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# Why do people decide to migrate? Aspirations, drivers and intersectionality

Work Package 9: Voices of irregular  
migrants settled in Belgium  
and Sweden

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

# Why do people **decide** to migrate?

## Temporality to the decision to migrate

- **Begins well before actual mobility**
  - Escalating violence to immediate threat
  - Watchful resource gathering
- **Temporality of migration itself**
  - Initially assumed to be short term
  - As barriers get entrenched, more long-term plan
- **Duration of the journey is intersectional**
  - Sometimes long, several hubs and transition points
  - Skills, gender, class, finances determine timeline

Findings based on:

Semi-structured interviews with irregular (settled) migrants

35 interviews in Belgium and Sweden each

Questions examined trajectory to Europe, pre-departure, in transit, en route to Europe and post-arrival



HumMingBird

# Decision-making is dynamic and intersectional

- Rarely final, fluid even after ‘settling’
- Skills play a critical role
  - Access to information, English
  - Ability to work en route, learn local language
- Gender impacts materiality of the move
  - Likelihood of travelling alone
  - Intersects with age and class, in particular.
- Aspirations are critical
  - Closure of schools, job opportunities
  - No opportunity for legalisation in transit countries
  - Access to labour market, Human Rights and a chance to ‘build a good life’

