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ABSTRACT

The transnational perspective emphasises the persistence of immigrants' home country connections, yet existing research adds little to our understanding of the mechanisms by which cross-border ties are maintained. We use nationally representative data of immigrants in Spain to describe changes in their kin network and study how two characteristics, *migration stage* (whether kin already resided in Spain at the time of emigration and whether any kin remained in the birth country (BC) at the time of interview) and *relationship-specific locations* of kin (children, parents, spouse, siblings), influence the frequency of cross-border communication. We find an expansion in the total number of kin largely due to childbearing and marriage. The average fraction of migrants' immediate kin in Spain shifts from 6% to 41%. The presence of at least one kin in the BC increases the frequency of cross-border communication, but with the exception of siblings, the presence of family already in Spain at the time of emigration does not. Siblings and parents were far more likely to retain a BC presence, but they were less likely than spouses or children to be contacted daily. While these ties are generally long-lasting, communication wanes as immigrant embeddedness in the receiving country grows.

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Focusing on the cross-border sphere, the transnational perspective on migration captures a fundamental aspect of the migratory phenomenon that assimilation – entirely oriented towards the country of *immigration* – inherently ignores, namely the continuing ties to the countries of *emigration*. Whether involving the sending of remittances, communication between immigrants and stay-at-homes, return travel, or hometown associations raising funds for development, these connections are ubiquitous, to be found wherever international migration occurs.

Though valuable for illuminating a pervasive, previously neglected aspect of the migrant experience, the transnational perspective provides little guidance for thinking about how or why home country connections would persist. Levitt and Schiller (2004, 1011) portray the 'migrant experience as a kind of pivot which while anchored, pivots between a new land and transnational incorporation', but this is a descriptive statement, not a framework for explaining which 'migrants manage that pivot', how they do so, under which conditions, and for how long. Furthermore, the assertion that 'some migrants

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continued to be active in their homelands at the same time that they become part of the countries that received them' (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 130) is plausible, yet does not explain the motivations that make cross-border engagements persistent even as immigrants put down roots in the country of immigration.

This paper seeks to answer that question by examining the ways in which the location of immigrants' core family members (children, parents, spouse, and siblings) – whether found in the society of emigration *or* immigration – influences cross-border engagements. While the idea of chain migration presupposes that families provide the connection for moving from origin to destination (Requena and Sánchez-Domínguez 2011), thereby generating an abundance of quantitative research estimating the likelihood of migration (Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003; Fussell and Massey 2004; Garip 2008; Palloni et al. 2001), empirical evidence of the relationship between a migrant's core familial network and the degree of transnational connectivity after migration is limited. Linking migration network theory to the transnational perspective, we use a nationally representative survey of immigrants in Spain, *Encuesta nacional de immigracion* (ENI), that collected rich information on the *availability and location of all of the migrants' children, parents, spouse, and siblings*, both at the time of emigration (pre-migration) and at the time of the survey (post-migration), to show how the spatial dynamics of family members between sending and receiving countries influence immigrants' transnational engagement.

We consider two distinct but complementary geographic dimensions of a migrant's kin network which we hypothesise affect the frequency of transnational communication: the kin network's *migration stage* (whether any kin already resided in Spain at the time of emigration and whether any kin remained in the birth country (BC) at the time of interview) and the *relationship-specific locations* of each member in the core family network (the pre- and post-migration locations for children, parents, spouse, and siblings). Studying the impact of these measures on cross-border ties brings clarity to previously ambiguous understandings of the persistence of transnational connectivity among immigrants who, in their search for a better life, are concurrently orienting themselves towards the host country.

Background

Cross-border kinship relations

Migration theories posit that cross-border ties spring from the inter-connected survival strategies pursued by migrants and their closest relatives at home. According to the 'new economics of labour migration', migrants from developing societies often emigrate with the goal of returning, not settling abroad. They relocate to a developed society in order to access resources that can only be found there, subsequently channelling those gains back home to family, whether for investment, insurance, risk reduction, or subsidising consumption. Furthermore, as migration network theory (Massey et al. 1987) has shown, the newcomers turn to one another and mobilise ties to earlier arrivals using those connections to help solve the everyday problems of migration: how to move from old home to new, how to find a job and settle down, and how to pick up the skills needed to manage in their new world.

Thus, practical considerations motivate the activation of cross-border networks for the purposes of leaving and settling, which is why migrants' decisions to depart one country for another implant an infrastructure that knits those two countries together. Yet those same decisions can also split family units, as individual migrants typically cross international borders while leaving many, if not most members of the core, familial network behind. 'An unwanted and unavoidable by-product of the entire process of international migration' (Reher, Requena, and Sánchez-Domínguez 2013, 27), the internationalisation of families derives from the selectivity of migration: those most likely to gain go first; others follow slowly, if at all; the elderly often stay behind. Moreover, the precise mixture of risks and uncertainties involved in moving to a strange place influences who departs and when: questions about the warmth of the welcome, the prospects for long-term settlement, and the capacity for maintaining long-distance ties of dependence influence decisions to migrate as a family unit or leave some members behind.

The turn of the twentieth-century migrations from southern and eastern Europe, later repeated by Mexican migrants and various guestworker migrations to Europe, exemplify the classic pattern: young men departing, leaving wives and children behind. In these cases, wives and also children sometimes later followed their husbands; in others – as with the Moroccan guestworkers studied by De Haas and Fokkema (2010) – fathers preferred that families stay behind, making long-term separation the norm. In the aftermath of the childhood health transition, with mortality rates of infants and young children down sharply and children's dependency on their mothers for health and well-being reduced, contemporary international migrants are more likely to leave children behind (Reher, Requena, and Sánchez-Domínguez 2013). In some cases, both parents leave together; in others, emigration more likely involves mothers than fathers; in still others, as with immigration to Spain, migration may divide couples and children, but subsequent couple reunification is more common than the regrouping of children with their parents (Requena and Sánchez-Domínguez 2011).

Consequently, migration at the turn of the twenty-first century commonly entails a period of child–parent separation (González-Ferrer, Baizán, and Beauchemin 2012). Reunification often waits until the migrating parent or couple develops the earnings capacity needed to permit children to move from a relatively low-cost place of origin, where the wages earned abroad go far, to the place of destination, where the burden of support is more exacting, although the separation may also last for the entirety of a childhood. The elderly – for whom the risks of migration rank high and the rewards low – are more likely to stay in place and the continuing need to care for them may contribute to the inertia of migrants' remaining siblings (Arias 2009). Thus, the geography of the kin network can shift slowly and erratically, involving complex decision-making processes entailing multiple family members at varying stages in the life cycle, with differing preferences for or against migration (Baizán, Beauchemin, and González-Ferrer 2014).

Receiving states' current focus on migration control further spurs familial internationalisation: emigrants are more likely to be those that either gain passage through legal means or circumvent obstacles meant to discourage unauthorised residence. Either way, the opportunity may be too important to be foregone, leaving family members with little choice but to stay behind. Though family reunification may later occur, the process is often protracted and uncertain, affected by family re-unification policies that have become increasingly restrictive (Beauchemin et al. 2015).

An inherent, pervasive aspect of the migration process, familial separation can lead to rupture. However, the entwined survival strategies pursued by migrants and stay-at-homes can also be stabilising. Migrants channelling some of their gains back home in order to secure and improve the options of the kin network remaining in place may also depend on the stay-at-homes, who can provide care to the elderly or to children, look after property, or furnish assistance when problems in the society of destination compel the migrants to look homeward for help. Hence, protracted familial commitments in the society of emigration provide the rationale for widespread, continuing cross-border connections.

Transnational communication

Of the many activities fostering ties among families internationalised by migration, communication may be the most important and most prevalent. During the mass migrations of the turn of the twentieth century, millions of letters crossed the Atlantic. Yet technological changes – most importantly, ongoing declines in communication costs and the advent of entirely new means of communication – appear to have had a transformative effect, providing 'the basis for the emergence of transnationalism on a mass scale' (Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt 1999, 223). New forms of information communication technology 'permit easier and more intimate connections' among migrants and stay-behinds, allowing 'them to be actively involved in everyday life there' (Levitt 2001, 22), whether making familial decisions or planning weddings across long distances. Smith's ethnography of a Mexican sending community provides an emblematic description of these changes as the region was:

> … both marginalized and transnationalized … the roads are in worse repair, vegetation is sparser, and the mountains are covered with sere shrubs; yet, numerous travel agencies list prices for flights to New York, signs advertise videos and cell phones, and parabolic television antennas … sprout from the roofs of the houses. Internet cafes have popped up, linking migrants and stay-at-homes by email. As the Mixteca drives people north, technology moves in to keep them in touch with their relatives who stay behind. (2005, 39)

While communication has become virtually costless, other common forms of cross-border contact – most notably, remittance sending and travel – are materially demanding. Travel also depends on the capacity to legally move back and forth across borders which are controlled with ever greater stringency, whereas possession of authorised legal status has no impact on immigrants' capacity to call home. Hence, as the most easily available means of maintaining cross-border connections, communication with family members in the country of origin is likely to provide a reliable indicator of immigrants' motivation to keep up those contacts, independent of material resources, skills, or legal status.

The geography of immigrant kin networks and the persistence of transnational communication

We hypothesise that two time-varying geographic dimensions of the migrant's kin network explain variations in the frequency of transnational communication: *migration stage* and the *relationship-specific locations of kin*.

Migration stage

Family migration is frequently a heterogeneous, multistage process. Powerful inertial factors retain some portion of the core familial network in the home society; interdependencies within the kin network extending across boundaries may lead to persistent cross-border contacts and communication. While having a family member remaining in the BC will increase the likelihood for overseas communication, migration is a social process rather than an isolated event, making the stage at which a migrant moves within the context of the family migration chain consequential. We consider the migration stage of the migrants' kin networks in terms of two dimensions: (a) the migrant's position in the sequence of familial relocations, whether as *pioneer* initiating the move that others would later take or as *follower*, proceeding in the steps of kin who had already emigrated; and (b) *completeness* (whether any kin remain in the BC at some post-migration point in time, and in this case, coinciding with the survey interview).

We expect that pioneer migrants, with limited receiving country family ties, will maintain strong homeland ties in order to receive and send social and material support (Faist 2000). Material support from friends may play an important role in explaining the propensity to migrate, particularly among men, but family members closely related by blood have higher 'expectations of trust and reciprocity' (Liu 2013, 1253). Given many migrants' increased need for financial help during the early stages of settlement and adaptation, they may turn to their close family members who likely funded their trip in the first place for assistance. In contrast, both the psychic and material costs may prove lower for migrants following close kin. As the earlier arrived kin will have attained a minimum level of economic stability and some understanding of the local customs in day-to-day life (González-Ferrer 2011), newcomers at this later stage will enjoy a greater ability to seek local support and comfort, especially if a co-ethnic community has simultaneously emerged, tempering their need for emotional and material support supplied by kin far away (Lindstrom and López Ramírez 2010).

Given the centrality of kinship relationships to the migration process, *completeness* of family migration is also likely to influence the frequency of transnational communication. For immigrants who have spent a majority of their childhood and young adult lives raised in the country of origin, the relocation of the entire core family network is unlikely to entirely eradicate the social basis for continuing home country ties and contacts. Nonetheless, migrants with no core kin remaining in the home country will be less likely to engage in frequent home country communication than those migrants who retain any close relatives residing in the country of origin.

These two different dimensions of the migration stage yield four categories: pioneer with completed family migration, pioneer with incomplete family migration, follower with completed family migration, and follower with incomplete family migration. We hypothesise pioneers with incomplete family migration will communicate the most frequently, while followers with completed family migration would communicate the least.

Relationship-specific locations of kin

Transnational families assume various forms, reflecting the diversity of family-level strategies employed during the migration process. We distinguish among different close kin relations' geographic locations at the time of the survey, because the physical separation of certain kin may promote more frequent, regular contact than others. In particular,

children and spouses left behind should prompt the most frequent contact. As childrearing responsibilities can be redistributed across borders within a 'transnational fostering triangle' (Åkesson, Carling, and Drotbohm 2012), whereby migrant mothers and fathers 'parent at a distance' (Parrenas 2008) while other relatives serve as social parents in children's day-to-day lives, we expect the presence of children to be associated with especially frequent cross-border communication. Since the spousal relationship confers additional privileges in terms of prioritisation for legal family reunification, we also expect that migrants' interest in family reunification will keep communication with spouses frequent.

With respect to the locations of core kin prior to a migrant's arrival in Spain, the presence of kin in the receiving country may weaken transnational ties as the support from nearby kin can be a close substitute for the help received from stay-at-homes. However, it is unclear whether the pre-migration presence of any *particular* member of the core familial network (e.g. a sibling versus a parent) would yield distinct receiving country resources that reduce transnational communication after the migrant's arrival.

The case of Spanish immigration

Long a country of emigration, Spain became a country of immigration in the late twentieth century, with immigration rising after the country's 1986 accession to the European Union (EU). It further accelerated after 2000 due to a construction boom, growing tourism, and more favourable immigration policies. Rising unauthorised immigration led to successive regularisations designed to manage the size and nature of the flow, of which the most comprehensive was implemented in 2005 (Arango 2013). With over 11% of its population comprised of foreign nationals and another 3% of Spanish citizens born abroad (Izquierdo, Jimeno, and Lacuesta 2015), Spain is now one of the EU's top immigrant-receiving countries. The immigrants are of diverse origins: 19% from Africa, over one-third from Latin America, 24% from the European Community, and the remainder from elsewhere in Europe (Isusi and Corral 2007). Morocco (11.9%), Romania (9.5%), Ecuador (8.2%), and Colombia (6.6%) comprise the largest source countries (Reher and Requena 2009).

This diversity of origins and migration histories yields diversity in the geographies of the immigrants' corresponding family networks. Among Latin Americans, the proportion separated from families varies greatly: divided families experiencing separation from at least one child are far more common among migrants from the Andeans and the Caribbeans versus those from Argentina and Uruguay with longer histories of migration to Spain (Reher, Requena, and Sánchez-Domínguez 2013). Even greater heterogeneity in the family reunification process extends to migrants from elsewhere, with the time for couple reunification among Romanian migrants averaging about two years and still longer periods of separation – between three and seven years – among African immigrants (Baizán, Beauchemin, and González-Ferrer 2014; González-Ferrer 2011). These disparities may be explained by differences in visa requirements, average lower female labour force participation among African wives, and in the case of migrants from Senegal, the gender of the migrant, as men are less likely to follow their migrant wives abroad (Liu 2013).

Data, analytic sample, measurement, and methodology

Data and analytic sample

We analyse the ENI, a high quality, nationally representative survey of immigrants in Spain, conducted by the Population and Society Study Group of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs between November 2007 and February 2008. The ENI collected extensive information regarding cross-border activities and ties both at the time of emigration and at the time of the survey, information that, to our knowledge, is not available from other sources.

A national probability sample of immigrants who were at least 16 years old and had lived in Spain for more than a year or intended to stay in Spain for longer than a year, ENI also included individuals who held Spanish nationality by birth but were born abroad and moved to Spain after the age of two. The survey had an 87.4% response rate from the original sample of 17,700 households in which there was at least one eligible individual, resulting in 15,465 completed interviews. Our sample includes only individuals without missing values on the dependent variable and all results use multiple imputation to address missing values for the independent variables. This results in a final analytic sample of 13,563 observations.

Because the survey collected detailed information on the location of the core familial network both prior to migration and at the time of the survey, the possible influence of unobservable preferences for or against social or physical proximity with family as well as the potential for reverse causation are reduced. The migrant's decision to move to another country may be affected by a taste for residence abroad, which in turn may influence a taste for continued communication with relatives at home. On the other hand, those tastes are highly unlikely to have caused moves made by others prior to the migrant's own relocation. While the migrants' own tastes for residence abroad could affect decisions to marry and/or have a child abroad subsequent to his or her own emigration, those same tastes are far less likely to cause the migration of other family members, especially parents and siblings.

Measurement

Dependent variable

Our dependent variable is the frequency of contact, which is conditional on the respondent answering 'yes' to the question 'Are you in contact with your family or friends in <country of birth>?' Follow-ups asked about the frequency of contact by mode of communication. For each of the five modes of communication (telephone, letter, electronic mail/chat, through other persons, and other systems), there were six response categories: daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, annually, and less than once a year. We created a composite measure of the overall frequency of transnational contact by taking the maximum value across all five modes of communication. We use a four-category operationalisation: daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly, and annually or less than once a year, since the results do not substantively differ from using a six category operationalisation.

Independent variables

The kin network. To enumerate core family members and their locations prior to migration, we use responses from the question 'Where did your closest family members live when you departed to Spain?' followed by listing five relationships: father, mother,

spouse/partner, children, and brothers/sisters. For children and brothers/sisters, the total number in each location is reported. For the 'post-migration' enumeration of family members and their locations, we use a combination of the respondent's household roster, a roster of non-coresident siblings and non-coresident children, and separate questions about the respondent's spouse/partner, mother, and father. For each family member at pre-migration and post-migration time points, response categories for geographic location denote whether the individual lived in the BC, Spain, or another country.

As a respondent's *migration stage* can be evaluated in terms of *completeness* and whether the respondent was a *pioneer or follower*, we develop a categorical variable with a four-group classification, based on the retrospective report of which core family members, if any, were already in Spain prior to the respondent's arrival in Spain, and the current report of which core family members, if any, remain in the BC at interview time. In referring to each category, we provide numerical abbreviations in parentheses, where 0 indicates no kin and 1 indicates any kin, at pre- and post-migration time points. The four categories of the respondent's *migration stage* are

(1) pioneer with completed family migration: pre-migration no kin in Spain, post-migration no kin in BC (0–0);
(2) pioneer with incomplete family migration: pre-migration no kin in Spain, post-migration any kin in BC (0–1);
(3) follower with completed family migration: pre-migration any kin in Spain, post-migration no kin in BC (1–0);
(4) follower with incomplete family migration: pre-migration any kin in Spain, post-migration any kin in BC (1–1).

We hypothesise that migrants who have any kin remaining in the BC (individuals in groups (0–1) and (1–1)) will have more frequent transnational communication than migrants who had no kin in Spain before migrating and whose *entire* familial network later joined the respondent in Spain leaving no one behind in the BC (0–0). Further, migrants who had any kin in Spain before migrating may communicate less frequently than those without because the availability of close kin in the receiving country would provide readily available assistance upon settlement, partially moderating reliance on individuals in the BC. Thus, relative to the reference group (0–0), migrants in (1–0) may communicate less frequently.

We also construct separate variables that identify *relationship-specific locations of kin.* We examine the pre- and post-migration kin by location for each type of relationship: child, parent, spouse, and sibling. Since not all respondents will possess each type of kin, we operationalise each kin location measure as a categorical variable distinguishing individuals without a particular kin from those who do possess the kin relationship, and among the latter, whether there is at least one of those types of family members in the BC. We include four *pre-migration* variables (one for each family member), each with the following three categories:

(1) migrant did not have any living child/parent/spouse/sibling;
(2) migrant had at least one child/parent/spouse/sibling, but none live in Spain;
(3) migrant had at least one child/parent/spouse/sibling in Spain.

We similarly include three post-migration variables:

(1) migrant does not have any living child/parent/spouse/sibling;
(2) migrant has at least one child/parent/spouse/sibling, but none live in the BC;
(3) migrant has at least one child/parent/spouse/sibling in the BC.

Home country material commitments. Variations in the frequency of contact with family may also be affected by home country material commitments such as a residence, land, property, or other investments since the upkeep associated with possessions is likely to require reliance on family members. We include three measures of assets reported at the time of interview: whether the respondent owns a dwelling in BC (0/1), land in the BC (0/1), and other assets (livestock, store or a business, or a vehicle) in the BC (0/1).

Traditional measures of incorporation: year of arrival, 1.5 generation, language, and citizenship. While years of residency in Spain will be correlated with diminished frequency of contact, the relationship between year of arrival and transnational contact may not be monotonic, as the implementation of different immigration regularisation policies can yield a different composition of new migrants and a different context of reception. In turn, both factors may influence the frequency of immigrants' cross-border communication. We operationalise the migrant's *year of arrival* to Spain as a seven-group categorical variable (before 1980, 1980–1985, 1986–1990, 1991–1995, 1996–1999, 2000–2004, and 2005–2007) to reflect separate cohorts of migrants who entered Spain during different periods of immigration regularisation policies aimed to limit unauthorised migrants, which took place in 1986, 1991, 1996, 2000, and 2005 (Arango 2013). In particular, in 2005, Spain further expanded policies to curtail illegal immigration and provide legal avenues for the integration of existing workers in the country, which shortened waiting times for family reunification (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005). We examine whether these features might reduce the frequency of cross-border ties than would otherwise be expected for the most recent 2005–2007 cohort.

We also add a *1.5 generation* indicator variable for persons who arrived in Spain at the age of 12 or younger, to allow for the possibility that the impact of residence takes a different form among child immigrants. We expect child migrants to have weaker home country ties for two reasons: they likely moved with or soon after an adult family member, reducing the number of close family members left behind to contact, and because socialisation in Spain may lead to closer host country identification, dampening interest in maintaining cross-border ties.

Many immigrants from Latin America arrive with full proficiency in Spanish. To capture the impact of acculturation on those immigrants who enter Spain without full linguistic competency, we include a categorical variable that specifies *whether the respondent is proficient in Spanish and whether the respondent originates from a country where Spanish is the official language*. The respondent's Spanish proficiency is based on several questions. First, the respondent is asked about his mother tongue as well as other languages he may know. If Spanish is one of his spoken languages, the respondent is then asked to evaluate how well he speaks Spanish (very good, good, sufficient, needs to improve). Any migrant who reported Spanish as his mother tongue or reported 'very good' in their Spanish-speaking abilities was classified as proficient.

We hypothesise that migrants from a non-Spanish-speaking country who speak Spanish proficiently, in other words, those who exhibit acculturation to Spanish society, will be more likely to maintain cross-border contact. Because there are almost no cases in which an individual is not proficient in Spanish despite being born in a Spanish-speaking country, the resulting variable has three categories:

(1) Spanish proficiency and originating from a Spanish-speaking country (1–1);
(2) Spanish proficiency and originating from a non-Spanish-speaking country (1–0);
(3) No Spanish proficiency and originating from a non-Spanish-speaking country (0–0).

A dichotomous measure for *whether the respondent currently holds Spanish citizenship or not* at the time of interview is also included in our analysis.

Control variables. We include several control variables. As the dependent variable is a composite measure of any frequency of transnational communication across several different modes of communication, we control for *whether one of the modes of contact includes email/chat* (0/1), as this form of communication may encourage more frequent contact than phone or letter. Because the core kin network's size may influence how frequently one communicates across borders, we control for the *number of living kin before the respondent's migration* and the *number of kin after the respondent's migration*. Furthermore, as belonging to a family with members dispersed in many locales besides just the respondent's home country may also affect the intensity of transnational ties, we incorporate two binary variables that represent *whether the respondent's network was diasporic, extending beyond Spain or the BC before the respondent migrated* and *whether the respondent's network extends beyond Spain or the BC after the respondent migrated*.

As availability of financial and social resources might affect the frequency of cross-border contact, we include three independent variables related to pre-migration resources: *possession of a dwelling before migrating* (0/1) to control for the migrant's socioeconomic background, *whether the respondent had travelled to Spain without family* (0 = includes family, 1 = alone or with friends), and *whether the respondent turned to someone upon arrival* (0 = no, 1 = yes).

As demographic and socioeconomic controls, we include the following covariates:

(a) *Country or region of birth,* classified into eight groups: Romania, W. Europe, E. Europe, Morocco, Other African countries, Andean, Other Latin America, and Other. We create separate categories for immigrants from Romania and Morocco because they are the two largest sending countries of migrants to Spain. We expect less frequent homeland communication among Romanians and Moroccans, overrepresented among temporary, seasonal workers, and likely to return after their limited term contracts expire
(b) *Male* (0 = female, 1 = male)
(c) *Age* (continuous)
(d) *High Education:* (0 = first stage of secondary education or lower, 1 = second stage of secondary education or higher)
(e) *Employed*: (0 = does not work, 1 = works full- or part-time).

With respect to education and employment, we expect individuals who have more time and resources for communication to communicate more frequently.

Methodology

We first review descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables of interest, and subsequently examine the expansion and contraction of the kin network across geographic locations over time, by family relationship type. We then proceed to our multivariate analyses. While our outcome variable, the frequency of contact, is ordered, it is unlikely that each independent variable will have the same effect across all categories of the dependent variable; therefore, we use multinomial logistic regressions. Higher values indicate more frequent contact, with weekly contact as the reference category. The first model focuses on the categorical pre–post-migration classification of the *migration stage* as an independent variable, with controls; the second model investigates the *relationship-specific locations of kin* prior to the respondent's migration, and whether these kin reside in the BC at the time of interview, with controls. We discuss the relationship of the frequency of migrants' transnational contact and other substantive covariates of interest, such as *home country material commitments* and *traditional measures of incorporation*. We present relative risk ratios, and provide predicted probabilities of the frequency of transnational contact based on changes in key independent variables of interest, holding other covariates at observed mean values.

Results

Table 1 summarises key characteristics of the survey respondents. As indicated by research on immigrants in the United States (Soehl and Waldinger 2010) and in Holland (Schans 2009), only a small minority of migrants cut off cross-border communication altogether. Indeed, these respondents mainly remain in very close contact with stay-at-homes: over half communicate weekly and almost a fifth do so daily – a fraction five times larger than those communicating yearly or less. Over 37% used email/chat as one means of communicating abroad. In analyses not shown, almost all (95%) relied on the telephone. Fifty-six percent used only one mode of communication, while the remaining 44% used two modes or more, of which one was almost always email. Educational, not age differences, distinguished the e-mailers (and chatters) from those relying on the telephone only, as 74% of the e-mailers/chatters had higher levels of education versus 48% among those not using electronic means.

As expected, a majority of respondents – 65% – were newcomers, having arrived in Spain after 1999. By contrast, about 10% arrived as of 1985 or earlier. About 6% of the respondents were born abroad, but moved to Spain as children. Geographical and historical factors also affect the composition of the immigrant population and its linguistic background. Historical ties to Latin America are reflected in the large proportion of respondents (44%) who were proficient in Spanish and came from countries where Spanish is the official language. A fifth of the respondents came from other EU countries, and roughly 10% from Morocco and Romania each.

As the literature has noted, migration is a network driven phenomenon, a characteristic shared by these respondents. Over 75% of all respondents reported having had someone in

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for sample ($N = 13,563$).

	Mean or %	(SD)
Dependent variable		
Frequency of cross-border communication		
Annually or less than annually	3.8	
Fortnightly or monthly	24.9	
Weekly	53.2	
Daily	18.0	
Independent variables		
Core kin changes		
Migration stage		
Pre-migration Spain, post-migration BC (0–0)	11.7	
Pre-migration Spain, post-migration BC (0–1)	66.9	
Pre-migration Spain, post-migration BC (1–0)	4.5	
Pre-migration Spain, post-migration BC (1–1)	16.9	
Relationship-specific locations of kin		
Pre-migration child location		
No children	57.8	
All children not in Spain	40.2	
At least one child in Spain	2.0	
Pre-migration parent location		
No living parents	11.0	
All parent(s) not in Spain	82.1	
At least one parent in Spain	6.9	
Pre-migration spouse location		
No spouse	53.9	
Spouse not in Spain	39.8	
Spouse in Spain	6.3	
Pre-migration sibling location		
No siblings	10.7	
All siblings(s) not in Spain	79.3	
At least one sibling in Spain	10.0	
Post-migration child location		
No children	36.4	
All children not in BC	42.1	
At least one child in BC	21.5	
Post-migration parent location		
No living parents	17.9	
All parent(s) not in BC	19.0	
At least one parent in BC	63.1	
Post-migration spouse location		
No spouse	32.8	
Spouse not in BC	61.5	
Spouse in BC	5.7	
Post-migration sibling location		
No siblings	10.8	
All siblings(s) not in BC	20.5	
At least one sibling in BC	68.7	
Post-migration BC material commitments		
Owns dwelling in BC	24.9	
Owns land in BC	7.7	
Owns other assets in BC	6.4	
Year of arrival		
Before 1980	6.5	
1980–1985	3.3	
1986–1990	5.1	
1991–1995	6.8	
1996–1999	13.0	
2000–2004	50.1	
2005–2007	15.2	
Spanish proficiency by Spanish language of BC		
Spanish prof. 0, Spanish off. lang. country 0	36.7	
Spanish prof. 1, Spanish off. lang. country 0	19.3	

(*Continued*)

Table 1. Continued.

	Mean or %	(SD)
Spanish prof. 1, Spanish off. lang. country 1	44.1	
Spanish citizenship	17.0	
1.5 generation	6.3	
Core kin traits		
Pre-migration # kin	5.8	(0.04)
Post-migration # kin	6.5	(0.04)
Pre-migration any kin neither in BC nor in Spain	13.7	
Post-migration any kin neither in BC nor in Spain	18.9	
Pre-migration resources		
Have own dwelling	33.6	
R migrated without family	58.5	
Turn to someone upon arrival	78.8	
BC/birth region		
Romania	10.3	
W. Europe	20.3	
E. Europe	6.9	
Morocco	11.3	
Other African countries	4.8	
Andean	23.1	
Other Latin American countries	13.8	
Other countries	9.6	
Demographic and socioeconomic traits		
Male	51.7	
Age	37.7	(0.16)
High education	56.8	
Employed	65.5	
Email used as one mode of communication	37.4	

Notes: Data are weighted using individual weights. BC refers to birth country. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Spain to turn to at the time of arrival. Nonetheless, a much smaller fraction – just over 20% (4.5 + 16.9) – had core kin living in Spain at the time of arrival. Furthermore, for the majority (59%), the move to Spain did not entail physically traveling with the family unit.

The interval between the time of migration and the survey, however, saw a considerable shift in the locus of the kin network. As shown in the distribution of core kin changes by *migration stage*, about 16% (11.7 + 4.5) of respondents no longer had any immediate relatives living in the country of origin. In fact, the shift towards Spain was also part of a broader, diasporic displacement away from the country of origin, as shown in the core kin traits of migrants. The proportion of respondents with at least one kin living neither in the BC nor in Spain, *pre (post)-migration any kin neither in BC nor in Spain*, rose from almost 14% to 19% between the time of migration to Spain and the survey. This tilt away from the country of origin occurred alongside an increase in the mean number of kin (from 5.8 to 6.5 between the time of migration and the time of the survey), a change related to the sample's relatively young age (38 years old at the time of interview).

Figure 1, highlighting this shift in the geographic distribution of core kin over time, as migrant families reunify and evolve in size, illustrates the proportion of each respondent's core kin network living in Spain, the BC, or somewhere else at two time points: before and after the respondent's move to Spain (labelled as *pre-migration* and *post-migration* bars, respectively, in the chart). Note that the average fraction of respondents' core family members living in Spain prior to the respondent's emigration represented a very small

fraction – about 6%– of his or her total kin network at the time, but rose to over 41% by the time of interview.

Table 2 provides greater detail on changes in the composition of migrants' kin network and each member's location. We find the total number of living kin for each respondent in our analytic sample before and after migration and then calculate the mean number of kin by relationship type, distinguishing between kin located in the BC, in Spain, and elsewhere. The mean number of kin expands from 5.8 to 6.4 reflecting several concurrent processes: increases in the mean total number of children reported (from 0.86–1.34), spouses (from 0.46–0.67), and siblings (from 2.89–3.07), and a decrease in the mean total number of parents (from 1.57–1.36). This incremental change in the size of the kin network over time mainly results from changes in fertility and marriage, with marginal increments from the addition of new siblings through parental later-life childbearing and remarriage among the respondents' parents, although moderated by the mortality of parents.

Prior to migration, about 92% of the average number of children lived in the BC; by the survey, only 30% (0.40/1.34) of the mean number of children remained there. The average number of spouses in the BC changes similarly between the two time periods, dropping from 0.39 to 0.06. Yet parents and siblings are not as mobile. The pre-migration mean number of parents and siblings in the BC is 1.38 and 2.46, respectively, meaning on average, one parent and two siblings live in the BC. Yet, parents and siblings constitute 87% of family members left behind ((0.97 + 2.04)/3.47)). Hence, changes in family formation drive the geographic shift of the familial network from the country of origin to the country of destination, whereas the ties to the home country derive from the greater immobility of parents and siblings. This immobility reflects family-level migration strategies that often hinge upon control systems such as restrictive family reunification policies.

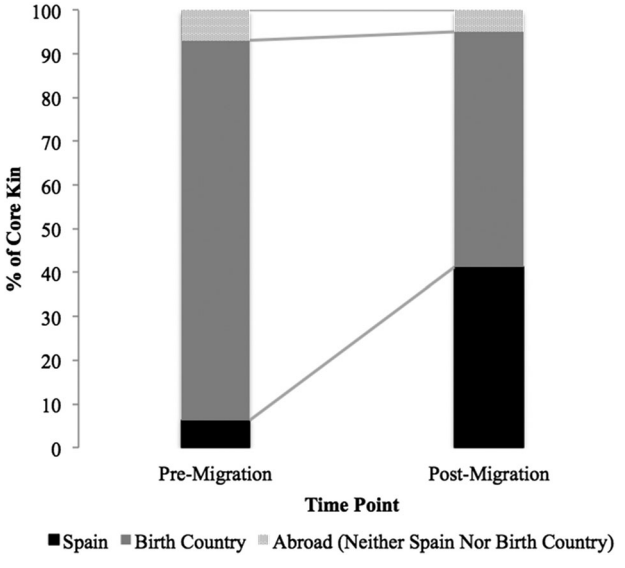

Figure 1. Pre- and post-migration geographic distribution of core kin.

Table 2. Expansion and contraction of core kin by relationship type and geographic location ($N = 13{,}563$).

	Pre-migration Mean	Post-migration Mean	Difference Post–pre
# Children	0.86	1.34	0.48
In BC	0.79	0.40	−0.39
In Spain	0.04	0.90	0.86
Neither Spain nor BC	0.03	0.04	0.01
# Parents	1.57	1.36	−0.21
In BC	1.38	0.97	−0.41
In Spain	0.09	0.33	0.24
Neither Spain nor BC	0.10	0.06	−0.04
# Spouse	0.46	0.67	0.21
In BC	0.39	0.06	−0.33
In Spain	0.06	0.61	0.55
Neither Spain nor BC	0.01	0.001	−0.01
# Siblings	2.89	3.07	0.18
In BC	2.46	2.04	−0.42
In Spain	0.17	0.81	0.64
Neither Spain nor BC	0.26	0.22	−0.04
# Any immediate kin	5.78	6.44	0.66
In BC	5.02	3.47	−1.55
In Spain	0.36	2.65	2.29
Neither Spain nor BC	0.40	0.32	−0.08

Notes: Data are weighted using individual weights. BC refers to birth country. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Multivariate results

Home country familial commitments: changes in the kin network

Table 3 presents the results of regressing the frequency of cross-border communication on migration stage. When compared to migrants without close family connections in Spain before their own migration and who currently had at least one family member residing in the country of origin at the time of the survey (group 0–1), migrants with no family members left in the BC (groups 0–0 and 1–0) were roughly two times more likely to communicate fortnightly or monthly in contrast to weekly and between roughly six (no pre-migration contacts in Spain) and eight (no post-migration contacts in the BC) times more likely to communicate 'less than monthly' in contrast to weekly. When comparing migrants who have family left behind in the BC and were pioneers (group 0–1) to those who were followers (group 1–1), we find no difference in the daily, fortnight/monthly, or 'less than monthly' frequency of transnational communication compared to weekly contact. Similarly, when comparing pioneer migrants with no family members remaining in the BC (group 0–0) to follower migrants who also lack family members remaining in the BC (group 1–0), we find no difference in the frequency of transnational communication compared to weekly contact (result not shown here).

Figure 2 more clearly illustrates the relative impact of the differences in migration stage. Among pioneer migrants (group 0–0) lacking a relative in Spain soil *prior* to migration but whose entire core network had left the BC *after* migration, 64% communicated daily or weekly. By contrast, 78% of those pioneers retaining kin in the BC (group 0–1) communicated daily or weekly. A considerably greater disparity characterised the followers: 77% of followers with continuing BC kinship ties reported communicating daily or weekly versus 56% of their counterparts lacking remaining BC kin. The results confirm the importance of having any kin remaining in the BC for more frequent transnational

Table 3. Multinomial logistic regression predicting frequency of cross-border communication (reference: weekly communication) ($N = 13{,}563$).

	<Monthly		Fortnight/monthly		Daily	
	RRR	SE	RRR	SE	RRR	SE
Migration stage (ref: pre-mig. Spain, post-mig. BC (0–1))						
Pre-mig. Spain, post-mig. BC (0–0)	6.277***	(0.893)	1.915***	(0.168)	0.760*	(0.086)
Pre-mig. Spain, post-mig. BC (1–0)	7.965***	(1.923)	2.169***	(0.253)	0.753	(0.119)
Pre-mig. Spain, post-mig. BC (1–1)	1.467	(0.311)	1.096	(0.067)	0.953	(0.069)
Post-mig. BC material commitments						
Owns dwelling in BC	0.569*	(0.143)	0.794**	(0.068)	1.213*	(0.113)
Owns land in BC	0.924	(0.319)	0.904	(0.110)	0.794	(0.108)
Owns other assets in BC	0.796	(0.347)	0.684*	(0.112)	1.470**	(0.187)
Year of arrival (ref: 2005–2007)						
Before 1980	15.080***	(7.968)	5.815***	(1.093)	0.858	(0.195)
1980–1985	9.611***	(5.119)	3.630***	(0.696)	1.083	(0.262)
1986–1990	6.270***	(3.263)	3.592***	(0.608)	0.864	(0.171)
1991–1995	5.999***	(3.117)	2.573***	(0.407)	0.847	(0.135)
1996–1999	2.787*	(1.377)	2.431***	(0.317)	0.747*	(0.097)
2000–2004	2.698*	(1.217)	1.724***	(0.184)	0.886	(0.083)
Spanish prof. by Spanish lang. of BC						
(ref: Spanish prof. 1, Spanish off. lang. country 1)						
Spanish prof. 0, Spanish off. lang. country 0	0.677	(0.297)	0.794	(0.150)	0.969	(0.183)
Spanish prof. 1, Spanish off. lang. country 0	0.762	(0.307)	0.738	(0.143)	1.299	(0.253)
Spanish citizenship	2.614***	(0.439)	1.337**	(0.124)	0.990	(0.108)
1.5 generation	2.030**	(0.436)	1.011	(0.159)	0.803	(0.184)
Kin network traits						
Pre-mig. # kin	1.018	(0.038)	1.019	(0.020)	1.024	(0.022)
Post-mig. # kin	0.953	(0.029)	0.978	(0.018)	0.953*	(0.020)
Pre-mig. any kin not in BC or Spain	1.305	(0.346)	1.151	(0.107)	0.935	(0.097)
Post-mig. any kin not in BC or Spain	0.890	(0.174)	0.933	(0.075)	1.227*	(0.112)
Pre-migration resources						
Have own dwelling	0.979	(0.179)	0.924	(0.074)	1.038	(0.092)
R migrated without family	0.792	(0.134)	0.822**	(0.054)	1.067	(0.078)
Turn to someone upon arrival	0.868	(0.200)	1.060	(0.093)	0.894	(0.082)
BC/birth region (ref: W. Europe)						
Romania	0.583	(0.233)	0.915	(0.122)	0.704*	(0.102)
E. Europe	1.317	(0.559)	1.081	(0.157)	0.826	(0.130)
Morocco	0.583*	(0.145)	0.866	(0.107)	0.664*	(0.111)
Other African countries	0.947	(0.386)	1.288	(0.211)	1.025	(0.230)
Andean	0.417	(0.198)	0.958	(0.201)	1.007	(0.211)
Other Latin American countries	0.924	(0.374)	1.008	(0.195)	1.203	(0.225)
Other countries	0.654	(0.270)	1.344	(0.270)	1.079	(0.212)
Demographic and socioeconomic traits						
Male	1.476**	(0.188)	1.133*	(0.068)	0.823**	(0.057)
Age	1.022***	(0.005)	0.999	(0.003)	0.993*	(0.003)
High education	0.966	(0.125)	0.932	(0.058)	1.243**	(0.096)
Employed	1.023	(0.150)	0.876*	(0.058)	0.898	(0.067)
Any email/chat mode	0.098***	(0.019)	0.306***	(0.023)	3.606***	(0.283)
Constant	0.046	(0.035)***	0.715	(0.205)	0.228	(0.072)***

Note: Weighted using individual weights.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.
***$p < .001$.

communication, while contrary to our hypothesis, pre-migration presence of kin in the receiving country is less of a distinguishing feature.

The results in Table 4 and Figure 3 underscore the importance of the specific kin remaining in the BC. *Before migration*, locations of specific kin have no association with cross-border communication, except for siblings: odds of communicating daily versus weekly were 35% greater for respondents with at least one sibling in Spain

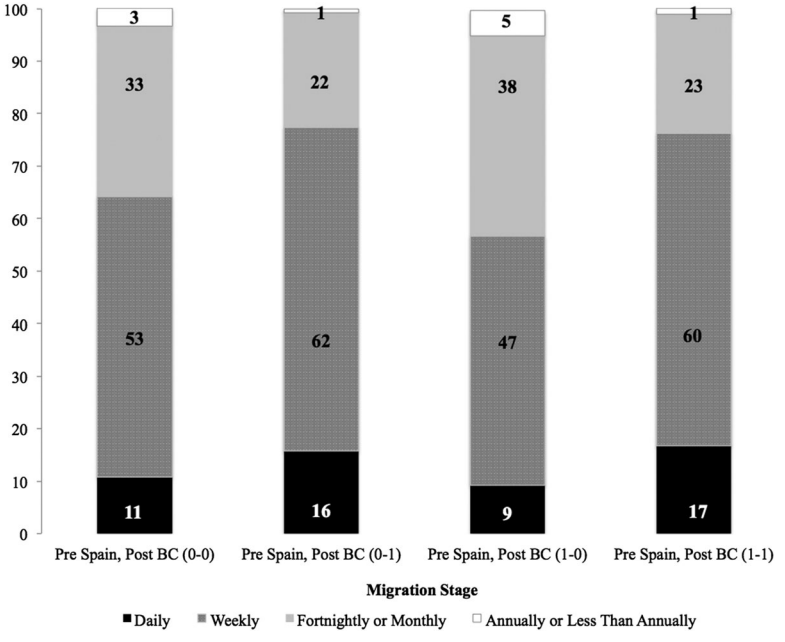

Figure 2. Predicted probabilities of the frequency of cross-border communication by migration stage ($N = 13{,}563$).

compared to having all siblings not in Spain. Greater differences appear *after* migration: having at least one child in the BC versus not having any children in the BC increases the likelihood of daily communication compared to weekly, with similar results for the BC presence of a spouse and a sibling relative to not having any of those remaining kin there but not with respect to parents. The presence of at least one child in the BC is associated with contact at the highest levels, as 86% communicated daily or weekly (22% communicated every day and another 64% did so every week), compared to 69% of migrants without children remaining the BC (12% communicated daily and 57% communicated weekly). A spouse's presence had a similar effect on the frequency of contact, though as very few spouses remained in the BC post-migration, the net effect on communication was slight. By contrast, siblings and parents were far more likely to retain a BC presence, but less likely than spouses or children to be contacted by migrants at a daily rate.

Other predictors of the frequency of cross-border communication

Post-migration resources also yield statistically significant impacts on the frequency of communication, though the direction and strength of the effect varies from one resource to another. Table 3 shows that post-migration ownership of a dwelling or of other assets in the BC positively affects the likelihood of daily frequency of communication compared to weekly communication, yet owning land in the BC bears no relationship with the frequency of contact.

Year of arrival yields strong effects on the frequency of communication. As shown in Figure 4, net of controls, 68% of the 2005–2007 migrant cohort communicated weekly versus 47% of the pre-1980 cohort. Nonetheless, severing communication was rare: 98%

Table 4. Multinomial logistic regression predicting frequency of cross-border communication (reference: weekly communication) ($N = 13{,}563$).

	<Monthly		Fortnight/monthly		Daily	
	RRR	SE	RRR	SE	RRR	SE
Relationship-specific locations of kin						
Pre-mig. child location (ref: all children not in Spain)						
No children	0.855	(0.207)	0.982	(0.104)	0.909	(0.117)
At least one child in Spain	1.317	(0.646)	1.311	(0.265)	0.931	(0.299)
Pre-mig. parent location (ref: all parent(s) not in Spain)						
No living parents	0.914	(0.276)	0.848	(0.129)	0.816	(0.164)
At least one parent in Spain	1.487	(0.417)	1.157	(0.158)	1.042	(0.171)
Pre-mig. spouse location (ref: spouse not in Spain)						
No spouse	0.965	(0.216)	0.986	(0.089)	0.879	(0.088)
Spouse in Spain	0.814	(0.388)	0.975	(0.118)	0.871	(0.129)
Pre-mig. sibling location (ref: all siblings(s) not in Spain)						
No siblings	1.042	(0.277)	0.970	(0.185)	0.938	(0.207)
At least one sibling in Spain	0.993	(0.273)	0.906	(0.095)	1.346*	(0.170)
Post-mig. child location (ref: all children not in BC)						
No children	0.796	(0.152)	0.664***	(0.065)	1.135	(0.132)
At least one child in BC	0.197***	(0.059)	0.402***	(0.040)	1.658***	(0.180)
Post-mig. parent location (ref: all parent(s) not in BC)						
No living parents	0.950	(0.237)	0.739*	(0.111)	0.845	(0.166)
At least one parent in BC	0.349***	(0.068)	0.515***	(0.052)	1.077	(0.127)
Post-mig. spouse location (ref: spouse not in BC)						
No spouse	1.014	(0.159)	1.066	(0.090)	1.165	(0.105)
Spouse in BC	0.025***	(0.026)	0.800	(0.137)	1.444*	(0.247)
Post-mig. sibling location (ref: all siblings(s) not in BC)						
No siblings	0.533*	(0.153)	1.056	(0.218)	1.302	(0.311)
At least one sibling in BC	0.301***	(0.057)	0.974	(0.090)	1.365**	(0.159)

Notes: Weighted using individual weights. Data are weighted using individual weights. BC refers to birth country. Model includes controls for post-migration BC material commitments, year of arrival, Spanish proficiency, Spanish citizenship, 1.5 generation, kin network traits, pre-migration resources, BC/birth region, demographic and socioeconomic traits, and whether email/chat is one mode of communication.

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

***$p < .001$.

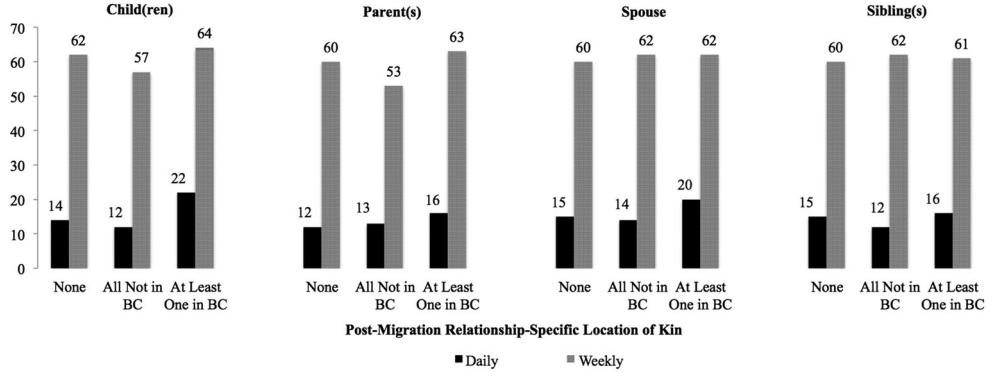

Figure 3. Predicted probabilities of the frequency of cross-border communication by post-migration relationship-specific location of kin ($N = 13{,}563$).

of the pre-1980 migrants reported communicating with home country contacts at least monthly if not more frequently; more than half still communicated weekly or daily. Contrary to our expectations, even among the 2005–2007 cohort, some of whom experienced easier roads to integration and with shorter waits for family reunification, the relationship

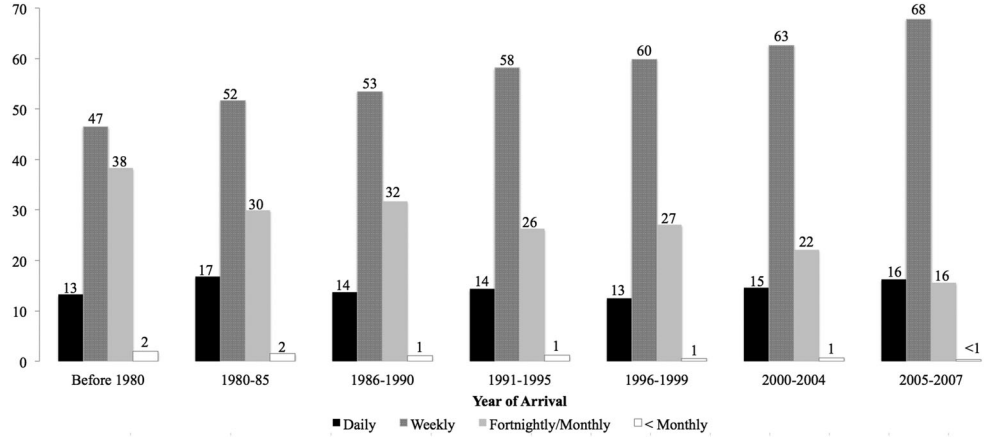

Figure 4. Predicted probabilities of the frequency of cross-border communication by year of arrival ($N = 13{,}563$).

between the year of arrival and the frequency of communication is still monotonically increasing, with the 2005–2007 cohort contacting their home country more frequently than the 2000–2004 cohort, and successively more frequently than cohorts before 2000. As regularisation policies have strict eligibility criteria, they may have affected only a small fraction of migrants in our sample, diluting effects on the frequency of transnational communication.

While theory suggests that linguistic acculturation will be negatively associated with the intensity of home country connections, the results shown in Table 3 suggest otherwise. Host country language proficiency yields no impact on the frequency of communication: there is no statistically significant difference in the coefficients for persons lacking proficiency in Spanish and originating in countries where Spanish is not the official language, from those possessing proficiency in Spanish and originating from Spanish-speaking countries. Two other variables – possession of *Spanish citizenship* and membership in the *1.5 generation* – are associated with very infrequent cross-border communication.

We note the association between several demographic and socioeconomic characteristics and the frequency of transnational communication. As predicted, Romanians and Moroccans communicate less frequently (Enriquez 2013). Men are less likely to communicate daily, while migrants with higher levels of education are more likely to do so. *Using email/chat* as one mode of communication increases the probability of communicating daily compared to weekly more than 3.5 times.

Discussion and conclusion

The political and social logic of international migration combine to produce families divided across borders. The stretching of family ties across boundaries generates persistent home country commitments and obligations and also creates the opportunity to turn to homeland kin for help in times of need. 'Internationalised families' represent the dominant family form among immigrants surveyed by the ENI, though one whose geography changes as settlement deepens. At the time of departure, these respondents left a kin

network that was overwhelmingly concentrated in the country of emigration. Much had changed by the time of the survey by which time almost half of the migrants' kin now lived in Spain and an additional 5% had emigrated to other destinations. The characteristics that select for migration, most notably, youth, also spurred that locational shift: in the interval between migration and the survey, the proportion of respondents who were married and the number of children both grew, with disproportionately large gains occurring in the number of spouses and children living in Spain.

Nonetheless, the survey also shows that the migration of the core family network was far from complete. Since the shift from country of emigration to country of immigration occurs gradually and erratically, the great majority of respondents (84%) retained at least one relative, most commonly a parent or a sibling, still residing in the home country. Many also maintained material commitments, such as property ownership, which were likely to keep them rooted in the place from which they began. For these reasons, cross-border communication is pervasive: as we have seen in this paper, half of the migrants living in Spain were in weekly contact with family members at home; 18% communicated daily. Thus, even as they live in the society of destination, migrants are likely to remain of the society of origin as long as the members of their core familial continue to live there (Waldinger 2015).

While we hypothesised that distinguishing among migrants based on their *migration stage* would explain variability in the frequency of transnational communication, we find no difference in the levels of communication between pioneers and followers. Rather, these cross-border ties are maintained among migrants with any kin residing in the country of origin. These migrants are more likely to communicate frequently than those whose core familial network has undergone complete emigration. Beyond differences in simple presence of kin in the BC, however, the nature of the tie connecting to relatives at home uncovers important differences in transnational communication by family relationship type. We find evidence to support our hypotheses about the intensity of transnational communication depending on the *relationship-specific location of kin*. Disaggregating the types of family members present in different locations at two time points, we find that having a sibling present in Spain prior to the migrant's own arrival compared to not having any sibling in Spain at that time increases his or her current daily frequency of communication, even controlling for the post-migration presence of different types of family members. This suggests that migrants who are part of families with existing migration histories involving siblings already in Spain are likely to remain very connected to their birth countries. In terms of post-migration kin locations, those having children or spouses abroad communicate more frequently (in some cases daily), than those with links to parents or siblings. In particular, children's residence exercises a particularly decisive influence, as respondents having any child in the BC at the time of the survey were more likely to communicate daily as compared with those who had no children remaining in the country of emigration. Our findings underscore the importance of understanding the dynamics in the geographies of core kin as well as that the locations of specific family members, in studying transnational connectivity.

Beyond the kin network, material possessions are also relevant in explaining differences in the frequency of cross-border contacts. Net of controls, owning a dwelling or other assets in the BC increase the frequency of cross-border communication. The significance of other assets in the BC for predicting transnational ties suggests that other individuals beyond the core familial network such as extended kin, or non-family connections such

as friends, neighbours, or business colleagues, are also important agents in studies of transnationalism. While this study relies on data that neither capture the full familial network nor migrants' broader social networks over time, future data collection efforts and empirical studies stemming from these data would do well to examine the locations of both specific immediate family members as well as second-order ties to individuals from work- or community-level domains. Collecting additional characteristics about these individuals within the migrant network would also provide further empirical specificity about the nature of transnational communication such as the content and the direction(s) of the flow of information being transmitted. Given that our findings show that more than half of migrants communicate at least weekly, we suspect these avenues of research should further elucidate how the geographic distribution of individuals from different social domains of an immigrant's life over the course of migration would impact transnational attachments.

International migration extends social networks across state boundaries. Scholarship has focused on the ways in which, once put in place, cross-border connections facilitate further migration as egocentric ties linking settlers to newcomers reduce the costs and risks associated with migration. Moreover, migration yields other community-wide spillovers – whether as a result of the remittances the migrants send home, the houses that they build, or the properties that they accumulate – all of which induce further migration. Yet in making that case, scholars applying a transnational perspective have struggled when trying to explain why cross-border connections might persist, resisting the impact of factors that typically corrode ethnic ties: typically, they have asserted that cross-border ties may prove enduring, without stating how or why. This paper provides support for the claims of the transnational perspective. Rightfully underlining the myriad forms of the connections linking host and home societies, it has demonstrated the importance of an approach encompassing societies of immigration *and* emigration. By highlighting the influence of the geographic location(s) of immigrants' core kin networks, this paper fills that lacuna: when the people and things that count remain anchored in the country of emigration, the place of origin maintains a hold on the migrant's attention.

That hold weakens as migrants' core kin shift from place of origin to destination. While consequential, settlement does not make the immigrants deracinated. Inertia exercises powerful influences; migrants can decide their own fate but generally not that of their relatives, whose capacity for emigration is impeded by factors ranging from the needs of existing family members at home and abroad, to demographic characteristics, to migration policies. Hence, cross-border connections are likely to be long-lasting, even as immigrants increasingly orient their lives towards the destination countries where they actually reside.

Disclosure statement

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