



## AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

MACERATA 17 -20/09/2014

### TITLE: MOTIVATIONS OF TUNISIAN YOUTH TOWARDS MIGRATION ABROAD

AUTHOR: JON GRESHAM, (intl2@securenym.net)

#### ABSTRACT:

Thousands of Tunisians left the country in 2011. Why?

To find answers that would supplement popular opinions on the subject, we interviewed 503 young adults in the Sahel of Tunisia in 2012-2013. Among our respondents, the top motives for outward migration were job and career (96%), money (90%), and adventure (79%). Less important factors included freedom, stability, education, religion, politics, family reunification, and family pressure. Our average respondent was 23 years old (with 52% male vs. 48% female), had 14 years formal education, and knew at least five people living abroad.

We conducted individual surveys with both traditional paper-and-pen methods and with online, internet-based survey methods. Snowball sampling (via-via methods) was from initial university student contacts in Sousse, Tunisia. Analysis by SPSS included factor analysis and cross-tabs.

We drew helpful insights from studies on the psychological and social factors involved in emigration intentions, such as those of George Groenewold (2006), Taoufik Bourguiba (2004), Hassen Boubakri (1993, 2002), and The International Organization for Migration (2012). These helped relate our research into the larger picture of push-pull factors of emigration, and the significant impact of circular migration in the Tunisian economy.

We have established a baseline for future studies on emigration motivations of Sahelian young adults. Future research on Tunisian emigration would be advised to include items on the domains of education and work and on family patterns of circular migration. Similarly, future youth employment projects should include career and entrepreneurship counseling, including emigration training if young adults are to contribute to economic and social development in Tunisia.

#### AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:

*Jon N. Gresham. Ph.D., enjoys learning and writing about technology and culture and how they interact. He has lived in 6 countries.*

*<http://www.Facebook.com/TunisMigration>. He is presently collaborating with the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis, Tunisia.*

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Keywords: motivation to migrate; international migration; emigration factors; emigration motivation; emigrant; Tunisia; North Africa.

JEL Codes: J61, I31, O15.