

3G Internet Access and Migration Intentions¹

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Abstract

How does internet access affect migration intentions? Using unique data sets including 120 countries and worldwide mobile 3G internet roll-out spanning from 2008 to 2018, we show that an increase in mobile internet coverage leads to an increase in desire to migrate to another country. Our analysis uses fine-grained geographic data and within-district annual variation in 3G coverage, allowing us to control for district and year fixed effects and district-specific time trends. In our baseline regression, 3G internet access increases the probability of wanting to emigrate by 4 percentage points. This effect is primarily driven by low-skilled individuals aged 25 to 39.

Keywords: Migration intentions; Internet access; 3G

JEL Codes: F22

¹ Views presented are those of the authors and not necessarily of the EBRD or any other organization. All interpretations, errors, and omissions are our own.

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