Unpacking the ‘colonial dummy’: An exploration of the migration effects of independence and post-colonial ties
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Independence
- Political and economic uncertainties → high emigration
- Border regimes → constrained emigration opportunities
- Migrant networks → help to overcome migration barriers

Non-sovereignty
- Political and economic stability → low emigration
- Weak border regime → emigration of rural, low-skilled

Post-colonial ties
- A package of language, culture, institutions → explain destination selection
The Three Guianas
Emigration from the 3 Guianas

Percentage of population abroad

1966 Guyana’s independence
1975 Suriname’s independence

Source: World Bank Global Bilateral Migration Database
Post-colonial ties?

Percentage of total population abroad in former colonial state

Source: World Bank Global Bilateral Migration Database
Research questions

• What does independence mean for the population and how does this influence migration?

• What are the characteristics of a border regime?

• How and when do post-colonial ties affect migration towards the former colonial state?
Synchronous independence and border regime

Independence and border regime with former colonial state

Legend
- Inter-temporal substitution
- Categorical substitution
- Spatial substitution
Guyanese emigration

Source: British Guiana Annual Labour Reports 1955-1967; DEMIG TOTAL; DEMIG C2C; and Peach 1968.
Border regime before independence

Legend

- Inter-temporal substitution
- Categorical substitution
- Spatial substitution
Surinamese emigration

Source: DEMIG C2C
Independence before border regime

Legend
- Inter-temporal substitution
- Categorical substitution
- Spatial substitution

Time
Emigration

Independence
Border regime with former colonial state
French Guianese emigration

French Guianese population in France

Thousands

Percent of FG population


French Guianese emigrants in France
Emigrants as % of FG pop
Non-sovereign status

Legend
- Inter-temporal substitution
Independence and border regime affect migration

• Different rationale behind how they drive migration
• Different groups of people
  o Independence affects a broad segment of the population while border regime affects migration prone individuals

Timing of these two events may explain

• Volume and patterns: concentrated or dispersed
• Destination: concentrated (reinforcing post-colonial ties) or diversified
• Composition: Class, ethnic group, age