Mobile Internet Access and the Desire to Emigrate

Coauteurs : Cevat Giray Aksoy et Panu Poutvaara

RÉSUMÉ

How does internet access affect migration intentions and behaviour? To answer to this question, we combine a unique survey data set from 120 countries comprising more than 600,000 individuals with data on worldwide 3G mobile internet roll-out spanning from 2008 to 2018. We find a positive effect on plans to migrate (both in general and internationally) within 12 months and the preparation to migrate. We furthermore argue that pre-trends in migration intentions prior to expansion of 3G networks are unlikely to be present. Importantly, no statistically significant effects of 2G coverage have been found, excluding communication as a possible mechanism, allowing for internet access and use-related explanations.

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