

Early Leavers from Education and Training (ELETs) in Spain

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Introduction

Young people with at most lower secondary education—which in Spain is the compulsory *Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* or ESO—are “Early Leavers from Education and Training”, or (ELET)s. Their rate in Spain is particularly high: 16% vs. 10% in the EU-28 in 2020 (Eurostat 2021). Having the lowest stock of human capital in their cohort, ELETs are likely to face labor market penalties and, ultimately, social exclusion and poverty (European Commission 2014, 2015). While many dropouts subsequently continue their training or find a job, some are “neither in employment, nor in education or training”, i.e., NEETs or *ninis* in Spanish.

Main objectives

We investigate the influence of gender, migrant origin, and parents’ education on the probability of becoming an ELET in the 2013-4 ESO graduation cohort, distinguishing between ELETs who resumed training in the following four years and ELETs who did not. Moreover, we define a proxy for repeaters in the 2013-4 cohort. This allows studying whether gender, origin and parents’ education affect the probability of having a second chance in the educational system (Bernardi and Cebolla 2014). Finally, we also study whether the effect of parents’ education varies by migration status.

Data

We analyze the *Encuesta de Transición Educativa-Formativa e Inserción Laboral*, (ETEFIL 2019) carried out by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2020). The survey interviewed in 2019 individuals who in 2014 either graduated from ESO or left schooling.

Table 1: Explanatory variables by ESO graduation status (row percentages)

	ESO graduate	ELET (studies later)	ELET (no further study)
<i>Disabled</i>			
No	77.71	16.25	6.04
Yes	43.20	37.87	18.93
<i>Repeater[†]</i>			
No	79.76	14.80	5.43
Yes	52.65	33.37	13.98
<i>Gender</i>			
Men	71.63	20.67	7.70
Women	83.03	12.23	4.74
<i>Migrant status</i>			
Natives [‡]	79.01	15.12	5.86
Migrants	56.62	32.61	10.78
<i>Parents’ education</i>			
None/Primary	59.32	28.21	12.47
Secondary	83.03	13.23	3.74
Tertiary	92.97	5.79	1.24
Observations	6,251	1,356	512

Note: [†] Repeaters are ESO students aged 18 or 19 in the 2013-4 academic year; [‡] natives are defined as people with at least one parent born in Spain.

Method: Multinomial logit model (Greene 2018)

$$p_{ij} = \Pr(y_j = i) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{1 + \sum_{m=2}^k \exp(x_j \beta_m)}, & \text{if } i = 1 \\ \frac{\exp(x_j \beta_i)}{1 + \sum_{m=2}^k \exp(x_j \beta_m)}, & \text{if } i > 1, \end{cases}$$

We compare this model with a nested logit regression. The latter relaxes the Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives condition by grouping together ELETs who resume studying and ELETs who do not (within the four years we observe after dropping out).

Results

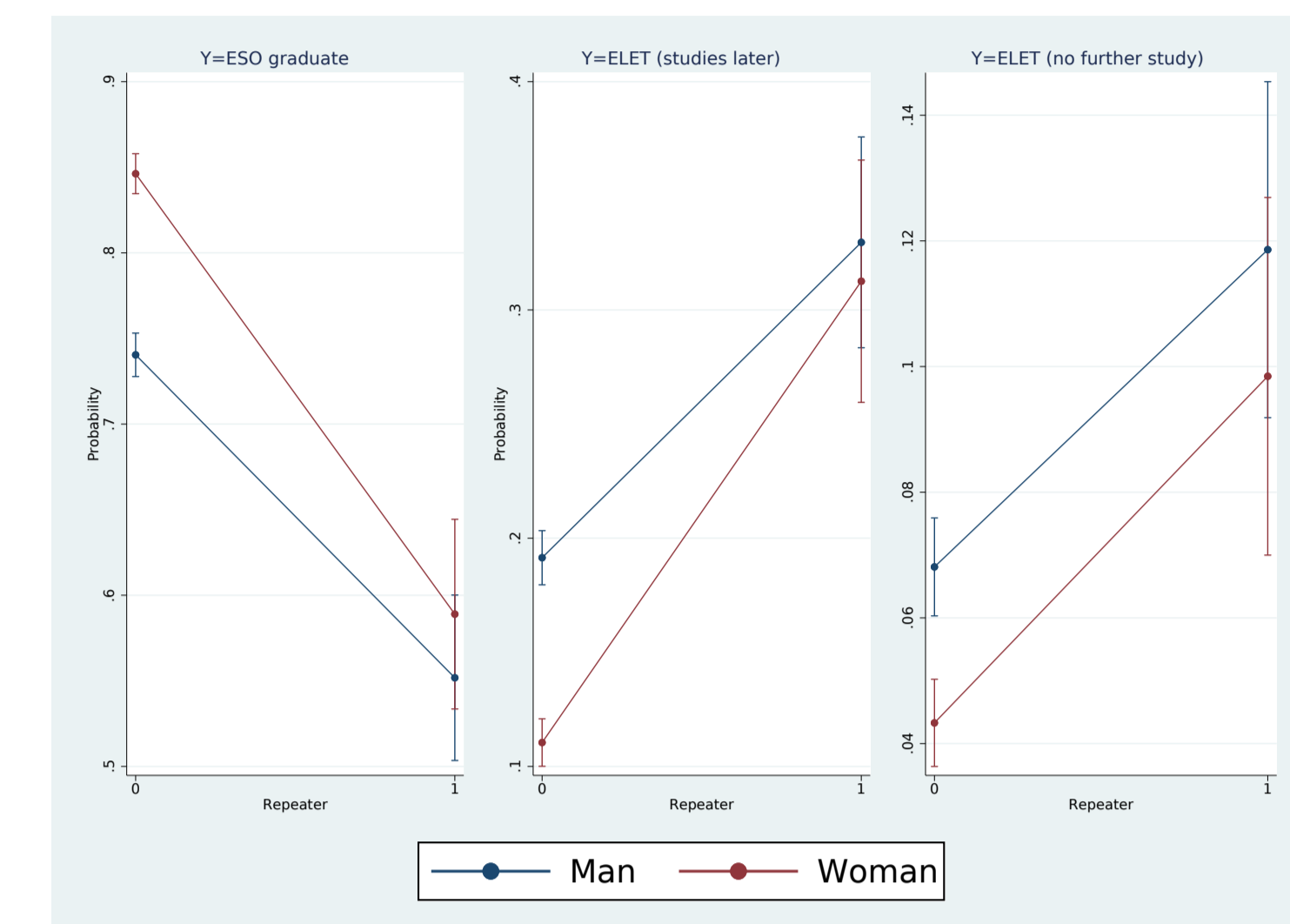


Figure 1: Probability of each outcome by gender and whether the student is a repeater or not

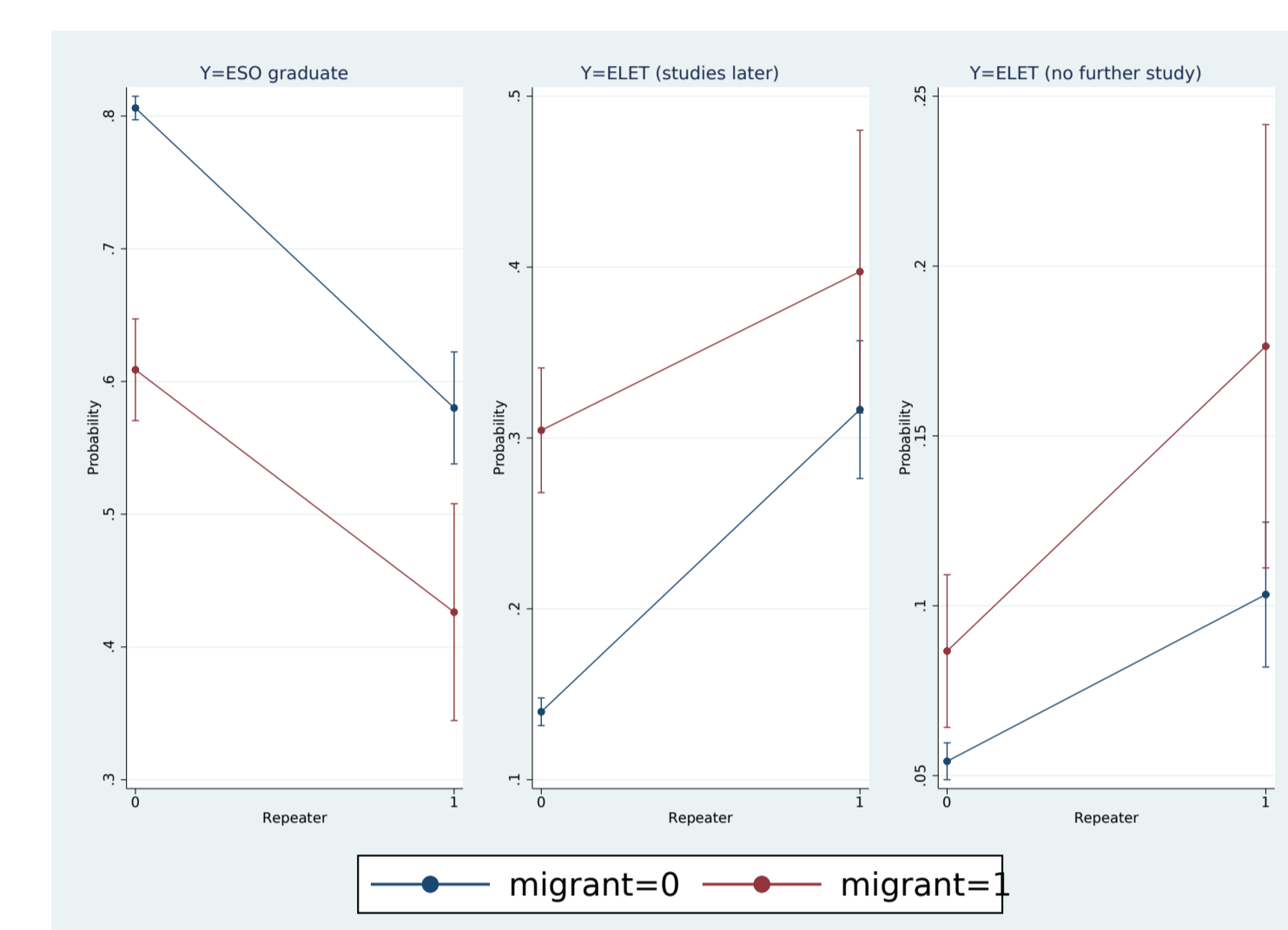


Figure 2: Probability of each outcome by migrant background and whether the student is a repeater or not

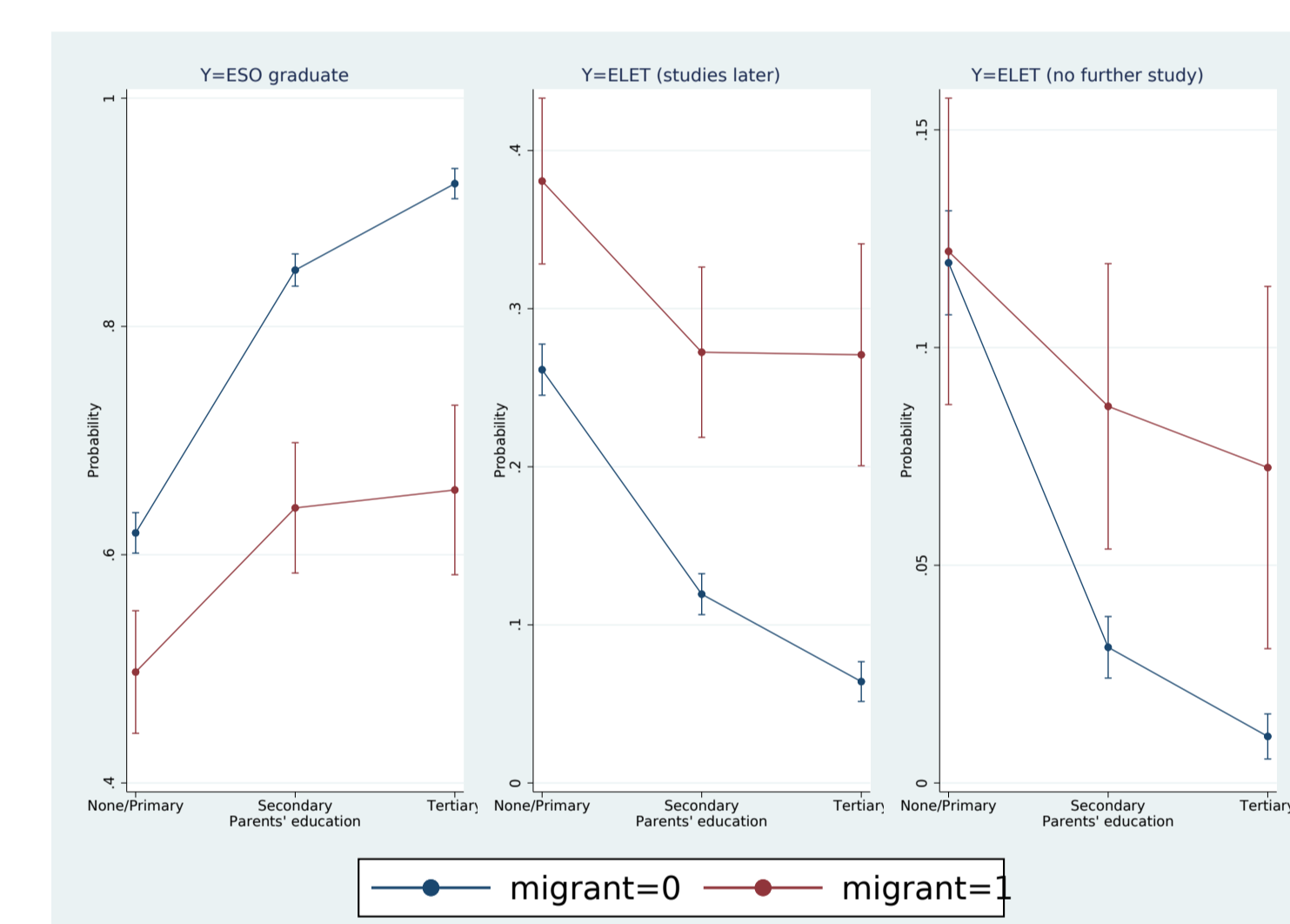


Figure 3: Probability of each outcome by migrant background and parents’ level of education

- There is no statistically significant difference by gender among repeaters; however among non-repeaters, the probability of dropping out is greater among men. (See Figure 1; Rahona and Morales 2021.)
- The gap between repeaters and non-repeaters in the probability of being an ELET and not returning to study is greatest among migrants; the converse is true for the probability of being an ELET who later resumes studies; i.e., an educational second chance is more likely among natives. (See Figure 2.)
- The probability of being an ELET decreases as parents’ level of education increases; however (a) this pattern is more acute among native people; and (b), among migrants there is no difference between the secondary and tertiary levels of education. (See Figure 3.)

References

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