At Europe’s Frontline: Factors Determining Migrants Decision Making for Onwards Migration from Greece and Turkey

Dr Katie Kuschminder and Prof Khalid Koser
Migrants Decision Making Factors in Transit

• Perceived or actual conditions in the intended destination country
• Conditions in the current country of residence
• Access to information
• Social networks
• Economic resources of the migrant
• The role of migrant smugglers
• Policy interventions
Case Studies: Greece and Turkey

**Turkey** - Largest host to refugees in the World
  – New Migration Law in 2013 - Offers Temporary Protection to Syrians and Iraqis
  – UNHCR manages Refugee Status Determination

**Greece** - 853,650 sea arrivals in 2015
  – New Asylum process as of 2013
  – No reception facilities or benefits for asylum seekers and refugees
Data Collection

- 1056 Surveys in Athens and Istanbul with migrants from Afghanistan (375), Iran (138), Iraq (136), Pakistan (263), and Syria (144, Greece only)
- 60 Follow-up interviews
- Surveys conducted by migrants
- Multiple entry points
- May-July 2015
At this time, do you want to...

- Migrate Onwards: 73.7% (76.7%), 58.5% (55.3%), 66.1% (68.0%)
- Stay: 24.4% (26.8%), 34.1% (34.3%), 29.2% (29.0%)
- Return: 1.8% (1.8%), 7.3% (7.2%), 4.6% (4.8%)
Intended Destination Country (n=699)
Most Frequently Cited Decision Making Factors for Migrating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better living conditions in destination country</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>94.50</td>
<td>93.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe country</td>
<td>96.41</td>
<td>87.38</td>
<td>92.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My intended destination has good opportunities to become a citizen/resident</td>
<td>92.05</td>
<td>84.14</td>
<td>88.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My intended destination has good asylum seeker treatment</td>
<td>90.51</td>
<td>81.23</td>
<td>86.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My intended destination has good social assistance/health policies</td>
<td>88.97</td>
<td>82.85</td>
<td>86.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most Frequently Cited Decision Making Factors for Stay (n=310)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a peaceful country</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am well adjusted</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly locals</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a job</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of money to continue my trip</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

• Probit Regression
• DV: 1- Migrate Onwards, 0- Stay
• 4 Categories of independent variables:
  – Conditions in the origin country
  – Conditions in the current country of stay
  – Intended Destination
  – Policy Incentives/ Disincentives
Conditions in the Country of Origin

• Afghans less likely to seek to migrate onwards from Greece as compared to all other country of origin groups
• Iraqis and Pakistanis more likely to seek to migrate onwards from Turkey
• Reason for migration significant in Turkey
Conditions in the Current Country

- Migration status is insignificant
- Current Subjective Living Conditions highly significant
- Employment is significant in Turkey
- Speaking Greek and Experiences of Abuse are significant in Greece
Intended Destination and Policy Incentives/ Disincentives

• Those who intended to migrate to Greece and Turkey were significantly more likely to plan to stay
• Having a previous migration attempt did not deter onwards migration from Turkey
Conclusions

• Elicit understandings of migrants decision making factors in transit and conditions of migrants in Transit
• Results show that multiple factors across origin-transit-destination countries impact decision making in transit
• Factors most likely to contribute to the decision to stay are enabling factors that positively influence choice to stay
• Policy interventions have a limited role
Thank you