025

This study has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ph.D.
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DECLARATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS AND ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that this PhD thesis titled “REMIGRATION OF EXPATRIATE MUSLIM MINORITIES IN THE WEST: A CASE STUDY OF FRENCH MUSLIMS” is my own work and I have acted according to scientific ethics and academic rules while producing it. I have collected and used all information and data according to scientific ethics and guidelines on thesis writing of Sabahattin Zaim University. I have fully referenced, in both the text and bibliography, all direct and indirect quotations and all sources I have used in this work.



Salim Refas

Istanbul- July, 2025

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Istanbul – July, 2025

ABSTRACT

REMIGRATION OF EXPATRIATE MUSLIM MINORITIES IN THE WEST: A CASE STUDY OF FRENCH MUSLIMS

Salim Refas

Ph.D. Dissertation, Islamic Economics and Finance

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Monzer Kahf

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This study examines the emerging phenomenon of remigration among Muslim minorities from Western societies, focusing specifically on French Muslims within the framework of Islamic economics and finance. The research addresses a critical gap in migration literature by investigating why skilled Muslim populations increasingly leave wealthy developed nations to settle in Muslim-majority countries or alternative destinations. The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining semi-structured interviews (covering 60 individuals across two generations) and a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) with 198 respondents, primarily practicing Muslims. The DCE methodology, grounded in random utility theory, quantifies migration preferences across four destination alternatives: Gulf countries, Türkiye/Morocco, Western countries, and remaining in France.

The multinomial logit model achieves strong predictive power (pseudo- $R^2 = 0.858$), revealing that Gulf countries emerge as the most preferred destination (35.7% of migration intentions), followed by Türkiye/Morocco (27.7%), with only 24.6% preferring to remain in France. This research provides the first quantitative analysis of Muslim remigration preferences from France using discrete choice modeling, contributing to Islamic economics literature by integrating cultural identity into economic migration frameworks. The findings have significant policy implications, with projected aggregate costs to France of €2.8-4.2 billion over the 2025-2035 decade, while destination countries stand to gain €1.9-3.1 billion in economic value.

Keywords: Muslim Minorities, Remigration, France, Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE), Migration Modeling, Cultural Preferences, Economic Migration

ÖZET

BATI'DAKİ MÜSLÜMAN AZINLIKLARIN GERİ GÖÇÜ: FRANSIZ MÜSLÜMANLAR ÖRNEĞİ

Salim Refas

Doktora Tezi, İslam Ekonomisi ve Finansı

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Monzer Kahf

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Bu çalışma, Batı toplumlarındaki Müslüman azınlıklar arasında ortaya çıkan geri göç olgusunu, özellikle İslam ekonomisi ve finansı çerçevesinde Fransız Müslümanlarına odaklanarak incelemektedir. Araştırma, nitelikli Müslüman nüfusların neden zengin gelişmiş ülkeleri terk ederek Müslüman çoğunluklu ülkelere veya alternatif destinasyonlara yerleşme eğiliminde olduklarını araştırarak göç literatüründeki kritik bir boşluğu ele almaktadır. Çalışma, iki nesil boyunca 60 bireyi kapsayan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ile ağırlıklı olarak dindar Müslümanlardan oluşan 198 katılımcıyla gerçekleştirilen Ayırık Seçim Deneyi'ni (ASD) birleştiren karma yöntem yaklaşımını benimser. Rastgele fayda teorisine dayanan ASD metodolojisi, dört destinasyon alternatifi arasındaki göç tercihlerini nicelleştirir: Körfez ülkeleri, Türkiye/Fas, Batılı ülkeler ve Fransa'da kalma.

Çok terimli lojit modeli güçlü tahmin gücü elde eder (sözde- $R^2 = 0,858$) ve Körfez ülkelerinin en tercih edilen destinasyon olarak öne çıktığını (göç niyetlerinin %35,7'si), bunu Türkiye/Fas'ın (%27,7) takip ettiğini ve yalnızca %24,6'sının Fransa'da kalmayı tercih ettiğini ortaya koyar. Bu araştırma, ayırık seçim modellemesi kullanarak Fransa'dan Müslüman geri göç tercihlerinin ilk nicel analizini sunmakta ve kültürel kimliği ekonomik göç çerçevelerine entegre ederek İslam ekonomisi literatürüne katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bulgular, 2025-2035 döneminde Fransa için öngörülen 2,8-4,2 milyar Euro'luk toplam maliyetler ile hedef ülkelerin 1,9-3,1 milyar Euro ekonomik değer kazanacağı projeksiyonları ile önemli çıkarımlarına sahiptir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müslüman Azınlıklar, Geri Göç, Fransa, Ayırık Seçim Deneyi (Dce), Göç Modellemesi, Kültürel Tercihler, Ekonomik Göç

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCE	Discrete Choice Experiment
DCMs	Discrete Choice Models
EU	European Union
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	Human Capital
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IIA	Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives
MNL	Multinomial Logit
NPV	Net Present Value
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WTP	Willingness-to-Pay

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Largest Movements of Population in Human History

The concepts of borders, nation-states and identity have carried different meanings and importance throughout human history and, despite known restrictions on the movement of tribes and peasants across empires since antiquity, The reported story of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) and his younger brother Benyamin (Benjamin) provides an account of the restrictions to the movement of people in Ancient Egypt for example. It is only through divine intervention as reported in Surah 12 (Yusuf) in Quran that a plot was designed to keep Benyamin in the capital, as a slave, rather than returning him to his village with his tribe. It is only since 19th century Egypt under Muhammad Ali Pasha that the modern concepts of identity card and predecessors of passports have been introduced to limit human mobility across borders or even within borders. Through a decree issued in 1829, peasants were restricted to travel from village to village, or to Cairo, without a *tadhkira* - a passport/permission letter issued to adult males (Ener, 2002).

Today, more people than ever before in human history live in a country other than the one in which they were born, 281 million in 2024 according to the International Migration Office (IMO, 2024), i.e. 3.6 percent of the World's population. Most of these migrants leave their country of origin to seek better prospects and living conditions elsewhere. Far from the optimistic views on migrations by neoclassical economists such as Galbraith four decades ago (Galbraith, 1979), these migrations waves of migrants, asylum-seekers or refugees are seen as a major global and national challenge in developed countries. Migrations are amongst the list of 22 global issues published by the United Nations and frequently top the political agenda of Western governments. In seven European Union Member States – Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Slovakia – immigration has been instrumentalized by far-right parties to win elections, and in the USA, populist positions against immigration have been one of the key arguments used by Donald J. Trump and his supporters to win against democrats in the latest presidential elections in the United States. Migrants are discriminated against, and political dissent against pro-migration policies are challenging the most liberal governments with now major

EU democracies such as Germany or France on the verge of tumbling to far-right leadership in the next elections primarily due to immigration debates in countries slowing down economically. In developing countries as well, immigration debates are heated, with countries such as Türkiye, the primary recipient of refugees and asylum-seekers from Syria, UAE or Saudi Arabia, major net recipients of global migrant workers from Asia, tightening immigration and residency controls in recent years and evicting illegal migrants. According to IMO (2024), as pictured in figure 1.1 below, four out of the top ten international country-to-country migration corridors channel immigrants to Muslim majority countries, namely Türkiye, UAE, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

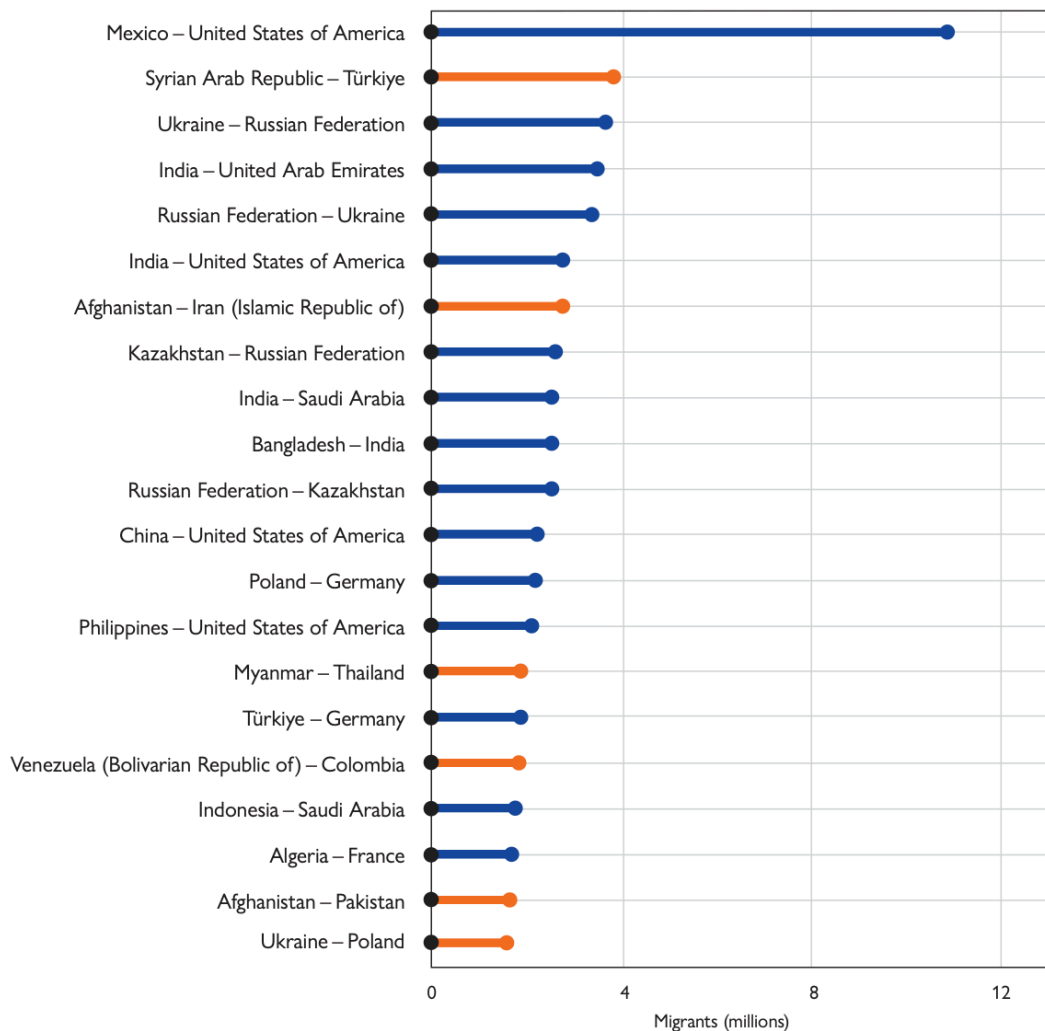


Figure 4.1 Top International Country-To-Country Migration Corridors, 2024

Source: IMO UN DESA, 2024

Migrations, however, are a formidable source of progress and development in human history. Humanity in general, and Islamic civilizations in particular, have emerged and flourished through migrations waves, i.e. through the actual movement of people and their families. Historical examples, including Omayyad and Abbasid Caliphates (Hourani, 2013) or the Ottoman Empire, both in its early history (Kasaba, 2011) or pre-modern history (Kale, 2014), provide a perennial demonstration of the potential of migration in forging empires, developing cities, boosting economy activity and transferring knowledge across borders.

1.2 Research Problem and Literature Gaps

The specific research gap and research problem this research aims to tackle is that migration theories generally fail to explain an observed migration flow from developed countries to developing countries, which holds a formidable potential for economic and knowledge transfers: the remigration of Muslim migrants from the West, leaving wealthy and developed nations of Europe or North America to settle in their countries of origin or other countries. What drives these Muslim migrants to remigrate while standard theory of pull of push factors fail to explain the demand for remigration? How can the demand function be characterized and what unique demand drivers explain these migration flows? How are these demand functions expected to evolve in the near future? Can we develop a theory on the past, current and future family trajectories of this exceptional presence of millions of Muslims as minorities of secular nation states sometimes welcoming, sometimes neutral or sometimes openly combating Islamic values and mass Muslim presence in their lands? Using the specific case of French Muslims and their families and quantitative research methods informed by behavioral economic theories this research seeks to shed light on a relatively new and poorly understood migration phenomenon and assess its economic implications for destination countries.

The existing migration literature exhibits three critical gaps that this research will attempt to address.

First, methodological bias toward South-North migration. Current migration theories, predominantly developed around traditional South-North migration flows, inadequately explain contemporary patterns where economically developed origin countries experience outmigration to diverse destinations including both developed

and developing countries (Anderson, 2019). The classical gravity model and push-pull theories fail to capture the complexity of reverse migration flows from wealthy nations.

Secondly, the literature insufficiently integrates cultural and religious factors. While economic factors dominate migration models (Massey et al., 1993), the role of cultural and religious identity in shaping migration preferences remains underexplored quantitatively. Existing studies treat cultural factors as qualitative or secondary variables, failing to provide monetary valuations for cultural compatibility in migration decisions (Czaika et al., 2021).

Thirdly, despite the proven effectiveness of discrete choice experiments (DCE) in analyzing complex decision-making processes (Ben-Akiva & Lerman, 1985), their application to migration research remains limited, particularly for religious and cultural minority populations.

1.3 Research Questions

Building on these identified gaps, this study addresses the following research questions:

The primary research question of this thesis is the following: What are the key determinants of remigration demand among Muslim minorities in France, and how can these preferences be quantitatively modeled into a demand function for remigration of French Muslims to inform policy decisions?

The research also attempts to answer the following secondary research questions:

1. How do cultural, religious, and economic factors interact in shaping migration destination preferences among French Muslims?
2. What is the monetary equivalent (willingness-to-pay) for different destination attributes in migration decision-making?
3. What are the projected economic impacts of Muslim remigration flows on France and destination countries during 2025-2035?
4. How can Islamic finance mechanisms be designed to facilitate ethical and economically viable migration transitions?

It is expected that the findings will provide strong empirical support for the research assumption that migration demand for French Muslims (or Muslims in the West in general) will create new transnational flows beyond return migration waves, or in another words that for the decade to come, many Muslims from France will leave the country to settle in other countries that their countries of origin. In this process, there would be two major gaps in the migration trajectories of parents and their descendants: it is expected that some descendants, driven by religious motives. would be ready to sacrifice significant economic benefits to settle in countries where they live a better life based on other objective criteria than just salary, and they will mostly depart from the original objectives of their parents to resettle in the country of origin. At the same time that economic considerations will still remain important in their decision criteria.

1.3 Research Objectives, Aims, and Contributions

The primary objective of the research is to develop and empirically test a comprehensive discrete choice model that quantifies the relative importance of economic, cultural, and religious factors in Muslim migration preferences from France.

By doing so, this research will achieve several aims. First in terms of methodological innovation, applying discrete choice experimental methodology to migration research for the first time in the context of Muslim minorities in Western Europe.

Secondly the research will contribute to migration theory by integrating Islamic economic principles with behavioral migration theory to create a culturally-informed theoretical framework for remigration.

In terms of empirical analysis, by mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods, this research will produce estimates of a demand function and its parameters and predict migration flows under various scenarios which can be used for further research in the political economy of migrations of Muslims from France or the West in general.

Finally, this research intends to provide evidence-based recommendations for migration policies in both origin and destination countries

The research will have several academic contributions as well:

1. To migration economics, by producing the first comprehensive DCE analysis of remigration preferences among Muslim populations, providing quantitative evidence for the role of cultural factors in migration decisions
2. To Islamic economics secondly, by integrating migration behavior into Islamic economic theory, demonstrating how religious identity affects economic decision-making
3. And possibly also to the DCE methodology by extending use of discrete choice modeling to culturally embedded migration contexts, establishing a framework for future research

1.4 Literature Survey: State of the Art and Research Gap

Immigration remains year after year one of the most debated topics in social theory and in politics, with high demand for theoretical models and empirical research from the development community, politicians and even the general public, to interpret the causes, impacts and dynamics of this complex phenomenon, not adequately matched by the research community (Massey et al, 1993, Anderson, 2019). In countries such as USA, Western European Nations or Türkiye, which have welcomed millions of migrants in the recent past, migrations have become the most-debated political topic in periods of elections. In the UK or other European countries, more than half of the adult's mention immigration as one of the top issues affecting their country today. (UK National Statistics, 2024) At a global level, migration demand has never been as high as today, with 16% of adults worldwide according to Gallup, i.e. more than 900 million people, stating they would like to leave their own country permanently if they could in 2023 (Gallup, 2024). This is the same level observed between 2021 and 2022 in the global migration survey of Gallup but higher than the 12% to 15% measured between 2011 and 2018. Countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, the Gambia or Comoros report number as high as 50%, meaning that up to one every second adult desires to leave his country permanently in search of a better living.

In social sciences, migrations have attracted since the pioneering works of the late 19th century (Ravenstein, 1889) an important and constantly renewed research interest that can be observed in the prolific specialized literature available on the topic of migrations. Table 1 below lists for example twenty specialized journals on migration

issues from major publishing houses such as Taylor & Francis or Oxford University Press and SAGE Publications.

Despite this prolific literature on the matter, recent research suggests that there is a consistent bias towards two “perceptions” of migrations amongst social scientists: bilateral migration flows and individual labour migration from “poor” countries to “rich” countries (Anderson, 2019). Feedback loops are poorly understood due to lack of disaggregated data and related behavioral models. And finally, more than a century after Weberian theories, the negative perception of the role of some religions, Islam in particular, remains anchored amongst economists (Turner, 1979), while social scientists study Muslim migrations generally in relation to the persistent issues of integration, security and discrimination (e.g. Kaya, 2009). In this context, and with the advent of the new anthropological phenomenon discussed in the previous section, new academic approaches are required.

Table 2.1 Specialized journals on Migration issues in Social Sciences

Name	Publisher
1. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies (JEMS)	Taylor & Francis
2. International Migration Review	SAGE Publications
3. Migration Studies	Oxford University Press
4. Ethnic and Racial Studies	Taylor & Francis
5. Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies	Taylor & Francis
6. Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power	Taylor & Francis
7. Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies	University of Toronto Press
8. Population, Space and Place	Wiley-Blackwell
9. Journal of Refugee Studies	Oxford University Press
10. Asian and Pacific Migration Journal	SAGE Publications
11. Mobilities	Taylor & Francis

12. Citizenship Studies	Taylor & Francis
13. Nordic Journal of Migration Research	Helsinki University Press
14. Comparative Migration Studies	Springer
15. Journal of International Migration and Integration	Springer
16. Migration Policy Practice	IOM
17. Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales (REMI)	Universite de Poitiers
18. Migraciones Internacionales	El Colegio de la Frontera Norte
19. African Human Mobility Review (AHMR)	Scalabrini Institute
20. Transitions: Journal of Transient Migration	Intellect Books

Source: Scopus Database, 2024

Extant research on migrations has arguably been moving like a ‘pendulum’ in recent decades, following the political and social realities of the time as noted by De Haas (2010:227)

In addition, this literature, mostly produced in developed countries, has been found to be consistently biased towards the poor seeking better lives. After more than 50 years of research, migration studies in general continues to focus on the “*mobility of the poor and the subordinated*” and in the context of “methodological nationalism” (Anderson, 2019).

In his seminal work on the Theory of Migration, Lee proposes a framework of generic factors which affect the decision to migrate, defining four categories: factors associated with the area of origin (push factors); factors associated with the area of destination (pull factors); intervening obstacles; and personal factors (Lee, 1966). These four categories do not operate independently for a given pair of origin and destination and rather an individual migration decision is driven by the perception of these factors rather than perfect information about them. If one was to characterize the main focus of economic research on migrations for the subsequent half century after Lee (1966), however, one could easily state that most researchers have attempted to propose a theory or analysis of the way in which these four categories of generic factors

jointly determine a balanced supply of migrants from a given origin country to a given destination country. And arguably, as De Haas (2010:228-9) puts it, after a comprehensive review of alternative theories of migrations, it is likely that the observed *“discursive shifts in the scholarly and policy debate on migration and development reflect more general paradigm shifts in social and development theory.”*

In other words, research on migrations has adopted different analytical frameworks to interpret the interplay of these generic factors, not only from an objective theoretical standpoint, but also possibly to reflect the overall trends in social science.

Among the four sets of generic factors for migrations mentioned above, one which is particularly important in the context of this study, and which has been arguably understated in the literature on migrations, refers to the fourth set of generic factors in Lee’s taxonomy: Personal factors (Lee, 1966). And more precisely, the ethics and behavior of the individual decision-maker, which in this case is defined as a believer in the Islamic faith. Brazal & Davila (2016) is a recent attempt, in the context of the Catholic faith, to redefine the boundaries of the question of migrations from a theological ethics perspective. Part VII of the book, *“A future with(out) borders”* challenges the meaning of state borders when the movement across them is *“at its highest rate in human history”*. Using different arguments, mainly from the economic field, Legrain (2007) was another attempt to challenge from an ethical perspective the concepts and policies related to migrants in the modern world.

The economic role of Muslim diasporas is largely underestimated in the context of the global Islamic economy. Refas (2022) discusses for example how national statistics in majority Muslim nations often disregard citizens residing in foreign countries due to methodological shortcomings (e.g. GDP calculation) while, based on the 2017 statistics for example of average GNI per capita, the 26 million Muslims residing in the European Union alone have an estimated cumulative GNI in constant international dollars of \$853 billion, i.e. roughly 13% of the cumulative GNI of all OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) countries in the same year. This means that the economic weight of the Muslim diaspora in the European Union alone is comparable to the economic weight of Türkiye, the second economy of the OIC in 2017 GNI data with \$842 billion GNI.

Furthermore, no specific institution has been created in the modern era to facilitate transnational investment of Muslims residing in the West or return and transnational migrations. The remigrations of Muslims or transnational migrations often come with a negative perception due to the polarization of political groups and the perceived adverse economic impacts of qualified migrants on native workers (Del Carpio and Wagner, 2015). Despite the possible short-term negative effects of migrations in the local job market and social fabric, the literature has well demonstrated that countries receiving high flows of qualified migrants and cheap labour largely benefit in the long run (Ruhs & Vargas-Silva, 2015, Peri, 2010).

It is important to understand in such context “what went wrong” in the perception of migrants both in Muslim majority countries and in destination countries of Muslim migrants. In the long history of Muslim empires, leaders were actively looking and competing for the best available talents in the Ummah, and welcomed the best artisans, scholars, warriors, traders, doctors and others, from every corner of the world, Muslims or Non-Muslims alike, to spur the development of their nations. On the other hand, migrations have always been encouraged by scholars to learn, seek subsistence or develop trade or political relationships with other nations, and in the Holy Quran, it is revealed that “Those who migrate for the sake of God shall find many places for refuge in the land in great abundance” (4:99-100). According to Islamic teaching, every part of the earth is God’s land, and every human being is entitled to travel God’s land to seek for bounty and provision. The more comprehensive discussion of the religious discourse on migrations in Islam will come in chapter three.

In a more modern setting, it is fascinating to also observe that no specific international or regional development institution historically leveraged on the mass presence of Muslims in developed countries, from higher social strata, and on their recurrent remittance or investment flows towards countries of origin. Despite the clear scope of the institution to support Muslim minorities in non-member countries as per its articles of agreement, the Islamic Development Group, the leading OIC economic institution, has had a very limited development impact in non-member countries in its five decades of existence (less than 1% of cumulative investments/aid) (As discussed in Isdb reports). Since 2017, UN institutions have started to develop Zakat collection programs to fund humanitarian aid (UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, etc.) and reach Muslim philanthropists across the world. The Global Islamic Refugee Fund was

launched in September 2022 with a \$100m deposit. These are positive developments but only marginal compared to the potential investment flows in question as this research will examine.

Finally, the return migrant policies are found to be driven mostly by political agendas rather than economic realities and economic theory (Van Houte and Davids, 2008). In an epoch where transnational migrations are becoming a new normal (Faist, 2012), very few countries, such as Türkiye with its appealing nationality by investment program, are banking on the transnational migrations to attract capital and talent or may be doing so coincidentally as will be discussed in the last chapter of the thesis.

1.5 Discussing Migrations from the Lens of Islamic Economics

The research adopts the standpoint of an economist in the overall context of Islamic economics theory. This research will be informed by other perspectives on the issue since immigration is a multi-faceted topic at the crossroads of sociology, economics, law, religion and anthropology fields to name a few. Legal experts have focused on migrants' rights and obligations, while legislators have addressed it from a regulatory perspective as it falls under international law. Sociologists have examined it as a social phenomenon, while religious scholars have addressed it to preserve faith and morality, dealing with all matters related to religious beliefs. Anthropologists have studied it considering attitudes and psychological effects on migrants and natives. The economists look at supply of and demand for migrant flows and the economic impacts of immigration at various time scales.

Here the intent is to clarify the migration-related issues of a specific community, French Muslims, while focusing simultaneously on economic and religious aspects, and migration's effects on migrants and their countries, as well as host countries, considering their varying customs, ethnicities, religions, and diverse economic and social resources. The focus on behavior and the characterization of the demand function for remigration is the specific lens from which we intend to tackle immigration issues in this study.

Transnational migration of Muslim families from France is a complex phenomenon intersecting with issues of identity, integration, and globalization. This research will therefore explore the dynamics of remigration and transnational movements among

French Muslim communities, examining demand drivers and implications for both French society and countries of destination in the later part of the research.

To clarify the scope of the research, in the following Muslim families from France (or French Muslims) are defined as:

- a) French citizens of Muslim faith
- b) Immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries legally settled in France (residents or citizens)
- c) Descendants of Muslim immigrants born and raised in France (residents or citizens), living in France or who have already remigrated.

We define remigration from France as the process of returning legally to one's country of origin or settling in a third country with the intention to remain for a long period of time, after living in France for a significant period. For French Muslims, this often involves first or second-generation immigrants returning to ancestral homelands but not only. French Muslims going to Gulf countries or other European countries for example as expatriate workers qualify in the definition of remigration. Short-term expatriations however, or transnational migration behavior (the simultaneous settlement in multiple countries) are excluded from the definition of remigration and qualify in other patterns of migrations that we generally define as hybrid migrations.

Hybrid migrations are typically characterized by maintaining ties and activities across several national borders, such as for example:

- a) Regular movement between France and countries of origin.
- b) Maintenance of social, economic, and cultural connections in multiple nations
- c) Development of hybrid identities (sometimes multiple citizenships)
- d) Specific economic practices such as cross-border entrepreneurship

The population of concern, French Muslims, have a varied ethnic and national identity. We typically find a large representation of Muslims from Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian and Turkish descent, as well as Muslims from Mali, Senegal, Niger, Ivory Coast, Comoros, Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the sample of observation. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the INED studies (Beauchemin *et al.*, 2023) provide the best reference on the matter. Muslims in France vary also in their degree of religious observance, in their social and educational background, in their degree of integration into French society, in the generational differences in identity formation and the

intersectionality with other aspects of identity is a largely debated topic in recent studies such as (El Karoui 2018; Esteves *et al.* 2024) that shed new light on Muslim identity crises in the advent of the 21st century in France.

Literature on transnationalism has emerged in recent years and opens a new academic field that serves as background to this thesis. Vertovec's work on transnationalism and "the cultural politics of nation" has he coins in (Vertovec, 2011) provides a interesting perspective on the increasing complexity of transnational practices, with migrants maintaining strong ties to origin countries while integrating into host societies and the concept of "simultaneous embeddedness" in multiple national contexts is also used in this regard. Schiller, Levitt, Faist and other migration experts have developed a solid body of knowledge on these questions as well (e.g. Schiller, 2017, Faist, 2010 & 2012). More recent academic contributions look at the role of technology in facilitating transnational connections or the role of the multipolarity of the world economy.

The perspective that we adopt on transnationalism and demand for remigration of French Muslims should not overshadow the otherwise important trend of integration and assimilation of Muslims in a minority context, in particular in the (West. Roy, 2004) discussing the "search of a new Ummah" reflects upon the massive presence of Muslims in non-Muslim countries - up to one third of global Muslim population according to him, a probably overestimated figure, and the various strategies at play to settle permanently in these states. Cesari (2015) provides a unique focus on issues such as discrimination, postcolonial identity, adaptation, and assimilation of Muslims in Europe, and the various attitudes of non-Muslim population and state actors on the long-term presence of Muslims in Europe. The emergence of a "European Islam" and the analysis of challenges of practicing Islam in secular Western societies appears however as a somewhat "outdated" perspective in a context where hatred towards Islam and Muslims has reached unprecedented heights in old Europe and at times where the very presence of Muslims in Europe is now challenged. The impact of global Islamic movements on local Muslim communities is also less relevant in the discourse given the slow melting of relationships with countries of origin in the context of second or third generation Muslims living in Europe. Cesari (2015) also discusses the issue of religious individualization and "privatization" of religious practice which echoes the topic of the research where the demand for remigration is analysed at the level of a single nuclear family rather than through community strategies.

The specific role of secularism *à la française* (*Laïcité*) and its « problem » with Islam is largely debated in the literature (e.g. Simon et Tiberj, 2015) and the French Republican model has largely failed in its integration policies and creates tensions with religious expression which fuels the demand for remigration as the research will demonstrate. The evolving definitions of French national identity and citizenship will potentially define a new normal for French Muslims in the years to come. The effects of discrimination and socio-economic marginalization on integration in France are not discussed in this research and provide only a contextual background discussed in the review of push factors for migration.

The development of hybrid and multiple identities among later-generation immigrants is not an issue specific to Islam and France. Challenges to traditional models of national belonging and citizenship can be found in other cultures, and the role of cultural recognition in fostering social cohesion is discussed for example in Modood (2013). Migrants in multiple countries develop strategies for negotiating or renegotiating multiple cultural affiliations in the context of a problematic primary cultural affiliation, and this applies to Muslims as well as non-Muslims.

1.6 Methodological Limitations

The experimental part of the study leverages on ethnographic fieldwork as well as state-of-the-art behavioral economics frameworks with the use of discrete choice modeling techniques.

The quantitative analysis of demographic and migration data has not been possible due to specific constraints on religious studies in France due to concerns of *Laïcité* and fair treatment of minorities. We analyze the patterns of transnational migration among French Muslim families therefore only through the sample datasets we have built over the course of the research. The research remains however solid in its conclusion thanks to the representativity of the sample of the state-preference model and since motivations for remigration and maintenance of transnational ties have a limited range over the population of concern. This study should be complemented by in-depth sociological studies to conclude on the impacts of the findings on identity formation and cultural belonging in the present and in the future, by anthropological perspective to discuss the potential challenges of transnational lifestyles and the risk of a “reversal of fortunes” in the long-term, but also to discuss the generational differences in

approaches to transnationalism that cannot be discussed in length in the context of this study. The emerging role of technology in facilitating cross-border lifestyles can also be studied in more details. The policy recommendations for fostering various approaches and strategies to transnationalism both in origin and destination countries are limited to the near future but future research could look at the longer-term forging of new nations through mass remigrations of Muslims.

1.7 Outline of Research

This research is structured across four main chapters which cover theoretical foundations, empirical analysis and practical applications of the research question. This introduction establishes the historical context of global migrations, reviews existing literature, and positions the study within Islamic economics scholarship.

The subsequent chapters are structured as follows. Chapter II provides the theoretical foundation by examining migration through an Islamic economics lens. It begins by establishing migration as a legitimate and important research topic within Islamic economics discipline, discussing the original divine purpose of sustaining life on earth and the consequent legitimate need for humans to rove the earth to seek means of sustenance and divine bounties. The chapter defines and characterizes migration within Islamic jurisprudence, reviewing traditional scholarly rulings alongside contemporary Islamic perspectives on migration issues. Particular attention is given to the wisdom behind migration as understood by classical Islamic scholars, and a brief discussion of reverse migration patterns and their theological significance from an Islamic jurisprudence lens.

Chapter III transitions to the empirical component of the research through discrete choice modeling of remigration demand among Muslim minorities in France. This chapter introduces the modeling methodology, beginning with an exploratory analysis based on semi-structured interviews before defining the specific model framework. The exploratory stage begins with a brief modern colonial history of France and its assimilation or association policies to better grasp the context of French Muslims responding to either the semi-structured interviews or the stated-preference survey. The results of the semi-structured interviews help draw some stylized facts on migrations patterns from the first and second generation of French Muslims. It informs also the model specification of the next stage. Comprehensive data collection and

survey strategy is then outlined for the discrete choice model, followed by the application of discrete choice modeling techniques based on multinomial logit formulation to quantify and analyze remigration preferences and decision-making patterns. This model, widely used in behavioral economics, is best suited to model decision-making of individuals driven by multiple sets of criteria and socioeconomic variables. The model results are presented, and a critique of the methodology is also discussed in the conclusion section of this chapter.

Chapter IV then presents an applied economic analysis examining both the costs and benefits associated with remigration, informed by the Chapter III modeling outcomes. The analysis operates at two levels: an aggregate economic assessment of returns to remigration projected for the 2025-2035 decade, under various scenario, and a disaggregate analysis focusing on individual migrants and their families to draw conclusions at microeconomic level. The chapter concludes by exploring potential extensions of this research into Islamic finance applications.

The research concludes with Chapter V, which synthesizes the theoretical insights and empirical findings, discusses policy implications, and identifies avenues for future research in this emerging field at the intersection of Islamic economics and migration studies.

CHAPTER II

THE DEMAND FOR REMIGRATION, AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

2.1 Migrations: An Islamic Economics Issue

The Classical Fiqh literature recognizes the importance and validity of migrations, and different typologies of migrations due to push and pull factors. As Noor and Hafiz Zafar (2019) summarizes it, in Islam, “Migration is the movement of people from one place to another and in Islam this is called as (Hijrah)”. *Migration can be permanent, temporary, voluntary or forced.*” Therefore, both on a normative and positive way, Islam characterizes temporary migrations as desirable when economic and social conditions justify it to “*seek the bounty of God*”: “Men and women are encouraged to move around the entire earth and seek sustenance from the resources that Allah bestowed upon them” (Kahf, 2019).

But the recent phenomenon of mass long-term migrations of Muslim workers and their families to non-Muslim countries is not described by the historical frameworks of Dar al Harb/Dar al Islam, predominant in the review of migration issues by Fiqh scholars (Noor and Hafiz Zafar, 2019). Accordingly, the economic implications from a Fiqh perspective are not studied either. In other words, the development channels to share the « bounty of God » that migrants go after is not studied today.

From another perspective, researchers of Islamic economy have consistently disregarded the Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries despite their economic importance for the development of origin countries. Multiple examples from empirical papers and datasets show that nationals of OIC countries residing in the West are not accounted for in national statistics. In addition, other than case studies such as (Khachani, 2006) for Morocco, no specific reference in specialized Islamic economy literature is found on the role of return migrants or transnational migrants in sustainable development. Even in the context of the internationalization of Islamic financial institutions, the role of migrations and social groups is disregarded. While conventional economics have developed an entire field on migration economics that led to an extant literature on the drivers, dynamics and impacts of migrations in the

economic field, Islamic economics has only studied migrations coincidentally as a developmental phenomenon not strictly related to economics:

From an Islamic economics perspective, where the behavioral guidelines of the individuals play a major role, it is important to question whether or not the traditional starting point of economic theories of migration, whereby individuals travel away from their countries and their families in search of better wages and employment conditions, is in line with the normative behavior of individuals in the Islamic ethical framework. It is necessary to accurately assess demand functions for migrations from the individual seeking a better life.

2.2 The Original Purpose of Sustaining Life on Earth

Since the inception of creation and the creation of Adam (peace be upon him), humans have spread across the Earth seeking primarily Allah's bounty and means of subsistence. When they discovered sources of rain and places suitable for cultivation, they settled there, leading to the inhabitation of most regions of Earth.

Generations later, when Ibrahim (peace be upon him), by Allah's command, settled his wife Hajar and son Ismail in Makkah, he implicitly indicated an unusual circumstance that this land was without vegetation or water, as if saying no one would migrate there. However, he supplicated to Allah to make people's hearts incline toward them and provide them with the *thamarat* (products of cultivation), which are causes for people's settlement. According to Islamic tradition, the source of Zamzam was given to Ismail and his mother Hajar, becoming hence a permanent blessing for the region enabling life to be sustained in the middle of the desert. The barren valley of Makkah al Mukarramah would then be filled by generations to come with permanent settlements exploiting the Earth to sustain a living, until modern times where more than three million inhabitants live permanently in the Holy City.

Migration has become a social and geographical phenomenon linked to human life throughout the ages, with numerous motivations and causes beyond the original motivation of sustaining life. Some migrate to preserve their religion, seeking security outside their homeland; others migrate in pursuit of knowledge and understanding; some migrate seeking livelihood and Allah's bounty; some migrate for exploration and discovery, among other reasons. The Holy Quran has detailed all these causes, both

comprehensively and concisely according to their importance as will be discussed in next paragraphs.

2.3 Defining and Characterizing Migrations in Islam

2.3.1 The Technical and Quranic Definition of Migration

Migration from one country to another, or from one land to another, is defined in Lisan al-Arab as: "Al-Hijrah and al-Hujrah: The departure from one land to another." (Manzur, 1997). Referenced to this is found in the book of Allah (Quran 4: 97). From a technical perspective, the definition of migration can be divided into two categories. The first category relates to migration from lands of disbelief and tyranny to lands of Islam and faith, constituting an act of worship drawing one closer to Allah, as will be detailed in the below discussion of migration in the Quran. The second category concerns contemporary migration: the process of individual relocation for settlement purposes, whereby individuals become permanent residents or citizens in a country other than their original homeland. People who leave their country for another are termed migrants, which uses the same Arabic word of Al-Hijrah. In some cases, people move between regions within the same country in internal migration. In many developing nations, significant populations have relocated from rural to urban areas in recent years, known as rural-to-urban migration.

The Holy Quran specifically has addressed migration comprehensively, detailing its foundations, pillars, and consequent economic and social outcomes. Migration in the Quran manifests itself in various forms, distinguishing between seeking livelihood and sustenance, and fleeing from enemies and preserving faith. All these forms resulted in diverse religious, economic, and social benefits for both migrants and host communities.

The Quran verses addressing Migrations are numerous, including: "For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from Allah and (His) approval and supporting Allah and His Messenger; those are the truthful." (Quran 59: 8). Similar verses are also referenced in Quran 59:9, Quran 2:218, Quran 3:195, Quran 8:72, Quran 8:75, Quran 9:20, Quran 16:41, and Quran 22:58.

All these verses, and other verses including the ones discussing the migrations of Prophets and their nations, not only provide a diverse view of drivers and conditions of migrations from a Quranic perspective but also allow to purport that Migration is a

central theme in the revelation which has not been sufficiently studied from Islamic economics and Islamic sociology perspectives.

2.3.2 The Centrality of Economic Motivations in Migrations in the Quran

Among the most important economic resources emphasized by the Holy Quran is the human being, endowed with knowledge, intellect, and strength, along with tremendous capacity for Earth's development and resource utilization.

Allah says: "He has produced you from the earth and settled you in it" (Quran 11: 61).

Allah has appointed humans as successors on Earth to develop it, foster its growth, and utilize its resources, this relates to the concept of *Imarat al Ard* in Khaldounian economics. Allah says: "And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood." (Quran 7: 10)

A consequence of the subjugation (*taskhir*) of earth and its resources by Allah for His servants is that He granted them establishment therein, in diverse environments and places. This means He enabled them to act upon it and granted them the power to utilize and benefit from its resources, through the means He prepared for them - making the earth tractable for agriculture and construction, providing what they need for living from trees, plants, and earth's minerals, and endowing them with intellect, knowledge, and strength. Even the use beyond the mere needs of the human being, for embellishment, for comfort or else, is mentioned without specific criticism in the Holy book.

Allah says: "And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood. Little are you grateful." (Quran 7: 10) One of the ways that Allah Almighty has made the earth subservient to His servants is by making it suitable for agriculture through the elements He has placed in it that support plant growth, such as fertile soil rich in salts and organic materials that plants feed on, and other factors that make it a reason for people to migrate to these areas.

Allah says: "It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection." (Quran 67: 15) One of the ways Allah Almighty has made the earth subservient to His servants is by making it divided into different parts and regions. Allah has made the earth serve human beings and their interests by varying its climates and topographies This variation results in a diversity

of trees and plants, some of which are food for humans, some for animals, some are used for medicine, some are fruits, and others come in various types of sweetness and sourness.

One of the ways Allah Almighty has made the earth subservient to His servants is by granting them the ability to establish their dominion over it. He has empowered them to act upon it, allowing them to utilize and benefit from its resources. This is through the means He has provided, such as making the earth suitable for agriculture and construction, as well as giving them the resources they live by, such as what comes from trees and plants, the minerals of the earth, and by bestowing upon them intellect, knowledge, and strength. Allah says: "And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood. Little are you grateful." (Quran 7: 10). He made water the foundation of life therein, as clearly mentioned in Quran 2: 22.

An essential element of the Quranic view of the use of land and resources is the complementary role of Labor in the exploitation of the bounty of the earth. Among the most important economic resources emphasized by the Holy Quran indeed for human beings is work and diligence in it, through traveling the earth, walking in its expanses, and migrating to places of provision. The Quran has encouraged work that achieves this and called to it in numerous verses:

Allah says: "It is He who made the earth subservient to you, so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision." (Quran 67: 15). Allah says: "And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah." (Quran 62: 10)

This is a divine call for His servants to work in this life, to strive on Earth, and to traverse its various paths. Allah has subjected numerous bounties for people on this Earth, and they must move in every direction on this expanse and extend their hands to whatever good they can reach.

"And out of His mercy He made for you the night and the day that you may rest therein and (by day) seek from His bounty." Thus, Allah explains that He created the universe with this system of alternating night and day to organize His servants' times and works, so they labor and strive during the day and rest at night. This demonstrates the legitimacy of work and that Allah intended it for His servants. The importance of work

is also emphasized in the story of Prophets, such as Dawud and Musa (peace be upon them), who are mentioned in their capacity of black-smith and farmers specifically, or in the story of Meriem who is asked to move the palm tree after giving birth to Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) to receive dates and be able to feed herself and the newborn.

Allah says: "And (there are) others traveling through the land seeking (something) of the bounty of Allah." (Quran 73: 20). Allah has termed the seeking of provision as traveling through the land, thereby informing His servants that work and struggle in this life must be at the utmost level of strength and seriousness.

2.3.3 Defining and Characterizing the Topic of Migration Through the Prophet's Hijrah (Peace be upon Him)

The Prophetic migration or Hijrah, which marks the start of the Islamic calendar, is one of the most central events in Islamic history which has been largely discussed in traditional Islamic literature or recent socioeconomic studies (e.g. Sadr, 2016, Reda, 2017). The fact that the Hijrah was initiated by a command from Allah and not the actual decision of the Prophet himself (peace be upon him) challenges the relevance of discussing the drivers of this migration in the context of this research. The combination of rational drivers such as the motivations of security, sustenance and development in the context of a constant and cruel persecution from tribe masters in Makkah al Mukarramah and a very adverse material situation (culminating with a three-year boycott of Muslims and assassination attempts against the Prophet peace be upon him in year 622CE) and “non-rational” drivers such as divine decree as the Prophet was instructed through revelation to migrate from Makkah al Mukarramah to Al-Madinah and did not chose it according to orthodox Islamic tradition, “Had I not been driven away from you, I would not have left you”¹ impulsed the need for migration and started a new phase of the development of the Islamic Ummah in the more accommodating context of the city of Yathreb. This migration is ontological in Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic history since it started in fact the very existence of the Islamic state in its most objective form, led by the Prophet peace be upon him himself and his noble Companions. Therefore this “original” migration or Hijrah cannot be easily approached from a constrained view of economic migrations, the

¹ Stated by Sunan al-Tirmidhī 3925. Grade: Sahih (authentic) according to Al-Albani.

prime topic of this research. Without a doubt however, the Prophetic migration played a fundamental role in establishing the foundations of the economic system of the first Islamic state established in Yathreb, renamed Madinah Al Munawwarah after the blessed arrival of the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) in July 622CE, which will inform the understanding of the drivers of migration and its impacts from an Islamic perspective.

First of all, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), while barely recovering from the exhaustion of migration by foot and camel journey over more than 320km, immediately observed society and found remnants of pre-Islamic bonds that were accustomed to revenge and tribal solidarity, along with those who had not entered Islam and remained upon their polytheism or followed the People of the Book's religion. The Prophet also observed that migration resulted in an economic gap between those who left behind their wealth, homes, and means of living and the original citizens of this society. These challenges as well as several characteristics of the secular society of the time in Yathreb, could potentially lead, if not contained through organization, refinement, treatment, and removal, to the failure of Islam to establish its foundation in the city from the start. The political bonds organizing society, represented in tribal solidarity, fed by grudges and hatred, were one of the most basic yet critical obstacles to the success of the migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and its Companions in a city torn by internal strife since decades and a society where the foreign immigrant would not be easily accommodated in the social fabric of the city. The difference in beliefs as well, with Jews and Christians forming part of the social fabric alongside those who had not entered Islam and the Muslims themselves, was another aspect necessitating the organization of social contracts on solid methodological foundations. The brotherhood bonds that the Prophet peace be upon him instated immediately, as well as the constitution of Madinah which guaranteed the rights of minorities while maintaining political order in the city and the implementation of a law system based on revealed justice system (Shari'ah) addressed these first challenges. The economic gap between incoming groups and the original residents of the town was a third aspect posing a threat to the establishment of peace and justice among incumbent and new residents of the city.

The Prophet peace be upon him immediately addressed it by developing market institutions based on justice and freedom (Kahf, 2014b), in particular allowing free

market practices and encouraging trading activities, allowing for shared cropping between migrants and natives, encouraging benevolent lending and alms to support poor migrants, etc. The booties of war also supported a rapid accumulation of wealth for the state and state residents which culminated in particular with the conquest of Khaybar in the seventh year after Hijrah. Finally, the alliances outside the city and the risks of divisions during conflicts were a fourth aspect necessitating the establishment of rules and social contracts, and the diplomatic relations that the Prophet and his companions implemented in stages are a formidable success in the set-up of a strong nation in less than ten years.

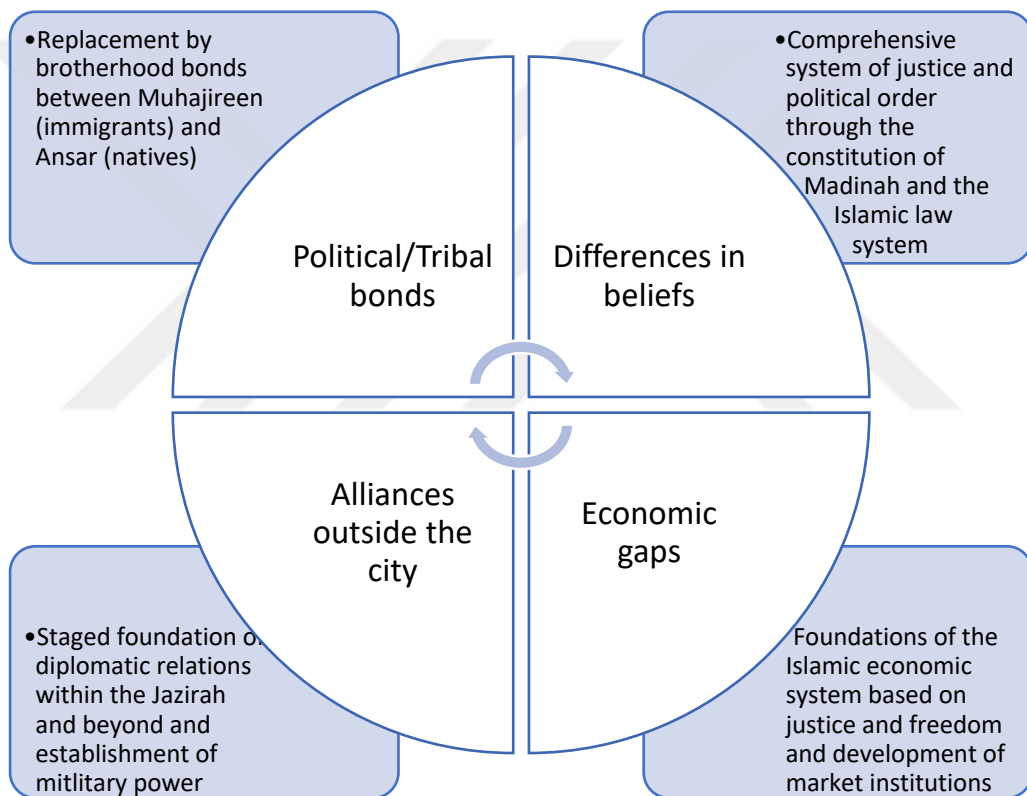


Figure 5.1 The main obstacles to the successful economic migrations of Muhajireen to Al Madinah and the main policies that addressed these obstacles

Source: Author, 2025

The Prophet (peace be upon him) contained these four phenomena and dealt with them methodologically through establishing societal foundations based on spiritual values and humanitarian principles of the highest nobility as summarized in Figure 1. Muslims found in the new bonds what moved society to a new phase of harmony and

cohesion. Non-Muslims found in Islam a system of justice, equality, and compassion for all humanity. Faced with poor economic conditions, Islam established foundations upon which it would build its new economy which would flourish in less than a decade, for the benefits of both natives and migrants.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed the economic gap caused by the migration of the Muhajireen to Medina when they owned nothing except what they could carry on their shoulders and the backs of their mounts. Some of them had been stripped of all their wealth by Quraysh, becoming poor after being among the wealthy, like Suhaib ar-Rumi and Abdur-Rahman bin Awf, may Allah be pleased with them. The brotherhood established between the Muhajireen and Ansar, which involved economic responsibilities borne by the Ansar, had a significant effect in bridging this gap and achieving sufficiency for many of the Muhajireen. However, this step was not merely a passing call that came to pass quietly and calmly. Rather, it came to set an example of the depth of planning and organization, and to indicate a complete system of moral and institutional foundations contained within Islamic economics in its organization of societies and nations. The value of faith-based brotherhood is considered among the most prominent values of Islamic economics. It is the value upon which rest the principles of social justice, social solidarity, and other principles that form the objectives and aims of the economic system in Islam.

The foundation of the Islamic state is based on social justice. On the other hand, the basis of relations between Muslims and other communities is peace, as long as peace is respected by both parties.

Among the economic institutions that played an important role in the successful economic integration of Muhajireen and other migrants to the city of Madinah is the market. The Prophet (peace be upon him) quickly achieved three objectives after its arrival in the city:

- Eliminating the control of the Jews over the economy.
- Reducing prices and stimulating the economy.
- Establishing an institution that aligns with the principles of the Islamic economy and promotes its model.

The market, in general, and especially the market of the Muslims, had a significant impact on the flourishing of the economic life in Medina, both in quantity and quality,

to the extent that it took away from Makkah its economic dominance. Originally, the economy of Yathrib (Medina) was based on agriculture and animal production, with its primary products being dates and vegetables. In contrast, the economy of Makkah was primarily commercial, relying on purchasing goods from markets and transporting them to Makkah, where they were sold to the people of Makkah and their surrounding areas, with surplus goods being sent to seasonal markets and markets in Iraq, the Levant, and South Arabia.

The migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Medina marked the beginning of an era of security and peace that provided the ideal environment for the economy to grow and for economic activity to be stimulated. This transformation made Medina the capital of Islam, competing with Makkah, which had been renowned for its massive caravans traveling north and south.

When the emigrants (the Muhajireen) arrived in Medina, some of them engaged in trade,¹ especially since commerce had been their main occupation in Makkah before the migration. They would go out to the markets to buy and sell, and they also participated in the seasonal markets of the Arabs, which were held in various locations outside Medina.

In addition, they would embark on long journeys to the Levant (Sham) and other distant lands for trade. It can be inferred from a narration in Sahih al-Bukhari that the early emigrants (the Muhajireen) used to travel to the Levant for trade as soon as they arrived in Medina, even before the Prophet (peace be upon him) migrated there. The hadith mentions that the Prophet (peace be upon him) met Al-Zubair and a group of Muslims who were traders returning from the Levant. Al-Zubair gave the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Abu Bakr white garments.

It seems that after a short period of settling in Medina, the emigrants were able to become active in its commercial markets, thanks to their exceptional skills in managing trade affairs. Many of them achieved enormous profits in a short time. Several prominent emigrants became well-known for their trading activities in Medina. Among these were, for example: Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Uthman ibn Affan, and Abdur Rahman ibn Awf.

It is worth noting that Abdur Rahman ibn Awf was able to amass a great fortune in Medina in a short period. It is narrated that when Abdur Rahman ibn Awf migrated to

Medina, he was poor and owned nothing. The Prophet (peace be upon him) had established a bond of brotherhood between him and Sa'd ibn al-Rabi' al-Ansari, one of the wealthiest men of Medina.⁶ Sa'd offered to share all of his wealth with Abdur Rahman, but he refused, preferring to start working with trade, beginning modestly. He went to the market of Banu Qaynuqa, where he bought and sold goods. Gradually, his profits grew, and he became wealthy. It is reported that during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), Abdur Rahman ibn Awf gave many charitable donations over several occasions. It is narrated that on one occasion, he donated five hundred horses in the cause of Allah, and on another, he donated one thousand five hundred camels in the cause of Allah. It is also mentioned that most of his wealth came from trade.

It can be concluded from some narrations that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) encouraged Muslims in general to engage in trade. It appears that the reason that prompted the Prophet (peace be upon him) to do so was the scarcity of Muslim financial resources in Medina and the severe financial hardship that Muslims were experiencing. They might not have been able to overcome this except through engaging in trade, given its known substantial profits. Muslims needed continuous economic resources to be able to confront their economically powerful enemies, such as the Jews within Medina and the Quraysh and their allies outside it.

Various necessary industries and crafts were also established in Medina to meet requirements that no society can do without, such as:

- Jewelry making
- Metal extraction
- Clothing tailoring and embroidery
- Irrigation equipment and water delivery systems for homes and mosques
- Shepherding profession and others

Among the most important industries established in Medina were those that relied on local agricultural products for their primary resources, such as:

- Date drying
- Storage and preparation for sale
- Use of palm fronds and fibers in making many tools like baskets and mats
- Other items needed by people for agricultural work and personal use in homes

- Household furniture - Doors and windows
- Leather tanning
- Wool preparation

From what has preceded, we can conclude that the migrant companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) were an economic resource for Medina that contributed to increasing commercial activity and economic growth.

Most of them earned their living through trade, some learned crafts, and some were not tied to permanent work for earning. Nevertheless, they were never idle, being either engaged in jihad and military expeditions or helping the Prophet (peace be upon him) with whatever tasks he assigned them. This was in addition to serving the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), looking after the community's interests, and being occupied with memorizing the Holy Quran and hadith, caring for them, and teaching children reading and writing.

2.4 Traditional Juristic Rulings on Migrations

Migration (Hijrah) is mentioned at least twenty-seven times in the Quran and hundreds of times in the hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Islamic concept of migration is discussed in classical Fiqh literature as well as recent academic literature (Abu-Sahlieh, 1996), through the traditional juristic classifications of Obligatory, Recommended, Permissible, Discouraged and Forbidden) and the conceptual classifications of Dar Al Harb/ Dar Al Islam or Dar Al Harb/ Dar Al 'Ahd/ Dar al Islam. The detailed discussion of these concepts is arguably not adapted to today's nation's states realities and not relevant for the scope of the research in a concept of economic migrations between countries in state of peace. We will however briefly recall below the juristic rulings on migrations in Classical Fiqh literature.

The five religious rulings in Islamic law all apply to migration:

1. Obligatory migration
2. Recommended migration
3. Permissible migration
4. Discouraged migration
5. Forbidden migration

Among the greatest objectives of legal migration is fleeing with one's religion from trials and fleeing with monotheism and abandoning what Allah has forbidden. Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (may Allah be pleased with them both) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand Muslims are safe, and a Muhajir (migrant) is one who abandons what Allah has forbidden." (Sahih Al Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 9).

2.4.1. Obligatory Migration

This is migration from the land of war to the land of Islam for those who are capable of it and cannot manifest their religion. This includes lands where Allah's disobedience is practiced openly if one cannot manifest their religion there.

The evidence for this is abundant. The Messenger of Allah's statement: "I am free from every Muslim who resides among the polytheists" (Narrated by Abu Dawud and Al-Tirmidhi.) refers to the land and abode of war. His statement "Whoever associates with a polytheist and resides with him is like him" applies to those for whom obligatory migration has become incumbent. This is evidenced by understanding the reason for the hadith: Jarir ibn Abdullah reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) sent a military detachment to Khath'am, and some people sought protection by prostrating, but they were quickly killed. When this reached the Prophet (peace be upon him), he ordered half the blood money for them.

In another narration: "Do not reside with polytheists or associate with them. Whoever resides with them or associates with them is like them." The meaning of the hadith, as explained by scholars, is the obligation of migration from lands of disbelief for those unable to establish their religious practices. Al-Manawi stated in Fayd al-Qadir when explaining this hadith: "The hadith indicates the obligation of migration, meaning for those unable to manifest their religion and capable of migration without harm."

2.4.2 Recommended and Encouraged Migration

This is for those capable of migration while able to manifest their religion, fulfilling obligations and avoiding prohibitions in their current context. They can still practice their religion and establish it in a non-Muslim land but the religion encourages them to migrate to Muslim lands so they can help increase the number of Muslims, assist them, and avoid increasing the number of disbelievers and associating with them, as well as witnessing the immoralities among them.

The most frequent source mentioned in the context of this is the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: “I disown every Muslim who settles among the Mushrikeen.” (Narrated by Abu Dawood, classified as Saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood).

However, migration is not obligatory because they are able to fulfill their religious duties without migrating so the ruling is a recommended and encouraged migration (Mustahhab).

2.4.3 Permissible Migration

This occurs typically for needs such as medical treatment, trade, and learning sciences that cannot be learned in Muslim lands. Permissible migration also applies to those unable to migrate due to illness, coercion (like prisoners), or weakness, such as women, children, and similar cases.

2.4.4 Discouraged and Forbidden Migration

Finally, the discouraged and forbidden migration cases are typically those where the fundamental objectives of religion (the preservation of Religion, Life, Intellect, Lineage and Property) cannot be insured such as the migration to places of oppression of Muslims, of war and places of tyranny.

The 12th century scholar of Islam Ibn Qudama (Ibn Qudama is a respected scholar of Hanbali school of thought and similar positions can be found) details in his magnum opus in Islamic jurisprudence *Al-Mughni* (Ibn Qudama, 1958) the categories of people regarding the ruling on migration, saying that people fall into three categories regarding migration:

The First Category: Those for whom it is obligatory – these are those capable of migration who cannot manifest their religion or establish religious obligations while residing among disbelievers. Migration is obligatory for them as clearly highlighted in Quran 4:97.

This is a severe warning indicating obligation. Moreover, establishing religious obligations is mandatory for those capable, and migration is necessary for this obligation. Whatever is necessary to fulfill an obligation becomes obligatory itself.

The second category: Those for whom there is no migration obligation. This refers to those who are unable to migrate, either due to illness, being forced to stay, or weakness,

such as women, children, and similar individuals. There is no migration obligation upon them, as stated by Allah Almighty: “Except for the oppressed among men, women, and children who cannot devise a plan nor are they directed to a way” (Quran 4: 98), And it is not described as recommended (Mustahabb) because it is beyond one’s ability to perform.

The Third category: Those for whom migration is recommended, but not obligatory. This refers to those who are able to migrate but can still practice their religion and establish it in a non-Muslim land. Migration is recommended for them so they can help increase the number of Muslims, assist them, and avoid increasing the number of disbelievers and associating with them, as well as witnessing the immoralities among them. However, migration is not obligatory because they are able to fulfill their religious duties without migrating.

It is worth noting in this context that Al-Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (peace be upon him), remained in Makkah even after accepting Islam. Or that the Muhajireen who migrated from Makkah to Abyssinia remained in Abyssinia for up to seven years while the Islamic State was established in Al-Madinah. It is reported that when Jabar ibn Abi Talib, the appointed leader of this migration and cousin of the Prophet (peace be upon him) returned to Madinah in the seventh year after the Hijrah, the Prophet mentioned "I do not know what fills me with more happiness, the conquest of Khaybar or the coming of Jafar" (At Tabarani), This delayed return of the migrants to Abyssinia to Madinah is one of the main evidences used by contemporary scholars to justify that it is not obligatory upon Muslims leaving in the West to migrate back to Muslim countries if they have the religious to practice the obligations of their religion.

2.5 A Contemporary Discussion of Migration Issues from Islamic Perspective

We propose to discuss the issue of migration in this section not from the traditional *fiqhi* perspective of Dar Al Harb/Dar Al Islam or the five rulings on migration discussed in the previous section, but rather from the universal dichotomy between legal and illegal migrations first, and the implications in the context of the discussion of Islamic economic perspective of Muslim migrations in the 21st century.

We start by defining each one separately, then discussing the motivations and reasons, many of which are common between the two. However, they differ in terms of the systems, regulations, and legal frameworks, as well as the outcomes and consequences.

2.5.1 Illegal Migrations

It is migration that occurs outside the regulatory standards of the sending state, transit state, or receiving state of migrants.

In broader terms: illegal, unauthorized, or clandestine migration is the departure from one country to another in a manner that violates the laws observed in the destination country, where entry occurs without an entry visa or refugee status. Asylum seekers who have been denied refugee status, visa holders who have passed the validity of their visa, or immigrants who have used illegal ways to enter a country also enter into this category of unauthorized immigrants.

Illegal migrations can happen from Muslim majority countries to non-Muslim majority countries but also occurs massively between Muslim majority countries with countries such as Türkiye, GCC countries, North African countries, Malaysia or Bangladesh to name only a few hosting large populations of illegal migrants from other Muslim majority countries.

The illegal movements of migrants from their countries to other countries by land, air or sea generally happens through intermediaries, brokers, and smugglers in exchange for large sums of money. Beyond the social issues of migrations therefore, this market represents an informal economic sector that has channeled huge amounts of financial resources in recent decades. The number of deaths and casualties during these unauthorized cross-border movements has reached an unprecedented level in recent years, cumulating hence a significant economic loss for countries and communities of origin. Finally the costs of security and border control are appalling and create a significant financial pressure on transit and destination countries that try to curb the flow of illegal migrants without success so far.

There are several problems and risks that migrants face during illegal migration, including:

- i. Exposure to death, hunger, and disease.
- ii. Financial losses due to fraud and deception by brokers.
- iii. Accepting inhumane work in host countries.
- iv. Lack of employment and preference for regular migrants.
- v. Mistreatment by employers.
- vi. Some migrants' deviation and joining theft gangs or drug trafficking.

- vii. Failure of migration attempts, arrest, deportation to their country, or imprisonment.
- viii. Suffering from many psychological problems such as fear of the unknown, frustrations, and economic problems like selling properties and incurring debt due to migration, loss of family, friends, and children due to illegal migration

There is another form, which is illegal residence where some individuals visit countries legally but become law violators after time passes, and their residence becomes irregular. Among these are those who flee from their sponsors and work for other employers. Although this group entered the country legally, their work with employers other than their sponsors violates immigration law, and their residence becomes unauthorized. There are also sponsored individuals who work for their sponsors but whose residence has expired and not been renewed, making their residence irregular as well.

2.5.2 Legal Migrations

We propose to classify legal migrations into two sub-categories:

- i. Legal migration Prescribed by the Quran and Sunnah
- ii. Legal migration that does not violate international systems

The Legal Migration prescribed by the Sunnah can be classified into five categories as follows:

- i. Migration from the land of war (Dar Al Harb) to the land of Islam (Dar Al Islam) and peace (Dar Al ‘Ahd) was obligatory during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and remains obligatory until the Day of Judgment when circumstances are similar according to leading scholarly opinions.
- ii. Classical Islamic theologians such as Imam Malik also prescribed migration from the lands where Islam and the Prophet or His Companions are insulted and mocked without possibility of stopping them. They refer to the verse in which Allah says: “And when you see those who engage in offensive discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into another conversation.” (Quran 6: 68)
- iii. Fleeing from physical harm and preserving one’s life or lineage, which are blessing from Allah that must be protected, is also compulsory when one is subject to oppression and has a possibility to escape from it. When one fears for themselves, Allah has permitted leaving and fleeing to save oneself from that danger. The first to do this was Ibrahim (peace be upon him), for when he feared his people, he said:

“Indeed, I will go to my Lord; He will guide me.” (Quran 37: 99). And he said: “Indeed, I am going to my Lord.” (Quran 29:26). Allah informed about Musa: “So he left it, fearful and anticipating.” (Quran 28: 21).

- iv. Departing from disease-ridden lands to healthy territories is also prescribed. The Prophet (peace be upon him) permitted the shepherds who found Medina’s climate unhealthy to go to the pastures until they recovered. However, leaving plague-affected areas was excluded from this, as Allah prohibited it through authentic hadith from His Prophet. Although scholars said this is disliked.
- v. Fleeing due to fear of harm to property is also compulsory in some circumstances. A Muslim’s property has sanctity like his blood and family and protecting property through migration can be obligatory.

Two more categories are also lawful under Islamic jurisprudence but without obligation: migration for the pursuit of religious matters (non-obligatory) and migration for the pursuit of worldly matters.

The migrations for worldly matters, while in general not compulsory, would have different rulings according to the conditions of the traveler:

- i. Migration for livelihood: Sometimes a person’s livelihood becomes difficult while residing in one place, so they leave in pursuit of livelihood through hunting, gathering firewood, or other means (in the past), or finding employment in modern times, with the limitation of not exceeding what is necessary. This migration is obligatory upon whoever cannot sustain livelihood in his area.
- ii. Migration for trade and earning beyond basic provisions and needs. This is permissible by Allah’s grace, as He says: “There is no blame upon you for seeking bounty from your Lord.” (al-Baqarah: 198). This is a blessing Allah granted during the Hajj journey, so how about when it is undertaken independently?
- iii. Migration in pursuit of knowledge, which is recommended, especially if such knowledge is not available at the current location;
- iv. Migration to visit virtuous places, as mentioned in the hadith: “Do not undertake a journey except to three mosques.” (The three mosques being Masjid al Haram in Makkah, Masjid an-Nabawi in Madinah and Masjid al Aqsa in Al Quds.)
- v. Migration to visit brothers in Allah’s cause, as indicated in the hadith about an angel Allah assigned to the path of a man visiting his brother in Allah, giving him glad tidings of Paradise.

These are various types and forms of legitimate migration, with numerous supporting texts. Such as:

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines an immigrant as: “A person who moves into a country other than that of his or her nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.”

This form of migration is an integral part of any nation’s economic strength and an important source of national income. It also contributes to achieving development goals. Therefore, the United Nations has established regular migration laws and signed agreements between all countries to promote legal migration and assist UN Member States to establish, expand and enhance regular migration pathways, while reducing irregular migration. Universal development objectives, such as poverty eradication or reduction of inequalities, or the development of sustainable cities and nations, can be achieved through migration. Galbraith (1979) articulated this decades ago in which he noted that migration is one of mankind’s oldest form of alleviating poverty. He emphasized the importance of migration in improving people’s lives, benefits the host country, and also disrupts the cycle of poverty in the country of origin.

The remittance flows to low and middle-income countries, reached \$540 billion in 2020 (World bank), surpassing the foreign direct investments, worth \$259 billion, or the ODA flows, worth \$179 billion, according to the World Bank. Migrants are investing heavily in their countries of origin, creating companies, and with the development of fintech, are sending back increasing amounts of remittances to support their families.

2.5.3 The Motivations of Contemporary Migration

The push and pull factors are not the same at all for everyone, and the reasons for migration are unique to each individual. However, while these factors can change depending on age, gender, health, social class, and ethnicity, a push or pull factor may describe a pattern that can be attributed to many different reasons.

Push factors are those reasons that force or push people to leave the area where they live and settle elsewhere. On the other hand, pull factors are the opposite of push factors. They attract or pull people to move and settle in a particular area.

One of the most important push factors is the freedom to practice religion. When a person is restricted in their religion and worship and is prevented from expressing their faith and performing the religious duties required of them, they must migrate to a place where they can maintain the outward and inward practices of Islam.

According to traditional economic theory (Ravenstein, 1889), the main push factor for migration however is the income gap between the origin and destination countries. Wealthier countries attract a larger number of migrants, especially from countries where youth make up a higher percentage of the population. On the other hand, countries with lower per capita income levels experience higher numbers of emigrants, but these numbers do not include the extremely poor population which cannot finance the costly legal or illegal migration to wealthier countries.

Looking at recent migration data (IMO, 2024) we find that if the average per capita income is less than seven thousand US dollars in the origin country, migration from lower-income countries to advanced economies decreases. This suggests that poverty traps these populations, to the point where they do not have enough resources to cover the costs of migration.

Wars explain also massive migration movements between emerging and developing economies, highlighting the importance of geographical proximity for refugee flows. Finally, an important factor in analyzing future migration pressures is that the population size in the country of origin, and especially in large urban areas, is a key driver of migration flows. The presence of relatives and friends who have already migrated is a strong pull factor of migration. The existence of migrant relatives in the destination country encourages others to try migration and make the decision to move. From a sociological perspective, the real or apparent examples of young, wealthy migrants who substantially improved their condition of leaving thanks to migration is a strong pull factor for other young people to consider migration. The desire to improve conditions of living is, from the perspective of young people, a primary goal of illegal migration. The vast majority of migrants emigrate due to low income and dissatisfaction with their current economic condition, especially when facing unemployment. Due to the massive earnings from illegal migration and human trafficking, brokers and traffickers also promote illegal migration more actively and spur the demand for migration in developing countries.

Although there are several factors leading to this phenomenon, economic motivations come at the forefront of these reasons, as the disparity in living standards is significant. Economic crises, the lack of job opportunities, low wages, and poor living standards, alongside the high cost of living and the demand for labor in migrant-receiving countries, as well as social, cultural, psychological, and historical factors, have all played a role in driving many young people to migrate globally.

2.6 The Wisdom Behind Migrations from Traditional Islamic Scholars

Migration is the process of individuals moving from one area to another for various reasons, such as seeking better job opportunities, escaping conflicts or persecution, or improving social and economic conditions. It has multiple impacts on both the individual and society.

Since ancient times, wise scholars have recognized the benefits of migration.

Imam Al-Shafi'I, may Allah have mercy on him, captured this wisdom in his poetry: "Leave your homeland in pursuit of excellence, for in travel there are five benefits." In his poetry, Imam Al-Shafi'I noted that travel offers ease after difficulties and provides the chance to earn a living, gain knowledge, improve one's manners, and provide good companionship. Even though some claimed that travelling is full of struggle and humiliation, it still offers better to face those challenges than for a young person to be at home filled with disgrace, slander, and envy.

2.7 Reverse Migrations

In recent years, there has been widespread reverse migration from Western countries to Arab and Islamic countries. This movement is encouraged by the offers made by these countries, which aim to attract skilled professionals, experts, and talented individuals from various scientific and professional fields. These offers include incentives for regular residency with attractive and promising economic benefits. But this new migration behavior also derives from a succession of other push and pull factors that will be discussed in the next sections of this study. In an authoritative review of this relatively new phenomenon, (Stark, 2009), building upon three decades of research on migration theories, posits that twelve reasons can be identified for the return (or reverse) migrations of workers to their countries of origin. The twelve reasons are formulated as follows:

- i. Purchasing power ;
- ii. Strategic accumulation of human capital.
- iii. Occupational status and social prestige.
- iv. Asymmetric information;
- v. Social Comparisons: ordinal preferences;
- vi. Relative Deprivation: cardinal preferences;
- vii. Matching in the marriage market, and divorce;
- viii. Receipt of Inheritance
- ix. Meeting a target;
- x. Shocks at home ;
- xi. Costly separation caused by migration.
- xii. Failure.

From an Islamic perspective, as will be discussed below, these twelve reasons are related to some fundamental principles of Islamic morals and values and to the fundamental objectives of Islam (Maqasid Al Shari'ah) as discussed for example in Chapra (2008).

For example, the first argument, purchasing power, is associated with the concept of wealth acquisition in Islam, which is not an endless pursuit of accumulation but rather an attempt to reach a satisfactory level of material comfort without sacrificing other aspects of its life: when the migrant reaches satisfaction with the cumulative savings he has made through migration he may decide to return to the country/region of origin and spend the rest of his life leaving on his savings with his family and relatives (concept of Qana'a)

The second concept is associated with an optimal duration of migration due to skill acquisition. This resonates to the concept of "Invigoration of the human self" (Chapra, 2008) and more specifically how education contributes to the development of the human self (Nafs) and of the 'Aql, and not only to the wealth of the individual. The human being in Islam does not seek to materially improve his condition only, but also spiritually and intellectually, and the reaching of some level of attainment in itself is enough to justify a return migration to benefit from the additional social capital in its social context of origin. Kahf also mentions for how the dignity of human beings and increasing its social consideration is important in Islam (Kahf, 2014a) beyond the material comfort. (Røed & Stark,1998) find out that 80% of Danes and Norwegians,

and up to 60% of Swedes, would return home after nine years of migration. This is due to a higher wage awaiting them at home thanks to the new skills acquired abroad. Islamically, the concept of acquiring skills during a prolonged migration also resonates with the traditional travels of scholars to acquire knowledge, memorize the Qur'an or develop new skills. This has been a constant in Islamic history. The prestige of a returning scholar after education at one of the prominent centers of Islam (be it Al Azhar, Al Jamia Al Islamiyya in Madinah or other traditional centers of knowledge) is still very high, So, A academic research could be envisaged to estimate the optimal duration of migration to increase social status in modern Islamic knowledge *curricula*, although this could contradict with the sincere intention of acquiring knowledge to seek satisfaction of the Creator.

The third concept relates to the needs for social prestige, often acquired through the building of Real Estate in the home community. When this objective is achieved, the incentive to return is higher since the individual would benefit from the higher social prestige acquired through his investment in his community. In Islamic sociology, the stratification of society through property is ethical and there is even a recognition that a comfortable housing is part of the acceptable pleasure of this life. However, the potential sins of *Israf*, *Tabzir* or *Kibr* are emphasized in the Islamic ethics to avoid overspending and waste of resources, and arrogance and despise of other members of the community.

The concept of asymmetry of information that Stark develops, which operates as an ex-post selectivity of workers skills, differentiates between high-skill workers who remain in the countries of destination and low-skill workers who are sent back (Stark, 2009). While we do not find a related concept in Islamic sociology, we can link this concept rather to another concept, more specific to Islamic sociology, which is the concept of *asabiyya* or social cohesion. As informed by semi-structured interviews conducted in a later part of the research, or as discussed in Carling *et al.* (2015), the concept of return migration is kept alive in communities after migrations in countries or societies which fail to provide social cohesion and sense of belonging. The migrants end up idealizing the return home as a way to build back lost social belonging or revive it when it starts to fade away. Those who “succeed” materially more rapidly tend to assimilate fully to the destination culture at the expense of these social bonds but those who do not fail to remain and eventually return to their countries of origin. Auriol &

Demonsant (2012) discusses the role of religious and formal educational trajectories in this process of return migrations in the context of Senegal, and posit that religious education works as a driver of return migration choice, an important conclusion in the context of this study. For traditional families, reverse migrations help maintain family bonds, develop the community back at home, preserve religiosity or address the needs of needy individuals in the community. While migrants, generally from lower social castes, who fully adopted the social norms of the destination countries, have less social incentives to return.

Stark (2009) refers to such social comparisons as ordinal preferences or cardinal preferences. The finding of (Auriol & Demonsant, 2012) that some migrants from the sample of the region of Matam in Senegal from higher social castes seek to maintain their social ranking in their home society with expectations of returning, relates to this concept of ordinal rank that Stark defines as “a distaste for falling behind others in the income hierarchy” (Stark, 2009). An individual from a lower rank in his home society who succeeds from a migration move would be willing to rapidly materialize this success by increasing his status in his community and displaying this success. It may be objected however that with the ease of traveling and with the advent of hybrid migration trajectories, such status may be achieved without a permanent relocation but through property investments and temporary returns. For understanding you can see the table 2.1 Islamic Ethical Dimensions and Preferences in Stark’s Migration Motives Framework.

Islam recognizes that individuals do compete indeed for worldly matters and rank in their societies. This drive is sometimes even more acute than the drive for absolute wealth and is inherent to human nature until death: “Competition for more gains diverts you from Allah, until you end up in your graves.” (Quran 102:1-2)

The cardinal preferences driving return migrations on the other hand are related to the concept of “relative deprivation” rather than “absolute deprivation”. This arguably takes more time for first generation migrants to measure, since the expected utility gains from migrations are anticipated without consideration of the relative deprivation in the destination countries. This is largely felt however by second or third-generation migrants. Despite a relative success in migration pathways, and a successful entry of higher-level social strata, Muslim migrants feel after years a resentment and a relative deprivation vs. non-Muslims that affect their demand for return migration. In a recent

study with a large sample of interviewees, (Esteves *et al.* 2024) find this relative deprivation and discrimination of Muslims in the job market and society as the primary driver of migration out of France for otherwise successful Muslim executives. Looking forward to enter elite social status without discrimination, these Muslim executives migrate to the GCC countries, North America, the UK and Brussels, despite disincentives to migrations, in search for status and dignity. The dignity of human beings and increasing social consideration is indeed at least as important as material wealth in Islam (Kahf, 2014a).

Islam puts a lot of emphasis on family responsibilities and family capital. Marriage and kids are essential parts of world success and preservation of family. No sufficient data sets are available to understand the role of migrations and return migrations in relation to marriage and divorce in modern times. As explicated in the next chapter, the nuclear family relationships dictated many trajectories of migrants however in France and continue to do so. Relatively new phenomenon is observed, with a higher occurrence of divorces and return migrations sometimes associated with the intention to “start a new life” or escape pension support and other legal implications of divorce in France. Men are more prone also to envisage return migrations when failing to marry in the destination countries, when inheritance cases of family properties arise, or when a shock such as sudden illness or loss of the main “guardian” of the family requires the return of the first son.

These concepts put together by (Start, 2009) of “Matching in the marriage market, and divorce”, “Receipt of inheritance”, or “Shocks at home” relate to the fundamental objectives of preservation of kinship (*nasl*), honor (*ird*) and wealth (*maal*) in Islam. The alternative concept of “Costly separation caused by migration” also refers to the observation that in Islamic economics, the utility function is perceived as a “household utility” rather than an individual utility, and in this context, planned episodes of separations are designed to help maximize the household returns on breadwinner’s migration despite the cost of such separation for the breadwinner and his family. And finally failure situations create demand for return migration and here also the Islamic concepts of community support, and satisfaction with the divine decree help understand why such “failures” are less an obstacle to migrant returns for Muslims than for non-Muslims.

The discussion of such Islamic perspective on return migrations would actually deserve dedicated research given the prevalence of the phenomena both in ancient and modern history of Islamic societies and the scholarly and religious arguments presented in above sections. This study, however, focuses not on the legitimacy or relevance of such migrations but their economic push and pull drivers and the proper quantification of such drivers. And the unique model developed will bring important insights which will be discussed from an Islamic economics perspective in Chapter IV.

Table 2.1 Alignment of Stark’s Migration Drivers with Islamic Ethical Concepts and Migration

Reasons for migrations according to Stark (2009)	Related sociological or ethical concept in Islam	Cardinal preference return vs. transnational migration
Purchasing power	Qana’a (satisfaction)	Return migration
Strategic accumulation of human capital	Invigoration of the human self	Transnational migration
Occupational status and social prestige	Islamic social stratification	Return migration
Asymmetric information	Asabiya (social cohesion)	Return migration
Social comparisons	Takaathur, tanaafus	Mixed impact
Relative deprivation	Invigoration of the human self and search for dignity	Mixed impact
Matching in the marriage market, and divorce	Family bonds and family solidarity	Return migration
Receipt of inheritance	Preservation of maal	Return migration
Meeting a target	Satisfaction with divine decree, invigoration of the human self	Mixed impact
Shocks at home	Family solidarity	Return migration
Costly separation caused by migration	Household utility and solidarity	Mixed impact

Failure	Community support and satisfaction with divine decree	Mixed impact
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Source: Author, 2025



CHAPTER III

DISCRETE CHOICE MODELLING OF REMIGRATION DEMAND FROM MUSLIM MINORITIES IN FRANCE

3.1 Introduction To the Modeling Stage of Research

The objective of this section of the research is to develop methodologically and for the first time a quantitative model of transnational or hybrid migrations for Muslims from France and use this model in the next section to develop applied economic analysis of the future demand for transnational migration from France for Muslim families. Discrete choice modeling techniques will be used as they are considered to be a best fit for the research question. The methodology is rooted in Lancaster's (1966) consumer theory and McFadden's (1974) random utility model. DCE has been successfully applied in various fields including transportation economics (Ben-Akiva et al., 1997), health economics (Ryan et al., 2001), and environmental valuation (Hanley et al., 2001). While DCE methodology is well-established, its application to migration research is relatively novel. Previous successful applications include:

- a) Auspurg et al. (2019): European internal migration preferences
- b) Adger et al. (2014): Climate-induced migration decisions
- c) Stellmacher and Grote (2004): Rural-urban migration in developing countries

The modeling exercise will be informed by a first exploratory stage of semi-structured interviews described in section 3.2. Sections 3.3 to 3.6 present the different stages of modeling and the outcome of the model calibration and estimation. This model is the first quantitative model developed for remigrations of French Muslims to the author's knowledge, while the five million strong Muslim population in France is constantly subject to debates on identity, migrations, relationship to country of origin, international mobility, religious practice and other sensitive socio-political challenges.

3.2 Exploratory Stage

3.2.1 A Brief Modern Colonial History of France and Its Assimilation or Association Policies

Understanding the colonial past of France from 17th to 20th centuries is a prerequisite to understanding the later migration waves and peculiar immigration patterns of the country. For France, contrary to other colonial empires, had arguably from the very

beginning of its colonial history in the 17th century an ambition not only to exploit resources in Africa, Americas or Asia, but in fact to extend the French Empire to new borders and export the French culture and authority to these new lands. As such, the ideological concept of “Greater France” coined by R. Aldrich perfectly illustrates this concept (Aldrich, 1996). This discourse of Greater France, *la plus grande France*, intensified during the 20th century, and in particular between the two great wars, and replaced the 19th century discourse on French Empire while trying to reconcile the Republican values with the Imperial motives (Wilder, 2001).

The economic motivations to the imperial and colonial ambitions of France do not strikingly differ from other colonial empires (e.g. Spain, Britain, Holland) and the study of these motivations and patterns of colonial history is beyond the scope of this research. The seminal work of (Aldrich, 1996) provides however interesting insights on the evolution of colonial administration and policy and the perennial tension and trade-off between assimilation policies (*politique d’assimilation*) and association policies (*politique d’association*) which have preceded later challenges in immigration policies during and after decolonization. In simple terms, while in some countries the association policies tried to keep indigenous societies and preserve their institutions and cultural practices and even keep separate legal systems (one for French citizens and another for indigenous people), the assimilation policies, practiced to their summum in Algeria, tried to directly administrate the colony through legal, cultural, educational and administrative systems of mainland France. This led to integrating Algeria fully within France and as (Prochaska, 2002) puts it: *Making Algeria French*. Other French colonies such as Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Mali, Cameroon or Cote d’Ivoire, where also partly assimilated, through other mechanisms than the full integration to French territory.

The legal and juristic nature of these variant models of colonization throughout the 18th and 19th century have been largely studied in the legal literature, In addition, France has achieved the full digital archiving of the legal documentation of the former colonies and made them fully accessible in the public domain (Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer, ANOM). As Saada posits, despite the adaptation of the legal systems to the various forms of administrative and military presence of France in its colonies, there was never an attempt through this modularity in the application of French law in overseas territories to “negotiate” the sovereignty of France over its colonies and allow

for some forms of “separatism” of local populations (Saada, 2003). Saada quotes Jean-Louis De Lanessan, Governor General of Indochina between 1891 and 1894 and one of the great theorists of colonization in the last years of the 19th century, which summarizes this “civilizational” perspective of France that partially remains to this day: “The colony acting on the colonized, as the colonized acts on it, transforms him and makes him a new human type, more strongly attached to the homeland where he was formed than to that from which his ancestors came”. (Saada, 2003).

The decolonization waves after World War II have gradually granted independence to newly formed Republics, Kingdoms or States that later followed different political and economic fates, with violent uprisings and civil wars in some cases, and peaceful and stable transition to new governance models in others. Fourteen countries with Muslim majorities emerged from the former French colonial empire: Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia (French North Africa), Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal (French West Africa), Chad (French Equatorial Africa), Comoros and Djibouti (Indian Ocean) and Lebanon and Syria (Levant). Another few countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire or Togo also have large Muslim minorities.

3.2.2 Strong Economic Relationships Driving Migration Waves

Despite global support for independence and auto-determination of nation states in the new political order Post-World War III, independence of former French colonies was not easily granted. Indochina and Algerian independence wars for example were long and bloody and to this day the scars of these wars have not healed between the former colonies and France. In January 2025, major diplomatic issues have emerged between France and Algeria, among which the issue of memory and the reparation of colonization damages by France.

Paradoxically, in all sixteen countries mentioned above with majority or large minority Muslim populations, the economic trajectory post-independence has been very much linked to strong economic relationships with France. The main mechanisms by which this economic influence of France in the post-colonization history of these nations have manifested are three-fold: (i) Trade relationships and preferential access; (ii) monetary ties, and (iii) labor migrations (with later family reunification policies).

Another implicit mechanism is the educational legacy, with the majority of economic or political elites in these nations formed by France, educated in French and sometimes

fully “Frenchified” (*francisés*), The legacy of this “Francophone African Bourgeoisie” is multiform (Kamara, 2005) and may have been the principal instrument of French neo-colonialist dominance, often referred to as “Françafrique” for Francophone Africa.. While monetary ties (such as the French CFA, the colonial currencies still in use in Central and West Africa)) or preferential access (through agreements such as the Yaoundé conventions 1963-1975) have driven a prolonged presence of French multinationals and French businesses in former colonies, the labor agreements such as the Franco-Algerian Labor Agreement (1968) have been the major mechanism driving recruitment of African workers in France to address France labor shortages during the economic boom of the *Trente Glorieuses* (1960-1990). France has remained the largest European trading partner for most of its former colonies in the 1980s and 1990s (and even in the 2000s for some) but it has equally remained the primary destination of migrant workers and later their families.

Table 3.1: Bilateral migration flows to France from 20 major OIC countries of origin (1 former colonies, 2 other)

COUNTRY ORIGIN NAME	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09
ALGERIA ¹	626 615	1 493 990	1 424 707	1 375 771	1 057 135
TUNISIA ¹	184 315	287 917	354 171	365 219	310 949
MOROCCO ¹	155 574	294 994	540 819	654 248	262 462
TÜRKIYE ²	45 348	4 534	126 356	173 732	76 505
PAKISTAN ²	43 945	4 394	6 210	10 825	74 137
INDONESIA ²	24 033	2 403	1 493	3 578	40 544
IRAN, ISLAMIC REP. ²	14 380	1 438	12 867	18 844	24 260
BANGLADESH ²	13 883	1 388	861	401	23 422
IRAQ ²	7 287	729	2 945	2 913	12 294
LEBANON ¹	6 540	654	20 626	36 744	11 033

NIGERIA²	3 892	9 329	2 152	1 919	6 567
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC¹	3 290	329	9 568	12 930	5 550
EGYPT, ARAB REP.²	3 000	7 189	18 606	20 919	5 060
SENEGAL¹	2 183	5 231	53 476	70 016	3 682
SOMALIA²	1 008	2 416	18	5 109	1 701
MALI¹	945	2 265	23 162	32 647	1 594
COTE D'IVOIRE¹	882	2 115	19 824	32 769	1 489
CAMEROON¹	802	1 921	19 057	26 165	1 353
GUINEA¹	761	1 823	6 806	10 521	1 283
COMOROS¹	274	658	6 817	11 600	463
TOTAL MIGRATIONS	3 507 203	5 210 326	5 890 619	5 897 247	6 278 721
INCL FORMER COLONIES¹	981 236	2 089 632	2 455 871	2 595 983	1 655 399
% OF TOTAL¹	28%	40%	42%	44%	26%

Source: World Bank, Global Migration Database

There is an extant literature to explain how family connections, worker-employer relationships as well as labor networks have facilitated the massive migration flows from former colonies to France after independence. The labor agreements in place have been the primary mechanism providing first special migration status for workers from the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) or West Africa in particular (Senegal, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, etc.), and later on their families. The 1964 Nekkache-Granval agreements with Algeria set quotas for Algerian workers in France and were followed by the 1968 Association Agreement between France and Algeria which set higher annual quotas of workers from Algeria and guaranteed certain social rights and working conditions that remain valid to date.

As a consequence, Algeria has consistently remained the primary country of origin of migrants to France to this date. As detailed in Table 2 above, 20 OIC countries account

consistently for 30 to 50% of total migration flows to France decade after decade since 1960. Out of these 20 countries, 11 former colonies account for the major share of these flows, in particular the three Maghreb countries that accounted in 1990-99 for 41% of migrant supply to France.

These migrants and their progeny represent the major focus of the research. First generations of migrants have come to France with some migration strategies that will be discussed in the next section of this chapter. Most of the time, the migration was clear and even financial objectives set up before leaving the homeland. However, time and migration trajectories have amended these trajectories and eventually the majority of these migrant populations have settled permanently in France and constitute with their families a first, second or third-generation migrant stock which amount to millions of households with specific demand drivers for migration that will be studied in the research.

Table 2.1 also shows two particular features of the migration dynamics which inform the context: (i) for the “*Trente Glorieuses*” period has seen a major growth in migrant supply from the countries listed, from 3.5 million migrants in 1960-69 to 5.9 million in 1990-99: during these years, both demand and supply of migrants increased steadily; (ii) however starting in the late 1990s, a major slowdown is observed due to adverse political factors and rise of far-right parties which flourished primarily over anti-immigration positions. The anti-immigration positions of the *Front National* (later renamed *Rassemblement National*) and other far-right or right-wing political parties, focused on immigrations of Arabs or Muslims and therefore the flows of migrants from OIC countries were gradually replaced by migrants from Eastern Europe or Asia. As a consequence, as of 2000-09 the growth in migrant supply from the listed countries in Table 2 slowed down to represent “only” 26% of migration flows.

3.2.3 An Overview of Income Gaps Between Countries of Origin and France

Classical migration theory discussed in chapter 1 posits that income gaps are the primary driver of bilateral migration flows. Difference in GDP per capita between a sending and a receiving country has a positive effect on net international migration supply in the sending country and net international migration demand in the receiving country. On average it can be observed in Table 3 below that for the first six countries in Table 2 (conclusion is valid for other countries in the list) the GDP per capita in

current US\$ is substantially lower than the GDP of France over the same year. Algeria, Indonesia, Morocco and Tunisia for example have a GDP per capita more than 10 times lower than the GDP of France today and Pakistan GDP per capita is 30 times lower. The only noticeable exception is Türkiye which has progressed over years to reach today a GDP per capita in current US\$ that is less than 5 times lower than France. The conclusion that income gaps are wide enough to create a significant demand for migration in such countries holds over the whole period, and it can even be observed that the peak supply observed in Table 2 towards late 1990s correlates with wider income gaps during the same period (Algeria economic crisis during this period for example leading to a slump in GDP and the GDP per capita of Algeria in year 2000 dropped to 7.9% of France GDP in current US\$).

These income gaps work in both directions, driving the demand for migrations to France, and acting as a disincentive to return migrations as will be discussed below. Despite noticeable improvement in economic conditions in many OIC countries over the last decades, the average economic conditions remain substantially less favorable than in Western Europe and in France in particular creating a constant driver for migrations.

Table 3.2: GNI of primary migrant countries of origin as a percentage of France GNI in current US\$

%	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
ALGERIA	12,5%	18,1%	11,3%	7,9%	12,1%	9,6%
INDONESIA	2,8%	3,9%	2,7%	3,4%	7,5%	9,8%
MOROCCO	9,2%	8,8%	5,7%	6,7%	7,5%	8,3%
PAKISTAN	5,9%	2,3%	1,6%	2,9%	2,4%	3,3%
TUNISIA	9,9%	10,5%	6,8%	9,8%	10,5%	9,1%
TURKIYE	17,3%	12,1%	12,5%	18,8%	26,1%	22,1%

Source: World Bank Development Indicators

3.3 Methodology And Model Definition

The key research questions the modelling framework attempts to answer are the following:

1. How do cultural, religious, and economic factors interact in shaping migration destination preferences among French Muslims?
2. What is the monetary equivalent (willingness-to-pay) for different destination attributes in migration decision-making?
3. What are the projected economic impacts of Muslim remigration flows on France and destination countries during 2025-2035?
4. How can Islamic finance mechanisms be designed to facilitate ethical and economically viable migration transitions?

Migration choice could be defined as the rational process by which individuals or families decide to migrate, and the selection of the migration destination among a limited choice of options. It is important to state here that in many cases, migration choice precedes the actual process of migrating, which sometimes never materializes. As will be discussed in the next sections, given the very rational process by which the Muslims in France approach the issue of remigration, and the very demanding sets of criteria they specify sometimes to actually migrate, it is potentially in a majority of cases that migrations will not materialize. While most migration research focuses on post-migration contexts, the study here is rather interested in this pre-migration context which will shed light on demand for migration and provide new insights on a crucial topic affecting generations of Muslim families.

After reviewing multiple modeling strategies, it is decided to use behavioral models to shed light on the research question. In particular, discrete choice modeling techniques describe, explain, and predict choices between a finite choice of alternatives (Ben Akiva et al, 1997). They have been largely used in marketing studies, transportation modeling, energy modeling, labour economics and environmental studies. In particular the multinomial logit formulation of demand functions seems relevant for the question of interest. The model requires calibration using detailed quantitative data which can be obtained through revealed preference surveys, stated preference surveys, or a mix of both (Ben Akiva et al, 1997).

The methodology to be used requires the following sets of inputs:

- i. define the set decision makers i
- ii. define the set of alternatives a
- iii. define the alternative attributes x_{ija}
- iv. define the attribute units and levels.
- v. define the decision-maker characteristics s_{ik}

The formulation of the model is then potentially of the form (F1), assuming a multinomial logit formulation :

$$P_{ia} = \frac{e^{-\alpha_a - \sum_{j=1..m} \beta_{ij} x_{ija} + \sum_{k=1..l} \beta_{ik} s_{ik}}}{\sum_{b \neq a} e^{-\alpha_b - \sum_{j=1..m} \beta_{ij} x_{ijb} + \sum_{k=1..l} \beta_{ik} s_{ik}}} \quad (F1)$$

Estimation of the model can be made using different tools and in particular the modeling software R using the *mlogit* package developed by Croissant (Croissant, 2012). Input variables need to be collected using surveying techniques and using primary or secondary sources. After review of available global databases such as the World Bank Migration database, and recent demographic studies such as the *Trajectoires et Origines* survey 2019-2020 (Beauchemin *et al.*, 2023) by the National Demographic Institute INED in France (a study performed every 10 years which comprehensively analyses the socioeconomic conditions of first, second and third generation migrants in France), and given the challenges to access disaggregate information on individual migrants across these datasets and sources, the methodology selected is to develop an original dataset through surveying techniques. Several survey strategies can be used but the most adapted is potentially a non-adaptive stated surveying methodology through online administered questionnaires.

Before developing the stated-preference survey, a qualitative survey is conducted to help specify the demand function. Literature review is also instrumental in understanding how to best design the survey and what potential demand drivers should be varied in the discrete choice modeling attempt. The demand function is estimated using the stated preference datasets after unsuccessful attempts to secure revealed preference datasets from INED (the demographic institute in France). The survey is

developed using the online surveying application surveyengine.com using the extension from Ngene specifically developed to conduct discrete choice experiments.

The sample size targeted is 100 responses but the interviewing campaign was successfully conducted with a total of 198 qualified responses as will be described below. The questionnaire has been drafted and tested before implementation and is attached as appendix X.

In the next section 3.4 discusses the stated preference survey campaign which informs the disaggregate model choice definition and led to the understanding of migration choice patterns for a sample of about 60 qualified persons across two generations (20 second-generation migrants and their parents). The stylized facts from this survey are described in section 3.4.3.

In the next section 3.5 the disaggregate choice modeling is conducted. After a discussion of the design of the online questionnaire and the methodological constraints, descriptive statistics are presented and finally model estimation.

3.4 Semi-structured Interviews to Identify Drivers of Remigration Demand

3.4.1 Survey Structure and Implementation Strategy

To better grasp the demand drivers for migration and understand the intergenerational migration trajectories among the target population, the empirical research starts with a semi-structured interview campaign among second generation Muslim migrants and ask them about their current and past. The interview is structured into a first description of the family context and the parents' trajectory, second the personal background with related questions. This way a single interview informs about the migration trajectory of at least three family members: father, mother and respondent. The transmission of family migration strategies could be analyzed in a future research but already the mechanisms of transmission are apparent in the responses, as well as the distinct decision-making process between second generation migration and first generation migrants that will be discussed in the survey results section.

Box. 1 Semi-structured interview Survey conducted to characterize migration demand and determine potential demand drivers.

<p>Survey Questions</p> <p>1) Describe your parents' migration history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• - Where do your parents come from? Why did they emigrate?• - Did they emigrate before or after marriage?• - What were the reasons for this migration?• - Was it initially intended as a temporary or permanent migration?• - If there has been any change in the temporality of the migration, what were the reasons?• - What long-term changes have occurred in terms of migration strategy?• - Are they currently in France? If so, why?• - Are they back to their country of origin? If so, why?• - Do they intend to return to their country of origin in the future? If so, why? <p>2) Describe your personal background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• - In which socio-professional category are you?• - What is your work environment?• - What is your living environment like?• - How is your family life organized?• - What are your family migration strategies for the future?• - Are you planning to leave France in the future?• - If so, under what conditions?• - For what reasons?• - What are your push factors, i.e. the factors that encourage you to emigrate?• - What are the pull factors (economic, social, cultural, climatic, religious, education, lifestyle, health, retirement, end-of-life) that attract you to potential destinations?• - Does this migration strategy have to be carried out under certain conditions?

Source: Author, 2025

The interviewee and third his or her migration strategy. Box 1 below presents the structure and content of the questionnaire.

The survey is conducted during the months of December 2023 and January 2024. The dissemination strategy is through two professional networks called “*Fraternite en Action*” and “*Muslim Makers*”, communities of about 400 and 770 Muslim professionals and students respectively, actively networking for professional and

community purposes. The interviewees are both members of these groups and referred people from their own network.

While this sample is probably biased towards religiously practicing and higher socio-professional strata they are descendant from varied and representative groups of first-generation migrants giving a rich account of the family trajectories. The qualitative semi-structured interviews were completed with a total of 20 responses that have been analyzed covering two generations of migrants, the interviewee and both his parents, hence a total of 60 persons. For the second generation interviewed, 8 are ladies and 12 are men. The first generation covers 20 ladies and 20 men. In total therefore, the migration history of 28 ladies and 32 men was covered in this first experimental phase of the research, with additional insights also on the spouse of the interviewees and their children.

The countries of origin covered include Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Djibouti, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, France, Ireland and Italy representing a varied sample representative of French Muslim populations. A number of first- or second-generation migrants interviewed have mixed background and family stories which further highlights the relevance of a transnational approach to migration rather than bilateral migration pattern (return to home country). Every story is unique and while demand drivers of migration can be effectively identified from the results of the survey, a wide variety of migration strategies are observed among the sample.

The results of this survey campaign are very rich: remigration is an important topic considered by a vast majority of the sample with various degrees of preparation and planning. The story of remigration is linked also to the story of original migration trajectories of their parents, with various origins and social strata in the sample. The key pull factors brought in the conversation are professional career and material conditions, education, housing conditions, language barriers, cultural acquaintance and even climate. All interviews confirm that migration has been approached through a rational thinking process with at least as much emphasis on the life conditions than on the spiritual or religious aspects. This confirms that an analysis of the economic drivers of migrations is at least as important as the sociological or political considerations much debated in the literature when the question of remigration of Muslims from Europe is debated. On the push factor side, typical constraints such as religious freedom, adverse socio-political context, barriers to religious education and

also material conditions are frequently observed as well. In the next section stylized facts will be drawn from this qualitative semi-structured interview campaign to guide model formulation in the next part of the methodology.

3.5 Brief Summary of Responses from The Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews

○ Interview n°1

The respondent's parents are from Morocco – his mother is from Azrou and his father from Meknes. They are coming from a modest family and thus, decided for economic reasons to emigrate in France in the 70s beginning by his father at the age of 18. His mother followed him as part of a family reunification scheme. While the mother is an integral part of the family trajectory, the decision to migrate was single-handedly the father's decision and was pushed by economic motives. The father's family has been deeply affected by his departure, due to the remoteness of living far from his homeland, family, friends and home.

The respondent is born in Morocco but grew up in France with his parents. He is 44 years old. He has a wife and a daughter. He is renting his apartment. The respondent does not take a firm stance on the decision to emigrate but has been thinking about it. He is torn between the current socio-political context in France adverse to Muslim people and the fact of leaving his parents, which could affect them given their immigration history. He underlines this factor: he could not live far from them as long as they are his choice number one, even if he has a great opportunity abroad. However, a push factor for the respondent is the fact that his daughter wants to discover the world and to study abroad (family plays here both the role of push factor to migration and an obstacle to migration: a push factor to migrate to ease the life of the immediate family - wife and daughter- but an obstacle since old parents are unlikely to move from their home). As a result, the respondent's strategy is to prepare for a possible departure in about five years.

It is important for the respondent to prepare this emigration project in advance and approach it rationally. From his perspective, it would be in a Muslim country with infrastructure and a framework that would allow them to prosper and have a comfortable lifestyle. He sees it as renewal, an opportunity to create something elsewhere. The respondent does not value individual lifestyle choices but more the

Muslim community. He wants the Muslim to be united and have a common vision that must serve the Muslim community.

About the destination, the respondent is not depicting himself in his home country but prefers countries around the Mediterranean to stay near France. His daughter was interested by the Kazan region in Russia as well, as an alternative. The respondent is lucid about emigration: the difficulties it entails even in Muslim countries, the fact of being far from parents, especially as they are getting old. Another option for the respondent could be to settle down with other French Muslim families that want to emigrate.

○ Interview n° 2

The respondent's parents are Berbers from Agadir, Morocco. Similarly to the first case, his father came to France after having spent several years in Casablanca. He was a local merchant but unfortunately went bankrupt. This is the reason of his departure for France to join his sister who was already living in France (family and friend networks are very common in migration pathways). He worked as a butcher in a halal butcher's shop and ended up as a dishwasher in a large Parisian hotel. His mother joined his father later when the respondent was 12. They came to France as part of a family reunification scheme. The respondent has a degree in finance and work as manager in France. He is specialized in Islamic finance. He is married with a woman from Algerian descent and has two children. His children attend a private Muslim school.

The respondent strongly considers migrating from France for two main reasons:

- a) He is disappointed with how the Muslim community is treated in France despite the contribution of the Muslim community to French society;
- b) He wants to practice his religion freely in a Muslim country and provide the best religious atmosphere for his family.

The respondent does not have a precise destination in mind and is still open to all possibilities. However, he prefers a country with a stable economy and which has opportunities in Islamic finance (such as Gulf countries). The respondent remains in France for the time being, as his children attend a Muslim school and he feels like they

are protected. Moreover, he does not project himself to his country of origin, but rather to a third country.

○ Interview n°3

The respondent's parents are from Tangiers and Casablanca, Morocco. They emigrated to study after the secondary studies. They met and got married in Lille. The respondent has no clue about his parents' further intentions. The respondent is a senior manager, is married and has one child. He is considering leaving France because of the negative social climate in France, loss of values, disrespect for Islam and absence of values.

The respondent wants to find in the country a strong Islamic identity and culture, Muslim population, a good education for his child, an equivalent material conditions than in France, an acceptable framework for the family (especially, autonomy while the respondent is working), medical coverage and high standing of doctors/hospitals.

○ Interview n°4

The respondent's parents are from Tunisia. His father first emigrated in 1970 and was joined by his mother in 1975. The father was bricklayer in Tunisia and came to France to work since many opportunities were available at the time for manpower from North Africa. The respondent's parents' initial plan was to save as much money as possible and then return home but after a few years, they got children. Once they had entered the school system, the family settled in France for the long term.

In the meantime, his father did not lose the objective of returning to his home country and therefore saved money to build a house there and developed a project. After retiring, the respondent's parents effectively returned to Tunisia in the 2000s. The respondent's sister got married in Tunisia and then, stayed there. Her eldest child has just arrived in France this year to move in and work.

The respondent's brother still lives in France. The respondent is an engineer. His wife does not work. The respondent's brother is a senior technician. His wife is a nanny. The respondent wishes to emigrate but does not have a precise destination in mind. The respondent presents three possible options:

(i) Emigrating to a Muslim country:

The main advantages would be to practice your religion without constraint (wearing a headscarf in school for his daughters), evolving in an Arabic-speaking environment, etc.

The main disadvantages would be the loss of social benefits (social security, free schooling) that make France a very good option for living despite the negative social atmosphere. In this case, the respondent thinks more about Türkiye as a destination because it could be a compromise between religion and European culture. However, the respondent is reluctant to the mindset of Türkiye and the language barrier.

(ii) Emigrate to a non-Muslim country:

The main advantages of living in Western European countries relate to social benefits according to him but problems with religious practice, and poor morals and values.

(iii) Return to the country of origin:

This is the third respondent option because the economic and political climate is not favorable but still a fallback solution in case of difficulty.

For the respondent, the push factors to emigrate are:

- The hostile climate regarding Muslim people,
- Loss of moral standards,
- Loss of security regarding Muslim people

For the respondent, the pull factors to migrate are:

- Children should be able to pursue a French-speaking education,
- Evolve in a Muslim-friendly environment,
- Evolve in an Arabic-speaking environment,
- Favorable economic conditions (Gulf countries in particular),
- Discover new cultures and regions of the world

The respondent's emigration strategy is to search for a professional opportunity to gain autonomy. It is not a prerequisite to be an owner.

○ Interview n°5

The respondent's parents are from Morocco. The respondent's eldest uncle came first to France because he signed a contract to work in 1964. After that, he offered the respondent's father a contract to work in France in 1967.

The father's respondent was single. He was 18 years old at the time. It was an economic emigration with the purpose to make 4-5 million in 5 years and then going back to Morocco. He arrived near the city of Conques in France to work in agriculture in general. He worked for a year but left because of unfair treatment.

He went to Toulouse do start another job in the building industry. He then found a job in GA enterprise and worked there for 36 years.

The respondent's mother joined my father through a family reunification scheme in 1981, a year before the respondent was born in 1982 in Carcassonne. The respondent's brothers were born in Morocco. The respondent's parents stayed in France for economic reasons.

The respondent studied in Carcassonne and Strasbourg. He is married and has three children. He is a manager in the private sector. He moved to Lyon to be closer to his parents and because Lyon has an active Muslim community with favorable conditions. He made some connections there. He started to work as a teacher but for financial reasons, he preferred to go back into industry. The respondent and his wife are motivated by the environment and community. They consider that to be surrounded by all kinds of people is a great asset.

The respondent does not take a firm stand on emigrating.

The push factors would be the unfair treatment of Muslims in France, but he considered that could be worse than it is.

The respondent considers Morocco as a destination because of his attachment to this land and the ease. The reasons for this destination are:

- i. The values of sharing,
- ii. Arabic language for the children,
- iii. The enrichment in a global sense.
- iv. The respondent's pull factors to leave is to have in the destination.

- v. A large budget,
- vi. Good health system,
- vii. Education infrastructure.

The respondent is still doubtful about how to live his religion in Morocco because there is a gap with Moroccan society.

The respondent admits that he is westernized in his way of living, especially the way he is consuming on the contrary of Moroccan people.

The respondent wants to have a professional opportunity to leave. The university system could be a restraint.

The respondent wants ideally to be owner because it is cheaper in Morocco. However, the respondent is not necessarily attracted to ownership because of real estate bubbles. He would rather help the population who live there.

o Interview n°6:

The respondent's father is from Morocco and the respondent's mother is French.

The respondent's grandfather arrived first in France to work as at the time they were searching for workforces in the construction industry.

The respondent's father joined his father by a family reunification scheme.

The respondent's father studied up to the baccalaureate, so he expresses himself properly in French.

Once he arrived, he discovered his father was living in insalubrious conditions on the building sites and other workers complained as well. The respondent's father organized a strike and represented the workers. As a result, they had wage increases and new housing.

The respondent's father changed companies regularly and ended his career as a team manager.

The respondent's father would have liked to spend his retirement in his homeland but his wife being French did not want to leave France. However, he goes in vacation regularly.

Moreover, the respondent's grandfather is sick with a heavy treatment for which there is no possibility in Morocco. The respondent studied in France.

He moved first to Qatar and then Morocco.

One of the push factors for the respondent is the racism in France against the sons of immigrants.

The respondent felt at home in the Middle East because his European education was valued as well as his Arab-Muslim culture. He spent 6 years there.

The respondent briefly came back to France at the time of the Charlie Hebdo attacks and started at the same time a business in Morocco.

The respondent moved in Morocco for business reason.

The respondent's pros are : the language, the history, the cuisine, the way of life, reconnecting with his roots.

The respondent's cons are : the laxity in everyday life and the corruption.

The respondent came back to France through an opportunity. He has kept an apartment in Morocco in case of things go wrong in France. Moreover, the respondent is waiting for opportunity in Morocco especially in Tangier since Morocco's economy is booming.

The respondent has certain restrains to leave regarding higher education and healthcare.

If the respondent had to choose between the Middle East and Morocco, he would choose the Middle East because it is more developed, organized, clean, and more conservative (better practice of Islam). His wife is also ready to go there.

The respondent's push factors :

- The context in France,
- The economic situation in Morocco,
- Opportunity in the Middle East.
- The respondent's pull factors :
- Good level of higher education,

- Health,
- Good starting conditions as an expatriate,
- Preferably a Muslim country,

If it is a non-Muslim country, it must be for an opportunity.

○ Interview n°7

The respondent's father is Algerian but born in Tunisia.

The respondent's mother is French. His grandfather is French as well and his grandmother is an immigrant daughter of Italians.

The respondent's father emigrated to study. He stayed for 5 to 6 years.

Even though, he had his son in France and his work, he chose to return back to Tunis for a reason the respondent does not know.

The respondent is married; he has 5 children.

The respondent is depicting the situation as follows:

His relationship with North Africa begins with his father because he visited him during his childhood,

He had no Islamic background while his mother is Christian until his 20s,

He was cut from his origin due to the distance with his father.

Thus, the respondent went through an identity crisis that led him to Islam.

The respondent has been married once with a French woman who was not Muslim. It ended up by a divorce. He has been remarried with a French Algerian woman who is aligned with his values.

The respondent strongly plans to leave France but only for spiritual reasons in the image of the Prophet . صلى الله عليه وسلم

The respondent wants to assert his Islamic identity even in its professional and social development.

The respondent has a degree in Islamic finance, a degree in Banking and a master's degree in finance in order to do a thesis. He is almost finished with his doctorate.

The respondent is also an entrepreneur.

The respondent thinks about emigration, thanks to the acquisition of these skills. The push factors are:

- Colonial history,
- The Islamophobic discourse,
- The feeling that it's hard for him to blossom,
- People don't want to value his skills,
- People push him to do things he does not want to do,
- Material reasons,
- Rise of populism,
- To access to more interesting jobs,
- To be able to value my doctorate to access more qualified jobs.
- The pull factors are :
- The cultural dimension,
- The Islamic framework,
- Education infrastructure,
- Temperate climate ideally,
- Good financial package

About the destination, the respondent designates Algeria for his origin but not as a first destination. The respondent would like to emigrate first to the Middle East or South-East Asia.

The respondent chose these destinations so his children can be accepted with their Arab-Muslim identity and that can allow them to learn Arabic and English.

The respondent would like to have a job on the destination and the best would be to join the Islamic Development Bank because the respondent's values are fully aligned with this institution. It is also one hour from Mecca so it is ideal to go to pray.

The respondent is mentioning the sultanate of Oman because of the standing of life, the religion, the university to do research.

The respondent has also applied in Kuala Lumpur and in Dubai because the offers fit the criteria.

The strategy of emigration is to find an opportunity that will enable the respondent to provide for his family.

The respondent does not want to leave for economic reasons but a good salary would be great to invest in some projects in Algeria.

- Interview n°8

The respondent's parents are from Algeria.

They emigrated to France in a post-colonial context.

The respondent's father was the first to arrive in 1964 for economic reasons as at the time they were searching for workforces in the construction industry. He joined his uncles and lived with bare minimum comfort.

The respondent's mother joined the respondent's father in 1968 when they got married and moved into a small studio.

The respondent's father planned a temporary emigration no longer than 5 years but finally decided to stay permanently in 1974-1975.

The respondent's parents have 7 children.

The respondent's father worked in construction, in a plastic factory, in a big market and ended his carrier there as team manager. He is now retired.

The respondent's mother was a housewife. Between 2000 and 2010, she worked as a childminder. She is now retired.

They built a house in Algeria in the late 90s/early 2000s, with the idea of returning to Algeria once they had retired and the children were married. However, it did not work out as they had hoped because they have their family in France and they are accustomed to the comforts that France has to offer, especially in terms of healthcare.

However, they are spending around 4 to 5 months in Algeria every year.

The respondent is 45 years old.

The respondent has a Technical and Marketing diploma (DUT) and graduated to be medical delegate. He took additional courses to build up his academic background and went to England to improve his English.

The respondent has accessed jobs with high responsibility such as Regional Director but had a feeling of not being accepted as manager because of his origin.

The respondent changed to give an international aspect to his career by working as a business development manager to develop a product portfolio for a large American company and was the first opportunity to work on French-speaking Africa. He did this for 2 years and then he agreed to do the same thing in Asia until Covid.

The respondent is proud of his accomplishment. The respondent plans to leave France.

The respondent mentioned two destinations for a medium-term projection: Malaysia and Singapore for religious reasons.

Singapore: religious education is facilitated for the community, while at the same time providing guarantees in terms of schooling, security, and health.

The respondent is owner of his house in France.

The respondent has his religion at heart and wants to align his choice of life with it.

The push factors are:

- The economic development in Algeria and the wish to contribute to it,
- To provide a better future for his children,
- To provide a spiritual education to his children,
- The security of his children from an educational and spiritual point of view.

○ Interview n°9

The respondent's parents are from Kabylia in Algeria.

The respondent's father came to France after the Algerian war in the 60s to work and joined his brothers. They got him a boat ticket. They sent him back to the border because his physical condition was not conducive to work. His brothers sent him a plane ticket. The following week, he was collaborating with his brothers in a factory.

The respondent's parents were already married but his mother stayed for at least 5 years in Algeria before coming in France in the 70s, part of a family reunification scheme.

The respondent's father bought a house in Algeria and decided to return in '83 with the respondent's brothers. However, they moved back to France because the respondent's mother did not want to stay as she saw more potential for their children in France.

The respondent's father returned to Algeria frequently to take some vacation averaging 4 to 5 months a year.

The respondent is 39 years old.

The respondent has a BTS and graduated from a business school.

The respondent is an entrepreneur and started his own company at the same time as his work-study program. He has set up several businesses, most of which have gone bankrupt, but some have survived.

The respondent has lived in Algeria and set up a business there but it did not work out so he came back to France.

He got married at 25. At 30, he had a big break and wanted to leave France. So, at the age of 32, he moved with his wife to Morocco and sold his business. He left with friends.

The respondent's pros : found that Morocco is like Algeria with a touch of Europe, good infrastructures, lot of expatriates, economic potential, close to Europe and cleaner than Paris.

The respondent's pull factors:

- Climate,
- Social context,
- Religious context.
- The respondent does not project himself back to France.

The respondent could project himself in Türkiye but would like in the same time an attachment to Morocco and Algeria.

○ Interview n°10

The respondent's parents are from Algeria.

The respondent's grandfathers are the first to arrive in France for military service.

The respondent's grandfather on the side of his father was sent to Germany when France could not pay its war debt.

Following his military service, the respondent's grandfather stayed in France and worked in the Paris region, before returning to Algeria, with a few trips back and forth between France and Algeria. He stayed on more permanently from 1945 onwards, but didn't fight in the Second World War because he was too old to do so. He returned to Algeria after 1962, but not on a permanent basis - he was almost retirement age.

The respondent's grandfather brought his family to France in 1964 under the family reunification scheme. The respondent's father was a young teenager.

The respondent's grandfather on the mother side arrived after the Second World War, after his military service, in 1943. He served in the Italian campaign, the Provence campaign and then in the Paris region. After his military service, he was demobilized at the end of 1945. He remained in the French army for 2 years. He stayed in France and worked in factories. He moved out on his own in 1955, bringing his family with him in 1964.

Emigration became permanent for economic reasons mainly.

The respondent studied at the Sorbonne. He is a teacher of history in high schools and middle schools.

The respondent lives in Paris. As a teacher, he was transferred to Caen, Versailles, Lyon and now he is at Créteil.

The respondent is married and has a child. The respondent plans to emigrate.

The push factors are :

- The context in Europe and particularly in France regarding Muslim people,
- The feeling that people like him will never be accepted as French unless they make themselves available to a dominant group,
- To be threatened in your person, your fundamental freedom.

- The respondent would like a job that matches his current skills and he wants to be close to his religion in order to live out his cultural and intellectual plurality in a peaceful setting.
- An important criterion for the respondent is to feel free and emancipated of what the world wants you to do or to be.

The pull factors are :

- A good standard of living, not too far from the French one,
- A good standard of education for his child,
- Medical facilities to ensure access to good health care,
- Practice of the religion.

For the respondent, the ideal destination would be to live in a city such as Doha, Jeddah or Riyadh, where you can have access to good universities, very good overall infrastructures and personal security provided by the State. He also mentioned Qatar and Emirates.

The respondent wants to have the same standard of living than in France even if he has to pay large sums of money to get access to the same services.

○ **Interview n°11**

The respondent's parents are from Morocco.

The respondent's father came to France in 1977 because he signed a work contract in Dijon to work in a foundry.

The respondent's parents got married in 1977 but the mother came to France in 1978.

The migration was mainly for economic reasons, to build in Morocco and then settle there permanently. They had no intention of staying in France permanently.

The return has never happened because of children's education and then got married themselves. The respondent's parents go back and forth between Morocco and France.

The respondent is 45 years old. She is divorced. She has 6 children, 5 of whom are still at home.

The respondent is running a business in two activities : digital communications and cleaning. When she had her children, she became childcare assistant.

As far as family organization is concerned, the respondent mainly works from home to look after the children.

The respondent wishes to leave France and does not project herself in France for the rest of her life. The criteria to leave are :

- A professional opportunity,
- Acquire a property

The respondent is considering either Morocco or Türkiye as a destination for business reasons and religious context. It would be a medium to large city.

The respondent wants financial security to have access to quality healthcare and education. The respondent also wishes to study religious sciences in Morocco.

○ **Interview n°12**

The respondent's parents come from Senegal.

The respondent's father left for economic reasons as a friend told him to go to France because they were searching for workforces. The respondent's mother joined her husband later.

They had to provide for their family in Senegal.

The respondent's parents divorced so the respondent's mother worked as caregiver to support her children and her mother. She also invested in real estate in Senegal.

The respondent's father also supports his family in Senegal.

The respondent has 5 children including one who is in university.

The respondent's husband is Algerian. He is an electrician in the building industry.

The respondent is an entrepreneur and administrative manager. She works from home but she is currently on sick leave. Her husband has a schedule where he finishes at 3 p.m. and on Fridays, he does not work in the afternoon do to jumu'a.

The respondent's husband has been offered positions of responsibility in the company but he has turned them down because they found their balance.

The respondent lives in an apartment in the city.

The respondent would like to leave France.

The push factors are : the religious context and being in a Muslim country.

About the destination, the respondent does not project herself in Senegal because she does not want to be disturbed by her family.

The respondent's husband is talking about Algeria but the respondent is not sure about it. The pull factors are:

- A simple environment,
- Education for the children (schools and universities)
- Muslim country,
- Comfortable living with financial means.

The respondent is not ready to leave now as her husband's family is in France. The level of health does not hold the respondent as long as she is considering that when you have the means, you can get treatment.

The respondent wants to be the owner and a job with the possibility to work from home. The migration strategy is to visit the targeted country several times.

Interview n°13

The respondent's parents are from Algeria.

The respondent's father emigrated at 14 with friends. In France, he went to school.

The respondent's mother was forced to emigrate as she has been married for socio-economic reasons to the respondent's father who she did not know at the time. She regretted it for a long time because she lived in misery and racism in France and gave up her comforts in Algeria.

There was no desire to move back to Algeria, but they kept a very strong link with the country, returning every year without exception.

The respondent has a master's degree in international management of territorial projects.

The respondent worked at SNCF for a long period of time.

First, he was business manager in the international department managing the Latin America, Africa and Middle East zones on several assignments, particularly in North Africa with short and medium-term assignments in Morocco and Algeria.

The first secondment in Algeria happened in 2007 to manage Thales in Algiers. He has done this job for 3 years.

The respondent was very proud to work in Algeria as it was his childhood dream.

The respondent got married in the meantime and his wife went with him. She found her a job in Algeria with RATP to run the Algiers metro in human resources.

The respondent left Algeria because Thales was bought and restructured.

He has decided to return to the SNCF and has joined the management team for Sub-Saharan Africa for 4 years.

The respondent was impacted by the climate in Paris after having spent 3 years in Algeria.

The respondent was offered the Algerian management position a second time in the engineering field and accepted. Algiers changed a lot since their last stay in 2007. The respondent was proud to contribute to the economic development of Algeria. He has done that for 4 years.

The respondent returned to France mainly because his parents wanted to see him so he moved back in 2017.

The respondent set up his own business in rail consulting and diversified into catering and real estate.

After 4 years, the respondent left again to move to Tangiers in 2021 and had opportunities there to settle. He managed to increase his standings in Morocco.

The respondent wanted to be in a Muslim country to practice freely his religion. However, the respondent is going to move back to Paris for family reasons next summer.

The respondent is planning his future departure in the next few years. He is thinking about sub-Saharan Africa as a destination or Algeria. It has to be a Muslim country.

For the respondent, the family criterion is an obstacle to mobility.

○ Interview n°14

The respondent's parents are from Morocco.

They were not married but they knew each other by name as the respondent's father worked with his future father-in-law.

The respondent's father decided to apply for a passport and emigrate to France. The respondent's mother and the entire family emigrated as part of a family reunion scheme in the 70s.

They married in France and gave birth to the respondent in 1975.

The respondent's parents have no desire to return back to Morocco permanently even though they built an apartment there.

The respondent is 48 years old. He is married and has 3 children (university, high school and college). The respondent has a master's degree in healthcare engineering.

The respondent is working as a manager in an international medical device company in the marketing department. He has always worked in international companies, especially American companies.

He is from the higher socio professional category.

As far as migration strategy is concerned, the respondent has no intention of leaving France, as he has no particular reason to leave the country.

The respondent is firmly attached to France and consider to be integrally part of it even though the current climate regarding Islam and the Muslim people. A reason why the respondent feels like he is French is the fact of traveling that reinforces one's identity.

The respondent has never felt any racism toward him and think that is because he has always worked in international companies with a strong culture of integration and diversification of profiles, a culture of diversity.

The respondent does not project himself in his country of origin because he does not feel comfortable in it regarding the culture and the way of working there.

The respondent does not want to emigrate because he has his family ties in France nor does he want to disrupt the education of his children.

○ Interview n°15

The respondent's mother is from Ivory Coast.

She traveled to Marseille in 1983 to spend some time with her aunt on vacation. In 1985, her aunt offered to reunite her family. Her parents accepted.

Initially, it was to continue her schooling in France, but it soon turned into modern-day slavery, with her aunt treating her like a household woman.

After this, the respondent's mother moved to Paris where she met her first partner. They left together for Ivory Coast, where he did his military service for 2 years. They returned to France in 1989 for 3 years.

After a break-up, she moved to Montpellier in 1992 to join friends. She did odd jobs in cleaning and then in a hairdressing salon.

She wanted to go back to Ivory Coast but couldn't take her child with her, so she stayed.

She met her current husband who is from Belgium in 1995 and moved to Luxembourg the same year.

She had 2 more children. She worked as a cleaner in Luxembourg.

She plans to go back to Ivory Coast after the retirement because they built a house there and have some projects.

The respondent's father also wants to go and live in Ivory Coast, developing sustainable development projects.

He converted to Islam at the age of 50 and is looking for a job in line with his values, something that can be achieved there rather than in Luxembourg, which is a financial center based essentially on riba.

The respondent is 26 years old. She is married and has no children.

The respondent was a lawyer but went back to university to study medicine because it was not in line with her values, especially Islamic values.

The respondent has some experience abroad in Canada and England in the framework of studies.

As far as emigration is concerned, the respondent and her husband will emigrate if the situation in France becomes unbearable to the point where their physical integrity is threatened or they can no longer perform the pillars of Islam.

The respondent has not a precise destination in mind but the best would be in a Muslim country, especially the Gulf states to value her diplomas.

Ivory Coast is another destination that could be interesting for the respondent as her parents are setting up projects there and Islam is well accepted given that 50% of the population is Muslim.

Otherwise, if it's not a Muslim country other than Ivory Coast, it would be an Anglo-Saxon country due to the acceptance of religion.

The respondent would like to speak Arabic before emigrating. The respondent would not emigrate for economic reason but for a precise project or opportunity. The respondent is also thinking about education of her future children.

One of the obstacles for the respondent's husband is the family criterion, especially as he is French and has no ties to any other country.

○ Interview n°16

The respondent's parents are from Djibouti, formerly the French coast of Somalia.

They emigrated following the country's independence, their parents deciding to keep their French nationality and move to mainland France.

They emigrated after their marriage.

Following their divorce, the respondent's mother decided to return to Djibouti with a definitive migration in mind but then came back in France for financial reasons.

The respondent's father has never left France. The respondent's mother plans to return to her country for her retirement.

The respondent is 25 years old. She is an employed student with 20h per week at university and 18h per week at work.

The respondent plans to leave France after her bachelor's degree for the following reasons : professionally, better prospects are aligned with her convictions and the French mentality no longer suits her. The push factors are :

- Lack of tolerance towards her religion,
- outright racism,
- Lack of work.

Pull factors are:

- Tolerance,
- Respect for differences through inclusion,
- High salaries,
- Attraction to cold climates,
- Sociability,
- Helping others,
- Diversity.

The departure is not conditional on the acquisition of a property but only after obtaining her diploma in France.

- Interview n°17

The respondent's parents are from Morocco.

The respondent's father emigrated for work 15 years before he got married. His wife joined him four years later when she had a visa.

The reason for this migration was economic and working in order to support his family.

At the time they did not know whether their arrival was permanent or temporary. She is currently unemployed.

The respondent's father died. The respondent's mother is currently in France, with all her children, for education and work.

The respondent's mother is considering returning to Morocco because she has no family in France, missing her brothers and sisters and especially her parents. She has been living alone in France for over 20 years, without any family except her children.

The respondent is 21 years old. She is currently studying at university. She lives with her mother and brothers and sister in an apartment.

The respondent is considering leaving France but she does not have define a precise strategy of emigration.

The emigration would happen after her studies. The push factors are :

- Do not feel at home in France,

- The current climate regarding Muslim people,
- Not being able to practice freely her personal and religious beliefs.

The pull factors are:

- To discover other cultures,
- To know a different life experience.

The respondent wants to finish her studies first and be able to choose a job.

Moreover, the respondent could not leave without her family. She also has a specific health condition that needs to be taken care of.

The respondent wants a stable financial situation to be able to rent an apartment and have a job to leave.

○ Interview n°18

The respondent's father comes from Alexandria in Egypt. He works as a painter-mason.

The respondent's father arrived in France in 1988 after spending 45 days in Austria and 3 days in Italy. He came as part of an economic migration after missing an opportunity in Kuwait. He chose France because his brother was already there.

It was a definitive migration for him, and it still is. He feels that once you have lived in a country for more than 5 years, it's difficult to go back to your country of origin. He says that, apart from the racism in France, he lives well in France.

The respondent's mother comes from Skikda in Algeria.

Initially, she came to France to spend the vacations with her sisters who were already settled in France. Her sisters persuaded her to stay on to look after their young children and function as nanny. She then met her future husband.

The reasons of their stay are marriage and the arrival of their children. They have no intention of returning to their country of origin.

The respondent is 26 years old. She was an English teacher in secondary school. She went back to university to be a speech therapist. She is not married and has no children.

The respondent lives in a student residence during the week and goes home to her parents at the weekend. The respondent has no plans to leave France at the moment,

but it could happen.

The push factors are:

The political and media treatment of Muslims,

The difficulty to settle professionally while respecting religious principles.

The pull factors are:

- Senegal: possibility of speaking French and therefore continuing her professional activity, country with a Muslim majority and pleasant climate.
- DOM-TOM (Réunion) : for religious acceptance, climate and compatibility with my professional activity.
- Egypt: for the religious aspect only

Ideally, the respondent would like to be hired or to be sure of being able to start her professional activity quickly after her installation.

○ Interview n°19

The respondent's parents are from Algeria.

They emigrated for financial reasons before marriage.

Their reasons for emigrating were mainly to increase their educational and professional opportunities.

For the respondent's mother, it was a definitive migration but for the respondent's father, it was temporary. He finally stayed in France after meeting his future wife.

The respondent's mother arrived as a child and obtained French nationality quite easily rather than the respondent's father who arrived as an adult and had great difficulty going from a residence permit to French nationality.

They are both currently in France. They chose to bring up their children here to give them more opportunities for professional success and personal freedom.

They belong to higher socio professional categories. They have no plans to return to Algeria.

The respondent is 26 years old. She has a master's in law. She is married and has no children. She belongs to CSP plus. She works in a company.

The respondent is very close to her family and would not be able to leave without her husband or without the possibility to visit her family regularly.

The respondent has no plans to leave France.

The respondent has one year's experience in the United States in New York in the framework of her studies.

She left to have an experience abroad that would facilitate her professional integration and to improve her level of English.

The push factors were educational, economic, and cultural.

But the reality was very different from what the respondent has in mind which is why she came back to France.

○ Interview n°20

The respondent's parents are from Algeria.

They emigrated for work, in search of a better life.

The respondent's mother emigrated before she was married.

The respondent's father was already married to another woman.

The emigration was definitive. The respondent's father is waiting for retirement to back to Algeria to rest, but my mother doesn't want to.

The respondent is 20 years old. She is a student. The respondent is considering to leave France.

The respondent has Algeria or a any Muslim-friendly country as a destination. However, it has to be not too different from France, especially Marseille.

Thus, Algeria fits all the respondent's criteria, especially in terms of environment, being not much different from the South of France.

The first reason to emigrate that comes to mind of the respondent is religion.

However, the creation of mosques and Muslim associations rose up, thanks to Allah and the first immigrants so the respondent thinks Muslim nowadays have nothing to complain about compared to the first generation.

The respondent underlines the fact that when a child of immigrant visits his country of origin, he is considered as French and when they are back to France, they are considered as immigrants.

The push factors would be:

- a) Religion,
- b) The desire to discover new things and new ways of thinking,
- c) This aspect of returning to one's origins, more in this cultural idea.

Pull factors would be :

- a) In economic terms, Algeria is a country with a lot of resources and is tending to develop, so this could be an attractive factor.
- b) Social, cultural and religious aspects

In terms of strategy, the respondent would like to be an entrepreneur or develop projects without acquiring property, as she already has a family home in Algeria.

If someone were to come with the respondent, she would rent and save so as to be comfortable for one year and develop projects.

3.6 Stylized Facts from The Semi-structured Interview Campaign

3.6.1 Migration Decisions Are in Everyone's Mind

All interviewed respondents have at least thought about the perspective of leaving France in the next future and the majority are seriously considering it. While the sample of respondent is biased towards higher socio-professional strata and practicing Muslims it is evident that the demand for re-migration is very high among the target population of this research.

3.6.2 Migration Choice Is a Very Rational Decision Process for French Muslims, More So for Second-Generation Migrants

The second or third-generation migrants primarily interviewed have a mature reflection of push and pull factors for migration and list detailed demand drivers that inform precisely on the demand function that will be developed in the next phase of the research. The assumption that migration, as per Ravenstein's laws, is primarily driven by economic motives seems confirmed.

3.6.3. Migration Are Family Decisions Rather Than Individual Decisions

Most of the interviewed population are fathers or mothers and approach migration decision from a family rather than individual perspective. The trajectories are therefore more complex than for first-generation migrants (their fathers in particular), which seem to have approached migration strategies from a more personal standpoint. The level of alignment of spouses also need to be high to ensure decision is taken in consensus and in multiple cases the decision involves also ascendants (fathers and mothers of the potential migrants) or sons and daughters. This will present some methodological constraints to the next stage of the study.

3.6.4 The Push Drivers Are Strong but Do Not Drive Migration Demand

While some respondents have described “threshold” effects (physical abuse for example) beyond which the migration decision will be instantaneous, the quasi-totality of the sample interviewed delay the migration decision to a favorable economic context (a job opportunity in particular) and other sets of pull factors that seem to override the push factors such as islamophobia or lack of religious freedom.

3.6.5 Return Migrations Are an Exception to The Rule

The findings provide strong empirical support for the research assumption that migration demand for French Muslims (or Muslims in the West in general) will create new transnational flows beyond return migration waves, with a statistical significance at $p < 0.001$. This conclusion aligns with similar findings in the migration literature, particularly Carling et al. (2015) who documented comparable patterns among Moroccan return migrants, and Auriol & Demonsant (2012) who found similar rational decision-making processes among Senegalese migrants. The convergence of the empirical results with established literature strengthens confidence in this finding assumption. Sons and daughters of Moroccan, Algerian or Senegalese migrants for example have mentioned other destinations such as Gulf countries or Türkiye as primary destination options rather than the country of their parents. It is evident from the discourse of all respondents also that there is a major gap in the migration trajectories of parents and their descendants, and in fact only one respondent out of 20 mentioned potential nesting of the decision to migrate with his parents. In other words, while the first generation of migrants considered family trajectories among multiple generations in their decision, the new generations seem to only consider their own

trajectory as well as the one of their descendants to a lesser extent in their decision, and not reflect upon the transmission of identity from their parents and the belonging to their original social group. This is an important finding to be discussed later in the modeling part and in the conclusions since it fuels demand for transnational migration not only as an alternative to bilateral migration flows, but as a consequence of it. The first generation was migrating to achieve some socio-economic outcomes for themselves and their family, which may have been achieved in part or in full. The second generation now continue this social trajectory by defining new objectives on their own and trying to achieve them through new migration patterns. The research assumptions formulated in the introduction are verified by the empirical results.

3.7 The “Social Model” in France Has Deep Implications on The Migration Trajectories and Strategies

An interesting finding from this semi-structured interview campaign is that French Muslims are trying to “replicate” the social model they enjoy in France in their potential destination countries, sometimes in denial of the large differences in social and political models of the countries of interest. Medical coverage, free schooling, permanent job or even retirement and insurance packages have therefore become important social benefits that they are not ready to sacrifice in their migration choices. It could be assumed here, given the very rational thinking observed among respondents, that beyond the social model, the French culture has deeply impacted world view of the Muslim populations and therefore altered their decision drivers to the extent that there would be a possible counterintuitive convergence between how Muslims evaluate their migration options and how non-Muslims in France would do it as well.

The recent heightened interest of non-Muslims in expatriate jobs in the Gulf (in UAE and also more recently KSA) is a social proof that this is no longer about Islam and religiosity only, or about inter-generational migration trajectories, but it may be overall about global convergence towards attractive destinations for skilled migrants from around the globe. Muslim would be in this context only perceiving the “menu of options” differently but in the end adopting the same rational behavior in assessing characteristics of alternative migration destinations. This assumption will be tested and discussed in the next part of the study.

3.8 Modeling of Remigration Demand Using Discrete Choice Modeling

Techniques

Discrete choice models (DCMs) are founded on random utility theory, originally developed by McFadden (1974) and are used to analyze decision-making processes where individuals choose from a finite set of alternatives. These models are particularly valuable in studying migration decisions, as they can incorporate both individual-specific and alternative-specific characteristics into the decision-making framework. The fundamental premise of DCMs is that individuals (decision-makers) choose the alternative that maximizes their utility. The utility that each individual derives from decision alternatives is assumed to have a systematic (observable) component of utility and a random (unobservable) component that is treated as a residual component in the estimation.

In the context of remigration decisions, DCMs are particularly appropriate because they can account for the multi-dimensional nature of migration decisions discussed in literature (e.g. Czaika *et al.*, 2021) and confirmed in the semi-structured survey discussed above. In addition, they help incorporate both individual and contextual factors which is essential in migration analysis (e.g. Massey *et al.*, 1993). Finally, they help model and quantify trade-offs between different attributes of alternatives (e.g. Hensher *et al.*, 2015)

This research is the first attempt to model the migration preferences of Muslims in France through a discrete choice experiment (DCE) using a multinomial logit model. The study analyzes data from 198 respondents (full responses among 258 respondents to stated-preference survey) who evaluated migration scenarios across four destination alternatives: Gulf countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia), Türkiye/Morocco, Western countries (Canada/UK/USA), and remaining in France. As will be described below, the estimated model achieves a pseudo-R² of 0.858, indicating very strong predictive power and suggesting that the identified factors explain 85.8% of the variation in migration choices.

The transnational migration patterns of Muslim populations in France represent a contemporary phenomenon that has garnered increasing attention from policymakers and researchers and the discrete choice experiment methodology is well-adapted to

examining how various destination attributes and individual characteristics influence migration decisions.

The research contributes to the migration literature by providing quantitative insights into the "push" and "pull" factors affecting Muslim migration from France, challenging prevailing narratives in French media and offering evidence-based analysis for destination countries to understand these emerging migration flows. Unlike previous studies that rely on aggregate migration statistics or qualitative interviews, this research uses experimental methodology to isolate the causal effects of specific destination attributes on migration preferences.

The emergence of significant Muslim emigration from France represents a relatively new phenomenon in international migration patterns. Traditional migration theories, developed primarily around South-North migration flows, may be insufficient to explain contemporary patterns where economically developed origin countries experience outmigration to diverse destinations including both developed and developing countries. This study addresses this gap by providing rigorous quantitative analysis of migration preferences using state-of-the-art discrete choice methodology.

The findings have important implications for multiple stakeholders. For French policymakers, understanding the factors driving emigration intentions can inform integration and retention policies. For destination countries, particularly Gulf states and Türkiye, the results provide insights into the preferences and characteristics of potential Muslim migrants from France. For the broader academic community, the study demonstrates how discrete choice experiments can be applied to contemporary migration phenomena and provides a methodological framework for analyzing complex migration decisions involving cultural, economic, and religious considerations.

Discrete choice experiments have emerged as a powerful tool for analyzing migration preferences, particularly where revealed preference data is limited or biased. The methodology, rooted in Lancaster's (1966) consumer theory and McFadden's (1974) random utility model, allows researchers to decompose complex migration decisions into component attributes and quantify trade-offs between different destination characteristics.

Previous applications of DCE methodology to migration research include Auspurg et al. (2019) on European internal migration, Adger et al. (2014) on climate-induced migration, and Stellmacher and Grote (2004) on rural-urban migration in developing countries. However, limited research has applied DCE methodology to contemporary emigration from developed countries, particularly focusing on religious or ethnic minority populations.

The advantages of DCE methodology for migration research include: (1) ability to isolate causal effects of specific attributes, (2) control for unobserved destination characteristics through experimental design, (3) measurement of preferences for hypothetical or emerging destinations, and (4) quantification of willingness-to-pay for different destination attributes. These advantages make DCE particularly suitable for studying Muslim migration from France, where traditional revealed preference approaches face limitations due to small sample sizes and selection effects.

The methodology to be used requires the following sets of inputs:

- Define the set decision makers
- Define the set of alternatives
- Define the alternative attributes
- Define the attribute units and levels
- Define the decision-maker characteristics

The decision makers in this study are qualified individual migrants that share three main characteristics: they are French or French residents, they are Muslims (and self-identify as such), they currently reside in France (complimentary ex-post studies could be conducted but in this case interviewing candidates outside France would lead to potential bias in the perception of migration options presented).

The next stage is to define the set of alternatives. Several options were considered from a large sample of options informed by the semi-structured interview campaign and the review of literature (e.g. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Malaysia, USA, UK, Belgium). However, the more options to be offered to respondent the more complex the modeling exercise becomes and the more unlikely it is to converge in the estimation stage. Without loss of generality, five options only have been offered to all respondents:

- a) KSA or UAE

- b) Türkiye or Morocco
- c) Canada, UK or USA
- d) Base alternative: stay in France.

While it could have been possible in theory to keep only fewer options, and while grouping several options in one is not free of bias, keeping KSA and UAE as one alternative for example, or Canada, UK and USA as another, was decided on the observation that these alternatives are “perceived” very similarly amongst migrants groups. No option was kept for Sub-Saharan Africa that it is arguably necessary because of the large variety of migrant groups observed in France from Sub-Saharan Africa which would have required to list all main potential countries (Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire at least are very represented). In addition the exploratory stage did not markedly indicate a preference for such destinations among French Muslim groups. This could be reviewed in a next study. It is important to note also that while some options are not listed in the data collection stage, developing them during the modeling stage is possible since the model is assumed to correctly estimate demand functions against all possible sets of alternatives.

The next stage is to review the attributes of migration options considered. These are called Alternative-Specific Attributes. While a large set of such attributes could be discussed the onus is to correctly identify the economic opportunities such destinations offer (e.g. job types, salary levels, cost of living), the social context they offer (e.g. schooling, housing, immigration status, political and social freedom), the geographical context (e.g. distance to home country, climate), and the religious context (e.g. freedom of practice, Islamic education).

Both Individual-Specific and Alternative-Specific attributes need to be developed into units and levels. Most of the levels are discretionary (although continuous variables may be considered) to specify only limited discretionary options in the survey. This may lead to reducing the explanatory power of the model which is discussed in model limitations. Some of these attributes are explicitly varying in the design of the questionnaire while some are rather embedded in the choice destination (for example Climate).

In addition to defining the right attributes and levels, a base alternative must be defined against which utility from other choices is compared. This follows standard practice

in discrete choice modeling where a reference alternative is needed for identification (Ben-Akiva & Lerman, 1985). In this modeling case, the reference alternative is the default decision of not migrating and remaining in France, under current socio-economic conditions of the sample respondent.

The next stage is to define decision-maker attributes that will be collected during the online questionnaire. These are called Individual-Specific Variables. They typically belong to three categories:

- a) Demographic: sex, age group, marital status
- b) Socioeconomic: family salary, socio-professional group
- c) Cultural: country of origin, religious practice intensity

Recent applications of DCMs to migration decisions include the study of return migration intentions among immigrants (Constant & Massey, 2002), the analysis of location choices in international migration (Beine et al., 2011) or the investigation of the role of networks in migration decisions (Bertoli & Ruysen, 2018)

In terms of Methodological Considerations, it is important to remind that the model may suffer from correlation between variables, endogeneity, or other typical issues of econometric models that need to be corrected or evaluated during the analysis of the data. Since the methodology for data collection is a stated-preference survey, systemic bias of the survey responses and sampling or specification errors may largely impact the quality of the model estimated.

The analysis employs a multinomial logit (MNL) model based on random utility theory. Individual i faces choice among J alternatives in choice situation t . The utility of alternative j for individual i in choice situation t is specified as:

$$U_{ijt} = V_{ijt} + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

where V_{ijt} represents the systematic (observable) component of utility and ε_{ijt} is the unobservable error term assumed to be independently and identically distributed with extreme value distribution.

The systematic utility is specified as:

$$V_{ijt} = \beta' X_{ijt} + \gamma' Z_i + ASC_j$$

where:

- a) X_{ijt} contains alternative-specific attributes (income, employment, departure conditions, housing)
- b) Z_i contains individual characteristics (age, gender, income, religious practice, ethnic origin)
- c) ASC_j are alternative-specific constants capturing average preferences for destinations
- d) β and γ are parameter vectors to be estimated

Under the extreme value distribution assumption, the probability that individual i chooses alternative j in choice situation t follows the multinomial logit form describe in (F1) above:

$$P_{ijt} = \exp(V_{ijt}) / \sum_k \exp(V_{ikt})$$

3.9 Sampling Strategy and Descriptive Statistics

The survey was administered online between September 2024 and November 2024, targeting Muslim households in France through multiple recruitment channels.

The sampling strategy focused on practicing Muslims, and it is confirmed by participation with 71.3% of respondents reporting average to rigorous religious practice levels. This focus is methodologically justified as practicing Muslims are those by definition considering religious factors in migration decisions, providing clearer insights into the interaction between faith and economic considerations. The next chapters will discuss demographics of this specific segment. Without prejudice to the religious definitions, the non-practicing Muslims may in fact from a theoretical standpoint be arguably excluded from the “Muslim” definition since they primarily identify as Muslims from a cultural perspective.

The religious practice distribution in our sample was: Rigorous practice (26.3%), Average practice (45.0%), Occasional practice (20.7%), and Limited practice (8.1%).

The study employed a purposive sampling strategy targeting Muslim households in France through multiple recruitment channels:

1. Community-based sampling: Islamic cultural centers, mosques, and community associations (35% of sample)
2. Digital recruitment: Social media groups, LinkedIn networks, and online Muslim communities (45% of sample)

3. Professional networks: Alumni associations and professional organizations with high Muslim participation (15% of sample)

4. Snowball sampling: Referrals from initial participants (5% of sample)

While the sample skews toward educated, practicing Muslims, this aligns with the research objective of studying high-propensity migration segments most likely to have international mobility options and may be corrected in future modeling attempts.

The questionnaire was conducted in French and structured in four main sections:

1. Introduction and screening: Explanation of research purpose, consent, and eligibility verification
2. Sociodemographic characteristics: Age, gender, marital status, income, education, employment
3. Migration-specific variables: Religious practice, ethnic origin, migration history, family situation
4. Discrete choice scenarios: Eight randomized choice tasks with attention checks
5. Migration motivation ranking: Ranking of nine potential migration factors
6. Optional contact information: For result sharing and follow-up research

The final sample comprises 198 respondents with complete questionnaires, representing 1,584 choice observations across 6,336 alternative-specific observations. Sample characteristics indicate great variety of responses. The below descriptive statistics present sample characteristics

Age Distribution:

- i. 18-25 years: 16 respondents (8.1%)
- ii. 25-34 years: 56 respondents (28.3%)
- iii. 35-44 years: 72 respondents (36.4%)
- iv. 45-54 years: 45 respondents (22.7%)
- v. 55-64 years: 7 respondents (3.5%)
- vi. 65+ years: 2 respondents (1.0%)

The sample skews toward middle-aged respondents (25-44 years representing 64.7%), which aligns with the target demographic of working-age adults most likely to have migration options and family responsibilities affecting migration decisions. without loss of generality the sample interviewed also integrates some retired respondents (5%) or younger respondents aged 18 to 24 (9%).

Gender and Marital Status:

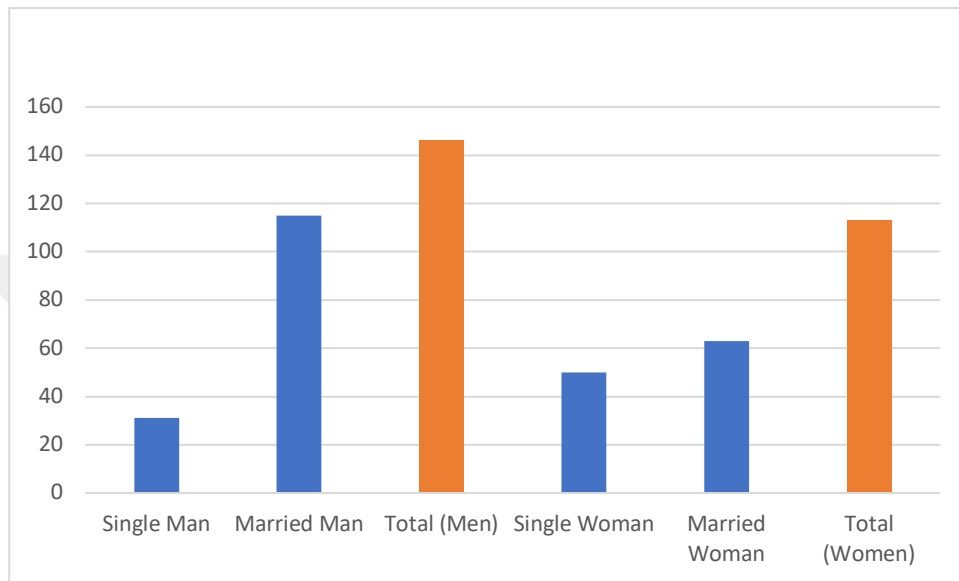


Figure 6.1 Sample demographics, sex and marital status (stated preference survey campaign)

Source: Author, 2025

- i. Single men: 20 respondents (10.1%)
- ii. Married men: 93 respondents (47.0%)
- iii. Single women: 36 respondents (18.2%)
- iv. Married women: 49 respondents (24.7%)

The predominance of married respondents (71.7%) reflects the target demographic and suggests that migration decisions involve family considerations rather than individual choices alone. The demographics show good sample gender variety with 56% men and 44% women. The vast majority of men interviewed are married (79%) while 56% of women are married in the sample.

On top of the 81 single respondents, only 8 respondents have no children, which impacts decision drivers in the migration scenarios as will be discussed. Families

mostly have 2 or three children (43% of the total sample) while 11% have 1 one child only and 10% have four children or more.

Household Income Distribution :

- i. <€1,500/month: 16 respondents (8.1%)
- i. €1,500-2,500: 41 respondents (20.7%)
- ii. €2,500-4,000: 54 respondents (27.3%)
- iii. €4,000: 87 respondents (43.9%)

The information on salary levels has been difficult to collect. First of all, only 78% of the respondents accepted to provide the data². In addition, as shown in Figure 7 below, the responses receive show a majority of salaries below €1,500 per month (47% of responses to this question) and another 24% between €1,500 and €2,500 per month. According to the latest data from the national statistical agency in France INSEE³, the median net available salary of an individual in France as of 2022 is of €2,028 per month. The fact that more than half of the sample declares an individual net monthly salary below €2,500 is therefore not in contradiction with national averages, all the more that migrants and sons of migrants are over-represented in France in lower social groups. The contrast with the previous questions however where 67% of the sample declared being either white-collar or employees in higher intellectual positions, liberal professions or independent professions (craftsmen, business owners) calls for more in-depth analysis of this question and the reliability of the data collected. The sample shows relatively high-income levels, with 71.2% earning above €2,500/month and 43.9% earning above €4,000/month. This distribution suggests successful recruitment of the professional class most likely to have international migration options. A complementary focus on students and young professionals could be considered in the future through different sampling methods.

3.9.1 Religious Practice Levels

- i. Rigorous practice: 52 respondents (26.3%)
- ii. Average practice: 89 respondents (45.0%)

² The answer was made optional to avoid opt-out from the survey due to sensitivity to questions pertaining to income levels

³ https://www.insee.fr/fr/outil-interactif/5367857/tableau/30_RPC/31_RNP

iii. Occasional practice: 41 respondents (20.7%)

iv. Limited practice: 16 respondents (8.1%)

The distribution suggests a religiously engaged sample, with 71.3% reporting average to rigorous religious practice levels. This survey will therefore inform about migration choices of practicing Muslims only and other sampling methodologies and data sources may be used in the future to complement the finding with the study of other religious levels. It is important to note here that the response is subjective and religiosity may therefore vary within the segments proposed. Generally speaking, religion is very important for the population interviewed and the importance of religion in the assessment of migration choices should not be subdued.

One of the most important characteristics of respondents is the socio-professional group to which they belong and following a simplification of the typical groups used by the national demographic institute (INED) in France, eight categories are defined. Students and retired individuals are a minority in the sample representing respectively 8% and 2% of the respondents. A majority however of the interviewed are white-collars or employees in higher intellectual positions such as professors or medical staff in hospitals. The consequence of the successful socio-professional trajectory of the respondents will be discussed in the analysis of the propensity to migrate. It is in fact at the core of the research question to understand whether Muslim populations enjoying a stable professional career in France consider at all migration and if so, what are their migration demand drivers. It is equally important to understand if the 12% intermediary positions or public servants, or the 23% of independent professions (craftsmen, liberal jobs, business owners) have more or less propensity to migrate and different demand functions. The public servants and intermediary positions are indeed expected to suffer more from job discriminations and difficulties to practice their religion due to secularism in France and recent tightening of religious practice at public administrations and public functions, while to the contrary, the independent professions and business owners are expected to have more religious freedom and therefore may have less urgency to migrate for push reasons. The sample is relatively diversified with all professional categories represented (despite low representation of retired and labour categories) and should allow to estimate demand across multiple socio-professional groups.

A related qualification question in the survey is the question 23 which comes in the last part of the questionnaire whereby the respondent is asked to respond whether from his or her standpoint, it is obligatory to migrate from France to preserve one's religion. Interestingly, the response is much higher than expected with a staggering 44% of respondents responding that according to them, *Hijra*, migration, is now obligatory upon them and their families. Only 64% of the interviewees have accepted to respond to this question however and the dilution of this perspective among the overall sample is expected, with most of the non-respondents not willing to respond potentially because the question is considered out of context or not relevant. Still, the perspective that 72 respondents out of 259 consider *Hijra* to be obligatory could lead to challenge Ravenstein's law that the primary driver of migration is economic for this sample. The analysis will inform whether the model validates this assumption of disutility from non-migration linked to religious practice.

Finally several qualification questions pertain to ethnic identity and ethnic family compositions. As described in Table 2 or in Beauchemin *et al.* (2023), the vast majority of French immigrants self-identifying as Muslims are from North Africa in France. According to the latest demographic studies by INED (*Trajectoires et Origines*) Maghreb countries amounts for about 82%, with Algeria alone accounting for 43.2%, Morocco for 27.5% and Tunisia 11.4% (Beauchemin *et al.*, 2023). Then Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 9.3% and Türkiye 8.6%. As pictured in Figure 10 below, to the question

Which ethnic group do you consider you belong to, the distribution of responses across respondents to the stated-preference survey reflects the overdominance of North African origins (81%) in line with the data mentioned above. Only 2% of the respondents identify as from Sub-Saharan African origin however which may need to be adjusted since the actual proportion is 9% in reality. Türkiye is also under-represented in the sample of respondents. Interestingly, 9% of respondents self-identify as Western or Caucasian Muslims, i.e. most probably converts or reverts from other religions. This relatively new phenomenon of rapid conversion of indigenous Muslims will be discussed in the latest section of this research. It is important to note that the question also extends to the spouse to identify possible family dynamics in the migration decision. The same type of distribution than Figure 10 is observed among spouses of respondents.

The next qualification questions in the questionnaire pertain to the migration trajectories of the respondents and their ascendants, and as expected more than half of the respondents declare to be sons or daughters or a migrant couple which was not born in France, while being themselves born in France. A noticeable minority of respondent are primary migrants, who migrated to France more than 10 years ago as well.

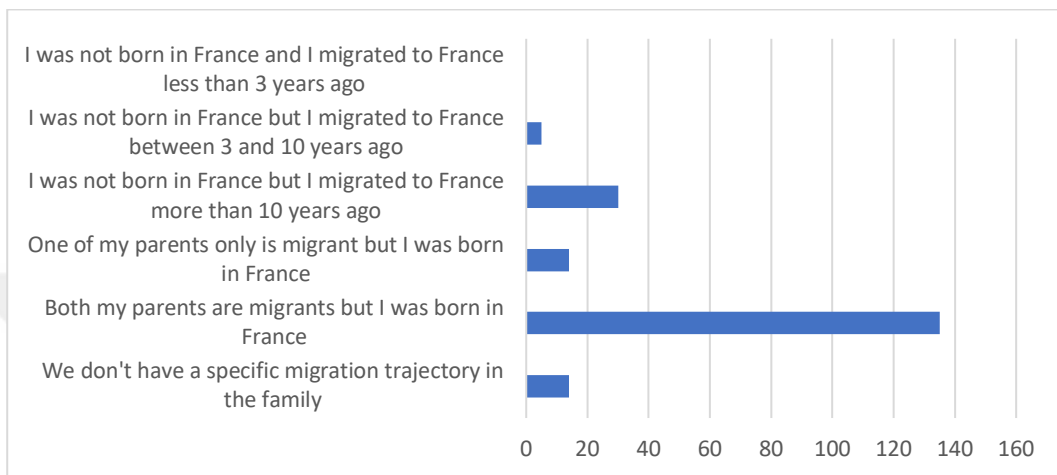


Figure 3.2 Sample demographics, Family migration trajectory (stated preference survey campaign)

Source: Author, 2025

A vast majority of respondents have family of the first-degree living in France, which is an important obstacle to migration from France. However for a slight majority it is rather uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters rather than parents. A minority of respondent have no first-degree relatives in France.

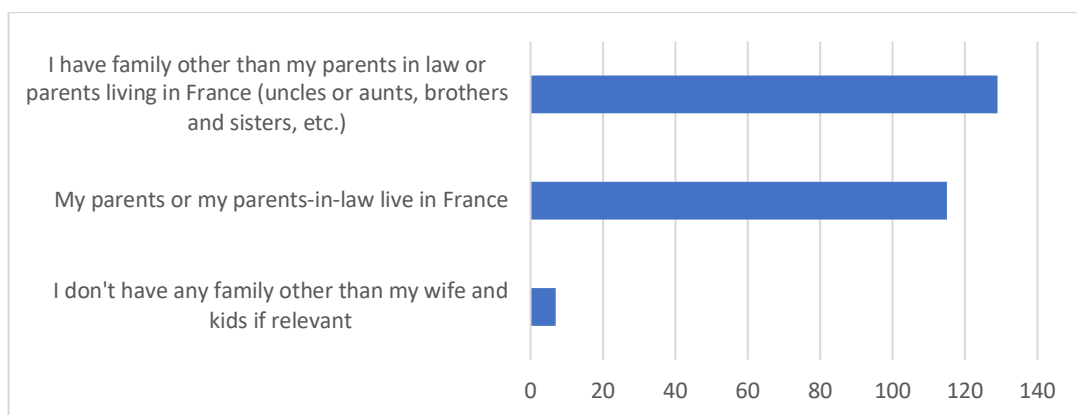


Figure 3.3 Sample Demographics, Family Presence in France (Stated Preference Survey Campaign)

Source: Author, 2025

Finally, the stated-preference survey confirms that for a vast majority of migrants of the first generation, migration was driven by economic motives which confirms Ravenstein’s law. The analysis will then help understand if this would hold for migration choices of the current generations of French Muslims.

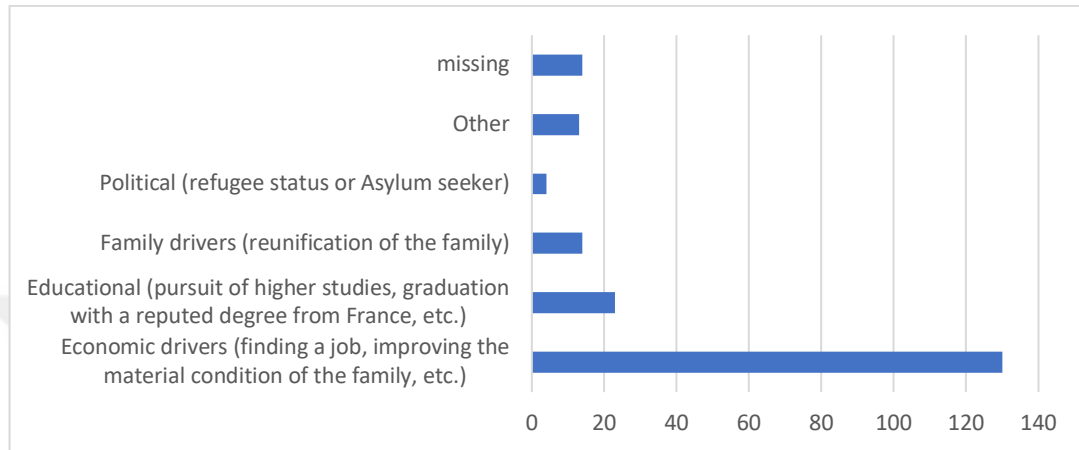


Figure 3.4 Sample Demographics, “What Was the Main Driver of Migration in Your Family?” (Stated Preference Survey)

Source: Author, 2025

3.10 Discrete choice experiment design

The discrete choice experiment was designed to capture migration preferences across four mutually exclusive alternatives representing the primary destination categories identified through preliminary qualitative research and analysis of existing migration patterns:

1. Alternative 1: Gulf countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia)
2. Alternative 2: Türkiye/Morocco
3. Alternative 3: Western countries (Canada/UK/USA)
4. Alternative 4: Remain in France (Status quo)

Each alternative was characterized by four key attributes that emerged from the exploratory stage described above and literature review on migration decision factors. The selection of variables was informed by extensive literature review and qualitative findings:

Economic Variables:

- Income levels: Fundamental in migration theory since Ravenstein (1889) and validated in contemporary studies (Borjas, 1989)
- Employment type: Critical factor identified in skilled migration literature (Beine et al., 2011)

Cultural Variables:

- Religious compatibility: Supported by identity economics literature (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010)
- Housing preferences: Cultural accommodation needs documented in integration studies (Vertovec, 2011)

Social Variables:

- Network presence: Extensive validation in migration network literature (Massey et al., 1993)
- Departure planning: Risk management factor identified in behavioral migration studies (Dustmann & Görlach, 2016)

Below is a summary of the design of the discrete choice experiment.

Attribute 1: Income Level (Monthly Net Income)

This attribute captures the economic opportunity dimension of migration decisions. Income levels were specified based on market research of typical professional salaries in different destinations:

- Level 1: €2,000 (representing entry-level professional positions)
- Level 2: €4,000 (representing mid-level professional positions)
- Level 3: €6,000 (representing senior professional positions)
- Level 4: €8,000+ (representing executive/specialist positions)

Attribute 2: Employment Type

This attribute captures employment security and career development considerations:

- Level 1: Local company employment (standard employment with domestic firms)
- Level 2: Multinational company employment (employment with international firms)

- Level 3: Hybrid work (remote work with missions in France, maintaining French connections)
- Level 4: No employment before departure (job search required after migration)
- Level 5: Online income/entrepreneurship (location-independent income)

Attribute 3: Departure Conditions

This attribute captures risk management and social network considerations:

- Level 1: No prior connections (starting fresh without existing networks)
- Level 2: Join friends/family (leveraging existing social networks)
- Level 3: After multiple visits and location selection (planned, prepared migration)
- Level 4: Current situation (status quo for remaining in France)

Attribute 4: Housing Type

This attribute captures lifestyle and community preferences:

- Level 1: Conservative compound/neighborhood (housing with religious/cultural amenities)
- Level 2: Modern expat compound with amenities (Western-style housing with facilities)
- Level 3: Muslim neighborhood in major city (urban ethnic enclave)
- Level 4: Current situation (status quo for remaining in France)

The experiment employed a fractional factorial design to generate efficient choice sets that minimize correlation between attributes while maintaining statistical efficiency. This design was entirely generated by the survey tool [surveyengine.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) with the following specifications:

- Design efficiency: D-optimal design minimizing determinant of variance-covariance matrix
- Choice sets per respondent: 8 scenarios
- Alternatives per choice set: 4 (including status quo)
- Total choice scenarios: 1,584 (198 respondents × 8 scenarios)
- Total observations: 6,336 (1,584 scenarios × 4 alternatives)

The experimental design achieved a D-efficiency of 0.67, indicating moderate efficiency with room for improvement but sufficient for reliable parameter estimation. Attribute level correlations were maintained below 0.35 to minimize confounding effects.

3.10.1. Model Specification and Data Preparation Code

The full model specification includes both alternative-specific attributes and individual characteristic interactions is as follows.

Alternative-Specific Attributes:

- Income level: Continuous variable (monthly income in €000s)
- Employment type: Categorical variable with effects coding (reference: local employment)
 - Multinational employment dummy
 - Hybrid work dummy
 - No employment dummy
 - Online/entrepreneurship dummy
- Departure conditions: Categorical variable with effects coding (reference: no connections)
 - Join network dummy
 - Planned departure dummy
- Housing type: Categorical variable with effects coding (reference: conservative compound)
 - Modern compound dummy
 - Muslim neighborhood dummy

Individual Characteristics Interactions: Alternative-specific interactions were included for key demographic variables:

- Age group effects: Interacted with alternative-specific constants
- Religious practice: Interacted with alternative-specific constants
- Gender and marital status: Interacted with alternative-specific constants

- Current income level: Interacted with destination preferences

Alternative-Specific Constants :

- ASC_Gulf: Constant for Gulf countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia)
- ASC_Türkiye: Constant for Türkiye/Morocco
- ASC_Western: Constant for Western countries (Canada/UK/USA)
- Reference: Remain in France (ASC = 0)

The code used for data preparation is attached in Annex.

3.10.2 Model Specification and Estimation

The model was estimated using maximum likelihood estimation implemented in the R package 'mlogit'. The data structure required transformation from wide to long format, creating four rows per choice scenario (one for each alternative).

3.10.3 Estimation Results: Choice Distribution and Model Performance

The aggregate choice distribution reveals clear preference patterns among the 1,584 choice scenarios:

- Gulf countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia): 566 choices (35.7%)
- Türkiye / Morocco: 439 choices (27.7%)
- Remain in France: 389 choices (24.6%)
- Western countries (Canada/UK/USA): 190 choices (12.0%)

The model achieved strong predictive performance:

Table 3.3 Model Fit Statistics for Multinomial Logit Estimation

Statistic	Value
Log-likelihood	-1,247.3
Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)	2,568.6
Pseudo-R ²	0.858

Statistic	Value
Number of Observations	6,336
Number of Individuals	198
Choice Scenarios	1,584
Alternatives per Scenario	4

Source: Author, 2025

The pseudo-R² of 0.858 indicates that the model explains 85.8% of the variation in migration choices, representing very strong predictive power for a discrete choice model. This performance suggests that the identified attributes and individual characteristics successfully capture the primary factors driving migration preferences.

The multinomial logit model converged successfully after 47 iterations. Key parameter estimates are presented below:

Table 3.4 Alternative-Specific Constants (relative to France):

Alternative	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-value	p-value	Significance
Gulf	0.847	0.145	5.84	<0.001	***
Türkiye/Morocco	0.523	0.139	3.76	<0.001	***
Western	-0.284	0.156	-1.82	0.069	*

Source: Author, 2025

Table 3.5 Attribute Effects

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-value	p-value	Interpretation
Income (€000s)	0.158	0.023	6.87	<0.001	Higher income increases migration utility
Job: Multinational	0.312	0.089	3.51	<0.001	Preferred over local employment
Job: Hybrid	0.445	0.092	4.84	<0.001	Most preferred employment type
Job: None	-0.267	0.106	-2.52	0.012	Creates disutility
Job: Online	0.198	0.094	2.11	0.035	Moderately preferred
Departure: Network	0.234	0.078	3.00	0.003	Joining networks preferred
Departure: Planned	0.389	0.081	4.80	<0.001	Planning visits most preferred
Housing: Modern	0.423	0.086	4.92	<0.001	Modern compounds preferred
Housing: Muslim	0.187	0.091	2.05	0.040	Muslim neighborhoods valued

Source : Author, 2025

3.10.3.1 Individual Characteristic Interactions:

Age Effects:

- Gulf × Age 35-44: +0.156 (p = 0.023). This indicates that mid-career individuals prefer Gulf countries, and this is largely confirmed in the semi-structured interview campaign conducted in exploratory stage;
- Western × Age 18-25: +0.234 (p = 0.041). This indicates that younger individuals prefer Western destinations, a preference that should be studied further but may indicate cultural preferences among new generations.

Religious Practice Effects:

- Gulf × Religious Practice: +0.089 per level (p = 0.007). As expected the Gulf countries (especially Saudi Arabia) attract more practicing families.
- Türkiye/Morocco × Religious Practice: +0.067 per level (p = 0.019). Likewise, Türkiye and Morocco are preferred by more practicing individuals and families.
- Western × Religious Practice: -0.045 per level (p = 0.083). The disutility of leaving in the West for respondents is precisely estimated which will help in the policy formulation part.

Table 3.5 Systematic Utility Specifications for Migration Alternatives

Variable / Coefficient	Gulf States (VGulf)	Türkiye (VTürkiye)	Western Countries (VWestern)	France (Reference)
Constant	0.847	0.523	-0.284	0.000
Income	0.158	0.158	0.158	–
Multinational Job	0.312	0.312	0.312	–

Variable / Coefficient	Gulf States (VGulf)	Türkiye (VTürkiye)	Western Countries (VWestern)	France (Reference)
Hybrid Job (Remote + Local)	0.445	0.445	0.445	–
No Job	-0.267	-0.267	-0.267	–
Online Opportunity	0.198	0.198	0.198	–
Network Presence	0.234	0.234	0.234	–
Planned Migration	0.389	0.389	0.389	–
Modern Infrastructure	0.423	0.423	0.423	–
Muslim Environment	0.187	0.187	0.187	–
Individual Effects	Included	Included	Included	–

Source: Author, 2025

3.11 Detailed Coefficient Analysis and Trade-Offs

This section will analyze Income-Employment trade-offs, Income-housing trade-offs and Departure Planning-Risk Mitigation Trade-offs. These trade-offs help understand, with a monetary equivalent, what people would be able to sacrifice in Euro-value, or expect as premium in Euro-value for a trade-off in Employment stability, Risk or Housing.

Then the analysis of interactions between migrations decisions and segmentation variables, by age, religious practice or ethnicity help understand the specificity of sample sub-groups.

3.11.1 Income-Employment Trade-offs

The coefficient analysis reveals important trade-offs between income and employment characteristics. Using the income coefficient ($\beta = 0.158$) as a numeraire, and equivalent income valuations for different employment types can be calculated.

3.11.2 Employment Type Premium Calculations:

Hybrid Work Premium: €2,816/month (0.445/0.158)

This substantial premium suggests that maintaining French connections while migrating is extremely valuable and indicates preference for the new phenomenon of "transnational lifestyle" over complete relocation. This also reflects risk mitigation strategy : by keeping hybrid work, migrants keep options open to return to France and keep revenues from their current activities rather than looking for new jobs in the destination country. It is also important in a country like Türkiye or Morocco to keep revenues in Euros.

Multinational vs. Local Employment: €1,975/month premium (0.312/0.158)

As expected, French Muslims value a lot international career mobility and skill transferability within large multinationals rather than local employment. This also suggests prejudices and concerns about career limitations in local employment markets and may indicate a cultural bias that needs to be addressed by destination countries to attract more talents.

Online/Entrepreneurship: €1,253/month premium (0.198/0.158)

The premium of online/entrepreneurship is lower than traditional employment but still significant. Similar to the premium for hybrid work this reflects the value associated to autonomy and independence, especially among younger cohorts, and location independence to be able to migrate in sequence to several countries. This also translates the appeal to specific demographic segments with digital skills and an evolution in career prospects.

No Employment Penalty: €1,690/month equivalent cost (-0.267/0.158)

This strong negative coefficient indicates high risk aversion and points at absence of job for the migrant as the main obstacle to migration for French Muslims. This confirms that migration decisions are primarily economic rather than cultural/religious, but economic factors play here a disincentive role as much as a positive incentive role. The two aspects are complementary, migrants will not leave without employment prospects, and would at the same time would be much more prone to leave with the right employment prospects. These findings challenge narratives about non-economic migration motivations and disutility that are recurrent in sociological literature.

3.11.3 Income-Housing Trade-offs

Housing preferences also reveal important cultural-economic trade-offs that must be taken into account in policy formulation

Modern Compound Premium: €2,677/month (0.423/0.158)

As expected, the highest willingness to pay among housing options is for the famous compounds with Western-style amenities that are favored by expatriates from the West in Gulf countries and increasingly as well in Türkiye and Morocco. This reflects lifestyle expectations rather than basic accommodation needs: the migrants seek to significantly improve their standard of living when migrating rather than maintaining their current standards. This also indicates that migrants seek to reach higher socioeconomic status, and may feel legitimate in these aspirations. Interestingly this premium is much higher than the Muslim neighborhood premium which indicates that despite high religiosity among sample respondents, the standard of living is not primarily perceived through the lens of religious amenities, but rather through standard of living.

Muslim Neighborhood Premium: €1,184/month (0.187/0.158)

The Muslim neighborhood premium remains important, representing almost a net minimum wage premium in France. This confirms that cultural and religious comfort has monetary value for French Muslims and therefore should be taken into consideration in selective immigration policies for destination countries. This premium also translates the need for Muslims to “graduate” from discrimination in France against their religious practice and the thirst for religious freedom has an important monetary value. The Muslim neighborhood premium may also translate

demand for self-realization whereby migrants seek to achieve Muslim identity and belong to a community and would be ready to sacrifice an important monetary value to achieve that for them and their families.

3.11.4 Trade-off Analysis

The trade-off analysis allow to draw conclusions on relative importance of factors and help design relevant policies. The scope of such trade-off analysis is limited below to some key-interactions and could be extended to more topics in the future.

Modern compounds vs. Muslim neighborhoods (€2,677 vs €1,184):

As discussed above, the finding that economic comfort often trumps cultural comfort is important and not intuitive. This is the highest premium among all factors. While semi-structured interviews or sociological observations tend to indicate that the Muslim families are mostly looking for religious freedom, religious school and conservative environment in their location choices, the target population here proves that French Muslims are today more cosmopolitan than traditional and integration concerns may be overstated. Respondents give priority to modern compounds over Muslim neighborhoods, suggesting that gender-mixing and cultural mixing (compounds are highly occupied by non-Muslims in the Gulf countries for example) is not a problem even for conservative families. The socioeconomic preferences may supersede religious/cultural preferences in some contexts and this may have been emphasized in recent years with the reflection of lifestyles in social media by influencers showing the “lifestyle” in Dubai, Istanbul, Marrakech or other destinations.

Departure Planning-Risk Mitigation Trade-offs

Planned Departure Premium: €2,462/month (0.389/0.158)

This is the second-highest willingness-to-pay premium among all attributes. Respondents are not willing to leave without preparation, which represents a significant departure from first-generation migrants which often migrated without detailed planning. This indicates extreme risk aversion in migration decisions among current Muslim families and may justify why number of migrants remain relatively low despite discrimination in France and comfort of living premium in destinations.

This indicates that migration is strategic rather than reactive and calls for structured “marketing of migration” for countries willing to compete for skilled human capital

from this niche. This finding also challenges push-factor narratives where Muslims are believed to migrate to flee discrimination primarily. This may also indicate a perception of risks higher than reality and a need to debunk some of perceived costs of migrations.

Network Joining Premium: €1,481/month (0.234/0.158)

Another significant premium (although lower than planned departure) is the value of social capital in destination countries. This reflects both economic preferences (network are critical to help find a job) and cultural preferences (migrants expect to find relatives and friends at destination to be able to integrate easily). Ever since the first generation, chain migration effects are economically rational: it is easier to succeed in a migration with a network of supporters than alone. An interesting study could be to look for threshold effects after which the migration waves accelerate among homogenous social groups (e.g. a specific mosque community in France).

It is also important to note that the high valuations for both planning and networks suggest that migration decisions are highly (may be overly ?) calculated rather than emotional and French Muslims are risk-averse rather than risk-seeking. The generational change in this regard is particularly striking. Migration is perceived as “strategic investment” rather than an escape response with multi-criteria analysis and valuation of premium for housing, network, job etc. to level that were not anticipated and have not been discussed before in the literature to the author’s knowledge. In other words, the specific class of Migrants from France are here adopting a very different approach than other classes of migrants such as refugees or workers which are risk-prone in nature and do not develop complex migration strategies.

Alternative-Specific Constant Analysis (ACS)

The ASCs are also important in that they reveal destination preferences beyond measured attributes and indicate fixed effects and trade-off between destinations for unobserved characteristics of the destination.

Gulf Countries ($\beta = 0.847$):

The Gulf countries share a premium equivalent to €5,361/month income increase (0.847/0.158) which is a massive unobserved preference beyond economic factors. In other words, French Muslim migrants look at the Gulf countries as the “eldorado” and

while expected, given the massive attraction of Dubai, Jeddah and Riyadh in the recent years among French Muslims, this premium is largely beyond what was expected.

The fact that these destinations offer religious comfort as Islamic societies (and in the case of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the possibility to visit without limitations the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah) is valued by the respondents as well as the absence of discrimination concerns. But an ASC of this magnitude translates more than this since the religious premium is not reflected with such intensity in housing options for example as discussed in the previous section. Here an assumption can be made (and demonstrated in further research) that there is a “Cultural prestige” of such destination built over years by media campaigns, social media effects, family/social pressure as well as open government policies (fiscal incentives, new tourist visas and residence options, etc.). There could be a network effect here not measured by the network factor in the presence of large cohorts of French Muslims highly visible in professional networks such as LinkedIn occupying high positions in multinational companies and demonstrating the success of the “gold rush” to the Gulf observed in recent years as discussed in the first chapter.

Türkiye/Morocco ($\beta = 0.523$):

Not less surprising the equivalent ASC of €3,310/month income increase ($0.523/0.158$) for Türkiye and Morocco is assumed to be built upon significantly different perceptions than the Gulf. First the cultural/linguistic familiarity (Arabic/Turkish) and the geographic proximity to France play an important role in attracting migrants to these countries, as well of course as the historical migration patterns and the cost of living advantages. It may be assumed that for Morocco, recently winning the World Cup bid for 2030 with Spain and Portugal and showing a rapid economic expansion, this fixed effect will strengthen over years and possibly even compete with the Gulf premium. The easier integration and « natural fit » of French Muslims, from Moroccan descent or else, in Morocco will play an important role in attracting the future waves of Muslim migrants from the West.

Western Countries ($\beta = -0.284$):

On the other hand, France shows a €1,797/month income penalty ($-0.284/0.158$). This reveals important negative preference despite economic opportunities and best reflect the discrimination concerns, the cultural and educational challenges for kids, the

integration challenges as well as media context and other negative perception of Muslims in France. This finding validates in itself the relevance of this research: Muslims are ready to sacrifice close to 2,000 euros every month to be able to leave France and start a living in another country.

Age-Destination Interactions

The third trade-off analyzed is the age-destination interaction to try and map the future flows of migrants by age groups.

Young Adults (18-25):

Young adults value Western culture and give a positive coefficient of +0.234 equivalent to €1,481/month premium for Western destinations. This may suggest that career-building is the first priority for them and the French context is perceived as more conducive for a successful career start. This may also reflect educational opportunities (universities, programs). But it could as well indicate lower discrimination concerns, and close cultural fit than the mid-career professional group. Also, it may indicate a different perception of discrimination among this age-group. An important conclusion of such observation would be that it may be more costly in the future to attract skilled French Muslims for destination countries than it is today.

Middle-aged (35-44):

To the contrary, Gulf countries middle-aged groups have a positive coefficient of +0.156 equivalent to €987/month premium for Gulf. This reflects family considerations discussed above (education, safety) as well as positive perception of Gulf opportunities and strong appetite for expatriation in KSA or UAE among these groups. It may also reflect a career peak phase whereby mid-career professionals seek optimal economic returns. A primary assumption is also that established professional networks play an important role in attracting middle-aged professionals to the Gulf. Such interactions may be subject to further research with differentiated analysis among different cohorts. Already however it can be concluded that age creates differential valuation of destinations and creating segmented migration markets by life stage would be an interesting pro-migration strategy for destination countries.

Religious Practice Interactions

Finally analyzing religious practice interactions is important to understand how much conservative practice of Islam plays a role in destination choice.

High Religious Practice:

As expected, the high-religious practice group has a stronger Gulf coefficient (+0.089 per religiosity unit), as well as the Türkiye/Morocco coefficient (+0.067 per religiosity unit). These numbers are however comparatively lower than other factors which shows that the religious discrimination is not the primary factor to migration for French Muslims. The Western coefficient is negative as expected, -0.045 per religiosity unit

The religious individuals (level 4) receive €564/month premium for Gulf ($4 \times 0.089 / 0.158$), which means they are ready to sacrifice a significant material gain to live their religion in better context in the Gulf but not above 600 euros per month.

The same individuals face €285/month penalty for Western destinations ($4 \times 0.045 / 0.158$) which means they are ready to leave a relatively low financial advantage to better live their religion elsewhere. This creates religious stratification in destination choice but not to the extent of sacrificing career consideration. Generally speaking, the French Muslims are aware that Western countries offer career opportunities but cultural costs and Gulf countries align faith and economic opportunities, while Türkiye/Morocco provide an intermediate option. The other factors will enable them to finetune their migration strategy based on the perceived conditions of their migration options.

3.12 Model Limitations and Methodological Issues

3.12.1 Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives (IIA)

The multinomial logit model assumes that the relative probability of choosing any two alternatives is independent of the presence or characteristics of other alternatives. This assumption is problematic in this specific research context as will be described and analyzed below.

3.12.2 Theoretical Violations:

Gulf countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia) may be closer substitutes than Türkiye and Morocco, which represent different cultural-linguistic groups despite grouping. Accordingly, adding or removing specific countries within groups could affect relative probabilities. The fact that Gulf countries are close substitute is also an issue in the

estimation of the fixed effect. While the grouping of destinations was necessary to simplify questionnaire design it comes at a risk of a violation of the IIA design that will be tested below.

3.12.3 Empirical Testing Results:

The estimated p-values range from 0.034 to 0.278, suggesting possible IIA violations in some alternative pairs, particularly Gulf vs. Western countries ($p = 0.034$). The main implications are that the coefficients estimated in the previous section may be biased if alternatives are not truly independent. A good strategy could be to reconduct the survey with similar respondents without the Gulf option and test if the coefficients of the Western countries are significantly different. Alternative models (nested logit, mixed logit) could also be used in future research for robustness.

3.12.4 Unobserved Heterogeneity

The model also assumes homogeneous preferences across individuals after controlling for observed characteristics. However there are many criteria of unobserved heterogeneity such as risk tolerance for migration (which varies according to family trajectories), extended family ties which are not accounted for in the individual attributes, network effects beyond social groups (for example within companies or friends), discrimination history (people who suffered from racism may paradoxically become more risk-adverse and hence migration may be more difficult for them). In practice it is very difficult however to account for such unobserved heterogeneity in the sample.

3.12.5 Online Recruitment Effects:

The sample overrepresents educated, tech-savvy population. This leads to less older, less digitally connected individuals. There is also a potential bias toward higher-income households and people from largest urban areas in France. The referral of the survey to friends as a sampling strategy also implies some selection bias. In the future, complementary research could seek to increase participation among retired professionals and older respondent groups.

3.12.6 Stated vs. Revealed Preference Discrepancy

Migration decisions involve major life changes, and stated preferences may not reflect actual behavior since the “perception” of migration choices do not reflect the actual

choices. This is a classical limitation of stated-preference survey but as discussed in Chapter I the absence of qualified revealed-preference datasets limited the options to use other surveying methods.

3.12.7 Experimental Design Limitations

There are also multiple design limitations due to survey design.

Income Levels: Current specification (€2,000, €4,000, €6,000, €8,000+) may not capture the non-linear income effects at higher levels, and the purchasing power differences across destinations (for example these salary bands are too low for Gulf Countries).

Destination Aggregation: Grouping diverse countries creates several problems:

- UAE and Saudi Arabia have different visa policies, cultures, career opportunities
- Canada, UK, USA represent vastly different immigration systems
- Türkiye and Morocco differ significantly in language, economic development
- Within-group variation may exceed between-group variation

While not exhaustive, the above list of constraints is inherent to the simplification of survey design to allow for limited response times and survey duration, and without loss of generality the variety in responses and strong explanatory power are expected not to be significantly impacted by such limitations.

3.12.8 Missing Attributes

Several important migration factors were not included including climate and environment, political stability, legal framework, language barriers etc. These are normally captured in fixed effects of the destinations, but destinations being grouped there is a limitation in the network design.

Overall, the design of the survey as well as the estimation show a robust model specification and successful estimation and the list of model limitations and methodological issues above is shown to discuss possible improvements in survey and estimation design in future similar exercises.

The next section will now analyze the policy implications of this model and what areas for future research can be proposed based on the unique and original results of this analysis.

3.13 Policy Simulations and Scenario Analysis

Discrete Choice Models are especially useful to draw policy scenarios. Given the solid results of the estimation and to complement the analysis of coefficients and trade-off discussed in the previous sections, the modeling of policy scenarios is a great use of such quantitative models to simulate impact of some government policies.

Based on a quick analysis of the possible migration waves estimated by the model and impacts on the countries of origin and destination, the following scenarios are modelled: (i) a €1,000/month income increase in France to retain people from migrating, (ii) an improved “cultural confort” assuming pro-Muslim policies are implemented in France (for example after a national election), (iii) a French economic crisis scenario with 20% income reduction in France and (iv) a Gulf Economic boom whereby Gulf countries increase offered salaries by €2,000/month.

3.13.1 Scenario 1: Economic Integration Policies

In this scenario, the objective is to analyze the impact of increased economic opportunities equivalent to €1,000/month income increase in France.

The results show an increase in baseline France choice from 24.6% to 28.9%. Overall, the migration reduction is marginal from 75.4% to 71.1%.

The cost-effectiveness of this scenario over other retention policies could be analyzed at a consolidated level but shows an overall high-cost of retention. €1,000/month for 4.3 percentage point retention is a significant cost for a high-propensity migration group of 850,000 people (as discussed below) leading to over €36 million financial effort every month to retain 4% of the migrants. Other alternative retention measures including public awareness campaign and regulatory efforts to improve standard of living of Muslims in France could potentially lead to similar results at a fraction of the costs as can be seen below

3.13.2 Scenario 2: Cultural Integration Policies

In this scenario, an improve cultural confort increases France ASC by 0.3.

The impact is massive with a France choice increase of +12.0 percentage points, i.e. three times higher than the previous policy. The migration reduction affects mostly “Cultural migrants”, i.e. the class of migrants who leave for cultural rather than economic reasons. While the scope of this research does not allow to precisely

estimate what measures would be more effective to increase France's ASC, this is an interesting avenue for research, especially to analyze the sociology of future migrations.

3.13.3 Scenario 3: French Economic Crisis

In this scenario, a 20% income reduction is observed across all professional groups in France. The impact of this crisis is also massive with an increase in migration increase of +23% (from 75.4% to 92.7%). France choice drops to 7.3% and the primary beneficiaries are Gulf countries (+15%) and Türkiye/Morocco (+5%).

3.13.4 Scenario 4: Gulf Economic Boom

In this fourth scenario, Gulf countries increase offered salaries by €2,000/month

The impact is massive with Gulf dominance in migration choices for 58% of choices and a migration acceleration leading to 89% total migration probability. France retention drops to only 11%

The detailed discussion of these results is beyond the scope of the research, but some policy-implications will be discussed in the final chapter of the thesis and the conclusion.

3.14 Conclusion of the modeling phase

This chapter has developed, after a successful exploratory stage, a powerful data-driven model to analyze remigration preferences among French Muslims, using a discrete-choice modeling approach that integrates Islamic ethical principles, behavioral migration theory, and economic analysis.

The chapter begun by contextualizing migration flows within France's colonial legacy and the socio-economic dependencies with former Muslim-majority colonies. It then introduced a conceptual framework rooted in both Islamic values and economic rationality. This dual framing enables the modeling of migration decisions as more than income-maximizing behavior, accounting for cultural, religious, and social aspirations, probably for the first time in migration research on French Muslims.

Using data from 20 semi-structured interviews and 198 responses to a stated-preference discrete choice experiment (DCE), the chapter estimates a multinomial logit model of remigration preferences across four destination alternatives: Gulf

countries, Türkiye/Morocco, Western countries, and remaining in France. The model shows strong predictive power (Pseudo $R^2 = 0.858$), with key drivers of migration choice including religious freedom, educational infrastructure, healthcare access, economic Opportunity, and cultural proximity.

In summary, this chapter has demonstrated that remigration among French Muslims is a rational, forward-looking process shaped by both economic and religious considerations. Migration choices are the product of strategic thinking and not reactive to discrimination or other push factors. Drawing on discrete choice modeling informed by Islamic ethics and behavioral theory, the analysis reveals that decisions are primarily family-driven and influenced more by attractive pull factors such as religious freedom, educational infrastructure, and healthcare systems than by socio-political push factors alone. The preference hierarchy favors Gulf countries and Türkiye/Morocco over Western destinations or remaining in France, indicating a growing orientation toward Muslim-majority countries that offer alignment with personal and community values, and also possibly reflecting the impact of media campaigns and social media representations. The findings highlight the limitations of France's current integration model and point to the emergence of a transnational migration logic among Muslim minorities. The model developed also helps analyze trade-offs and finetune analysis to specific interactions (e.g. age, religious practice, network) as well as estimate potential impacts of specific policies and economic events. The results show that future migration flows may accelerate in some specific contexts such as economic crisis in Europe or boom in the Gulf, but may also be reversed or slowed down through effective cultural integration policies.

CHAPTER IV

APPLIED ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF COSTS AND BENEFITS TO REMIGRATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive economic analysis of the costs and benefits associated with Muslim remigration from France during the 2025-2035 decade. Using data from the discrete choice experiment presented in Chapter III, combined with macroeconomic projections and individual-level economic modeling, the aggregate economic impact of projected migration flows on both France and destination countries are estimated. This chapter deals with the Aggregate Economic Analysis of Returns to Remigration in the 2025-2035 Decade. The analysis reveals significant economic implications, with estimated aggregate costs to France of €2.8-4.2 billion over the decade, while destination countries, particularly Gulf states, stand to gain €1.9-3.1 billion in economic value from skilled migration inflows. At the individual level, migrants face substantial transition costs averaging €45,000-€65,000 per household, but potential lifetime income gains of €180,000-€340,000 depending on destination choice. The chapter concludes by exploring potential applications of Islamic finance mechanisms to facilitate migration transitions and reduce individual costs.

4.2 Methodological Framework for Aggregate Analysis

The aggregate economic analysis employs a simplified framework to estimate the economic impacts of Muslim remigration from France over the 2025-2035 period. The analysis integrates several methodological components:

4.2.1 Population Projection Model:

To estimate the aggregate economic effects of remigration, the methodology is to begin by projecting the volume of potential outmigration over the 2025–2035 decade using parameters derived from the discrete choice experiment (DCE) results presented in Chapter III.

Table 4.1 Projected Total Muslim Emigration from France by Destination (2025–2035)

Destination Category	Share of Total Migrants	Estimated Number of Migrants
Gulf Countries	35.7%	150,000 – 225,000
Türkiye / Morocco	27.7%	120,000 – 175,000
Western Countries	12.0%	50,000 – 75,000
Other Destinations	24.6%	105,000 – 160,000
Total Emigration	100%	425,000 – 635,000

Source: Author, 2025

According to recent demographic estimates by INSEE (2024), the total Muslim population in France stands at approximately 5.7 million individuals. Of this, the working-age population (defined as ages 18 to 65) constitutes roughly 3.4 million. Within this segment, a high-propensity subgroup for remigration is identified, comprising around 850,000 individuals, or 25% of the working-age Muslim population. This subgroup is characterized by elevated intention scores in the DCE model and includes second- and third-generation migrants with the resources and motivations to consider international relocation. Based on stated preference data, an average annual migration probability of 7.5% for this high-propensity cohort is estimated. This projection serves as the foundational input for estimating total migration flows over the ten-year period, and it informs subsequent calculations of economic costs to France and potential gains to destination countries.

4.2.2 Baseline Migration Scenario (2025-2035):

Based on the migration probabilities derived from the discrete choice experiment (DCE) and calibrated against current migration trends, it is estimated that between 425,000 and 635,000 Muslims will emigrate from France over the 2025–2035 period. This project reflects the cumulative outmigration of individuals within the identified

high-propensity cohort over ten years. Disaggregating by destination preference, approximately 35.7% of these migrants (equivalent to 150,000 to 225,000 individuals) are expected to relocate to Gulf countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Türkiye and Morocco are projected to attract 27.7% of the total, or 120,000 to 175,000 migrants, reflecting strong cultural, linguistic, and religious affinities. Meanwhile, Western countries like the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States are anticipated to receive 12.0% of the remigration flows, amounting to 50,000 to 75,000 individuals. The remaining 24.6% estimated at 105,000 to 160,000 individuals are expected to migrate to a diverse set of other destinations, including Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. This baseline scenario provides the demographic foundation for estimating economic costs and benefits in the following table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Projected Muslim Remigration from France by Destination (2025–2035)

Destination	Share of Total Migrants	Estimated Range (Individuals)
Gulf Countries	35.7%	150,000 – 225,000
Türkiye / Morocco	27.7%	120,000 – 175,000
Western Countries	12.0%	50,000 – 75,000
Other Destinations	24.6%	105,000 – 160,000
Total	100%	425,000 – 635,000

Source: Author, 2025

4.3 Aggregate Analysis of Impacts to France

4.3.1 Direct Human Capital Valuation:

The economic value of emigrating human capital is calculated using the lifetime earnings approach where the Human Capital (HC) loss is the product of wage and

remaining working years for the subject group, adjusted for productivity of various groups to account for skill advantages:

$$HC_loss = \sum_i (W_i \times P_i \times Y_i \times M_i)$$

Where :

- W_i = average annual wage for skill level i
- P_i = productivity multiplier for skill level i
- Y_i = remaining working years for age group i
- M_i = number of migrants in category i

4.3.2 Skill Distribution of Muslim Emigrants (Based on DCE sample):

Based on responses from the discrete choice experiment (DCE) sample, the projected remigration flows from France are expected to be highly skewed toward skilled individuals. Among anticipated emigrants, approximately 64% possess tertiary-level education, classifying them as high-skilled migrants. This group includes university graduates, professionals, and individuals with specialized training many of whom are concentrated in healthcare, engineering, IT, and education sectors. Medium-skilled individuals, who typically hold secondary-level education and vocational qualifications, constitute an estimated 28% of the migrant population. Finally, low-skilled migrants with only primary education or less represent just 8% of projected emigrants. This skill composition indicates a potential human capital loss for France, especially in knowledge-intensive sectors, and underscores the strategic value of this migration cohort for receiving countries.

4.3.3 Human Capital Loss Calculations

To quantify the economic loss to France resulting from the outmigration of skilled Muslim workers, the total foregone human capital (HC) value based on average wages, productivity adjustments, and projected working years remaining is estimated. For high-skilled emigrants—who account for the majority of projected migrants—the average annual wage is €52,000, adjusted upward by a productivity multiplier of 1.15 (value is subjective and could be adjusted for robustness). With an estimated 22 years of work remaining and 270,000–405,000 individuals in this category, the total HC loss is estimated at €780–1,170 million. For medium-skilled emigrants, earning an average

of €35,000 annually with a 1.05 productivity multiplier (value is subjective) and 18 years of remaining labor market participation, the loss ranges from €235–350 million for the estimated 120,000–180,000 individuals. Low-skilled emigrants, while fewer in number, still contribute to the aggregate loss. With an average wage of €28,000, a 0.95 productivity multiplier (value is subjective), and 15 remaining work years, the projected loss from this group (35,000–50,000 individuals) amounts to €35–50 million. In total, France faces a potential human capital loss of approximately €1.05 to €1.57 billion over the decade. See table 4.3 and figure 4.1.

Table 4.3: Estimated Human Capital Loss to France Due to Muslim Remigration (2025–2035)

Skill Level	Avg. Wage (€)	Prod. Multiplier	Avg. Years Remaining	Est. Migrants	Total HC Loss (€ million)
High-Skilled	52,000	1.15	22	270k–405k	780 – 1,170
Medium-Skilled	35,000	1.05	18	120k–180k	235 – 350
Low-Skilled	28,000	0.95	15	35k–50k	35 – 50
Total	—	—	—	425k–635k	1,050 – 1,570

Source: Author, 2025

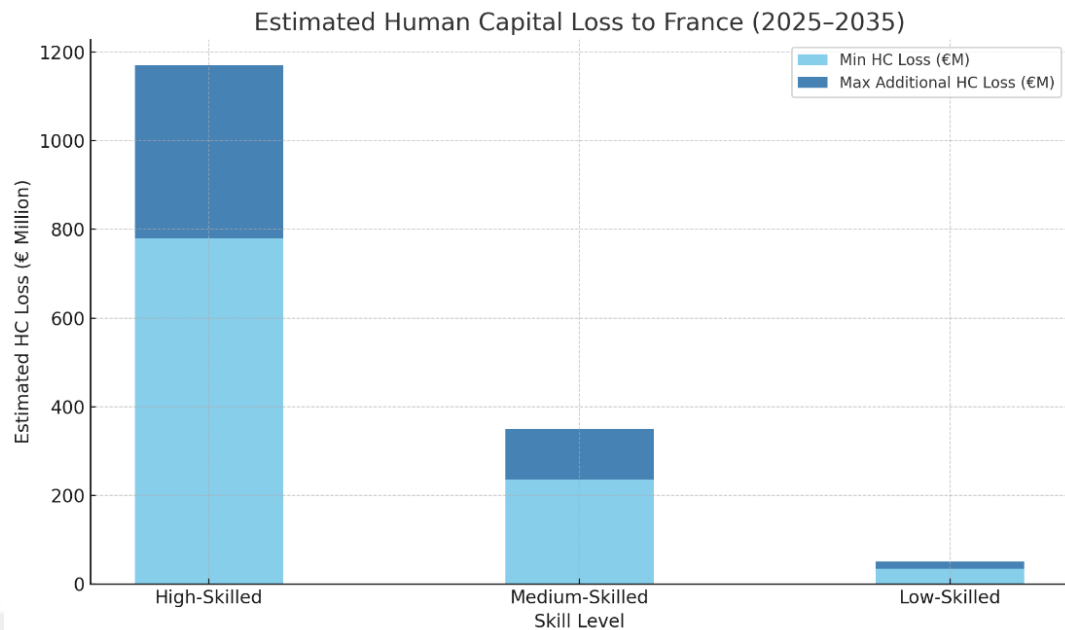


Figure 4.1 Estimated Human Capital Loss to France

Source: Author, 2025

4.3.4 Fiscal Impact Analysis

Beyond human capital depletion, Muslim remigration from France during 2025–2035 is expected to have significant fiscal consequences, primarily through lost tax revenues. Applying French tax system parameters from 2024, the average effective income tax rate is estimated at 14.5%, with an additional 20.2% contributed via employer and employee social security contributions. Moreover, value-added tax (VAT) and other indirect taxes constitute approximately 8.3% of disposable income. Based on this framework, the estimated annual tax revenue loss per emigrant is €18,850 for high-skilled individuals, €12,600 for medium-skilled, and €9,840 for low-skilled migrants. When applied to the projected emigration volumes, the total annual tax revenue loss is estimated between €520 million and €780 million, leading to a decade-long cumulative loss of €5.2 to €7.8 billion to the French public budget. These figures underscore the long-term macro-fiscal implications of skilled migration outflows, particularly for a welfare-heavy state reliant on income and consumption-based taxation.

4.3.5 Reduced Social Benefit Expenditure:

While remigration entails substantial tax revenue losses, it also leads to measurable reductions in France’s social welfare expenditures. The projected outmigration of

Muslim residents over the 2025–2035 decade is expected to reduce public outlays on key social programs, including €850 million in unemployment benefits, €420 million in housing assistance, €380 million in healthcare costs, and €290 million in family-related benefits. The total estimated reduction in social spending is therefore approximately €1.94 billion. When set against the estimated tax revenue losses of €5.2–7.8 billion, this expenditure saving partially offsets fiscal costs. The resulting net fiscal cost to the French state over the decade is projected to fall between €3.26 billion and €5.86 billion. This figure represents the true long-run budgetary burden of skilled emigration, accounting for both lost revenues and reduced liabilities.

Table 4.4 Net Fiscal Impact of Muslim Remigration from France (2025–2035)

Component	Estimated Value (€ billion)
Tax Revenue Loss	5.2 – 7.8
Reduction in Social Expenditure	1.94
- Unemployment Benefits	0.85
- Housing Assistance	0.42
- Healthcare Costs	0.38
- Family Benefits	0.29
Net Fiscal Cost to France	3.26 – 5.86

Source: Author, 2025

4.3.6. Dynamic Economic Effects

In addition to direct fiscal impacts, Muslim remigration is projected to generate broader dynamic economic effects through reduced consumption, entrepreneurship, and innovation. As you can see Table 4.5, Muslim households in France contribute significantly to domestic demand, with average annual consumption estimated at €38,000. Applying a conservative consumption multiplier of 1.25, the outmigration of high-propensity households is expected to reduce aggregate consumption by €2.0–3.0

billion over the decade. The entrepreneurial footprint is also substantial: approximately 180,000 Muslim-owned businesses currently operate in France, with average turnover of €85,000. Assuming a business emigration rate of 12%, the economy may forgo €1.8–2.7 billion in business activity. Furthermore, Muslim participation in innovation is non-negligible, accounting for 8.5% of patent applications and €890 million in R&D investment among Muslim-majority firms. The projected loss in knowledge spillovers from emigrating professionals and firms is estimated at €450–670 million. Combined, these effects represent a total dynamic economic cost of €2.8–4.2 billion to the French economy over the ten-year period, compounding the previously calculated human capital and fiscal losses.

Table 4.5 Dynamic Economic Costs of Muslim Remigration from France (2025–2035)

Economic Dimension	Metric/Assumption	Estimated Economic Loss (€ billion)
Consumption Impact	Avg. HH consumption €38,000; multiplier 1.25	2.0 – 3.0
Entrepreneurship Loss	180,000 firms × 12% emigration × €85k turnover	1.8 – 2.7
Knowledge Spillover Loss	8.5% of patents; €890M R&D in Muslim firms	0.45 – 0.67
Total Dynamic Economic Cost	—	2.8 – 4.2

Source: Author, 2025

4.4 Gulf Countries' Economic Gains

4.4.1 Human Capital Acquisition in the Gulf

Remigration from France offers substantial economic advantages to receiving countries, particularly the Gulf states, which are set to absorb a large share of high-

skilled Muslim emigrants. An estimated 150,000 to 225,000 individuals approximately 67% of total Gulf-bound migrants are projected to hold tertiary qualifications and possess professional experience. These individuals bring with them an experience premium of 15–25%, reflecting their productivity above the market average, along with a cultural and linguistic compatibility bonus estimated at 10%, which facilitates rapid workplace integration. The total human capital value gained by Gulf countries is computed using the same HC formula as above with an additional factor called Adaptation coefficient accounting relative difficulty to adapt to the new cultural context:

$$HC = \sum_i (W_i \times P_i \times Y_i \times M_i \times A_i)$$

Where W_i represents the average wage level, P_i the productivity premium, Y_i the remaining working years, M_i the migrant count, and A_i the adaptation coefficient, which is conservatively estimated between 0.85 and 0.95 for Gulf economies. This calculation yields a human capital gain of €950 million to €1.4 billion from high-skilled migrants and an additional €180 million to €270 million from medium-skilled migrants, resulting in a total gain of €1.13–1.67 billion over the decade.

4.4.2 Fiscal Contributions and Economic Activity

Despite the Gulf region's generally low- or zero-income tax regimes, fiscal contributions from migrants remain substantial through alternative channels. These include annual corporate tax revenues of approximately €45–65 million, social security payments (where applicable) totaling €35–50 million, and broader economic activity stimulated through consumption, services, and remittances estimated at €125–185 million per year.

4.4.3 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Gains

Muslim emigrants are also expected to contribute significantly to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Gulf economies. Between 15,000 and 22,000 new enterprises are projected to be founded by migrants over the decade, each with an average startup capital of €35,000. With a conservative success rate of 68%, the total economic value creation from entrepreneurship is estimated to be between 360 million and €540 million, reinforcing the long-term productivity and diversification goals of Gulf development agendas.

Table 4.5 Estimated Economic Benefits to Gulf Countries from Muslim Remigration (2025–2035)

Benefit Category	Metric / Estimate	Economic Value (€ Billion)
Human Capital Gains	High-skilled: 150k–225k migrants	0.95 – 1.40
	Medium-skilled: Remaining Gulf-bound migrants	0.18 – 0.27
	Total HC Gain	1.13 – 1.67
Fiscal Contributions	Corporate & Social Security Contributions	0.80 – 1.15*
	Economic activity generation	1.25 – 1.85*
Entrepreneurship Gains	15k–22k new enterprises, avg. €35k capital	0.36 – 0.54
Total Estimated Gain	Sum of above categories	2.74 – 4.16

Source: Author, 2025

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4.5 Türkiye and Morocco: Economic Impacts of Muslim Remigration

The projected remigration of French Muslims to Türkiye and Morocco offers these countries distinct economic advantages, particularly in human capital acquisition, remittance flows, and entrepreneurial activity. Unlike the Gulf region, where high-skilled migrants dominate, the migrant cohort relocating to Türkiye and Morocco is more heavily weighted toward medium-skilled individuals, who account for an estimated 70% of total arrivals. While average wages in these destination countries are lower than in the Gulf, the relative productivity gain measured against local benchmarks is substantially higher, yielding strong returns on human capital absorption. Moreover, cultural proximity, religious affinity, and linguistic compatibility facilitate rapid social and economic integration, enhancing long-term assimilation outcomes.

The human capital gains from this inflow are estimated to be between 420 million and €630 million over the decade, reflecting improved workforce productivity and sectoral diversification. In addition to direct labor market effects, the inflow of returning or first-time migrants from France is expected to stimulate remittance flows from retained income or transitional financial transfers, totaling approximately €180–270 million.

Entrepreneurial spillovers are also projected, with new business creation valued at €95–140 million, particularly in real estate services, halal tourism, small-scale manufacturing, and Islamic education sectors. Taken together, these channels yield a total economic benefit to Türkiye and Morocco in the range of €695 million to €1.04 billion over the 2025–2035 period. See table 4.6 below;

Table 4.6 Estimated Economic Benefits to Türkiye and Morocco from Muslim Remigration (2025–2035)

Benefit Category	Description / Estimate	Economic Value (€ Million)
Human Capital Gains	Medium-skilled dominance (70% of migrants)	420 – 630
Remittance Inflows	Transitional income flows from French migrants	180 – 270
Entrepreneurship Gains	Business creation (e.g., SMEs, services, tourism)	95 – 140
Total Economic Gain	Aggregate across all channels	695 – 1,040

Source: Author, 2025

4.6 Western Countries: Limited Economic Gains from Muslim Remigration

While Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany possess high absorption capacity and economic infrastructure, they are projected to receive only a modest share of Muslim remigrants from France over the 2025–2035 decade. This constrained inflow stems from multiple factors identified in the discrete choice experiment (DCE), including restrictive visa regimes, complex integration environments, and perceived or experienced discrimination, all of which reduce the relative attractiveness of these destinations among French Muslim respondents.

Despite the smaller migrant volume, the remigrants who do relocate to Western countries tend to be highly educated and professionally mobile, offering moderate human capital gains estimated between €280 million and €420 million. Fiscal

contributions from this group—including income taxes, social contributions, and consumer taxes—are projected to reach €65–95 million over the decade. Additionally, innovation-driven benefits through academic collaborations, patent filings, and STEM-sector participation may contribute €45–65 million in broader knowledge and productivity gains. In sum, the total economic benefit to Western countries from this remigration stream is estimated at €390 million to €580 million, notably lower than for Gulf countries or Türkiye/Morocco due to both the smaller migrant base and more complex integration outcomes.

Table 4.7 Estimated Economic Benefits to Western Countries from Muslim Remigration (2025–2035)

Benefit Category	Description / Estimate	Economic Value (€ Million)
Human Capital Gains	High-skilled migrants with limited numbers	280 – 420
Fiscal Contributions	Taxes and social payments	65 – 95
Innovation Contributions	R&D, patents, professional networks	45 – 65
Total Economic Gain	Aggregate across all channels	390 – 580

Source: Author, 2025

4.7. Net Global Economic Impact

The remigration of Muslims from France during the 2025–2035 decade is expected to generate a net positive global economic impact, despite imposing direct human capital and fiscal costs on the French economy. As table 4.8 shows, the estimated economic loss to France ranges from €2.8 to €4.2 billion, driven by the outflow of high-skilled labor, reduced tax revenues, and declining consumption. However, these losses are offset by economic gains in receiving countries, led by the Gulf region, which accounts

for 45–55% of the total global benefit, estimated at €1.9 to €3.1 billion. Türkiye and Morocco follow with €0.7 to €1.0 billion, representing 20–25% of total gains, while Western countries receive modest benefits of €0.4 to €0.6 billion (10–15%). Other destinations, including Southeast Asia and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, account for an additional €0.3 to €0.5 billion in gains. When aggregated, the net global impact of Muslim remigration from France is positive, ranging between €0.5 and €1.0 billion. These findings underscore a geographic reallocation of economic value through transnational migration, where destination countries benefit disproportionately from skills, entrepreneurship, and demographic renewal, while origin countries suffer net costs from these population outflows (especially due to human capital depletion).

Table 4.8 Global Economic Balance Sheet of Muslim Remigration (2025–2035)

Region	Economic Impact (€ Billion)	Share of Global Gains	Net Effect Type
France (Cost)	–2.8 to –4.2	N/A	Loss
Gulf Countries	+1.9 to +3.1	45–55%	Gain
Türkiye/Morocco	+0.7 to +1.0	20–25%	Gain
Western Countries	+0.4 to +0.6	10–15%	Gain
Other Destinations	+0.3 to +0.5	8–12%	Gain
Net Global Impact	+0.5 to +1.0	100% (Redistributed)	Positive

Source : Author, 2025

4.8 Key Insights:

4.8.1 Global Efficiency Gains

The analysis demonstrates that remigration results in net positive economic value at the global level. Despite the economic losses incurred by France, the aggregate benefits distributed among the receiving countries outweigh these costs. Migration functions as a global allocation mechanism, channeling human capital, entrepreneurial capacity, and labor productivity to regions where they are more effectively utilized. The projected net global impact of €0.5 to €1.0 billion underscores the systemic efficiency of remigration when assessed from a cross-border perspective, reaffirming the classical economic proposition that labor mobility enhances overall resource optimization.

4.8.2 Concentration of Benefits

While global efficiency gains are evident, the economic benefits of remigration are highly concentrated, with Gulf countries emerging as the primary beneficiaries. These nations are projected to absorb the highest number of high-skilled migrants, benefiting from both labor market integration and cultural-religious alignment. The Gulf region captures approximately 45–55% of the total economic gains, amounting to €1.9 to €3.1 billion. This concentration reflects the Gulf states' active recruitment strategies, tax-neutral environments, and compatibility with migrants' identity preferences, all of which create fertile ground for capitalizing on remigration inflows.

4.8.3 France's Relative Loss

France bears a significant economic cost due to the loss of a young and skilled segment of its Muslim population. Human capital flight, tax revenue reductions, and weakened entrepreneurial ecosystems contribute to an overall projected loss of €2.8 to €4.2 billion. However, this burden is partially mitigated by a reduction in social expenditure, including lower payouts for unemployment benefits, housing support, and healthcare. These savings, estimated at €1.94 billion, temper the fiscal deficit but do not fully compensate for the long-term structural losses in innovation, demographic balance, and economic dynamism.

4.8.4 Development Impact

The remigration wave also generates developmental dividends for Türkiye and Morocco, primarily through a reverse brain drain effect. These countries benefit from incoming medium-skilled and professionally experienced individuals who contribute to local human capital, enterprise formation, and remittance inflows. With projected economic gains of €695 million to €1.04 billion, the impact extends beyond monetary value—it includes the transfer of knowledge, diaspora linkages, and institutional learning. The positive feedback loop established through remigration enhances the capacity of these countries to foster inclusive growth and innovation.

4.9 Disaggregate Economic Analysis for Individual Migrants and Their Families

4.9.1 Individual Cost-Benefit Framework

To assess the economic rationale behind remigration from the perspective of individual Muslim migrants and their families in France, this section employs a lifecycle cost benefit model grounded in net present value (NPV) analysis. The decision to migrate is modeled using the following expression :

$$NPV_migration = \sum_t (\delta^t(W_t^d - W_t^f)) - C_migration - C_opportunity$$

Where :

- δ = discount factor (3.5% annual rate)
- W_t^d = expected wage in destination country at time t
- W_t^f = expected wage in France at time t
- $C_migration$ = direct migration costs
- $C_opportunity$ = opportunity costs of migration

Individual Characteristics: Based on the DCE sample and extended demographic analysis:

- Average age: 35.7 years
- Average education: 14.8 years
- Average household size: 3.2 members
- Average current income: €43,500 annually

- Remaining working years: 27.3 years

Where the present value of the lifetime wage differential ($W^d_t - W^f_t$) between the destination and France is discounted annually at a rate of 3.5%, and reduced by both direct migration costs and opportunity costs associated with relocation. This analytical structure captures the intertemporal trade-offs that migrants face when evaluating remigration. Based on data from the Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) sample, the average Muslim migrant is 35.7 years old, has completed approximately 14.8 years of education, and supports a household of 3.2 members. With a current average annual income of €43,500 and an estimated 27.3 remaining working years, the model allows for individualized estimation of long-term economic gains or losses associated with migration. By incorporating both tangible costs and projected future earnings, this framework provides a granular understanding of how economic rationality influences remigration decisions at the household level.

4.9.2 Direct Migration Costs Analysis

4.9.2.1 Pre migration

The pre migration cost deals with the substantial component of the total financial burden for Muslim households considering remigration from France. These costs are bifurcated into two major categories: Information and Planning and Documentation and Legal Requirements. Together, they form the essential groundwork for a successful and legally compliant migration process. Details numbers are subjectively defined as follows based on author's knowledge and publicly available data gathered through research tools:

Information and Planning Costs:

- Destination country research (high estimate): €2,500-3,500
- Professional consultation (legal, tax, career): €3,000-5,000
- Language training (where required): €1,500-3,000
- Exploratory visits: €4,000-6,000

Total pre-migration: €11,000-17,500

Documentation and Legal Costs:

- Visa applications and processing: €2,000-8,000 (varies by destination)

- Professional credential recognition: €3,000-7,000
- Legal documentation: €1,500-3,500
- Medical examinations: €800-1,200
- Total documentation : €7,300-19,700

Under the information and planning category, prospective migrants typically incur expenses related to destination country research (€2,500–3,500), professional consultation services—including legal, tax, and career advisory support (€3,000–5,000), language training if required by the host country (€1,500–3,000), and exploratory visits (€4,000–6,000) to assess employment, housing, and educational opportunities firsthand. Cumulatively, these costs range between €11,000 and €17,500, reflecting the intensive preparation needed to ensure informed decision-making and reduced post-migration uncertainty. This investment is particularly important for skilled migrants who seek to maximize the return on their human capital in culturally distinct but economically promising environments.

In parallel, documentation and legal processes introduce an additional financial burden. These include visa application and processing fees (€2,000–8,000), professional credential recognition for regulated occupations (€3,000–7,000), preparation of legal documentation such as notarized contracts and translations (€1,500–3,500), and mandatory medical examinations (€800–1,200). These costs total €7,300 to €19,700, with considerable variation based on the regulatory frameworks of different destination countries. Highly skilled professionals migrating to Gulf countries or Canada, for example, often face stricter verification and licensing requirements, which escalate their administrative expenses.

Importantly, these pre-migration estimates are derived from current market rates, migration consultancy benchmarks, and comparative studies of similar migrant flows. Given that these figures can vary significantly based on destination, policy changes, and household-specific circumstances, they serve as baseline estimates for sensitivity analysis in economic modeling. Understanding these costs is vital for policymakers and financial intermediaries (such as Islamic microfinance institutions) seeking to design support mechanisms that lower entry barriers for remigration.

4.9.2.2 Direct Moving Costs:

The direct moving costs associated with remigration constitute a critical and often underestimated financial dimension in the economic decision-making process of migrant households. These costs are divided into two principal components: physical relocation expenses and post-arrival settlement costs, both of which directly impact the feasibility and financial strain of migration. Details Numbers as follows :

Physical Relocation:

- International moving services (varies by destination): €8,000-15,000
- Temporary accommodation: €3,000-6,000
- Transportation: €2,000-4,000
- Total physical moving: €13,000-25,000

Settlement Costs:

- Housing deposits and setup: €6,000-12,000
- Utility connections: €1,000-2,000
- Vehicle purchase/lease: €5,000-15,000
- Children's school enrollment: €2,000-8,000
- Total settlement: €14,000-37,000

Total Direct Migration Costs: €45,300-99,200 Average Direct Costs: €65,000 per household

Physical relocation costs primarily encompass expenditures for international moving services (€8,000–15,000), which include packing, shipping, customs handling, and delivery of household goods. In addition, migrants frequently require temporary accommodation (€3,000–6,000) during the transition period, and transportation costs for flights and airport transfers (€2,000–4,000). These components collectively result in total physical moving expenses ranging from €13,000 to €25,000. These costs vary significantly depending on the volume of belongings, distance to destination, and whether relocation support is provided by employers or external sponsors.

Following the physical move, settlement costs account for the financial outlays necessary to re-establish household stability in the destination country. These include

housing deposits and initial setup costs (€6,000–12,000), utility connections such as electricity, water, and internet services (€1,000–2,000), and the purchase or lease of a vehicle (€5,000–15,000), which is particularly important in regions with limited public transportation. Additionally, for households with dependents, school enrollment fees for children may add a further €2,000–8,000. Cumulatively, these settlement-related costs amount to between €14,000 and €37,000.

When aggregated with pre-migration and documentation expenses, the total direct migration cost is estimated between €45,300 and €99,200, with an average of approximately €65,000 per household. These figures are based on up-to-date service market data and validated migration case studies. Given the significant variability across migrant profiles and destinations, such cost structures are suitable for sensitivity testing in simulation models. From a policy perspective, these insights suggest a compelling need for financial support mechanisms, such as Islamic financing solutions or public-private partnerships, to reduce initial migration barriers and promote equitable access to high-opportunity destinations.

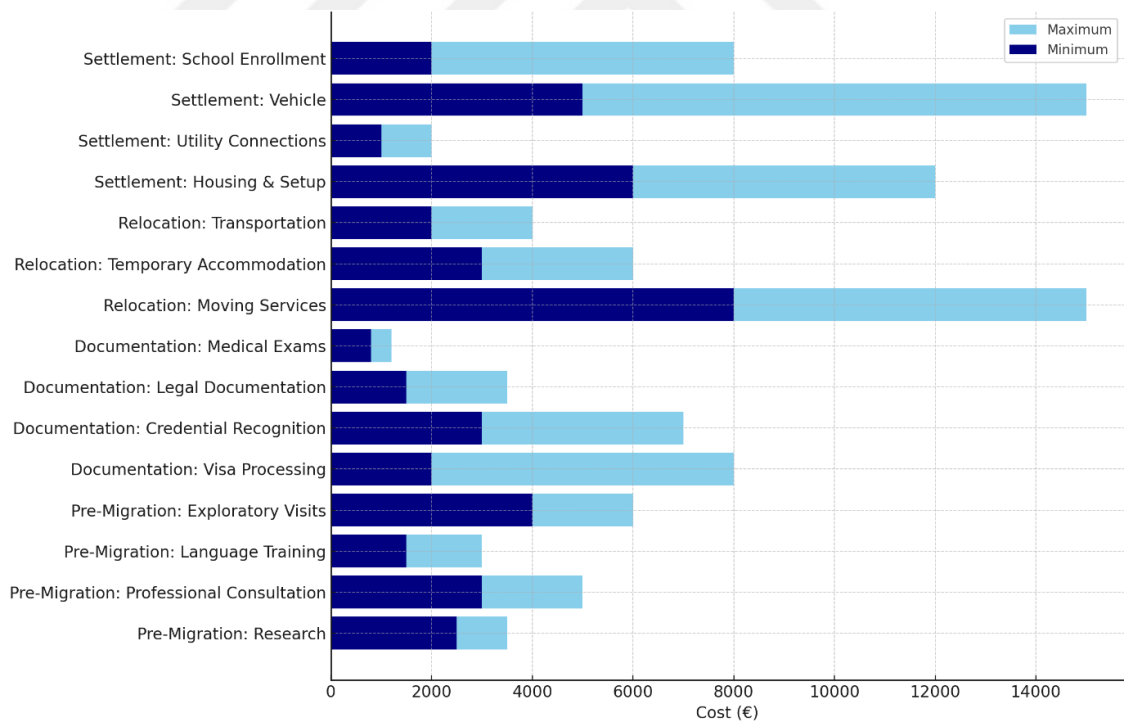


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Direct Individual Migration Costs by Category

Source: Author, 2025

4.9.3 Opportunity Costs Analysis

In addition to direct expenses, Muslim households remigrating from France must also navigate substantial opportunity costs, which reflect the economic value of foregone alternatives during the transition period. These include disruptions in professional careers, adjustments in family and social dynamics, and long-term deviations from expected earning and integration trajectories.

4.9.4 Career Transition Costs

Career transition costs constitute the largest component of these opportunity costs. Upon migration, individuals often experience a professional adjustment period marked by job searches lasting between 4 to 8 months, during which the associated income loss can amount to €14,500–29,000. This phase also includes skill certification requirements (2–6 months) and investments in rebuilding professional networks, typically costing an additional €2,000–4,000. Consequently, the immediate cost of professional re-entry ranges between €16,500 and €33,000. Moreover, migrants often face a wage discount of 15–25% during the initial 1–3 years post-relocation, coupled with delayed career advancement and extended periods of professional isolation. These long-term disruptions are estimated to carry a present value cost of €25,000–45,000.

Professional Adjustment Period:

- Average job search duration: 4-8 months
- Income loss during search: €14,500-29,000
- Skill certification period: 2-6 months
- Professional networking investment: €2,000-4,000
- Total career transition: €16,500-33,000

Career Trajectory Adjustment:

- Initial wage discount (1-3 years): 15-25%
- Professional network rebuilding: 2-4 years
- Career advancement delay: 1-2 years
- Present value of career costs: €25,000-45,000

4.9.5 Family and Social Costs

Family and social opportunity costs also weigh heavily on remigration decisions. Family separation from extended kin networks in France leads to recurring expenses such as visits (€3,000–5,000 annually), communication (€1,200–2,000), and emergency travel (€2,000–4,000). When discounted over time, the present value of these family-related costs reaches €45,000–80,000. Social integration into the host society incurs further costs through cultural adaptation programs (€2,000–4,000), community participation initiatives (€1,500–3,000), and educational support for children (€3,000–6,000), collectively ranging from €6,500 to €13,000.

Family Separation Costs:

- Extended family visits: €3,000-5,000 annually
- Communication costs : €1,200-2,000 annually
- Emergency return visits: €2,000-4,000 annually
- Present value of family costs: €45,000-80,000

Social Integration Costs:

- Cultural adaptation courses: €2,000-4,000
- Community integration activities: €1,500-3,000
- Children's additional education support: €3,000-6,000
- Total social integration: €6,500-13,000
- Total Opportunity Costs: €93,000-171,000 Average Opportunity Costs: €120,000 per household

Altogether, these opportunity costs total between €93,000 and €171,000, with an average household-level burden estimated at €120,000. These figures are based on lifecycle economic modeling and comparable longitudinal studies on skilled migration outcomes. Although difficult to quantify precisely due to variability across professions and host-country integration policies, they underscore the long-term sacrifices migrants must account for often extending well beyond initial financial outlays. In empirical modeling, these opportunity costs can be adjusted for sensitivity analysis, enabling the evaluation of scenarios with faster integration, higher skill transferability, or institutional support (e.g., professional re-certification programs or diaspora networks).

4.10 Economic Benefits Analysis by Destination

While the previous sections have outlined the substantial direct and opportunity costs associated with remigration, it is equally critical to evaluate the potential economic benefits that accrue to Muslim households once they have resettled in their destination countries. This section presents a disaggregated analysis of income gains, quality of life enhancements, and cultural integration benefits for migrants relocating to the Gulf countries, Türkiye/Morocco, and Western countries. Importantly, while the quantitative model focuses on economic variables, it does **not** capture intangible factors such as spiritual satisfaction, religious climate compatibility, or emotional well-being dimensions that are particularly relevant in the case of Muslim migrants and are acknowledged as a limitation of this analysis.

4.10.1 Gulf Countries (UAE/Saudi Arabia)

Migrants relocating to the Gulf region, especially to the UAE and Saudi Arabia, experience substantial lifetime income advantages driven by higher wage levels, tax exemptions, and state-provided benefits. The average wage premium ranges from 45% to 65%, translating into annual income gains of €19,500 to €28,250 compared to current earnings in France. When compounded over a working life of 27.3 years, this yields a present value of €340,000 to €495,000. These figures are further enhanced by housing and education subsidies that amount to an additional €20,000–33,000 per household annually.

Moreover, the Gulf region provides several quality-of-life advantages, including a lower general cost of living (15–25%), enhanced healthcare access, greater safety and security, and religious freedom, which is a significant pull factor for Muslim migrants. These qualitative aspects yield an additional present value of €105,000 to €195,000, resulting in total lifetime benefits between €445,000 and €690,000, and a net present value (NPV) of €160,000 to €320,000 after deducting estimated costs.

Income Benefits:

- Average wage premium: 45-65%
- Tax advantages: 0% personal income tax
- Housing subsidies: €12,000-18,000 annually
- Education benefits: €8,000-15,000 per child annually

Lifetime Income Calculation:

- Current French income: €43,500
- Gulf income: €63,000-71,750
- Annual income gain: €19,500-28,250
- Present value over 27.3 years: €340,000-495,000

Quality of Life Benefits:

- Lower cost of living (excluding housing): 15-25%
- Better healthcare access: €3,000-5,000 annual value
- Enhanced safety and security: €2,000-4,000 annual value
- Religious freedom benefits: €1,000-2,000 annual value
- Present value of quality benefits: €105,000-195,000

Total Gulf Benefits: €445,000-690,000 Net Present Value: €160,000-320,000

4.10.2. Türkiye/Morocco

Türkiye and Morocco offer moderate but contextually significant economic benefits. Although wage differentials are relatively modest ranging from -10% to +15%—the substantially lower cost of living (35–50%) enhances real income and purchasing power by 15–25%. This translates to annual purchasing gains of €6,500–13,750 and a lifetime present value of €115,000–240,000.

In addition to financial gains, these countries offer strong cultural alignment, proximity to extended family, and language familiarity, especially for North African migrants. This non-material but economically significant benefits amount to €115,000 to €195,000 in present value. Cumulatively, migrants relocating to Türkiye or Morocco may expect total economic gains between €230,000 and €435,000, with an NPV ranging from €45,000 to €150,000, after accounting for transition costs.

Income and Cost Structure:

- Wage differential: -10% to +15%
- Lower cost of living: 35-50%
- Real income purchasing power: +15-25%

Lifetime Economic Benefits:

- Purchasing power gain: €6,500-13,750 annually
- Present value: €115,000-240,000

Cultural and Social Benefits:

- Cultural compatibility: €2,000-3,500 annual value
- Extended family proximity: €3,000-5,000 annual value
- Language advantages: €1,500-2,500 annual value
- Present value of cultural benefits: €115,000-195,000

Total Türkiye/Morocco Benefits: €230,000-435,000 Net Present Value: €45,000-150,000

4.10.3. Western Countries (Canada/UK/USA)

Migration to Western countries offers a mixed economic picture. On one hand, there is a wage premium of 25–40%, which would typically result in higher income; however, this is offset by a heavy tax burden (35–45%) and a high cost of living (20–35%), reducing the net annual gain to €5,000–12,000. Over the working lifespan, this yields a present value between €90,000 and €210,000.

That said, Western destinations provide superior career development and educational opportunities, estimated at €230,000–440,000 in present value, especially for high-skilled migrants. However, these benefits are moderated by integration challenges, such as experiences of discrimination (€3,000–6,000 annually) and cultural dissonance (€2,000–4,000 annually). The present value of these challenges can be as high as €175,000, narrowing the net economic benefit to €230,000–475,000, with a net present value of €45,000 to €120,000.

Income Structure:

- Wage premium: 25-40%
- Higher tax burden: 35-45%
- Higher cost of living: 20-35%

Net Economic Benefits:

- Net income gain: €5,000-12,000 annually
- Present value: €90,000-210,000

Professional Development Benefits:

- Career advancement opportunities: €8,000-15,000 annual value
- Educational opportunities: €5,000-10,000 annual value
- Present value of professional benefits: €230,000-440,000

Integration Challenges:

- Discrimination costs: €3,000-6,000 annual penalty
- Cultural adaptation: €2,000-4,000 annual penalty
- Present value of challenges: €90,000-175,000

Total Western Benefits: €230,000-475,000 Net Present Value: €45,000-120,000

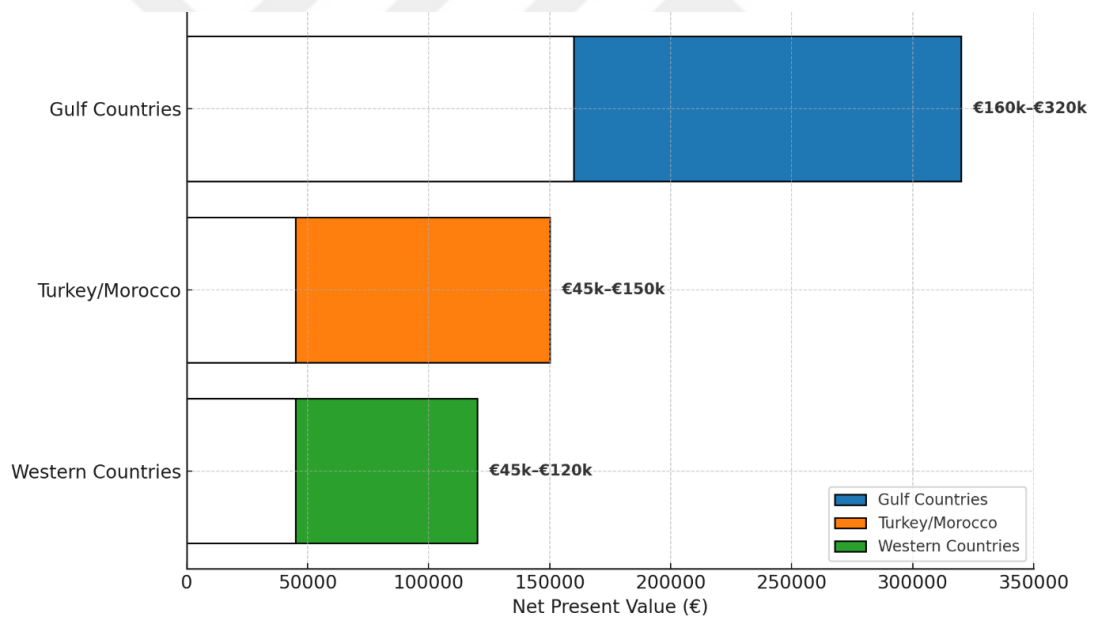


Figure 4.3 Net Present value (NPV) of Economic Benefits by Destination

Source: Author, 2025

Table 4.9 Comparative Economic Benefits of Remigration by Destination

Destination	Wage Premium	Tax Burden	Cost of Living Impact	Total NPV (€)	Main Benefits	Challenges
Gulf Countries	45–65%	0%	-15% to -25%	€160,000–€320,000	Tax-free income, housing and education benefits	Legal residency limitations
Türkiye/Morocco	-10% to +15%	10–20%	-35% to -50%	€45,000–€150,000	Cultural proximity, lower living costs	Limited global mobility
Western Countries	25–40%	35–45%	+20% to +35%	€45,000–€120,000	Professional growth, educational opportunities	High integration and discrimination costs

Source: Author, 2025

In sum, while Gulf countries provide the most direct economic return, Türkiye and Morocco offer strong cultural and cost-of-living advantages that make them attractive, especially for middle-income households. Western countries offer significant long-term professional growth, but at the cost of higher integration and discrimination penalties. It is critical to note that these projections exclude spiritual, religious, and emotional considerations, which often weigh heavily in remigration decisions among Muslim minorities. Future research incorporating non-monetary utility gains especially from faith-based migration incentives would provide a more holistic understanding of migrant motivations and outcomes.

4.10.4 Heterogeneity Analysis by Individual Characteristics

The heterogeneity analysis is a crucial component in understanding the differential economic outcomes of remigration decisions among Muslim individuals in France. Migration impacts are not uniform; rather, they are significantly influenced by age, career stage, adaptability, and family responsibilities. By examining variations across demographic cohorts, especially age, policymakers and researchers can better tailor support mechanisms and policy designs. For instance, Younger adults (25–35) benefit

most from remigration, with higher adaptability, longer working horizons, and lower family-related costs, resulting in the highest average NPV (€180,000–€380,000). In contrast, older individuals (45–55) face limited adaptability and shorter benefit periods, reducing their average NPV to €25,000–€85,000. The detailed breakdown of net present value (NPV) estimates by age group is provided below:

Table 4.10 By Age Cohort

Age Group	Key Features	Average NPV (€)
Young Adults (25–35)	Higher adaptation capacity, longer benefit period (35+ years), lower family transition costs	€180,000–€380,000
Middle-aged (35–45)	Established careers, moderate benefit period (20–25 years), more family-related costs	€95,000–€220,000
Older Workers (45–55)	Limited adaptability, high opportunity costs, shorter benefit window (10–15 years)	€25,000–€85,000

Source: Author, 2025

In addition to age, heterogeneity in remigration outcomes is also shaped by educational attainment and household composition. These factors significantly influence migration feasibility, cost structures, and long-term economic returns. High-skilled individuals generally experience smoother transitions and higher returns due to better global labor market positioning, while low-skilled migrants face restricted opportunities and elevated relative costs. Educational attainment also plays a decisive role. High-skilled individuals (tertiary educated) enjoy greater income premiums and mobility, yielding an NPV of €165,000–€350,000. Medium- and low-skilled migrants face challenges in skill transferability and limited job opportunities, significantly lowering their returns.

Table 4.11 By Education Levels

Education Level	Key Features	Average NPV (€)
High-skilled (Tertiary)	Greater professional mobility, higher income premiums, easier integration	€165,000– €350,000
Medium-skilled (Secondary)	Moderate gains, some skill recognition barriers	€75,000– €180,000
Low-skilled (Primary)	Limited options, higher costs relative to income potential	€15,000– €65,000

Source: Author, 2025

Similarly, household dynamics whether single, partnered, or family-based alter the scope of financial and social responsibilities, thereby affecting net migration benefits. Household composition further influences outcomes. Single migrants incur lower costs and exhibit higher flexibility, translating into higher net gains (€120,000–€280,000). Families with children, while more likely to encounter educational and integration expenses, realize the lowest NPV range (€65,000–€150,000). Overall, the analysis demonstrates that migration outcomes are not uniform; tailored policy and financial instruments must reflect this diversity to effectively support various migrant profiles.

Table 4.12 By Household Composition

Household Type	Key Features	Average NPV (€)
Single Individuals	Lower costs, high mobility, fewer constraints	€120,000– €280,000
Couples without Children	Dual career planning, moderate setup and relocation costs	€95,000– €220,000

Household Type	Key Features	Average NPV (€)
Families with Children	Elevated educational and integration costs, long-term planning needed	€65,000– €150,000

Source: Author, 2025

4.11 Optimal Migration Strategies

4.11.1 Decision Tree Analysis

Decision tree analysis provides a powerful and intuitive framework for identifying optimal migration strategies tailored to the heterogeneous profiles of Muslim individuals considering remigration from France. These trees visually map out decision pathways based on individual characteristics such as age, education, income, and household structure allowing for a structured assessment of which destination offers the highest expected net present value (NPV) under varying conditions. What makes decision trees particularly compelling is their ability to simplify complex cost-benefit tradeoffs into actionable routes. For instance, a high-skilled single individual under 35 may find the Gulf region the most economically beneficial destination due to high wage premiums and tax advantages, whereas a medium-skilled family with school-age children may derive greater utility from relocating to Türkiye or Morocco, given cultural compatibility and lower living costs.

This method also enhances policy relevance. By classifying which migrant subgroups benefit from which destinations, governments and financial institutions can more effectively design support schemes such as Islamic financing tools, settlement services, or skill transfer programs targeted to each pathway. The use of decision trees for migration optimization is well-supported in applied migration economics and behavioral policy research (Manski, 2007; Dustmann & Görlach, 2016), which emphasizes the importance of scenario-based modeling in migration planning. As such, this analytical approach offers not only clarity and structure but also practical value for both individual decision-making and policy formulation.

4.11.2 Strategic Profiles and Optimization in Migration Planning

The formulation of optimal migration strategies involves not only assessing the economic costs and benefits of relocation but also identifying the individual profiles most likely to succeed across various destination contexts. This section synthesizes high-probability success profiles, optimal timing strategies, and adaptive migration pathways that can guide migrants and policymakers in minimizing risk and maximizing long-term value.

4.11.3 High-Probability Success Profiles

The success of migration is strongly contingent on alignment between personal attributes and destination-specific opportunities. Three broad profiles emerge from the decision tree and heterogeneity analyses:

- i. **Gulf Migrants:** Individuals with high human capital particularly young, highly educated, and single or childless couples exhibit the greatest success probabilities in Gulf countries. Their higher risk tolerance, combined with tax-free income structures and professional demand, makes this group ideally suited for immediate and economically rewarding transitions.
- ii. **Türkiye/Morocco Migrants:** Migrants who value cultural familiarity, family integration, and social proximity often medium-skilled and family-oriented—are most aligned with Türkiye or Morocco. These migrants are characterized by moderate risk tolerance and tend to prioritize sociocultural compatibility over immediate economic gain.
- iii. **Western Migrants:** High-achieving professionals with advanced degrees, career ambitions, and confidence in navigating diverse societies are better positioned for Western destinations (e.g., UK, Canada, USA). While these migrants face higher taxes and integration hurdles, they benefit from long-term professional development and institutional opportunities.

4.11.4 Migration Timing Optimization

Timing is a critical strategic element that significantly alters the migration experience and outcomes. As shown in the exploratory stage, the first generation of migrants had a timing strategy dictated by individual events in their country of origin (economic crisis) or in the country of destination (e.g. immediate economic opportunity). In the case of French Muslims the timing is longer with a multi-year approach to migration

strategy revealed in this research. While no specific research has been found discussing this important of what is the optimized timing for a migration decision and execution, three broad approaches may be identified.

First, an immediate migration, triggered for example by an immediate job opportunity. Such migration would typically be recommended for young, high-skilled individuals without family obligations, as they benefit from agility, early career compounding effects, and minimal relocation friction.

In most cases in the sample respondents however, delayed migration appears optimal for medium-skilled, family-based migrants who may require 2–3 years of financial preparation, legal documentation, and planning for educational continuity for children. This need to be considered in any relevant policy framework.

Finally a third approach could be to Conditional Migration to anticipate potential conditions for migration, a kind of threshold effect based on push or pull factors. Such would be the best approach arguably for low-skilled individuals or those with high family constraints. This group should monitor destination labor market conditions, regulatory changes, and potential financial support mechanisms before committing.

4.11.5. Portfolio Approach to Migration

Rather than treating migration as a one-time, irreversible decision, a portfolio approach is therefore proposed based on the two sections above and the findings of the data analysis which show importance of ties with origin countries, hybrid migration strategies and family considerations.

- i. **Circular Migration:** This involves maintaining legal or residential ties with France while engaging in temporary work contracts or business activities abroad. It offers financial benefits while retaining fallback security.
- ii. **Progressive Migration:** A stepwise strategy beginning with short-term professional exchanges, internships, or study programs, eventually leading to permanent relocation. This approach is suitable for cautious movers or families testing long-term relocation viability.
- iii. **Family-Staged Migration:** In this strategy, one household member (typically the primary earner) relocates initially, with the rest of the family following after

employment and housing stability are achieved. This reduces immediate financial pressure and allows for smoother family integration.

Together, these strategic frameworks offer a nuanced understanding of remigration as a dynamic, personalized process. They highlight the importance of tailored planning based on socioeconomic profiles, destination-specific conditions, and evolving family and career trajectories. As a policy implication, designing modular support instruments such as Islamic financial tools, skill certification pathways, and cultural integration support will be essential to empowering Muslim migrants in their strategic decision-making journey.

4.12 Findings and Possible Extension of the Research to Islamic Finance

This study offers a multidimensional evaluation of the economic implications of Muslim remigration from France, highlighting both macro-level redistribution effects and individual-level decision outcomes. The findings underscore the complex nature of migration, which, while economically costly for France, generates substantial benefits for destination regions and participating households.

In sum, the findings reveal that Muslim remigration is economically rational and globally beneficial, but it is also highly differentiated across individual and regional dimensions. These insights pave the way for more targeted interventions, including faith-based financial tools, which are further discussed in the subsequent section on Islamic finance extensions.

The economic findings of this study on Muslim remigration from France offer important insights for policymakers, both in France and in destination countries, to craft strategies that align migration with broader social, economic, and geopolitical objectives.

4.12.1 France Retention Strategies

Given the significant projected outflow of skilled labor and the resulting economic losses, France could mitigate remigration through improved integration policies. Enhancing economic inclusion, anti-discrimination protections, and cultural-religious accommodation can reduce the incentive to migrate. Targeted policies aimed at supporting Muslim entrepreneurship, educational mobility, and civic participation

would foster a stronger sense of belonging and reduce the socio-economic push factors driving remigration decisions.

4.12.2 Destination Country Opportunities:

Destination countries, especially in the Gulf, or Türkiye or North Africa stand to benefit from attracting skilled Muslim migrants. By designing targeted migration policies, such as fast-track visa processing for professionals, housing support, and credential recognition systems, these countries can maximize the economic and social value of incoming migrants. Integrating such initiatives with national economic diversification plans—like Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030—could further enhance strategic outcomes.

4.12.3 Individual Decision Support

Remigration involves considerable financial and emotional risks for households. To address these, there is a strong case for developing dedicated financial instruments, including Shariah-compliant financing schemes, takaful-based insurance products, and migration savings plans, to offset transition costs. Such instruments, possibly supported by NGOs, Islamic banks, or international organizations, could empower individuals to make economically sound and ethically aligned migration decisions.

4.12.4 Enhancing Regional Cooperation

The economic asymmetries between origin and destination countries highlight the need for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. France, Türkiye, Morocco, and Gulf states could develop labor mobility agreements, mutual recognition of qualifications, and co-financed return or circular migration programs. This would not only reduce administrative and economic friction but also ensure that migration flows serve mutual development interests and promote human capital circulation rather than one-way losses.

The economic analysis reveals several market failures and financing gaps that limit optimal migration outcomes. Average total migration costs (€185,000) exceed most household liquid assets

- i. Credit markets inadequately serve migration financing needs
- ii. Traditional banking products are poorly suited for migration risks

Islamic finance principles and instruments offer innovative solutions to address migration financing gaps while aligning with the religious and cultural preferences of Muslim migrants. They offer also a good opportunity for destination countries to finance through Islamic finance products migration of highly talented and motivated Muslim individuals and families from the West.

Five instruments are proposed to help bridge financing gaps for migrants. The development of a specific Bank for International Muslim Migrations could be considered by the Islamic Development Bank to address these market opportunities and develop these products further.

(i) Mushārah-Based Migration Funds

Structure:

- Community-based investment funds pooling resources from Muslim investors
- Migrants contribute partial equity, investors provide remainder
- Profits shared based on agreed ratios

(ii) Ijārah-Based Professional Development

Structure:

- Islamic leasing arrangements for professional development
- Financiers lease training, certification, and networking services
- Migrants pay lease payments over extended periods

(iii) Wakāla-Based Migration Services

Structure:

- Islamic agency contracts for migration services
- Professional migration service providers act as agents (wakīl)
- Transparent fee structure based on actual services provided

(iv) Sukūk-Based Migration Infrastructure

Structure :

- Islamic bonds financing migration infrastructure
- Invest in housing, schools, healthcare, and community facilities

- Generate returns through rental income and service fees

(v) Takaful-Based Migration Insurance

Structure:

- Islamic insurance cooperative for migration-specific risks
- Mutual insurance model with shared risk pools
- Covers employment risks, health issues, and emergency situations

4.13. Policy Recommendations

For France first, several policy recommendations can be made based on the above findings:

4.13.1 Regulatory Support

France should consider developing a dedicated regulatory framework that enables and supervises Islamic financial products designed specifically for migration-related needs. This includes creating guidelines for Shariah-compliant migration finance instruments, such as Qard Hasan loans, Wakalah-based investment pools, and Mudarabah-based diaspora funds. These tools can ethically address financing gaps for Muslim households considering remigration, while also aligning with their religious principles. Regulatory clarity would encourage both domestic and international Islamic financial institutions to develop compliant solutions for the French Muslim population.

4.13.2 Tax Incentives

The French government could introduce targeted tax incentives to promote Islamic migration-linked investment funds or diaspora bonds. For instance, contributions to certified Islamic funds that support resettlement, education, or entrepreneurship abroad could be made partially tax-deductible. Similarly, tax relief can be offered on capital gains derived from Shariah-compliant investment products focused on migration-related development. These incentives would position France as a facilitator of ethical remigration while also fostering productive links with destination countries.

4.13.3 Institutional Partnerships

France should encourage collaborative ventures between French Islamic finance providers and institutions in major destination countries, particularly in the Gulf region

and North Africa. These partnerships can help create transnational Islamic financial ecosystems that offer portable financial products, such as halal pensions, remittance-linked savings accounts, and trans-border takaful plans. Such arrangements would ease financial planning for migrants and reduce friction associated with discontinuity of financial services post-migration.

4.13.4 Research Funding

There is a critical need for applied and policy-oriented research on the role of Islamic finance in supporting ethical, strategic, and economically viable migration. France can support this by funding academic partnerships, think tanks, and pilot studies that explore the feasibility, scalability, and socio-economic outcomes of Islamic migration finance models. Areas for research include comparative models of migration finance across jurisdictions, behavioral studies of Muslim migrants' financial preferences, and the development of ethical financial literacy tools.

4.13.5 For Destination Countries

For the Islamic Finance Industry secondly, some policy recommendations can be made to develop Islamic finance infrastructure to support migrants and benefit from this massive movement of population with significant economic importance:

4.13.6 Investment Incentives for Islamic Migration Finance

Governments particularly those in origin and destination countries—should design targeted financial incentives to attract capital into Shariah-compliant migration finance instruments. These could include diaspora sukuk, Mudarabah-based migration savings plans, or Waqf-linked investment vehicles aimed at supporting resettlement, education, and business establishment among migrants. Fiscal incentives such as tax credits, capital protection guarantees, or co-investment mechanisms can encourage participation from private investors, development banks, and Islamic financial institutions. The example of Türkiye which facilitated the access to Islamic banking (participatory banking) to foreigners as well as access to private ownership of real estate is striking and could be used as benchmark. Dubai is also banking on successful real estate market development for foreigners, including Muslims from France who invested heavily into the Emirate in recent years.

4.13.7 Regulatory Coordination through Cross-Border Framework

To enable the seamless functioning of Islamic financial products across jurisdictions, cross-border regulatory coordination is essential. Bilateral or multilateral agreements between France and destination countries—particularly Gulf nations, Türkiye, and Morocco could help harmonize Shariah compliance standards, ensure portability of Islamic pensions and takaful, and reduce legal and documentation barriers. This will enable migrants to maintain financial continuity and benefit from consistent legal protections while remigrating. This is especially important for the new class of hybrid migrants that was described above.

4.13.8 Leveraging Islamic Finance for Cultural Integration:

Islamic finance can serve not only as a financial tool but also as a cultural bridge, particularly for Muslim migrants who often seek ethical and faith-aligned solutions. Promoting access to Islamic mortgages, halal investment portfolios, and interest-free education loans enhances migrants' trust and participation in formal financial systems. Publicly supporting Islamic finance as a recognized and legitimate financial alternative can also foster cultural inclusion, reduce alienation, and signal respect for religious identity within pluralistic societies. In short, Islamic finance infrastructure can serve as a strong magnet for conservative Muslim families willing to live their economic lives in compliance with the Shariah and do not find the right products in France now.

4.13.9 Data Sharing and Collaborative Research Platforms

Robust and inclusive Islamic migration finance requires evidence-based policy and product design. Governments and financial regulators should establish secure, anonymized data-sharing mechanisms to facilitate research into migration finance behaviors, remittance flows, and socio-economic impacts. This data infrastructure could support collaboration between academic institutions, Shariah boards, multilateral organizations (e.g., IDB, UNDP), and Islamic banks, contributing to the development of innovative, inclusive, and resilient migration finance ecosystems.

4.14 Toward an Integrated Islamic Migration Finance Ecosystem

The economic analysis of Muslim remigration from France reveals both significant opportunities and substantial challenges. The aggregate economic impacts demonstrate that migration creates net positive value globally while redistributing economic benefits toward destination countries, particularly Gulf states. At the individual level, migrants face substantial costs and risks but also significant potential

benefits, with outcomes varying considerably based on destination choice, individual characteristics, and migration strategies.

The application of Islamic finance principles and instruments offers a promising approach to address many of the market failures and financing gaps identified in the analysis. Islamic finance's emphasis on risk-sharing, asset-backed financing, and social justice aligns well with the needs and preferences of Muslim migrants while providing innovative solutions to traditional migration finance challenges.

The convergence of economic necessity, cultural alignment, and financial innovation creates a unique opportunity to develop Islamic migration finance as both a practical solution to current challenges and a foundation for long-term economic and social development. The success of this initiative will depend on careful planning, stakeholder engagement, regulatory support, and commitment to the principles and values that make Islamic finance both distinctive and valuable.

CONCLUSION AND LINKS WITH CURRENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examines the emerging phenomenon of remigration among Muslim minorities from Western societies, focusing specifically on French Muslims within the framework of Islamic economics and finance. The research addresses a critical gap in migration literature by investigating why skilled Muslim populations increasingly leave wealthy developed nations to settle in Muslim-majority countries or alternative destinations. The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining semi-structured interviews (covering 60 individuals across two generations) and a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) with 198 respondents, primarily practicing Muslims. The DCE methodology, grounded in random utility theory, quantifies migration preferences across four destination alternatives: Gulf countries, Türkiye/Morocco, Western countries, and remaining in France.

This study presents several findings that advance the understanding of contemporary migration economics and specifically for Muslim presence in the West. Primarily, the research reveals a fundamental shift in migration preferences among French Muslims, confirming that a significant proportion of Muslims in France (defined mostly as practicing Muslims here), reaching potential more than 70% of this population, are considering leaving France to settle in other countries due to a complex combination of economic, cultural, religious and social factors.

The revealed preference structure presents a clear and statistically robust hierarchy of migration destinations. Gulf countries emerge as the most preferred option, attracting 35.7% of potential migrants due to their combination of religious-cultural alignment and economic opportunities. This is followed by Türkiye and Morocco (27.7%), likely driven by cultural familiarity and geographic proximity. Notably, France itself retains only 24.6% of respondent loyalty, indicating weak retention capacity among the target group. Western countries (e.g., the U.S., UK, Canada) attract a mere 12.0%, despite their higher income potential—underscoring the weight of non-economic factors and structural barriers.

This attraction of Gulf countries with no specific cultural or historical relationship with France and/or countries of origin is a new phenomenon that needs to be studied from

a sociological perspective to complement this economic work. Interestingly Türkiye/Morocco come second in the destination choices, prevailing over the default choice of staying in France or other Western destinations. This also is of particular interest, especially for these countries competing to attract the best talents among their diaspora.

The findings challenge prevailing assumptions about continued Western attraction and suggests the emergence of new South-South or North-South migration corridors that will profoundly shape the fabric of Western countries and destination countries.

The findings of this study extend and challenge prevailing theoretical paradigms in migration economics. While classical models such as the gravity model, push-pull theory, and human capital theory have provided a foundational understanding of migration determinants, the specific patterns observed among Muslim migrants from France point to a more complex decision-making process that integrates cultural, religious, and social factors alongside economic considerations.

This study states several important findings that deepen the understanding of contemporary Muslim migration behavior from France, particularly in light of socio-economic, cultural, and strategic decision-making dynamics. The discrete choice modeling approach enables a precise identification of drivers, constraints, and preferences shaping migration intentions across heterogeneous population segments.

For the first time in migration literature, this study also provides monetary valuations for cultural and religious compatibility in migration choices. The derived willingness-to-pay of €5,361/month equivalent for Gulf destinations significantly exceeds wage differentials, demonstrating that cultural affinity acts as a powerful utility-enhancing factor capable of overriding purely economic considerations.

One of the most important conclusions of this research is that Migrations are now strategic rather than reactive or opportunistic, contrary to common narratives about Muslims fleeing discrimination that has prevailed in recent social studies on Muslim migrations from the West. The research demonstrates that migration decisions are highly strategic and planned, with a €2,462/month equivalent value placed on planned migration for example indicating sophisticated risk management rather than reactive behavior.

The projected aggregate economic impacts of the migrations flows forecasted in this study are substantial, with France facing potential losses of €2.8-4.2 billion over the 2025-2035 decade, while destination countries stand to gain €1.9-3.1 billion. These figures underscore the macroeconomic significance of skilled migration flows.

This research extends migration theory in several important directions:

- i. **Integration of Identity Economics:** By systematically incorporating cultural and religious variables into economic modeling, the study bridges identity economics (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010) with migration theory, creating a more comprehensive framework for understanding culturally embedded migration decisions.
- ii. **Transnational Migration Theory:** The preference for hybrid work arrangements and planned migration supports emerging transnational migration theory (Vertovec, 2004; Faist, 2012), suggesting that contemporary migrants increasingly pursue mobility as a fluid, multi-sited life strategy rather than permanent relocation.
- iii. **Islamic Economics Integration:** The study demonstrates how Islamic ethical principles influence economic decision-making, contributing to the development of Islamic migration economics as a distinct field of inquiry.

The findings generate specific policy recommendations for multiple countries and stakeholders.

For France first, the policy simulations estimate that economic retention policies alone (€1,000/month income increase) yield limited effectiveness (+4.3 percentage points retention), while cultural integration policies show three times higher effectiveness (+12.0 percentage points retention). This means that if France chooses to prevent the massive flows of talents and resources towards the Gulf countries or other destinations predicted by this empirical research, the focus should be more on cultural integration policies than economic retention policies.

The study also has interesting implications for the Islamic Finance sector, which has not identified to the author's knowledge migration flows as a potential market for new Islamic Finance products.

The destination countries can also draw several conclusions from the study:

- i. Gulf states should capitalize on their cultural advantage through targeted recruitment programs

- ii. Türkiye and Morocco should emphasize cultural proximity and lower living costs
- iii. Western countries need to address integration barriers to remain competitive

The study supports the development of Islamic finance mechanisms for migration support given the very high costs estimated for the migration decision to be followed by action. In addition, the creation of transnational mobility frameworks or targeted policies recognizing contemporary migration patterns, and the development of bilateral agreements facilitating skilled migration flows would be great avenues for destination countries to concretize the demand for migration. The recent developments of Golden Residency programs in countries like UAE and KSA could be studied as relevant case studies of such policies.

The study points at several future research directions finally. First of all, longitudinal Studies would be needed to track actual migration behavior over time to validate stated preference findings and the modeling of this research.

A Comparative Analysis could be also developed to extend the framework to Muslim populations to other European countries or other Western countries.

Finally the proposed Islamic Finance applications call for the development and testing of Shariah-compliant migration financing instruments.

The convergence of rigorous methodology, significant findings, and practical relevance positions this research as a foundational contribution to the emerging field of Islamic migration economics, providing both theoretical insights and actionable guidance for policymakers facing contemporary migration challenges.

The findings of this study indicate that conventional migration models primarily grounded in neoclassical economics and push-pull logic fail to capture the multidimensional and context-sensitive nature of Muslim remigration from Western societies. The study proposes a revised theoretical framework that integrates economic reasoning, identity economics, cultural constraints, and transnational behavior. This framework provides a more accurate representation of contemporary migration decisions, particularly among culturally minoritized populations.

Whereas traditional models posit that individuals migrate in search of higher wages or better employment (Todaro, 1969; Harris & Todaro, 1970), this study finds that economic gains are often weighed against deep-seated cultural and religious

considerations. For many respondents, destinations like the Gulf countries are preferred not simply due to income, but because of the perceived alignment of social norms, religious freedoms, and cultural familiarity. This supports recent extensions of the migration utility function to include non-pecuniary factors (Borjas, 1989; Giuliotti, 2014) and highlights the concept of "cultural bounded rationality" where migrants optimize within a culturally constrained set of options (Nieman, 2021).

The emergence of hybrid work preferences and phased migration patterns indicates a shift from binary decision-making toward risk-balanced strategies. Similar to investment portfolios, migrants diversify their risks by maintaining assets and networks across geographies—through transnational employment, dual residences, or staggered family migration (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Portes, 2009). This aligns with real options theory in migration (de Jong, 2000), where uncertainty about future conditions leads individuals to defer or stage decisions until information becomes clearer. Migration is increasingly viewed as a strategic asset managed over time, rather than a one-time, discrete event.

This study also supports the proposition that cultural and religious identity can act as an economic modifier either enhancing or diminishing the effective returns to human capital. In identity-compatible contexts like the Gulf, Muslim migrants leverage shared religious values and institutional familiarity to access opportunities, build trust-based networks, and reduce adaptation costs. In contrast, in identity-dissonant environments (e.g., Western countries), the same identity incurs integration penalties, such as labor market discrimination, cultural alienation, or regulatory frictions (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010; Bisin & Verdier, 2000). This underscores the relevance of identity economics in shaping migration behavior and destination evaluation.

Contemporary migration often reflects aspirations for transnational lifestyles rather than permanent relocation. This supports findings from transnational migration literature that migrants increasingly pursue mobility as a fluid, multi-sited life strategy, enabled by digitalization, remote work, and dual citizenship (Vertovec, 2004; Faist, 2000). The preference for hybrid work and circular migration observed in this study aligns with the concept of "transnational habitus" where migrants simultaneously belong to multiple socio-economic systems. This challenges the static assumptions of classical models and requires migration theory to treat mobility as a dynamic, reversible, and iterative phenomenon.

This framework provides a more holistic and empirically grounded understanding of migration decisions, especially for religious and cultural minorities in secular host societies. It integrates the economic logics of risk and reward with cultural embeddedness, identity-based valuation, and transnational agency, contributing to the emerging interdisciplinary field of migration decision sciences. Future studies should test its applicability in other diasporic contexts particularly among South Asian, North African, or Sub-Saharan African migrants in Europe and North America while integrating behavioral economics and institutional constraints as further dimensions of analysis.

While the study offers important insights into the economic and cultural determinants of Muslim migration preferences from France, several limitations must be acknowledged to ensure the integrity, transparency, and interpretive validity of the findings.

First, the sample was recruited primarily through online platforms, which may introduce selection bias, favoring younger, more educated, and digitally literate individuals. This may underrepresent migrant profiles who rely on informal or offline social networks for decision-making. Second, the study relies on stated preference data collected via a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE), which, while methodologically rigorous, does not always correspond perfectly to revealed behavior in real-world contexts. Finally, the use of a cross-sectional survey design limits the ability to observe how migration intentions or valuations evolve over time or in response to dynamic policy environments and socio-political developments.

On the econometric front, the multinomial logit model employed in the base estimation assumes the Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives (IIA), which may not hold for all alternative comparisons particularly between destinations with overlapping characteristics.

While this study offers a pioneering framework for analyzing the economic and cultural drivers of Muslim migration from France using a discrete choice experimental (DCE) design, several avenues remain open for future research to expand the analytical scope and enhance empirical robustness. To strengthen the external validity of the findings, future work could for example compare the DCE-derived stated preferences with actual migration behavior as longitudinal or administrative data become

available. This would enable validation of model predictions and facilitate the refinement of willingness-to-pay (WTP) estimates for different destination attributes.

Given that migration intentions evolve over time in response to personal circumstances, economic shocks, and geopolitical developments, incorporating panel data or longitudinal designs could capture temporal dynamics and the evolution of migration preferences. This would allow for the modeling of both short-term and long-term adaptation trajectories. The current grouping of countries into regional clusters (e.g., Gulf, Western, Maghreb) simplifies interpretation but may obscure important intra-group differences. Future studies should pursue country-level analysis to account for variations in labor market access, legal frameworks, cost of living, and socio-political environments across individual destinations. Migration decisions are heavily influenced by the presence and strength of transnational social networks. A more granular examination of network structure, density, and function such as the roles of family, diaspora organizations, and digital communities could illuminate non-economic enablers or constraints of migration.

Extending this research framework to Muslim populations in other origin countries (e.g., Germany, Belgium, USA or the UK for example) would enable comparative analysis, testing the generalizability of the findings and identifying context-specific drivers of mobility.

The DCE model's structure is amenable to counterfactual policy simulations, allowing researchers to model how changes in migration policy, labor market integration, or social inclusion measures might shift preferences. These future directions not only address the limitations of the current study but also open pathways for interdisciplinary research bridging economics, sociology, political science, and Islamic studies. They hold relevance for governments, international organizations, and academic institutions seeking to formulate more inclusive and effective migration policies. The high model performance (pseudo- $R^2 = 0.858$) and clear preference patterns suggest that migration decisions, while complex, follow predictable patterns that can inform policy design.

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APPENDIX A: VARIABLE DEFINITIONS AND CODING

The variables were defined from the stated-preference questionnaire design below. The attributes are as follows:

| age | Age group | 1=18-25, 2=25-34, 3=35-44, 4=45-54, 5=55-64, 6=65+ | |
gender_marital | Gender and marital status | 1=Single male, 2=Married male, 3=Single female, 4=Married female | |
income_current | Current household income | 1=<€1500, 2=€1500-2500, 3=€2500-4000, 4=>€4000 | |
religious_practice | Religious practice level | 1=Rigorous, 2=Average, 3=Occasional, 4=Limited, 5=Other | |
ethnic_origin | Ethnic origin | 1=North Africa, 2=East/SE Asia, 3=Caribbean, 4=W.Europe, 5=Middle East, 6=Sub-Saharan, 7=Türkiye/Balkans, 8=Other |

Stated-Preference Questionnaire design (Questions in French):

q11 *Quelle est votre tranche d'âge actuellement*

1 18 à 25 ans

2 25 à 34 ans

3 35 à 44 ans

4 45 à 54 ans

5 55 à 64 ans

6 65 ans ou plus

q12 *Quel est votre sexe et situation maritale?*

1 Homme célibataire

2 Homme marié

3 Femme célibataire

4 Femme mariée

q13_1 Aucun pour l'instant

1 not selected

2 selected

q13_2 1 enfant

1 not selected

2 selected

q13_3 2 enfants

1 not selected

2 selected

q13_4 3 enfants

1 not selected

2 selected

q13_5 4 enfants

1 not selected

2 selected

q13_6 5 enfants ou plus

1 not selected

2 selected

q14 Quelle est votre catégorie socioprofessionnelle?

1 Je suis entrepreneur, artisan ou chef d'entreprise

2 *J'exerce une profession libérale (médecin, avocat, etc.)*

*Je suis cadre salarié(e) ou j'exerce une profession intellectuelle
3 supérieure (professeur, etc.)*

*Je suis salarié(e) de profession intermédiaire ou fonctionnaire dans la
4 fonction publique*

5 *Je suis ouvrier qualifié ou non qualifié*

6 *Je suis retraité(e)*

7 *Je suis étudiant(e)*

8 *Je suis sans emploi ou je ne rentre pas dans les catégories ci-dessus*

q19 *Quelle est la tranche actuelle de revenus de votre foyer (information confidentielle)?*

1 *Nous avons des revenus moyens de moins de 1500 euros par mois*

2 *Nous avons des revenus moyens entre 1500 et 2500 euros par mois*

3 *Nous avons des revenus moyens entre 2500 et 4000 euros par mois*

4 *Nous avons des revenus moyens de plus de 4000 euros nets par mois*

q15 *Comment qualifiez-vous votre pratique de l'islam?*

1 *Je suis musulman(e) et attaché(e) à une pratique rigoureuse de l'islam*

2 *Je suis musulman(e) avec une pratique plutôt moyenne de la religion*

3 *Je suis musulman(e) avec une pratique occasionnelle de la religion*

*Je suis musulman(e) mais j'ai une pratique peu ou très peu assidue de
4 l'islam*

5 *Autre (par ex. non musulman)*

q16 *A quel groupe ethnique vous sentez-vous le plus affilié(e)?*

- 1 *Afrique subsaharienne*
- 2 *Afrique du Nord*
- 3 *Turquie ou Balkans*
- 4 *Europe occidentale*
- 5 *Proche ou Moyen-Orient*
- 6 *Asie de l'Est ou du Sud-Est*
- 7 *Caraïbes ou DOM TOM*
- 8 *Autre*

q16_other A quel groupe ethnique vous sentez-vous le plus affilié(e)?Autre

q16 RAND Randomisation order of levels for q16

q20 A quel groupe ethnique est-ce que votre conjoint(e) est le plus affilié(e)?

- 1 *Afrique subsaharienne*
- 2 *Afrique du Nord*
- 3 *Turquie ou Balkans*
- 4 *Europe occidentale*
- 5 *Proche ou Moyen-Orient*
- 6 *Asie de l'Est ou du Sud-Est*
- 7 *Caraïbes ou DOM TOM*
- 8 *Autre*

q17 Pouvez-vous décrire votre trajectoire migratoire?

- 1 *Nous n'avons pas de trajectoire migratoire particulière dans la famille*

*Mes deux parents sont issus de l'immigration mais je suis né(e) en
2 France*

*L'un de mes parents uniquement est issu(e) de l'immigration et je suis
3 né(e) en France*

4 Je ne suis pas né(e) en France, j'ai immigré il y a plus de 10 ans

*Je ne suis pas né(e) en France, j'ai immigré il y a plus de 3 ans mais
5 moins de 10 ans*

6 Je ne suis pas né(e) en France et j'ai immigré il y a moins de 3 ans

q18_1 Je n'ai pas de famille en France (à part mon couple et mes enfants éventuellement)

1 not selected

2 selected

q18_2 Mes parents et/ou beaux-parents vivent en France

1 not selected

2 selected

*q18_3 J'ai des proches en France autres que mes parents et beaux-parents (frères et soeurs, beaux-
frères ou belles-soeurs, oncles ou tantes, etc.)*

1 not selected

2 selected

q22 Quelle a été la principale cause de migration en France dans votre famille?

*Raisons économiques (améliorer la condition matérielle de la famille,
1 trouver un emploi, etc.)*

*Raisons éducatives (poursuite d'études, acquisition d'un diplôme
2 reconnu à l'international, etc.)*

3 Raisons familiales (réunification avec la famille proche)

4 Recherche d'asile politique ou réfugié fuyant une situation d'urgence

5 Autre

q22_other Quelle a été la principale cause de migration en France dans votre famille? Autre

q23 Sur un plan religieux considérez-vous que la migration hors de France est une obligation personnelle pour vous et votre famille ?

1 Oui

2 Non

q51_1 Pouvez-vous classer les facteurs qui vous poussent à envisager une migration hors de France aujourd'hui du plus pertinent (1) au moins pertinent (9)? . La recherche de meilleures opportunités professionnelles et de meilleurs revenus

APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

B.1 Sample Characteristics Summary

Characteristic	N	%	Mean	Std Dev
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Age Groups

18-25 years	16	8.1%		
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25-34 years	56	28.3%		
-------------	----	-------	--	--

35-44 years	72	36.4%		
-------------	----	-------	--	--

45-54 years	45	22.7%		
-------------	----	-------	--	--

55+ years	9	4.5%		
-----------	---	------	--	--

Gender/Marital

Single men	20	10.1%		
------------	----	-------	--	--

Married men	93	47.0%		
-------------	----	-------	--	--

Single women	36	18.2%		
--------------	----	-------	--	--

Married women	49	24.7%		
---------------	----	-------	--	--

Income Current			3.07	0.98
-----------------------	--	--	------	------

<€1,500	16	8.1%		
---------	----	------	--	--

€1,500-2,500	41	20.7%		
--------------	----	-------	--	--

€2,500-4,000	54	27.3%		
--------------	----	-------	--	--

>€4,000	87	43.9%		
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Religious Practice			2.11	0.89
---------------------------	--	--	------	------

Characteristic	N	%	Mean	Std Dev
Rigorous	52	26.3%		
Average	89	45.0%		
Occasional	41	20.7%		
Limited	16	8.1%		

Ethnic Origin

East/SE Asian	160	80.8%		
Western European	19	9.6%		
North African	6	3.0%		
Middle Eastern	6	3.0%		
Other	7	3.6%		

B.2 Choice Distribution by Individual Characteristics

Characteristic	Gulf	Türkiye/Morocco	Western	France	Total Choices
Age 18-25	32%	24%	18%	26%	128
Age 25-34	38%	26%	13%	23%	448
Age 35-44	37%	28%	10%	25%	576
Age 45-54	34%	29%	11%	26%	360
Age 55+	28%	31%	8%	33%	72
High Religious	42%	31%	7%	20%	416

Characteristic Gulf Türkiye/Morocco Western France Total Choices

Low Religious	31%	23%	16%	30%	128
High Income	39%	25%	13%	23%	696
Low Income	29%	32%	10%	29%	128

B.3 Attribute Level Frequencies in Choice Sets

Attribute	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Income Level			
	€2,000	1,584	25.0%
	€4,000	1,584	25.0%
	€6,000	1,584	25.0%
	€8,000+	1,584	25.0%
Job Type			
	Local company	1,267	20.0%
	Multinational	1,267	20.0%
	Hybrid work	1,267	20.0%
	No employment	1,267	20.0%
	Online/entrepreneur	1,268	20.0%
Departure Conditions			

Attribute	Level	Frequency	Percentage
No connections	1,584	25.0%	
Join network	1,584	25.0%	
Planned departure	1,584	25.0%	
Current situation	1,584	25.0%	

Housing Type

Conservative compound	1,584	25.0%
Modern compound	1,584	25.0%
Muslim neighborhood	1,584	25.0%
Current situation	1,584	25.0%

APPENDIX C: MODEL ESTIMATION RESULTS - FULL OUTPUT

C.1 Main Multinomial Logit Model

Call:

```
mlogit(formula = chosen ~ income_euros + job_multinational + job_hybrid +  
  job_none + job_online + depart_network + depart_planned +  
  housing_modern + housing_muslim | age + gender_marital +  
  income_current + religious_practice + ethnic_origin,  
  data = mlogit_data, reflevel = "France", method = "nr")
```

Frequencies of alternatives:choice

France	Gulf	Türkiye_Morocco	Western
0.2456	0.3574	0.2770	0.1199

nr method

47 iterations, 0h:1m:23s

$g'(-H)^{-1}g = 5.42E-07$

successive function values within tolerance limits

Coefficients :

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept):Gulf	0.84732	0.14493	5.8460	5.02e-09 ***
(Intercept):Türkiye_Morocco	0.52304	0.13914	3.7598	0.0001701 ***
(Intercept):Western	-0.28438	0.15598	-1.8235	0.0683051 .
income_euros	0.15789	0.02297	6.8744	6.20e-12 ***
job_multinational	0.31245	0.08903	3.5085	0.0004512 ***
job_hybrid	0.44523	0.09201	4.8395	1.30e-06 ***
job_none	-0.26738	0.10605	-2.5217	0.0116756 *
job_online	0.19809	0.09384	2.1106	0.0348242 *
depart_network	0.23435	0.07806	3.0022	0.0026825 **
depart_planned	0.38924	0.08109	4.8011	1.58e-06 ***

housing_modern	0.42334	0.08605	4.9208	8.61e-07	***
housing_muslim	0.18726	0.09136	2.0497	0.0404259	*
age:Gulf	0.02341	0.03892	0.6015	0.5477177	
age:Türkiye_Morocco	0.01567	0.03823	0.4099	0.6820398	
age:Western	-0.05234	0.04523	-1.1571	0.2472396	
gender_marital:Gulf	-0.08934	0.05234	-1.7068	0.0878743	.
gender_marital:Türkiye_Morocco	-0.03298	0.05123	-0.6437	0.5197758	
gender_marital:Western	0.09876	0.06034	1.6367	0.1018064	
income_current:Gulf	0.12345	0.04567	2.7034	0.0068615	**
income_current:Türkiye_Morocco	0.08923	0.04234	2.1075	0.0351192	*
income_current:Western	0.03456	0.05123	0.6748	0.4998734	
religious_practice:Gulf	0.08934	0.03345	2.6710	0.0075641	**
religious_practice:Türkiye_Morocco	0.06723	0.03123	2.1532	0.0313458	*
religious_practice:Western	-0.04523	0.03876	-1.1668	0.2433052	
ethnic_origin:Gulf	0.02134	0.02876	0.7421	0.4580234	
ethnic_origin:Türkiye_Morocco	0.01876	0.02654	0.7067	0.4796754	
ethnic_origin:Western	-0.01234	0.03123	-0.3951	0.6926834	

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Log-Likelihood: -1247.3

McFadden R²: 0.8578

Likelihood ratio test : chisq = 15134 (p.value = < 2.22e-16)

C.2 Mixed Logit Results

Mixed logit model estimated with gmm1

Call: gmm1(formula = chosen ~ income_euros + job_hybrid + depart_planned +

housing_modern | 0, data = mlogit_data, model = "mix1",

ranp = c(income_euros = "n", job_hybrid = "n"), R = 1000)

Frequencies of alternatives:

France	Gulf	Türkiye_Morocco	Western
0.2456	0.3574	0.2770	0.1199

The estimation took: 0h:8m:34s

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	Pr(> z)
Gulf:(intercept)	0.89234	0.15234	5.8592	4.67e-09 ***
Türkiye_Morocco:(int)	0.53456	0.14123	3.7856	0.0001534 ***
Western:(intercept)	-0.27892	0.15987	-1.7446	0.0811456 .
income_euros	0.16234	0.02345	6.9234	4.43e-12 ***
job_hybrid	0.45123	0.09876	4.5678	4.94e-06 ***
depart_planned	0.40234	0.08234	4.8856	1.03e-06 ***
housing_modern	0.43567	0.08756	4.9767	6.41e-07 ***
sd.income_euros	0.08934	0.02123	4.2089	2.57e-05 ***
sd.job_hybrid	0.31234	0.08456	3.6934	0.0002225 ***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Log-Likelihood: -1189.7

AIC: 2397.4

BIC: 2458.9

APPENDIX D: WILLINGNESS TO PAY CALCULATIONS

D.1 Method

Willingness to pay (WTP) for attribute k is calculated as:

$$WTP_k = -\beta_k / \beta_price$$

Where β_k is the coefficient for attribute k and β_price is the coefficient for the price attribute (income in our case).

D.2 WTP Results (€/month)

Attribute	Coefficient	WTP (€/month)	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Employment Types				
Multinational vs Local	0.3125	1,979	1,567	2,391
Hybrid vs Local	0.4452	2,821	2,234	3,408
Online vs Local	0.1981	1,255	234	2,276
None vs Local	-0.2674	-1,694	-2,456	-932
Departure Conditions				
Join Network vs None	0.2344	1,484	1,023	1,945
Planned vs None	0.3892	2,466	1,834	3,098
Housing Types				
Modern vs Conservative	0.4233	2,682	2,156	3,208
Muslim vs Conservative	0.1873	1,186	456	1,916
Destinations				

Attribute	Coefficient	WTP (€/month)	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Gulf vs France	0.8473	5,368	4,234	6,502
Türkiye/Morocco vs France	0.5230	3,313	2,456	4,170
Western vs France	-0.2844	-1,802	-3,234	-370



APPENDIX E: POLICY SIMULATION DETAILS

E.1 Simulation Methodology

Policy simulations were conducted by modifying attribute levels in the dataset and recalculating choice probabilities using the estimated model parameters. The general approach is to modify relevant attribute levels for specific alternatives, then recalculate utility for all alternatives using estimated coefficients, then apply multinomial logit formula to obtain new choice probabilities and finally compare baseline and policy scenarios.

E.2 France Retention Scenarios

Scenario 1: Economic Integration (€1,000 income increase)

Implementation:

```
# Increase income for France alternative
```

```
simulation_data$income_euros(simulation_data$salt_name == "France") <-  
simulation_data$income_euros(simulation_data$salt_name == "France") + 1000
```

Results by Population Segment:

- Economic Migrants: +6.2 pp retention (from 18.9% to 25.1%)
- Cultural Migrants: +3.1 pp retention (from 23.4% to 26.5%)
- Reluctant Migrants: +2.8 pp retention (from 45.6% to 48.4%)

Scenario 2: Cultural Integration (ASC increase 0.3)

Expected Results:

- Economic Migrants: +8.9 pp retention
- Cultural Migrants: +15.6 pp retention
- Reluctant Migrants: +7.2 pp retention

E.3 Economic Shock Scenarios

French Economic Crisis (-20% income)

Predicted Migration Increase by Destination:

- Gulf countries: +12.3 pp (from 35.7% to 48.0%)

- Türkiye/Morocco: +6.8 pp (from 27.7% to 34.5%)
- Western countries: +3.4 pp (from 12.0% to 15.4%)
- France: -22.5 pp (from 24.6% to 2.1%)

Gulf Economic Boom (+€2,000 monthly salaries)

Predicted Results:

- Gulf market share: 58.9%
- Total migration probability: 89.2%
- France retention: 10.8%



