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Family, obligations, and migration The role of kinship in Cameroon

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate the influence of family and kin networks on the individual decision to migrate. The study is based on qualitative ethnographic data which was collected during a field research in Cameroon in spring 2005, showing the considerable impact of the extended family on the migrant's choice to leave Cameroon for Germany. Migrants do not solely move for their own achievements and purposes, but rather as significant members of their entire immediate family. The individual is part of an informal reciprocal system of exchange which is based on trust and has social consequences, and includes duties and responsibilities for both sides.

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