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***Immigration policies and migrant entry
channels: a theoretical and empirical
investigation***

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Background



- Growing body of literature on the role, effectiveness and outcomes of migration policies (Castles 2004; de Haas and Czaika 2013; Ortega and Peri 2013)
- Theoretical challenges:
 - Need to formulate an integrated framework to analyse distinct policy strands for the governance of different types of flows (labour, family, etc.)
 - Need to conceptually frame the relationships between the macro, meso and micro level of analysis
- Evidence gaps:
 - most data sources on the migrant population don't keep track of immigration status on entry
 - most empirical analysis deals with the impact of policies on migrant economic outcomes, scant attention is given to the social dimension

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This paper



Aim: contribute new thinking and analysis on the role of migration policies in shaping migratory processes

Contents and structure:

- Conceptual framework – the links between immigration policies and migration decision-making
- Data and empirical methodology: the EU-LFS AHM2008
- Composition of the migrant population by category of entry
- Comparison of migratory and household formation patterns of different immigrant categories

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The role of migration governance structures



1) Selectivity of admission channels

- ✓ Examples: selection of labour migrants most suitable to fill the jobs in demand, preferential channels for certain nationalities (or origins), openness to rights-based admissions (e.g. pre-entry language tests)

2) Regulation of stay conditions

- ✓ Examples: conditions for permit renewal and leave to remain, restrictions in access to the labour market and occupational mobility, status changes (e.g. regularizations), sponsorship of family members, citizenship

3) Integration and welfare policies

- ✓ Examples: exclusion of some categories from employment benefits, targeted measures to enhance employability (language, training, recognition of qualifications)

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Key role of the family as migration decision-making unit



- Migration as a strategy to maximise economic benefits for all household members (Da Vanzo 1976; Stark 1991)
- Decisions are gender-biased (Bielby and Bielby 1992)
- Temporal interdependency between mobility, employment and family formation (De Jong and Graefe 2008)
- Social networks: households as agency conveying cultural norms, expectations, providing information and assistance etc. (Boyd 1989)

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Migration policies and migrant households as decision-making units



- Migrant families dynamically respond to opportunity structures imposed by migration policies
- Choices on whether the family migrates jointly or initially sends off one member depend on the viability of immigration channels
- If the selected 'candidate' does not possess the immigrant profile exogenously imposed by immigration regulations, migration costs increase (Borjas and Bronars, 1991)
- Restrictions on sponsorship criteria (e.g. 'sufficient' financial means)
- Eligibility of family members who are allowed to migrate is established on the basis of marriage and the nuclear family unit
- Gender bias of work permit and sponsorship system (Kraler 2010)

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Data and empirical methodology

- The **EU-LFS 2008 ad-hoc module on migrant workers**
- **Target group:** foreign-born population in 6 major EU receiving countries (Fra, Ger, Ita, Spa, Swe, UK)
- Cross-classification of data on country of birth, nationality, year of entry, reason for migration, country of birth of parents, year of acquisition of citizenship
- **9 categories** of entrants: EU-15/EFTA; Post-enlargement EU-12; labour migrants (with and without job on arrival); study, international protection; family reunification or formation; ancestry-based + residual 'other'

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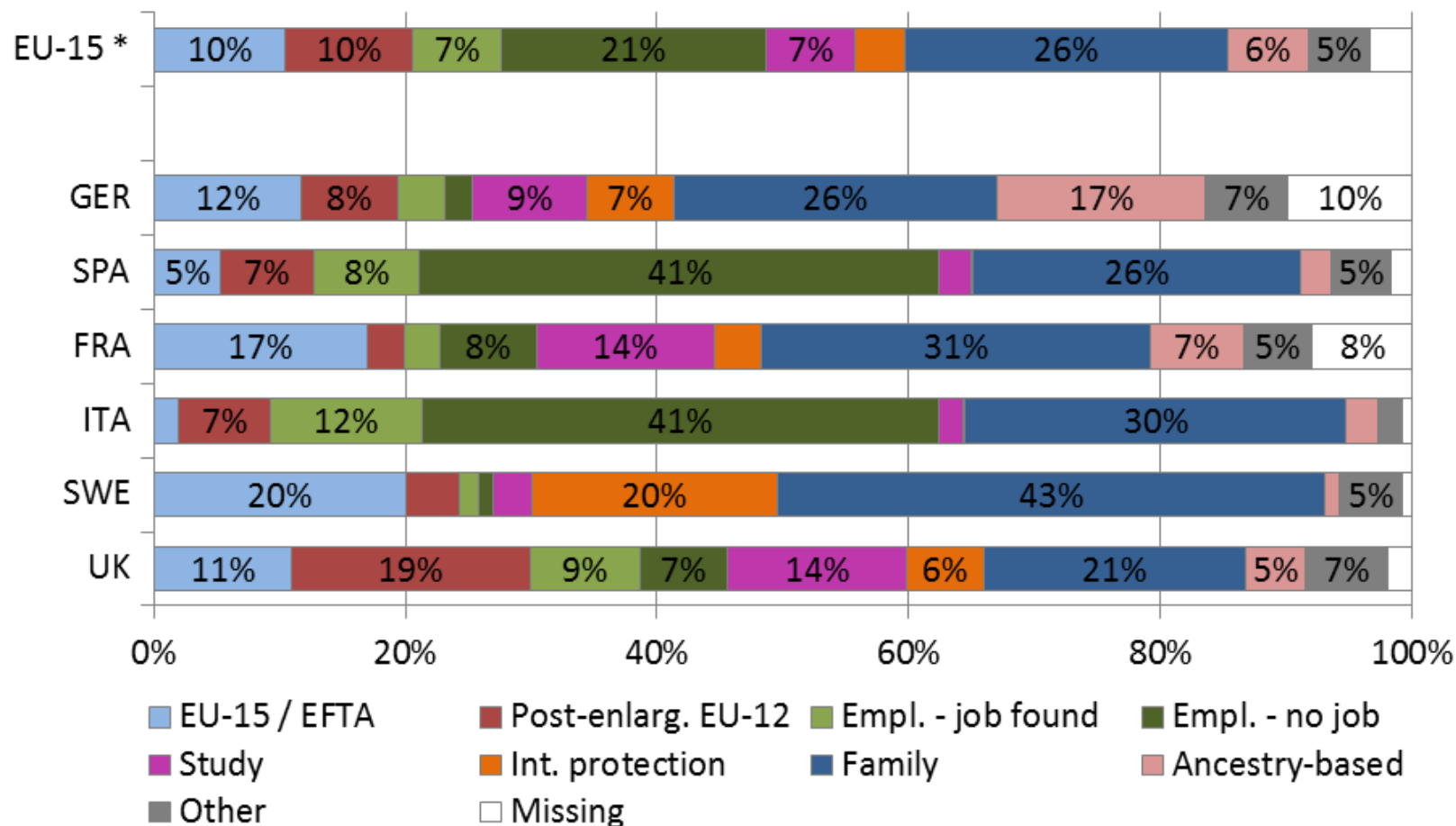
Data limitations



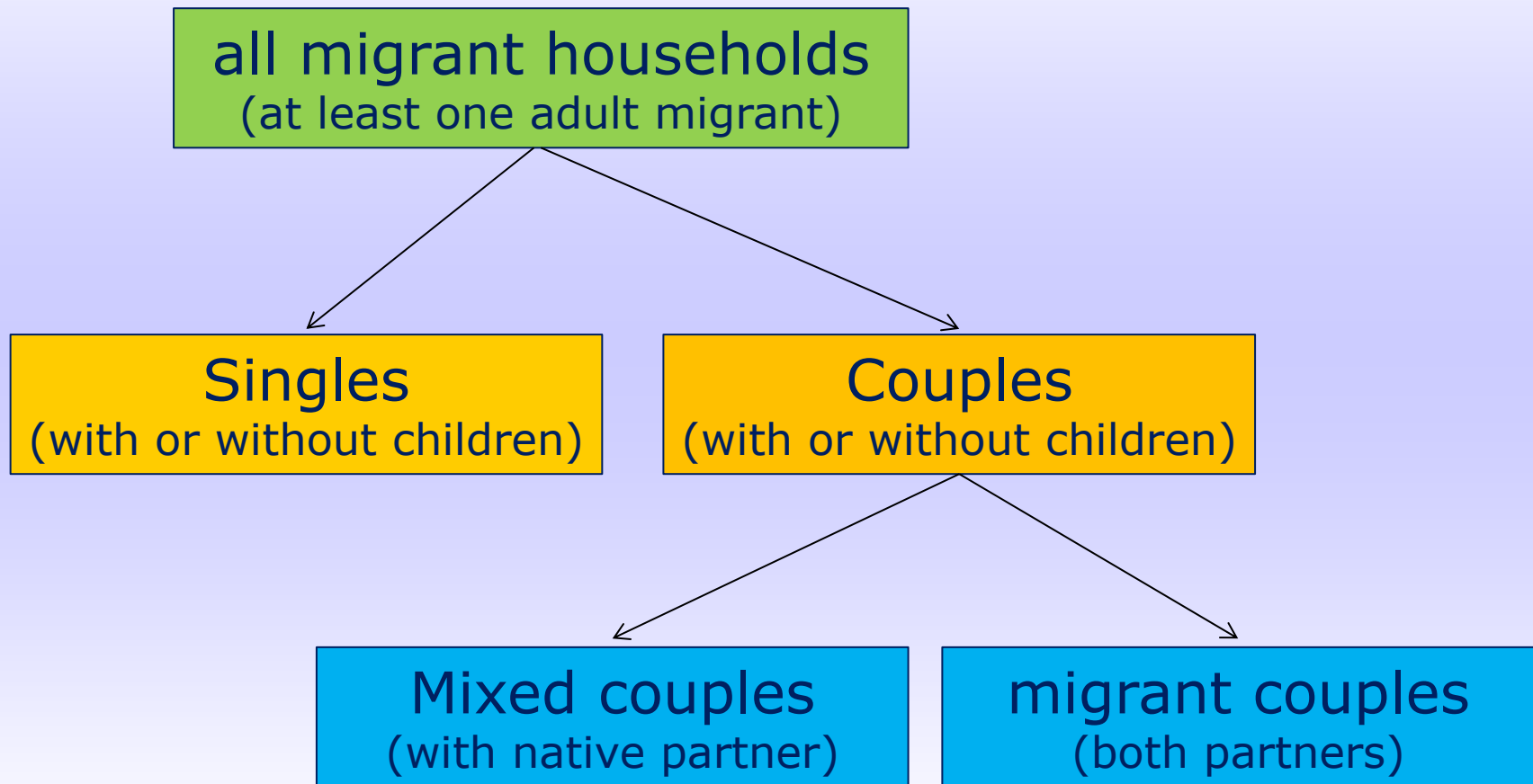
- Underrepresentation of recent migrants
- Immigration categories not specific enough
- Irregular status on entry not captured
- Possible disconnect between visa held and actual reason for migration
- Selective nature of return migration (or re-migration)
- Info on the timing of couple formation (e.g. before or after migration) not available

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The categorical composition of recent migrants (arrival in or after 1998)

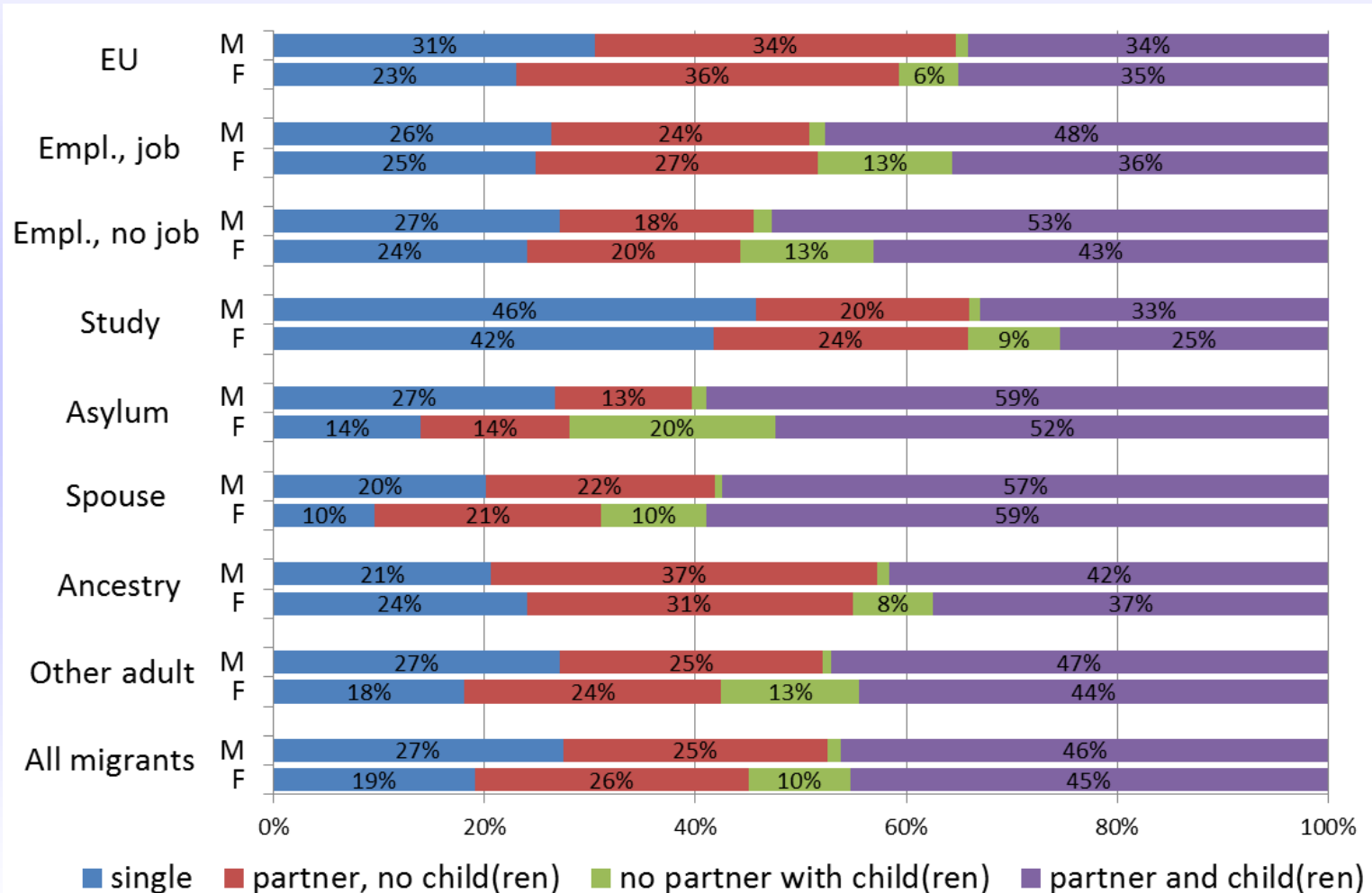


Household framework for empirical analysis

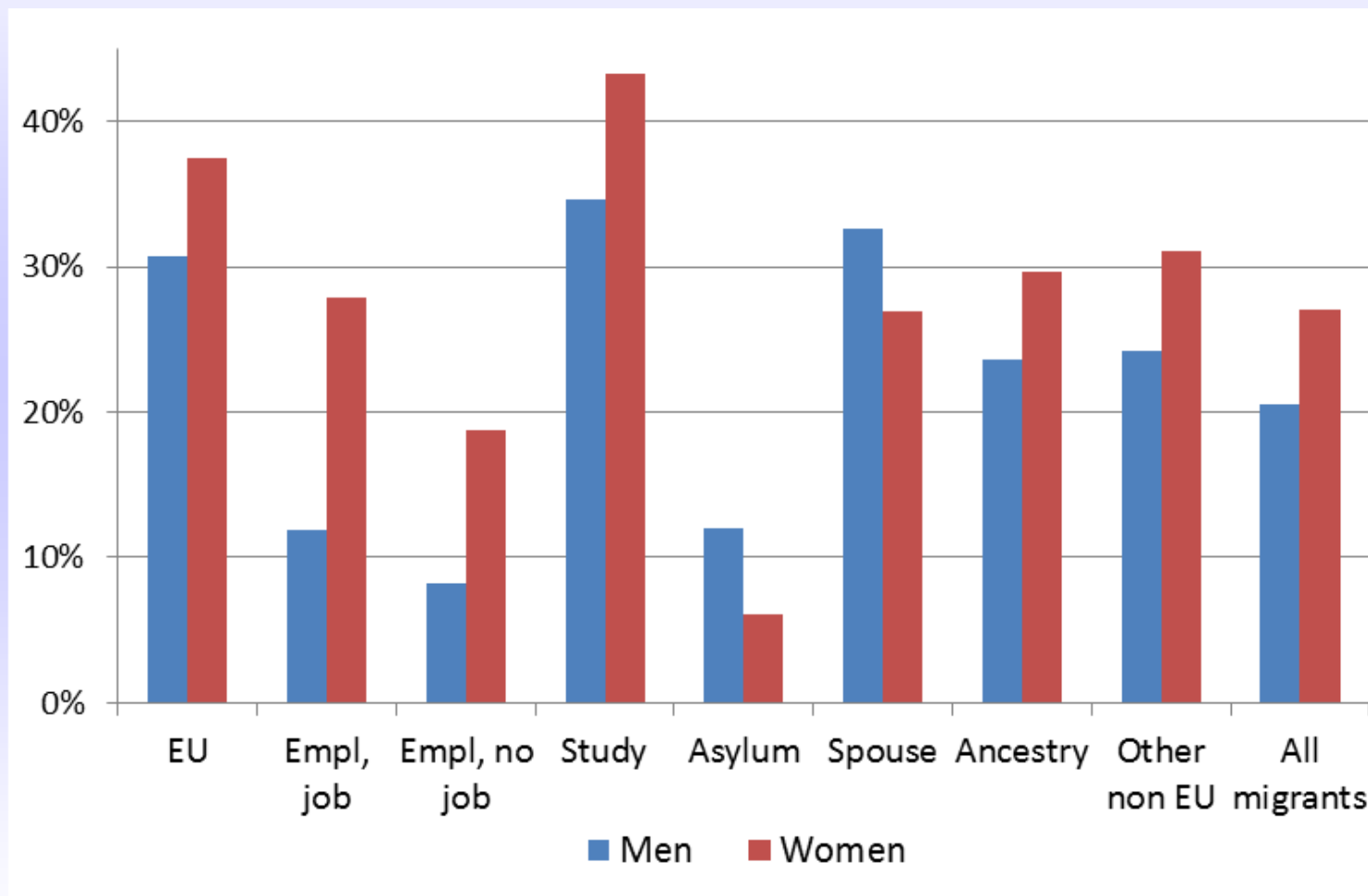


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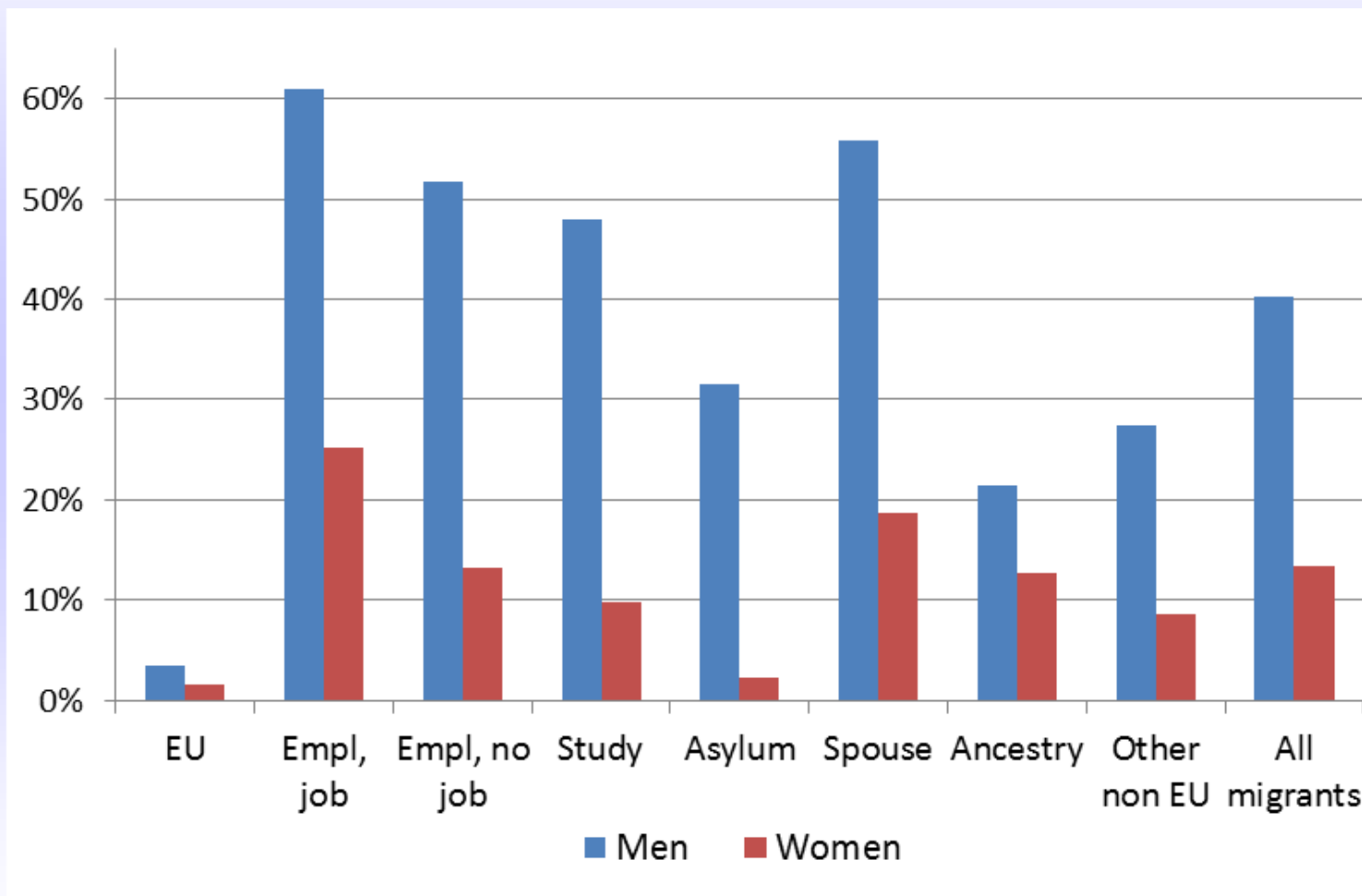
Type of household by immigration category on entry and sex (%)



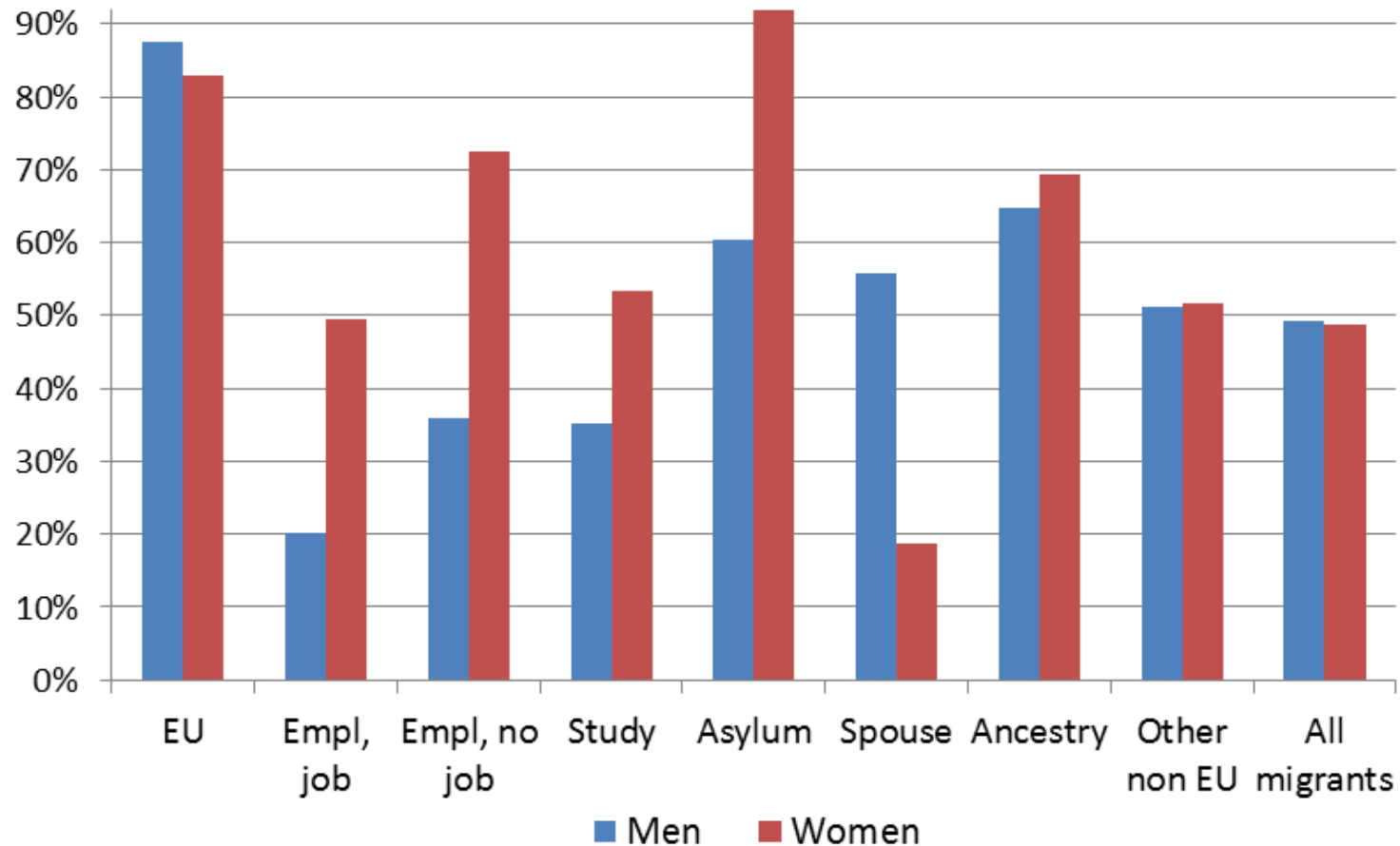
Migrants in couples with native-born partners (% within all couples)



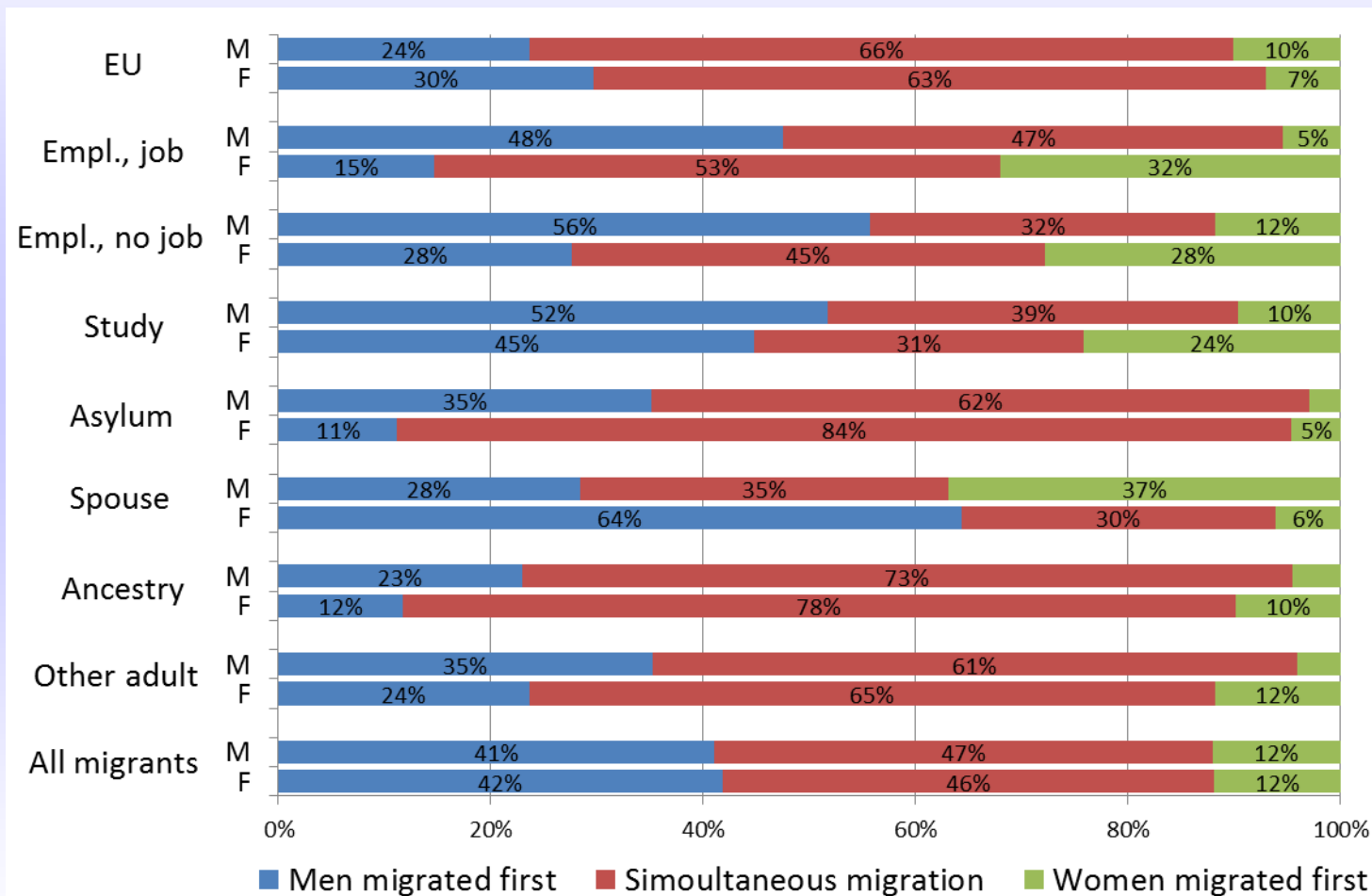
Migrants in partnership with spouse visa holders (% within migrant couples)



Migrants in couples with a partner with same immigration status on entry (% within migrant couples)



Timing of couples' migratory patterns (%)

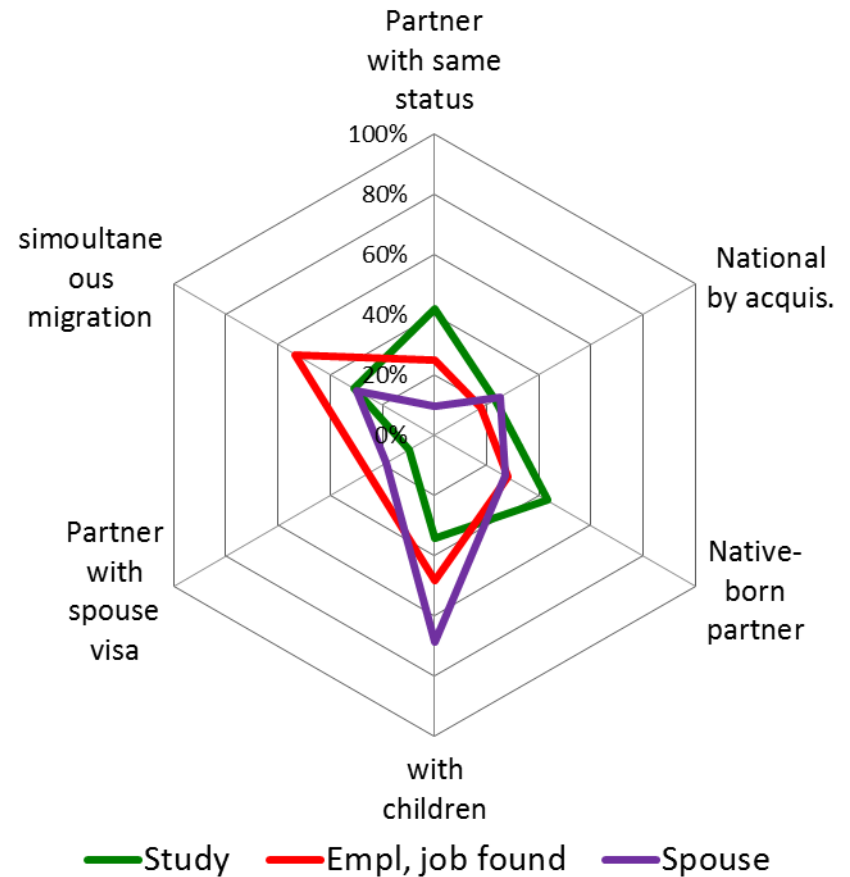
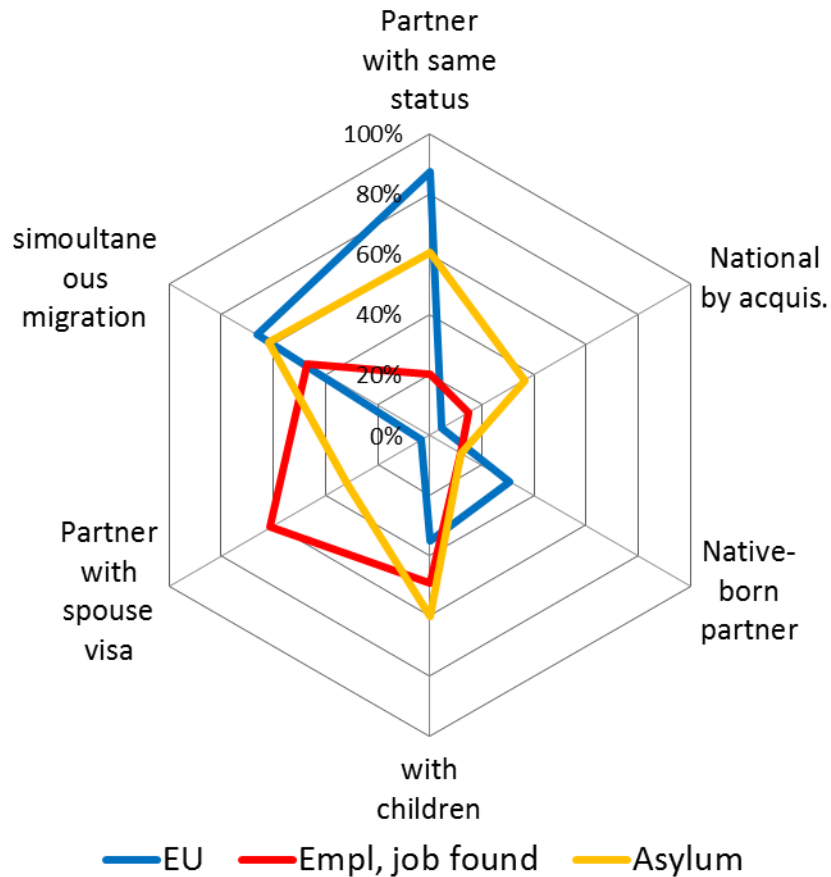


Profiles of migration and household formation



Men

Women



Emerging conclusions



- Migration regimes effectively 'channel' migrants into selective admission categories
- Admission systems reproduce well-established gender roles in migratory patterns
- Differential operation of family networks by admission category
- Policy implications:
 - some admission channels (labour migration) generate more 'demand' for family reunification (different multiplier effect)
 - for some temporary admission categories, especially students, indefinite leave to remain (citizenship) is likely to be obtained through unions with native partners

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VINAKA!

(thank you)

Questions? Comments?

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