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Revisiting the role of welfare in migration

The case of Moroccan migration towards Europe

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This thesis revisits how we understand the role of welfare in migration, taking the initial meaning of welfare, *faring well*, as starting point. Through a mixed-methods, multi-sited case study of Moroccan migration to Europe from the late 1990s to 2020, the thesis inquires how people born in Morocco understand and experience welfare regimes in Morocco, Spain and Norway, and how their understandings and experiences shape their migration aspirations and decisions. The thesis reveals that continued migration from Morocco to Europe during this period stems from people's unfulfilled aspirations and expectations around material security and subjective well-being, which earlier migration has partly shaped. The thesis demonstrates that welfare can be an intrinsic part of aspired lifestyles. It illustrates that while informal arrangements in welfare regimes can be a source of insecurities, they also can represent a resource and a safety net when other opportunities are not available. How people understand and experience material security and subjective well-being depends on their position in labour markets (welfare regimes are segmented, just like labour markets) but also on their imaginations, expectations, aspirations and social comparisons. The thesis integrates welfare theories with migration theories and presents a new, comprehensive welfare and migration framework. It contributes to how we understand welfare's role in migration in three new ways: by considering welfare's structural aspects from the perspective of individuals; by focusing on welfare's subjectivities; and by examining people's subsequent reactions in terms of aspirations and their decisions to migrate or stay put.



Revisiting the role of welfare in migration

Dominique Jolivet



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Disclaimers

(1) The data used for this multi-sited case study mainly consist of primary data collected when I worked as a research assistant and research officer at the University of Almería, the International Migration Institute at the University of Oxford and the University of Amsterdam. I had been directly involved in the data collection, cleaning and/or analysis. The data collection was funded by the Junta de Andalucía (Consejería de Innovación y Ciencia); the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad) (reference SEJ2007-66658/GEOG); the European Commission under the FP7 programme (reference 244703); the NORFACE Transnational Research Programme on Welfare State Futures (reference 462-13-068); Matched funding from the Oxford Martin School of the University of Oxford; and the European Research Council under the European Community's Horizon 2020 Programme (H2020/2015- 2020) (ERC Grant Agreement 648496). I provide more details on the projects, the funders and the datasets in section 3.2.4.

(2) This thesis partly builds on my previous work on migration processes and on the role of welfare in migration already published in book chapters, articles, reports, conference papers or blogs (Cohen et al. 2011; Jolivet et al. 2011; Pumares & Jolivet 2011b; Berriane et al. 2012; De Clerck et al. 2012; Pumares & Jolivet 2014; Jolivet 2015; Bakewell & Jolivet 2016; Binaisa & Jolivet 2016; Jolivet & Pereira 2021). In addition, parts of the argument on theorising the role of welfare in migration have already been published during my PhD trajectory (Jolivet 2020a, 2020b). I acknowledge one by one the specific arguments of the thesis that draw upon already published material.

(3) I translated Spanish and French quotes from primary sources into English. All errors are mine.

List of publications

Jolivet, D. (2020a). Post-2008 Multi-sited household practices: between Morocco, Spain and Norway. *International Migration*, 58(1), 45-60.

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My research trajectory started in 2006. I was living in the village of San Juan de los Terreros, close to Pulpí, in Spain. I was fascinated by the segregation I observed in this small part of the province of Almería. Locals, British migrants, Dutch migrants, Ecuadorian migrants, Moroccan migrants, Polish migrants; all these groups lived in the same municipality but in different worlds. On a sunny day (something not unusual in that region) I read in the local newspaper that the University of Almería was launching a new Masters degree in Migration Studies, Development and Social Intervention. After reading this announcement, I *knew* how I would start the career switch that I was looking for: going back to university!

My gratitude goes to my three supervisors, who I name in order of appearance through my research trajectory: Pablo Pumares, Hein de Haas and Jan Willem Duyvendak. Thank you, Pablo, for giving me the opportunity to discover the captivating research world and learn from you and other researchers who are now my friends. Thank you for encouraging me over the years. Thank you, Hein, for guiding me to grow as a researcher and for challenging me to speak with my own voice. Thank you, Jan Willem, you also played a key role bringing the sharp insights and pragmatism that helped me to finalise this PhD project when I thought it would never come to an end.

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