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Special Issue on
**“Family migration processes
in a comparative perspective”**

- Can M. Aybek and Nadja Milewski: Introduction
- Dynamics of change in transnational families in Spain and Ecuador
- Young Syrian women in the Netherlands: Building a new life and (re)making a family
- Spousal migration and reunification practices of refugees to Germany
- Migrants’ timing of endogamous and exogamous marriages
- A different perspective on exogamy

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

This Special Issue on *Family migration processes in a comparative perspective* has been prepared and supervised by *Can M. Aybek* and *Nadja Milewski*, who served as guest editors. For further information on its contents, please consult their *Introduction to the Special Issue* that follows immediately after this Editorial.

As we have indicated in our Editorial for issue 2/2019, the issue presented here is the last one published in dual form, i. e., in print and online, by the publishing house *Barbara Budrich Publishers* and its processor *Leske + Budrich* that served us very well for most of the more than three decades of this Journal's existence. From January 1, 2020, we publish *online only* and in *open access* on our new OJS-based platform hosted by the *University of Bamberg Press* under a CC-BY license. From the latter date on, our new platform can be reached by simply typing the very same URL previously used, that is: www.journal-of-family-research.eu.

Also starting in January 2020, we will drop the German part of our name, i.e. *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung* and will solely be known as *Journal of Family Research*. By doing so, we ultimately reflect in the Journal's title that we publish articles in English only since the first issue of this year. For the convenience for German-speaking readers and true to our long-standing tradition as a bilingual journal, we will continue to publish German translations of the titles, abstracts and key words of the papers at the end of each article.

We invite you to visit our new platform after the beginning of the new year. We also welcome submissions of new papers there. For speedy information on new releases, you may register on the spot for receiving this information by email from us.

Since the cooperation over a time span of three decades with people working at or for *Barbara Budrich Publishers* comes to an end, we would like to express our sincere thanks for their unremitting support for our Journal and their working for us. Specifically, our thanks go to *Beate Glaubitz*, the layout expert, to *Edmund Budrich*, who was responsible at Budrich's for our Journal, to *Miriam von Maydell*, who was the lector of our special issues/*Sonderhefte* in book format, and to *Barbara Budrich*, the publisher.

It is with great regret we have to announce that *Michaela Kreyenfeld* has left the Editorial Board on September 30th 2019 on her own request. During her twelve years of serving as an editor, an editor-in-charge, as well as a guest editor of special issues, she provided us and our readers with new insights and painstakingly sound academic reasoning.

From 2020 onwards, all papers ever published in the Journal will be made available for perusing and downloading free of charge on our new platform. Printed back copies as well as printed copies of Special Issues/*Sonderhefte* in book format may be purchased from the website of Barbara Budrich Publishers. We wish you a pleasant and informative reading and do hope that you join us on our new platform.

Henriette Engelhardt-Wölfler
Editor-in-Chief

Kurt P. Bierschock
Managing Editor

Can M. Aybek & Nadja Milewski

Introduction to the Special Issue on “Family migration processes in a comparative perspective”

Abstract

This paper provides an introduction to this Special Issue on “Family migration processes in a comparative perspective”. Following an introduction to the topic, we provide summaries of the papers in this Special Issue and discuss afterwards some overarching theoretical perspectives. This Special Issue contains papers that explore how family lives and intimate relationships are constituted and re-constituted under conditions of transnationality. The authors of the contributing papers, although they have followed very different theoretical and methodological paths, underscore the effect of conducting and facilitating family life and couple relationships during or after an international migration process. They show that the couples and multigenerational families in transnational contexts are constantly undergoing processes of constitution, negotiation, and reconstitution. We conclude that future research should shift from focusing solely on the individual to examining couples and families, and it should adopt dynamic, rather than static perspectives when studying family migration.

1. Preface

Two years ago, in 2017, we received the generous offer to edit a Special Issue combining the research fields of family and migration. This was at a point in time when the word “Familienzusammenführung” (family reunion) was used – and also misused – in an inflationary manner in political and public discourses not only in our country, Germany, but also in other European states. By that time, nearly two years had passed since the large refugee influx from the Middle East and Northern Africa in 2015. In the meantime, we had witnessed how the question of family members who potentially might follow those who already had arrived in the country affected public debates about which and how many refugees under subsidiary protection are actually entitled to stay. Those debates undermine the premise that an individual who is subject to persecution is entitled to protection. Gender stereotyping featured prominently in the discourses on refugees, fuelled by the sexual assaults that occurred during New Year’s Eve 2015/2016 in and around the central train station in the city of Cologne. A discourse analysis of reports published in two big news outlets in Germany (*Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Spiegel*) in the years 2013 to

2018 on refugees revealed that the keywords "male" and "young" were disproportionately mentioned together with the term "criminality" (Achterberg 2018). By contrast, "women" were mainly featured as potentially following family migrants with the primary role of ensuring that the male pioneer migrant can focus his attention on his successful integration into the host society. By successful integration, politicians mainly had in mind labour market participation – thus ignoring that asylum migration and labour demands in ageing Western societies may not perfectly match. The idea of the protection of the family as such appeared as a rather subordinated goal in public and political discourses. This illustrates the conflict area that arises when policies that target different goals interfere with each other. On the one hand, the family enjoys protection; on the other hand, immigration policies target individuals. By crossing international borders, the family is no longer only an institution in the private realm, but becomes a subject for controversial political debates (Bonjour/Kraler 2016).

Against this backdrop, we organized in October 2018 a workshop on family migration processes in Berlin. We wanted to establish a dialogue with and among those scholars who worked on topics related to family migration and could present results based on recent empirical observations. In this workshop, we also wanted to overcome typical compartmentalisations present in the academic world. We aimed to bring together scholars who come from various disciplines and countries, adopt different methodological perspectives, and focus on different "target groups".

Now, more than a year later, immigration to Europe continues, albeit on a smaller numerical level. New empirical studies have produced up-to-date datasets, and first results are available. We present five studies that fulfil our criteria of the initial idea of bridging different perspectives, methods, disciplines and – most importantly – research areas. Our main research interest is directed at the dynamics of family and couple life in a transnational context: We want to know how crossing international borders affects individuals as members of families or as partners, and how it affects families and couples as a whole, including those who stay behind.

Research on migration has come a long way in the past decades (Cooke 2008). Initially, the focus was on who moves and why. The (economic) research has mainly looked at the male migrant as the one initiating the international move, whereas another strand of research looked at the "trailing wife". Today we know that international migration involves not only individuals and couples, but also multi-generational households. Moreover, migration is a process that occurs over time (as in the case of refugees), includes much uncertainty and can consist of several moves; it need not be a single event that occurs over a short time span. Still, the majority of studies in this area are concerned with the questions of who moves and which determinants affect this move.

This Special Issue contains papers that explore how family lives and intimate relationships are constituted and reconstituted under conditions of transnational migration. The papers underscore the effects of conducting and facilitating family life and couple relationships during or after having experienced an international migration process. Within this scope, issues relating to integration or accommodation processes of immigrants and the problems they might have been confronted with on an individual level in their new homes do not make up the primary focus of these papers. This is partly due to the circumstance, highlighted also by Glick-Schiller (2010) and Levitt et al. (2003), that conditions

in destination societies make up only part of the perspectives from which transnational families and couples look upon issues related to belonging, attachment or relatedness. Similarly, overemphasising the role of homeland communities of immigrants, in terms of imposing values and behavioural patterns with respect to how one should conduct intimate relationships or family life, would probably lead also to an incomplete picture about the dynamics of transnational social relationships. The authors who have contributed to this Special Issue, even though they have followed very different theoretical and methodological paths in their research, all focus in one way or another on decision-making and negotiation processes of individuals who have experienced family life or an intimate relationship in a transnational context. As a result, the main emphasis of the papers in this Special Issue is on the relational aspects of individual life courses and the family/relationship dynamics in transnational settings.

2. Introduction to the papers of this Special Issue

Leading an intimate partnership or family life across borders is often characterised by inequalities in wealth and status between the involved parties. Under such circumstances, certain activities of families may serve to compensate for these differences, for example by sending remittances to or trying to obtain visas for those who are in the disadvantaged position. Some economists (e.g. Stark/Bloom 1985) referred to the family or the household as the more appropriate unit of analysis – rather than individual migrants – to understand migration dynamics. Complementary research literature from various fields (Agoston et al. 2014; Bonjour/Kraler 2016; Bryceson/Vuorela 2002a; Kofman et al. 2011; Kraler 2014; Walter 2009; Williams 2010) also emphasises the need to contextualise the life of transnational families or couples by taking into account the conditions created by the state and by the respective local community.

On an empirical basis, of course, these different analytical levels might be interdependent by reinforcing or undermining each other. State authorities might have, for instance, very different ideas than immigrants and their communities about what constitutes a family or a legitimate partnership and who, at the end, should enjoy the right to join their family/partner living in another country. Studies have repeatedly addressed such issues and pointed out discrepancies or inconsistencies that occurred as a result of changing immigration policies (cf. Schrover 2009; Strasser et al. 2009). Strasser et al. (2009: 167) have argued that “[t]he conditions which the state imposes on the entry and stay of family members reflect a certain notion of family as a social institution, i.e. the state’s perception of the family as a unit which mediates the relations between individual, society and state.”

By regulating the migration of family members and spouses in terms of defining who has what rights and duties, nation-states draw a boundary between the public and private realm not only for certain individuals, but for the whole society. Regulations concerning (re)unification of families or partners from third countries, despite the aim to introduce common standards within the European Union (EU), differ considerably among member states (Berneri 2017). As pointed out in the papers by Kraus et al. and Ruis in this Special Issue, for instance, the impact of status differences between different groups of refugees

in a specific national context defines the circumstances under which someone might enjoy the right for family reunification, employment or further education.

Legislation regulating the entry of family migrants has been changing in the course of time within individual nation-states in Europe. Political developments in the domestic and international realms often lead to tendencies to either liberalise or restrict policies (e.g. for Germany see Aybek 2012). By altering these rules, state actors respectively influence and change not only the rights of their residents with transnational family ties, but also the quality of the relationships among the members of these families. The same applies to the conditions for the entry of third-country citizens who want to join their partners living in an EU member state and are, as Bonjour and Kraler (2016) have shown, confronted with a range of different regulations stretching from quite liberal to very rigid depending on the country of destination. The intention of state actors behind such regulations is obviously to control and steer certain types of inflows. Individuals who are affected by such developments react to them by assessing their risks as families or couples and adapting their behaviour to newly introduced conditions (cf. Aybek et al. 2015).

Various dimensions of transnational migratory experiences have already been addressed extensively in migration research (e.g. Basch et al. 1994; Brah 1998; Cohen 1997; Smith/Guarnizo 1998; Faist 2000; Levitt/Waters 2002; Kibria 2002; Kasinitz et al. 2002). A part of that literature focuses on families and family lives in the transnational realm (Baldassar et al. 2007; Bryceson/Vuorela 2002b; Crespi et al. 2018; Goulbourne et al. 2011; Grillo 2008). The existing literature generally addresses how family life is sustained through networks across national borders connecting relatives and friends. A part of the scholarly work provides insights on how individuals and families try to cope with risks and challenges caused by external circumstances and political developments (Williams/Baláz 2012). Scholars emphasise that conducting familial life across national borders is nothing new; the phenomenon existed already in earlier periods (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002b; Goulbourne et al. 2011). Contemporary transnational migration experiences differ from those of earlier generations largely because of globalisation, advances in communication technologies, affordability of transportation, and the like (cf. Baldassar et al. 2007).

Since the early days of migration research, interethnic, bicultural or mixed partnerships and marriages have been among the standard areas of study (cf. Park/Burgess 1921 and other studies by representatives of the Chicago School). The continued interest in this topic stems from the fact that research on partner selection and marriage processes in the context of migration not only provides insights about the motivations and behaviour on the level of individuals, but also about how social boundaries between different groups within society are structured. In contrast to endogamous partnerships, which are viewed as the default option by a majority of groups in many societies and hence are affirmed by them normatively, exogamous relationships and marriages, especially with respect to partners who are ethnically, culturally and/or religiously different from each other, have often been considered unconventional and risky, and at times have been legally or socially sanctioned in different societies. Improved access to affordable transportation and communication technologies for wider parts of the population in the course of modernisation and globalisation have created more opportunities for individuals to meet people who are culturally, religiously or ethnically different to them. Couple relationships established between individuals from different ethnic-cultural, social and religious backgrounds create

bridges across different parts of society and therefore serve as an important indicator for analysing current and future trends in these societies. The proportion of mixed-cultural partnerships and individuals with multiple cultural and/or ethnic affiliations within the general population increased over the last decades in European countries (Lanzieri 2012).

The papers assembled in this Special Issue aim to understand the dynamics of family and couple relations in their specific national and transnational contexts. The need for contextualising empirical projects is not only an exercise to secure well-grounded results, but is based also on the idea that commonalities of transnational family lives in different contexts can be better understood by taking into account the specifics of each context. However, to put transnational social ties into the centre of the research interest essentially requires trying to adopt the perspectives of those who are leading their family or couple life under such conditions. Relations among family members and intimate partners in a transnational context are influenced by residential mobility, spatial distance and reunification in a new place. To study the dynamics behind these processes essentially means to try to understand „transnationalism from below“ (cf. Smith/Guarnizo 1998).

The first article by *Christian Schramm*, for instance, investigates the dynamics of change in transnational families in a migration system stretching from a former colony in Latin America to the former colonising country in Europe. The author draws on biographical perspectives of individuals from families that originate in Ecuador from which some members moved to Spain. The work is based on extensive multi-site fieldwork carried out in both the originating and destination countries of the migration project and with several members of the respective households. The data are innovative because they have a longitudinal character; the same family members were visited and interviewed on multiple occasions over several years. The author combines the life-course perspective with a family figurational framework. Through narrative biographical interviews, the author introduces the concept of turning points for the interpretation of individuals' actions. In doing so, Schramm is able to link actions and events on the individual level to the societal macro-level, namely the economic crises that hit Ecuador at the turn of the millennium and Spain in the years 2008-14. The economic crisis in Spain also impacted the family members of immigrants in their countries of origin.

The second paper by *Ada Ruis* takes the reader to the refugee immigrants in Europe. The participants in her qualitative study originate from Syria and have settled in the Netherlands. Like Schramm, Ruis has worked for several years in the field, conducting interviews and collecting other data on multiple occasions. Also like Schramm, she is familiar not only with the receiving context, but also with the society of origin. Ruis focuses explicitly on gender-related aspects by asking how young Syrian women who came as refugees with their families to the Netherlands navigate between family and work. In order to explore this question she also applies the life-course perspective and combines it with the concept of turning points. She places special emphasis on individual status passages and linked lives both in couple formation, but also on intergenerational relations. This paper is interesting not only because it centres on women and their agency (and not on their role as tied migrants or trailing wives), but also because the women in this study are highly educated and seek to pursue family life as well as educational aspirations and labour force participation, thus combining elements of traditional gender roles and modern ideas of the family.

The third paper by *Elisabeth Kraus, Lenore Sauer and Laura Wenzel* is again studying new refugee groups in Europe. The destination context in their study is, however, Germany, and the refugees originate from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, the three biggest refugee groups in Germany. Their paper is a quantitative study, which is still a novelty in social science research on vulnerable populations like refugees (Buber-Ennsner et al. 2016; Kohlenberger et al. 2017). Their database is the *IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees*. The authors use the two available waves of data collection containing retrospective and prospective information. Their focus is on the migration practices of families, with the couple being the unit of analysis. Their main research question is what spousal migration practices look like, i.e., whether spouses can migrate together, and how this is influenced by other family members as well as by factors related to human and social capital and – last but not least – their legal status. Kraus et al. show that forced migration is a gendered process and that several characteristics relevant for male migration do not apply to women.

While the papers mentioned above address mainly issues around family migration, the fourth paper authored by *Giuseppe Gabrielli, Elisa Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Laura Terzera and Anna Paterno* looks at individuals who undertook their international move alone. The receiving context of their study is Italy, which has a relatively short history as a modern immigration country, but which has experienced a rather large influx of foreigners given the short time span of immigration. Moreover, the immigrant population in Italy is highly diverse with respect to countries of origin and legal conditions; various quantitative data sources try to capture this diversity. Gabrielli et al. draw on data from the *Survey on Social Conditions and Integration of Foreign Citizens* and carry out event-history analyses on union formation after migration. This is innovative because it jointly models the impact of the length of stay in Italy and of the partner type, i.e. endogamous or exogamous partner choice. They find gendered patterns, with men being more likely than women to first become established in the labour market and then being more likely than immigrant women to form a mixed union with an Italian partner.

The fifth and last paper in this Special Issue also looks at the association between international migration and intimate relationships. *Mirko Braack and Nadja Milewski* focus on individuals in European countries who are part of an exogamous union, i.e., native Europeans who have a marriage or a non-marital cohabitation with a migrant. Unlike previous research on exogamy, they explore the native in such couples and ask whether their social attitudes toward family, gender and religion differ from that of other natives. The context of their study encompasses several European countries, both old and new immigrant destinations; the analysis is based on data of the *Generations and Gender Survey*. In so doing, they draw attention to the native part in such couples, for whom becoming part of a union or marrying an international migrant is not associated with a personal physical migration process, but with crossing social boundaries between population subgroups. Braack and Milewski question the common assumption that natives in exogamous studies are per se the vanguards in immigrant integration and the test of social cohesion. They show that such natives are a rather diverse group – like the immigrants – and that they combine traditional and modern cultural attitudes towards culture.

This short overview describes how the five papers presented in this Special Issue approach the topic of family and couple migration from different perspectives, in different

origin-destination contexts and with different methodological approaches. Still, there are intersections between the papers with regard to theoretical perspectives that are addressed in the following section. Initially some migration types and their relation to family dynamics are critically discussed, focussing especially on dichotomies such as forced and voluntary migration. Next, two concepts discussed in the research about transnational families, namely ‘frontiering’ and ‘relativising’, are connected to the discussion about the importance of social networks for migrants. Finally, emphasising certain characteristics, the relevance of the life-course perspective for the papers in this Special Issue is thematised.

3. Overarching themes of this Special Issue

Overcoming dichotomies

The endeavour to delineate between different types of spatial mobilities in migration theory has led to the development of categories that are contrasted regularly with their ‘counterparts’. This trend to dichotomise is observable when talking about voluntary vs. forced migration, international vs. internal migration or circular vs. unidirectional migration. Some of the papers in this Special Issue address the dynamics of family relations under the conditions faced by refugees, whereas the other papers do not have this focus. Hence the analyses contain forms of the phenomenon called forced migration as well as voluntary forms of migration. This raises the question of whether and how these contributions are substantively related to each other. In order to give a satisfying answer to this question, it seems worthwhile to provide some insights about the differentiations within migration research concerning different types of migration. For instance, Reed, Ludwig and Braslow (2016) point out that the label “forced migration” is used to denote various phenomena stretching from a flight due to acute conflicts and war to cases of human trafficking. They argue that the discursive dichotomy created between the terms “forced” and “voluntary” with respect to migration cannot be confirmed in a rigid manner on the level of empirical observation. If we describe migration as a process containing the stages leaving, travelling, transiting, arriving, settling, returning or moving onward, the forced or voluntary character of the decisions during these various stages might change and could also depend on how the available alternatives are interpreted (Bivand Erdal/Oeppen 2018; Carling 2017; Crawley/Skleparis 2018).

The papers by Kraus et al. and Ruis in this Special Issue address individuals and families who have had the experience of a flight, but do not put this circumstance necessarily in the centre of their analyses. The authors look rather at the dynamics of the family migration and the development of family relationships. In the analysis done by Kraus et al., for instance, the temporal dimension of family migration processes or the duration of spatial separation are the main focus. While studies on forced migration mostly focus on short-term effects, such as the immediate conditions and consequences of flight, Ruis’s case studies contain important information about the medium- and long-term effects in terms of family life development. Such analyses, as presented here by Ruis, through

which she illustrates the changes in inter- and intragenerational relations in a family after arrival in the Netherlands, show how 'doing family' functions in the destination society. 'Doing family' does not mean 'doing refugee family'; the family members aim at becoming independent of their initial legal status as refugees.

Nevertheless, from a legal perspective it is extremely important for individuals to meet the criteria contained in international agreements, such as the UN Convention of Refugees, as that is a precondition to obtain the refugee status. From a sociological point of view, however, if the motivations for migration are at the core of the matter, it does not seem to be sensible to make such a rigid differentiation between political and economic reasons.

To develop a comprehensive understanding of migration phenomena it seems to be more appropriate to take into account the various factors that simultaneously exert influence, as has been done by most authors in this Special Issue. This complex interaction of factors is even more relevant when looking at developments over a long period of time. Furthermore, from this point of view a rigid differentiation between voluntary and forced migration does not seem to be tenable.

Departing from classical sociological and (socio-)psychological theories that aim to explain human action (e.g. Ajzen 1996; Giddens 1984), people's behaviour takes place in a prestructured framework that restricts the options available in one way or another. In this manner, opportunity structures created on a societal level limit the scope of action on the level of individual autonomy. As Schramm illustrates, characteristics concerning roles and decision-making powers within family constellations determine the limits to the freedom of choice on an individual and familial level.

It is not possible in this introductory essay to discuss in more detail potential implications for the study of migration phenomena if the analytical perspective is strongly influenced by assumptions derived from action and motivation theories (cf. DeJong/Gardner 1981). We deem it sufficient to say that analytical models which are based on simplistic assumptions and rely exclusively on the orientations of actors to maximise benefits or utilities as explanatory factors do not seem to be very successful for grasping empirical realities. It seems more appropriate to assume that individuals make decisions based on many factors, not only pure cost-benefit analyses, and are, as is illustrated in the paper by Braack and Milewski in this Special Issue, for instance, also influenced to a certain extent by normative factors, such as value orientations, or follow long-term goals that are of non-monetary nature.

Rather than focussing on the voluntary or involuntary nature of migration processes, in our context it probably makes more sense to look at the degree of autonomy the actors enjoy and to talk about proactive vs. reactive patterns of behaviour (Richmond 1988). This agentic potential of individuals within families is also highlighted in the case studies presented by Ruis in this issue. Migration decisions, even if they have been taken under extremely high pressure, do not differ fundamentally from decisions taken under other social conditions. As stated above, any human action is subject to restrictions.

However, the range of options that are available differ from person to person, and depend on the resources accessible at the time. In other words, the autonomous character of decisions on an individual and collective level depends on the context. In certain situations, it seems feasible and appropriate to take a decision to migrate or not, once all avail-

able information has been critically assessed and the tangible and intangible benefits and risks that might go along with a migration have been weighed. In other situations, however, decisions to migrate might have more the character of a panic reaction induced by crises.

On the level of families, therefore, one might delineate between reactive and proactive strategies for action, as proposed by Richmond (1988). A comparative reading of the papers in this issue authored by Schramm and Ruis, even though dealing with non-refugee and refugee contexts, reveals interesting commonalities with respect to the autonomy of actors within family networks. Such a reading also illustrates that in most cases the empirical reality probably lies between these two poles of reactive and proactive strategies of action. Furthermore, the cases presented in the two papers illustrate that the decision to migrate is generally not taken abruptly. Rather, the individuals and families have been confronted for a relatively long period of time with the erosion of social structures, have experienced crises in terms of policies, security and economy and have been unable to satisfy the most important needs on an individual and familial level.

For Castles (2003) such patterns of spatial mobility have to be seen within the framework of deepening inequalities between the Global South and North. Inclusion and exclusion processes that have been triggered by globalisation processes, he argues, lead to conflicts and, ultimately, to migratory movements where it is difficult to distinguish clearly between security-related and economic motives (see also Zolberg 2001). Already in the early research literature emphasising the transnational character of migration (Faist 2000; Basch et al. 1994; Portes 1999; Vertovec 1999), the classical push-pull models to explain migration have been criticised. Main points of critique directed towards mainstream migration researchers has been that they overemphasise the role played by nation-states and their perspective on migration processes is that of movements in closed spatial contexts dominated by these nation-states. The transnational perspective, in contrast, departs from the idea of transnational social spaces transcending national boundaries and emphasises the role played by the exchange and circulation of different types of capital as well as networks across these boundaries connecting migrant and non-migrant populations.

Against this background we stress the importance of looking at commonalities between refugee families and non-refugee immigrant families by adopting a synthesising perspective of looking at transnational family constellations.

Overcoming boundaries

By way of introducing another analytical perspective that is relevant for several papers in this Special Issue, we present two concepts, 'frontiering' and 'relativising', that are discussed in the research literature on transnational families (Al-Sharmani et al. 2017; Bryceson/Vuorela 2002; Goulbourne et al. 2011; Grillo 2008). These concepts capture important aspects with regard to the dynamics of intra-familial relations in a transnational context and, at the same time, take into account the interaction of such families with their social environments.

The first concept, 'frontiering', highlights the means by which individuals interact with their family networks and within their transnational environment. Bryceson and

Vuorela (2002) attribute a relevance to this term that differs from the meaning expressed when social relations are negotiated. In contrast to negotiating, fronting refers to the interactions within families and between family members and external actors and, depending on the situation, these interactions could be to a greater or lesser degree consensual or conflictual. Conflictual interactions are characterised in this sense by behaviour that aims to obtain a greater clarity about attributions, differences and similarities, and results in social roles and positions that are rearranged accordingly. In this sense, 'fronting' means to develop a common understanding during interactions of where to draw boundaries.

Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) emphasise that their use of the term 'fronting' should be clearly disassociated from its historical meaning, related to the colonisation of North America, that entails the conquest and expropriation of 'the others'. In their perspective, the concept is used to describe how interactions in the liminal space between different life worlds are structured. 'Fronting' in the sense used by them is an agentic concept that helps avoid falling into the trap of a Eurocentric viewpoint. It represents a counter perspective to assimilation theories concerning immigrants; instead the term denotes that acculturation processes are very variable and open-ended. This proposition is made against the background of historical changes that since the second half of the 20th century turned Europe from an emigration into an immigration continent, characterised by a population that is - at least in its urban conglomerations - increasingly diverse (Vertovec 2007).

In the course of modernisation and globalisation, growing opportunities as well as necessities concerning spatial mobility within European societies have led to an increase of pluri-local family structures. In such families solidaristic relations and shared responsibilities, however, are not weakened and have not become rudimentary, but need to be organised differently to adapt to changing conditions (Baykara-Krumme 2013; Mau 2007). Fronting refers, at this point, to processes of accepting or rejecting certain behavioural patterns and normative orientations both within transnational families as well as in the wider society. Under conditions of transnational migration, experimenting with new familial roles and norms, adapting these, or trying to preserve existing roles and norms could, depending on the specific conditions, all lead to confrontations between genders or generations within a family (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002: 11-16). These processes may also result in a new consensus about altered roles and responsibilities within families (cf. Nauck 2005 and the papers by Ruis, Schramm and Braack/Milewski in this Special Issue).

The second concept Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) introduce in the context of transnational family relations is 'relativising'. This concept is used to indicate the various possibilities individuals have to establish, sustain or limit their relations with other family members. Relativising entails the behaviour through which bonds between family members in a transnational context may be fortified or weakened. Who is being seen as a communication partner within a family may be subject to change in the course of time. The pluri-local dispersion of the family and the existing geographical distances, make it necessary for transnational migrants to put effort into perpetuating and refreshing relationships with other family members. The concept of 'relativising' serves the purpose, according to Bryceson and Vuorela (2002: 14-15), of underscoring that, similar to the mechanisms described by Anderson (1983) concerning the construction of nations as imagined communities, 'doing family' in a transnational context requires actions that reconfirm emotional bonds and define shared responsibilities and hereby (re)construct family life.

Due to spatial distance between family members, these often do not have the opportunity of spontaneous personal interaction on a daily basis. As a result, a necessity to ‘organise’ connectedness among family members occurs that has to be adapted to the emotional needs and available material and time-related resources. Relativising also means, in this sense, that family identities change and individuals constantly need to redefine their own role within the family. The qualitative cases analysed by Ruis and Schramm in this Special Issue represent good illustrations of such dynamics.

Overcoming static and single-level research perspectives

As the contributions to this volume relate in one way or another to a perspective from life course research, it seems worthwhile to recall the features of this perspective: Since its beginnings, life course research has not been considered to be a scientific branch in itself, but instead is characterised by a high degree of interdisciplinarity (Giele/Elder 1998; Mortimer/Shanahan 2003). Depending on the focus of investigation, different disciplines, such as sociology, ethnography, history or historical demography or (developmental) psychology, may represent the main frame of reference. Researchers who follow a life-course research approach often employ concepts such as transitions, trajectories, turning points, spacing or age norms in combination with sophisticated empirical methods (Mortimer/Shanahan 2003). Among the first was Glen Elder (1973; 1974; 1993), who tried to describe the life course research paradigm as a set of theoretical and empirical elements combined for the purpose of reaching a better understanding of societal dynamics by simultaneously considering individual biographies and macro-social influences.

Despite the diversity of studies in this context, Elder et al. (2003) break down the characteristics of this research approach into four shared principles: First, the life-course perspective consistently holds the idea that sociological, psychological or biological processes in human societies are subject to permanent changes on the intra- as well as the interpersonal level. The feature that distinguishes life course research from other socio-analytical approaches is not the specific premises put forward, but rather the perspectives that the approach offers. The gist of these perspectives, adopted in the papers gathered in this Special Issue, essentially can be traced back to a study of migration research that is considered to be a classic, namely “The Polish Peasant in Europe and America” by Thomas and Znaniecki (1918-1920). Although the methodologies adopted in the contributions to this volume differ, the dynamic perspective is a characteristic they share.

Second, by focussing on the concept of agency, the life course perspective also highlights the possibilities of individuals to influence, according to their abilities and within the limits set by their environment, the conditions individuals themselves and those who are close to them are subjected to (Bandura 2009). Emphasising the role of agency helps scholars stay alert with respect to the risk of too quickly interpreting correlations they may observe on the aggregate level as causal relationships presumably valid for all immigrants of a certain type. How relations among couples or family members develop is to a great extent a consequence of decisions taken and actions performed by the very persons who are part of these relations. As also illustrated, for instance in the papers authored by Schramm and Ruis in this Special Issue, individuals regularly aim to impact their (inti-

mate) relations in a way that suits their interests and goals in order to secure their own well-being and that of those who are dear to them. The actions they take are restricted by the resources that are available to them; these actions have to be coordinated with the goals the individuals follow in other realms of life and are generally regulated by institutions and other structural conditions. The concept of 'agency' draws attention to the fact that behaviour under such circumstances is still formed by subjective preferences based on previous biographical experiences.

And third, the life course perspective underscores that social processes take place at a specific moment in time and in a particular geographical location. Within this framework, time has not only relevance as chronological time, but also as biographical time, i.e. the point in time at which certain events and processes occur in the life of a person. This is particularly relevant for the migratory processes individuals experience. Jasso (2003: 331) stresses that "[a]ll the processes associated with migration are rooted in time. They occur in particular historical eras and bear the imprints of those eras. They occur at different ages and bear the imprints of those ages. How difficult it was to migrate, how successful the migration, how permanent the move – all these depend jointly on the historical context and the migrant's age. Of course, many other factors shape the migration process, including, importantly, conditions and laws in both the origin and destination countries and including as well the migrant's enduring endowments and characteristics."

These issues are particularly relevant for analysing processes concerning families and couples in a transnational context, because they illustrate the types of interdependencies that exist between processes on global, local and individual levels. Life-course researchers are generally not interested in biographies of particular individuals, but rather search for systematic patterns that emerge due to events and transitions in specific life stages; they consider the impact of such questions as when and whom to marry (cf. Gabrielli et al. in this Special Issue) or how one's schooling is interrupted by fleeing from a war zone (cf. Ruis in this Special Issue). The analytical lenses provided by life course research help to assess the similarities and differences between experiences made by transnational families and couples in contrast to those who do not have a migratory background (cf. Braack/Milewski & Gabrielli et al. in this Special Issue). The fourth shared principle emerges from this perspective: 'Linked lives' appears as a concept to indicate that individual life courses are shaped by the social networks in which individuals are embedded, as well as by events on the macro-societal level. The analyses presented, for instance by Schramm in this issue, emphasise the role external shocks may have on transnational familial relations.

This approach of trying to embed the dynamics of individual life courses into broader societal contexts leads to an analytical perspective that Huinink and Feldhaus (2009: 307f.) describe as follows: "The life course is embedded in a multilevel structure of social dynamics and individual development. On the one hand, individual well-being is influenced by a multilevel frame of external and internal conditions. On the societal level, cultural and institutional social structures as well as political and economic conditions determine the constraints and opportunities of social action. On the level of the social context and social networks, associations, neighbourhoods, family and partnership (dyadic level) influence the scope of context- and situation-related actions of interdependent actors to differing degrees. ... On the individual level, we must consider the individual re-

sources and the psychosocial dispositions of the actor, which work as internal conditions of action. On the other hand, individual action feeds back into the process of reproducing and changing the social structure on every level. It affects individual resources and causes modifications of psychosocial dispositions.”

The application of the life-course approach to migration research enlarged the thematic scope to interrelations of events in the life course, such as the impact of moving on union stability or the interrelation of migration and family formation (Kulu/Milewski 2007). A drawback of the life-course approach in quantitative studies is that it tends to focus on one single event at a time. Recent research has tried to solve this by using techniques of sequence analysis and looking at trajectories instead of single events (e.g., Kleinepiers et al. 2015). Still, the focus here is on the individual. A newer, growing body of literature looks at the family life of several family members within a household. This is exactly where our Special Issue makes a contribution.

4. Summary conclusions and implications for future research

The contributions to this Special Issue come from researchers who are based in different countries and use data from these contexts. Cutting-edge empirical research is brought together that closes important gaps in our knowledge on transnational couples and families. This Special Issue contains five empirical studies that target the notion of family from a variety of theoretical, analytical and methodological perspectives. It is thus not surprising that the picture of ‘family’ is a diverse one. This diversity is not caused by the diversity of the perspectives, but by the causes and consequences of migration phenomena under conditions of globalisation. In fact, it is a joint feature of all these different families in transnational settings that they are constantly subject to change. The families not only differ from each other, they constantly change in their constellations, locations and relations. Our Special Issue and the review of the literature suggest that it is worthwhile for future researchers to transcend the boundaries between their disciplines or their methodological paradigms, similar to what the families and couples studied do on an almost daily basis in overcoming spatial, legal and social boundaries.

An improved understanding of the dynamics of couple and family relations in the context of migration is urgently needed, as the issues discursively addressed are socially and politically relevant on different levels of society. It seems to be particularly important to look not only into the causes of international migration, but also at subsequent migratory events (such as chain migration) as well as at the social integration of immigrants in their new environment. Furthermore, many researchers implicitly suggest that the native population in the destination country plays a role in immigrant integration, but studies combining both perspectives are rather rare. Concepts like ‘frontiering’, ‘relativising’ (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002b) or ‘boundary making’ (Lamont 2014; Wimmer 2008; 2013) should be applied to both parts in migration contexts, the ones who move and the ones whose environment changes due to migration without having physically moved.

Having said this, the papers in our Special Issue suggest most importantly that future research should broaden its perspectives by not focussing solely on the individual, but

studying also couples and families. As these transnational couples and multigenerational families are constantly undergoing processes of constitution, negotiation and re-constitution, adopting a dynamic instead of static analytical perspective seems appropriate. We are aware that our suggestions for future research would also require substantial efforts in data collection.

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Christian Schramm

Dynamics of change in transnational families – Biographical perspectives on family figurations between Spain and Ecuador

Abstract:

This paper explores the figurational process in transnational families through the study of the biographical self-presentations and the life courses of family members who live apart (in Bilbao, Spain and Guayaquil, Ecuador) but remain interdependent. It asks which factors inside and outside the family figuration influence the negotiation of the fragile power balances along gender and generational lines, with what effect for the structure of positions, family norms, mutual expectations and the division of tasks. Special attention is given to the deep financial and economic crisis affecting Spain between 2008 and 2014 and how this sudden change of the context in one national society impacts the transnational family life. Results highlight the importance of the long-term pre-migration family figurational process for the way transnational family life is being shaped. They also show how a variety of influencing factors, observed during the migration period and located in different national societies and the transnational social space, is intertwined with the logic of this long-term process.

Key words: transnational families, migration, biographical research, figurations, processes of change in families, financial and economic crisis in 2008.

1. Introduction

This paper explores the dynamics of change in transnational families through the study of the biographical self-presentations and the life courses of family members who live apart but remain interdependent. The family is understood here as a figuration that is constantly being negotiated, with fragile power balances across gender and generational lines (see Elias/Scotson 1993, Elias 2014). The underlying empirical study focuses on transnational figurational processes with individual family members located in Bilbao, Spain, and in Guayaquil, a small rural coastal community in Ecuador.¹

Starting with the general assumption that change in families always means a back and forth of power balances, the questions arise which factors inside and outside the family

1 The data presented here is part of a larger data set that has been collected in the framework of a PhD project in which, at the date of publication, analysis is still ongoing.

influence the swinging of this pendulum, with what effects, and how is this negotiation process influenced by the migration of family members? In the case of the more recent Ecuadorian migration to Spain it can also be assumed that the deep financial and economic crisis affecting Spain between 2008 and 2014 had a relevant impact on the family members living there and their cross-border family relations. But how does this sudden change of the context in one national society influence the long-term gradual, and at times transnational, figurational process of the family? And what exactly does the interplay between the crisis as a factor external to the family and the interior dynamics look like?

The main conceptual tools that help to distinguish different types of family dynamics, characterized by periods of gradual change and more or less abrupt ruptures, are the concepts of status passages (Glaser/Strauss 1971; Heinz 2009) and (biographical) turning points (Sackmann 2007; Wingens/Reiter 2011; Rosenthal 1995). Both concepts are applied here to individuals in family relationships. During the multi-sited data collection, biographical and ethnographic methods were employed. The analysis followed the principles of biographical case reconstruction (Rosenthal 1995), adapted to the study of families (Delcroix 1995; Bertaux 1995; Dausien 1996; Mummert 2012). In a first step, the challenge consisted in capturing the long-term (pre-migration) family figurational process and to put it in relation to the changes in the power balance within the transnational space of families during migration. In a second step, the interconnection between the transnational space of the family and the biographical courses (e.g. processes of social mobility) of individual family members in the local and national contexts of origin and of arrival have been analysed.

Results highlight the importance of the long-term family figurational process for the way transnational family life is being shaped (e.g. the extent and stability of power differences, the type of means of power that different family members have access to and the dynamics of interaction shaped by mutual dependencies). A variety of influencing factors observed during the migration period and located in different national societies is intertwined with the logic of this long-term process. These factors on the individual biographical level, on the level of interpersonal family relationships and on the level outside of the family are also influencing each other. The importance of the crisis in Spain for the individual family members in both nation-states is mediated by the family *history* and the (transnational) construction of the common family *story*.² Simultaneously it is through the individuals that the family is influenced by a macro-level change like the financial and economic crisis in Spain. The case exemplified here demonstrates how individual social mobility processes outside the households in both national contexts are intertwined with those in the transnational social space of the family.

2 *Story* refers to the collective remembrance and negotiation process that relate to the events that constitute the family *history*. The differentiation between lived *history* and narrated *story* is based on theoretical assumptions in biographical research (see Fischer/Kohli 1987, Rosenthal 1995).

2. Context

“The middle class is dying out”, “How to live with little money”, “Collective emotional depression because of the crisis”³ (*El Universo* 04/03 and 06/03, 1999) – at first sight these headlines could have been uttered during the global financial and economic crisis, maybe around 2009 or 2010, in a country like Spain. But they can be found on the front pages of the Ecuadorian newspaper *El Universo* in 1999. What the respective articles describe are the effects of a long period of economic stagnation and political instability that led Ecuador at the end of the 1990s into a deep structural crisis of the financial and economic system, with devastating effects for the living conditions of the middle and lower sectors of the Ecuadorian population (Larrea 2006). In the following years, many opted to change the course of their own and their family’s life by leaving the country. By the end of 2007, up to 970,000 Ecuadorians had done so (UNFPA-FLACSO 2008). The biggest share of this migratory movement headed towards Spain, where the national economy, which was growing by then, was desperately searching for additional labour force, above all in the agriculture, construction, domestic and catering sectors (Pajares 2008). Spanish politics also strategically stimulated the migration of Latin Americans, who after only two years of regular legal stay were entitled to acquire Spanish citizenship (Izquierdo et al. 2002). Most movements were individual migrations (around half were pioneering women), embedded in social and kinship networks, which at first led into irregular legal status (after overstaying the tourist visa) and employment in the lowest layers of the Spanish labour market. During the first years, people would relatively quickly find informal work and later on obtain their first residence and work permit. At the latest by 2005, when Spain carried out a massive regularization programme, most Ecuadorians acquired regular legal status. Already from 2003 on, when Spain imposed visa restrictions on Ecuadorians, family reunification started to gain importance in the migration process between the two countries. What followed was an integration process⁴ into Spanish society marked by a fragile process of social mobility through better positioning on the labour market and also, for some, the purchase of property in Spain and/or Ecuador through easily accessible loans - what would later be known as the Spanish real estate bubble (Herrera 2012). As family reunification became more important, it seemed that the more or less definite settlement of the whole family would be the characteristic feature of Ecuadorian migration to Spain instead of intergenerational transnational family relationships. Based on data collected in 2005, Herrera and Carrillo (2009: 100) speak of “families in transition”, in which the remaining family members in Ecuador were about to start their own migration project. Nevertheless, several studies highlight the continuous importance, throughout this period, of economic remittances for the households in Ecuador (Bendixen/ Associates 2003, Acosta et al. 2006, Ponce/Olivié 2008). Surveys in Ecuador and Spain for 2007 showed that respectively around 40% (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC)

3 The translations from Spanish into English are by the author.

4 Integration is understood as a multi-dimensional (social, economic, political and cultural) process of participation of all members of a social entanglement and which is pluri-local in the case of transnational migration (see Pries 2015).

2007 for Ecuador) and 20% (Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE) 2007 for Spain) of the migrants were parents with at least one minor child in Ecuador.

The global financial crisis hit the Spanish real estate business in 2007, with the national economy entering a recession which lasted until 2014. Between 2007 and the end of 2013, more than three million jobs were lost. The construction sector, the typical occupational sector for young male migrants with relatively low education, was the most affected (Pajares 2009/2010; Colectivo Ioé 2012; Eliseo et al. 2011, 2013; Alonso 2015). But domestic workers, mostly female, also suffered from unemployment, underemployment and worsening working conditions (Hellgren/Serrano 2018). By that time, most Ecuadorians had attained a permanent legal status, and the majority had their close family members reunited with them in Spain. Many opted in the following years for Spanish citizenship and in 2014 more than half of the nearly 450,000 Ecuadorians living in Spain had become Spanish nationals (INE 2015). The crisis not only interrupted a fragile process of social mobility, leaving many unemployed and some heavily indebted due to not being able to pay the mortgage rates, but also interrupted the process of settlement and family unification (Herrera 2013: 29). Between 2007 and 2015 annual remittances from Spain to Ecuador went down by 28% (BCE 2016), which is a high percentage but does not proportionally reflect the rise in unemployment rates (Moré Martínez 2013). This indicates that huge efforts were undertaken to continue the assurance of economic support to Ecuadorian households by family members living in Spain. For Ecuadorians and other Latino groups in Spain who arrived before or during the early 2000s, a major strategy to deal with the effects of the crisis has been international mobility of selected family members inside and outside Europe or back home, at least temporarily. (Herrera 2016/Yepéz de Castillo 2014/Echeverri Buriticá 2014). While Spain experienced an economic recession between 2008 and 2014, Ecuador's economy profited from relative political stability and high oil prices (Zibell 2017).

It seems that the abrupt change of external conditions in one national context (end of 1990s in Ecuador or from 2008 onwards in Spain) had a deep impact on the way (cross-border) family life is organized. To understand the actual importance of these macro-structural events for families, it is necessary to adopt a multi-level and dynamic approach. Therefore this analysis starts with the family formation phase, looks into the mutual and asymmetric interdependencies between family members before and after migration and considers the interplay between the productive and reproductive spheres. In other words, examination focuses on the general dynamics of change in (transnational) family figurations.

3. Conceptual framework

Understanding families as figurations (Elias 1993, 2014) means seeing them as a complex entity of asymmetric and interdependent relationships that link several persons with each other. Families are therefore marked by power balances with bigger or smaller power differences among their members, who are connected through functional interdependence (Elias 2014: 89), mutually satisfying their physical and psychological needs. From this

perspective, even a child has a certain power over his or her parents, if he or she has some kind of value for them (Elias 2014: 84). One crucial linking element in figurations is the need for satisfaction of emotional needs, which to a great extent depends on other people (Elias 2014: 158ff.). As families are communities of emotions and bounded solidarity (*Gefühls- und Solidargemeinschaften*) with strong emotional ties, their dissolution typically causes an inner crisis for the affected individuals (Bahrdt 2000: 97).

From this point of view, two perspectives have to be considered for the analysis of families: from a meso perspective, families are social entities in which a set of values and norms are the basis for mutual expectations (roles), which structure the behaviour of the individual members. Family members assume several roles simultaneously and are located in a space of social positions with unequal distribution of resources. Decision-making processes and the division of tasks are shaped by this structure. Family processes of social positioning are interconnected with processes of social positioning in other areas, such as the labour market, and also depend on the basic status dimensions of age, sex, gender and type of kinship relation (Jelin 2010). From a micro perspective, families consist of individuals with their own biographical experiences and projects and their own role definitions. Depending on their individual life cycle and respective integration into the kinship system of their own family of origin, each member may furthermore have specific privileges and obligations to fulfil that influence the organisation of nuclear family life (Hill/Kopp 2013; Jelin 2010).

In patriarchal societies like Ecuador, the power balance in families favours the oldest male family member as the main breadwinner and head of family. However, different factors influence the way this ideal type of family is put into practice, e.g. the social class positioning (Jelin 2010: 57f.; Therborn 2007: 37f.). One other important aspect for the study of families originating from countries with a less developed welfare state is their high importance as “units of survival” (Elias 2001: 271), which might imply a higher importance of the collective identity in the personality structures of the individual family members than is the case in Western European societies.

Transnational families are an institutionalized form of transnational social spaces that span pluri-locally over different nation-states (Herrera Lima 2001, Pries 2010). Different family members are therefore participating in the societies of origin as well as of arrival, building separate but interconnected households. Their daily life references and social positioning are located both at the national and transnational level (Berger/Weiß 2008; Gil Martínez 2006). According to the definition of Bryceson and Vuorela (2002: 3), transnational families are “families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely 'familyhood', even across national borders”. In transnational families, economic, cultural and social resources as well as care practices circulate as expressions of belonging and strategies of maintaining or shifting of power balances. As they are networks of support they are also spaces of reproduction of social inequalities. Regarding the asymmetric reciprocal exchange of care practices, Baldassar and Merla (2014: 29f) state that female members are ascribed the main care responsibility, while they usually give more than they receive.

Processes of change in families (i.e., the family figurational process) have to be analysed at three levels (Strohmeier/Herlth 1989; Bade et al. 2000: 1). At the meso level, ne-

negotiations between the different family members are shaped by the changing assumptions regarding the expectations of others throughout the family cycle. On the micro level, negotiations are influenced by the individual members' perceptions and evaluations of the practices of familial living together that are changing throughout their life course. This interior family dynamic on the micro and meso level is interrelated with change at the macro level of societal conditions. Because the interior and the exterior level are linked, the processes of individual social mobility inside and outside the family are also interconnected and influence the position of the family as a whole.

To better capture different types of change in family figurations, whether they are continuous and gradual or characterized by more or less abrupt ruptures, the theoretical concepts of status passage and (biographical) turning point are used. Status passages usually refer to a "movement into a different part of a social structure; or a loss or gain of privilege, influence, or power, and a changed identity and sense of self, as well as changed behaviour" (Glaser/Strauss 1971: 2). Heinz (2009) stresses the point that, on the micro level, status passages are constructed by biographical actors, located on social pathways. Their individual scope of action is shaped by institutional guidelines – represented by "agents of control" (Glaser/Strauss 1971: 57ff.), opportunity structures and the distribution of life chances (depending on the determinants of social inequality, such as gender, skin colour, age or the social position of the family of origin). In addition to these aspects, the individual's perceived self-efficacy should be added. Sackmann and Wingens (Sackmann/Wingens 2001; Sackmann 2007; Wingens/Reiter 2011), referring to the arguments of Elder (1974, 1985) and Abbott (1997), structure the overall life course into the courses of different life spheres (occupation, family, health, etc.). Whereas transitions only modify these courses, turning points, as radical disruptions or ruptures, can totally change their direction. These authors argue that family life courses are characterized by several changes of direction and therefore should be conceptualized through turning points. This more 'objective'⁵ conception of turning points is combined with the approach of Schütze (1981, 1984) and Rosenthal (1995), who look closer at their subjective biographical importance. Rosenthal (1995: 134ff.) points to biographical turning points as essential factors influencing the *Gestalt* of the narrated life story. Biographical turning points lead to biographically relevant ruptures in the routines characterizing everyday life (*Alltagszeit*) and overall, larger-scale lifetime (*Lebenszeit*). The author differentiates between several types of biographical turning points. Status passages are one of them; so-called "interpretation points" are others, causing a re-evaluation of past experiences as well as present and future perspectives (Rosenthal 1995: 141f.). They are temporal cuts in the life course that separate the time 'before' from the time 'after'. Biographical turning points imply risks as well as chances.

Looking at change in family figurations through the analytical lens of these two concepts and respecting the above mentioned three-level perspective, the influencing factors of status passages and (biographical) turning points also have to be located at these three levels and considered to be interrelated. At the micro level of the biographer, there are on-

5 The use of simple quotation marks indicates the interpretative orientation of the research design, which follows the assumption that "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas/ Thomas 1928: 572).

togenetically related passages, such as from childhood to youth or other biographical or life-cycle related events (sickness, marriage, desire to have children, etc.). Located at the meso level are events that happen inside the family and influence the relationships and mutual expectations (migration of another member, decease, etc.). The macro level includes events like economic crises or legal regularization programmes, leading to downward or upward social mobility, and other factors located outside the family figuration (e.g., dollar exchange rates or individual and collective actors exterior to the family).

The first step of the analysis is the biographical case reconstruction of the individual family members' *life story* and *history*, putting special emphasis on the *biographical turning points that lead to individual status passages inside the family*, e.g. in the context of individual social mobility on the labour market during migration. In a second step, the relationship between this individual status passage and the family figuration as a whole is analysed. In some cases, the individual status passage might lead to a *turning point in the family figuration process*, if power balances shift fundamentally and functional interdependencies are restructured. In this way, the link between the productive and reproductive spheres, organized along gender-specific lines (in the different national and transnational frames of reference of social positioning) remains clearly visible.

4. State of the art of research on dynamics of change in migrant families

The research on families shows that change is an inherent part of every family. They transform continuously following internal negotiations and adapt to changing external conditions. This process of gradual and abrupt changes becomes even more dynamic and challenging during migration. Looking at gradual changes, research points out the following: In the classical study of Thomas and Znaniecki (1918), and later in one of the first specifically transnational oriented studies of Grasmuck and Pessar (1991), we can observe that traditional patriarchal forms of family organisation, dominant in rural regions of origin, might lose their importance when adapting to lifestyles perceived as modern in the arrival context or because of the need to adapt to new life circumstances. Simultaneously, continuous connection to values and norms of the society of origin through modern means of transportation and communication makes a far-reaching change in traditional gender roles and hierarchies less likely (Grasmuck/Pessar 1991: 154ff.). Through the circulation of resources and care practices, transnational families keep fulfilling their primary function of guaranteeing mutual welfare. Even so, the power balance between mobile and non-mobile persons of different sex and generations is in constant movement (see e.g. Gil Martínez 2006; Pribilsky 2007; Levitt 2001a).

Research shows that the migration of mothers and wives requires greater adjustment of mutual expectations and of the division of tasks than the migration of fathers and husbands. A general insight is that families with a greater capacity for structural flexibility, i.e., to change the dominant set of values, norms and practices, are more likely to adapt successfully to the new circumstances (Bade et al. 2000; Pribilsky 2007). At the same time, traditional role models and practices are reproduced during migration, e.g., in families where mothers have emigrated without their children and other female members of the nuclear and extended family take over the mother's tasks (see e.g. Herrera/Carrillo

2009, Parreñas 2004). But not only do migrant mothers fulfil the traditional expectations towards them in their role as a mother, they also take over the role as main breadwinner usually ascribed to men (see e.g. Hondagneu-Sotelo/Ávila 1997; Boccagni 2012). Especially difficult in transnational families is the satisfaction of emotional needs, which leads to “emotional gaps” (Parreñas 2008). In families where mothers have migrated alone, remaining fathers can find it more difficult to bridge this gap. They are less flexible and orientate themselves more often than mothers towards the traditional gender norms. For migrant men, it is also important to compensate their loss of status in the society of arrival with status claims in the society of origin (Grasmuck/Pessar 1991), which tends to reinforce established hierarchies. Morokvasic (2009), in an overview of the link between migration and the maintenance, reinforcement or challenging of gender hierarchies, shows how migrant women use the traditional gender order for empowerment.

Contrary to discourses that relate the causes of family rupture to the migration process itself, blaming mostly the mothers or the remaining children (for the Philippines see Parreñas 2004, for Ecuador see Wagner 2008 or Pedone 2012, for Colombia see Echeverri Buriticá 2014), studies show that the migration of a family member often means the continuation of already existing tendencies and practices. This might be the case for grandparents that were already involved in caring for their grandchildren before migration, or when the latent process of separation that a couple goes through finally becomes manifest after the migration of one of the partners (see e.g. Levitt 2001a, Herrera/Carrillo 2009).

Another relevant factor for the dynamic in transnational families is the kind of migration project that is being negotiated inside the family. It makes a difference if it has been defined more as a collective or more as an individual project (Camacho/Hernández 2005). In general, individual members often feel a tension between individual needs and compliance with family norms of solidarity. One strategy is the intent by migrant members to redefine generalized ideas of family organisation, making it easier for them to comply with family expectations and maintain their family position (see e.g. Øien 2010).

In transnational families the different ways and courses of integration of individual family members in the societies of origin and arrival shape the transnational social space of the family. Oso/Suárez-Grimalt (2018) analyse the productive and reproductive strategies in transnational families and highlight the ambiguous and sometimes conflictual relation between shifting family roles and hierarchies, individual social mobility outside the family and the social mobility process of the family as a whole. With upward social mobility in arrival societies e.g. through a change of occupational sector or by changing from *live-in* to *live-out* work arrangements inside the domestic sector), the chances of successful processes of parenthood or family reunification improve. In addition to individual and intrafamilial elements, it is therefore the concrete living conditions of the individual members, especially regarding legal status and financial resources, that determine in great part the different and changing patterns of transnational family life. The highest degree of self-determination in how to live a transnational family life is to be found in persons with formal and easy access to the societies of origin and arrival (Pusch 2013). It has also been argued that the less successful the integration process is, the more important is family solidarity (Bade et al. 2000).

Regarding the importance of the economic crisis for abrupt changes in transnational family dynamics, several authors who look at Latino families with members in Spain and

Italy, point towards a re-intensification of cross-border family entanglement and with it a restructuring of these families (Herrera 2012; Roig/Recaño-Valverde 2012; Pedone 2012; Yépez del Castillo 2014). For the Ecuadorian case, Herrera notes that the crisis “may have played a role in reengaging settled families in the dynamics of long-distance social reproduction between Spain and Ecuador” (Herrera 2012: 127). She further explains that this process of family reorganisation of productive and reproductive tasks weakens the position of the female and youngest members of the family and leads to the *re-traditionalization* of gender roles and task divisions. The strategies in arrival societies aim at the preservation of income level and acquired goods. Simultaneously, a lower income leads to less money sent to Ecuador or a reverse resource flow (Martín Díaz 2012). In both national contexts, amplified family networks and informal practices (informal credit systems, informal employment, etc.) gain importance (Herrera 2012). Contrary to the finding of *re-transnationalization* of family relationships, Aguilar et al. (2009) identify a certain *de-transnationalization* for the case of Mexican families living between Yucatán and the United States, in the context of the reduction of resource flows and other crisis related household strategies. Generally speaking, it can be noted that the level of affectedness of households in the society of origin depends on the position and role of the migrated member and how easily households can diversify their more or less important income. Therefore, it is also a matter of social positioning of the family itself.

Only few of the studies cited here worked with a multi-sited research design that considers the perspectives of different family members located in different national societies, and none of them allows for the comprehension of family processes of negotiation and change that took place before the migration process started. One of the few exceptions is the work of Mummert (2012), who in a longitudinal research design combines multi-local ethnographic field-work with a biographical approach. She identifies some elements that are constant in different migration-specific forms of organisation of productive and reproductive tasks and makes reference to long-term societal change and its importance for differences in the experiences and social practices of different generations. But, even if she explores the period of formation of the analysed families, she narrows the focus of analysis very quickly to the migration process itself. Therefore, the analysis falls short of capturing the historicity and complexity of the long-term negotiating processes on family norms, roles, positions and practices, which is needed to identify the variety of influencing factors of the negotiation process in their complexity and to fully understand their importance during migration.

The present study proposes to relate a perspective on long-term family dynamics to the individual biographical courses and interpretations of family members and their processes of integration, i.e. participation, in the contexts of origin and arrival. Looking at one selected case-family, the results will focus on the normative settings, shifting power balances and mutual dependencies in gender and generational relations (in terms of role expectations and interpretations and corresponding practices) – i.e., the functioning of the family – before and after migration. I will identify some general characteristics of one type of dynamic of change in transnational families, taking into account the role of (biographical) turning points and status passages and answer the question regarding the importance of the economic crisis in Spain for this process.

5. Methods

The research design combines a temporal or process-oriented perspective (Elias 2014), linking the different levels of analysis with a multi-local approach that captures the simultaneity of transnational entanglements (Marcus 1995). From a methodological point of view, the study applies Elias' logic of descent in the analysis of figurational processes (2014: 194f.). This means that the figuration at the time of the interviews in 2014 can only be explained by determining how and why it evolved from a figuration, and not by a static root cause (such as a change in the contextual conditions through an economic crisis). Since every relationship between individuals is a process of entanglement, and actions of both sides can only be explained and understood by considering their interdependence (Elias 2014: 91), different perspectives of members of the same family are connected with reference to the simultaneity of events in different places (in the transnational space). By doing so, a basic requirement of researching transnational phenomena is taken into account. The process-oriented research design furthermore captures the dynamic of the changing degree of transnationality of family life (density and intensity of exchange of symbol systems, social practices and artefacts) (see Levitt 2001b or Pries 2010), and therefore its relevance for the individual life-worlds located at the national level. To get access to retrospective, longitudinal data, the theoretical assumptions of biographical research serve as a second main methodological principle. Biographies are socially constructed patterns of orientation. They integrate the levels of experience, agency and structure, thereby overcoming the dichotomy between 'subjective/individual' and 'objective/society',⁶ as well as the time levels of past, present and future. Biographers in the moment of telling their life story 'make sense' of their life. From a specific present and future perspective, a selection of past events and experiences are remembered and presented to the interviewer. Through biographical analysis, the course of events (the life *history*), as well as the structure of the self-presentation (the life *story*), is reconstructed (see Fischer/Kohli 1987, Fischer 1989, Rosenthal 1995, 2004).

Data collection was carried out through biographical-narrative interviews (Schütze 1983) with different members of the same family in Bilbao, Spain, and Guayaquil, as well as in a rural community in Ecuador. These interviews were combined with multi-local ethnographic fieldwork (participant observation and several interviews with additional family members and other persons of reference) (Sunstein/Chiseri-Strater 2012, Okely 2012). Analysis on the meso level focuses on the data of individual life course and family events (family history), starting with the birth of the respective family members but including information on the history of the older generation (see Bertaux 1995). On this analytical level, the empirical material undergoes a content analysis (Mayring 2015). Analysis on the micro level follows the principles of biographical case reconstruction (Fischer/Kohli 1984, Rosenthal 1995) and focuses on the biographical self-presentations of different family members and their comparison (see Delcroix 1995; Dausien 1996; Mummert 2012). The dynamic of the case structure, which is the family, results from the biographical course of the individual members, their interactions and subjective interpretations.

6 See earlier comment. Also Elias' figurational sociology (2014) aims at overcoming the suggested juxtaposition of individual and society, besides strengthening the perspective on processes.

6. The Gonzalez⁷ Family

For the purpose of this article, one case is selected from a total of six families. The presentation starts with some comments on the interview situations and the present-day perspective of narration (*Gegenwartsperspektive der Erzählung*) of the two biographers, Monica, the migrant daughter, and her mother Eugenia. In these first reflections on the individual living situations and the family figuration at the moment of the interview, a short description of the individual biographical courses is provided. Then follows the presentation of the family figuration process before and after migration. Special attention is paid to the decisive turning points that shape the transnational family dynamics.

Present-day perspectives and Biographical short descriptions

Monica

In my first conversation with Monica in February 2014, still on the bus towards her home in a working class neighbourhood of Bilbao, she already starts talking about her life with her family back in Ecuador. The conversation continues in her kitchen revealing intimate details in a quite early stage of the process of getting to know each other (e.g. about her unsuccessful attempts to remain pregnant). At that time, it was my impression that telling her life story serves a therapeutic purpose for her. The story she tells about herself is very much embedded in her family history. Especially the relationship to her father is crucial in presenting the way she became the person that she sees herself as being today. He seemed to be the patriarch who imposes a family hierarchy based on a traditional ascribing of roles and positions along gender and generational lines, following a strict Catholic-conservative set of values and norms. As a result, Monica's individual space of action and above all her sexuality were tightly controlled in her youth. This control went so far that she repeatedly suffered from interruptions of her educational path and from the cutting off of social ties that she tried to establish outside the family. One example is her imposed break from the university, during which she lost contact with her first boyfriend, whom she had met during the very exciting first year. After this traumatic experience, she saw a psychologist and quit university. Monica also refers to intrafamilial violence that her father committed against her mother. During these moments Monica repeatedly took her fathers' side and acted against her mother. Nevertheless, from a present-day perspective, and after a process of reinterpretation linked to her migration, today she somehow blames her father for it. But, during her self-presentation, Monica does not fully permit herself a negative evaluation of her father's role in her life or in the family history. He created a world for her, in which most of her material wishes were fulfilled, and she also took advantage of this bubble that he kept her in. After leaving university early, no-one pressured her to enter the labour market, "because my father supplied everything as long as I would be at home and follow the rules" (Monica). In 2001, at the age of 25, her best friend Julia (her only close relationship outside the family) got Monica her first job. Empowered by her own income, she opposed the father for the first time openly in another conflict on behavioural norms. This lasting but latent conflict, and

7 All names are changed.

the fact that her friend Julia left for Spain, led also to Monica's migration in 2003. In Bilbao, her economic and legal participation process follows the typical pattern. Soon after her arrival, she started working informally as a child carer earning relatively little money, but enough to live an individually oriented consumerist lifestyle. After some months living in Spain with Julia and her partner, Monica was told that her father was ill. This came as a very big surprise to her, although he actually had already been suffering for a longer time from prostate cancer. She blames herself for her ignorance, and in the interview she repeatedly evaluates herself negatively and shows a feeling of guilt. It might be that this negative present-day evaluation of herself is a result of the dilemma not to permit a negative evaluation of her father. When Monica realized that her father was seriously ill, she promised him in an intense and emotional conversation by phone to look after her mother and her younger sisters the same way he would do it. She commits to becoming the "head of the family" and not "betray his things, what he showed us" (Monica). In other words, her individual migration project becomes a collective one, in which she substitutes him in his position as head of household and main breadwinner. In 2005 she obtained her first legal residence permit and a work permit, and, some years later, Spanish citizenship. In 2008, she decided to leave the domestic sector and to continue her educational path. She started an apprenticeship and wanted to become an electrician. She quit her full-time job and started working part-time in geriatric care. When she fell ill in 2009, and before undergoing surgery, she travelled to Ecuador to hand over the financial responsibility for the family to her older brother. Back in Spain, and after the medical intervention, she was not able to return to her job and claimed social benefits. In 2010, Monica failed an important exam and abandoned the apprenticeship. In 2011, she married an Algerian man she got to know during the professional training. She finally moved out of the flat where she had been living for many years with Julia, Julia's husband and their daughter, and established her own household. She wished very much to become a mother, which implied a series of fertility treatment procedures. Until 2014 she did some informal jobs in the service sector during the summers and worked a few hours a week cleaning a school and private households. In the interview, she shows herself deeply disappointed with the state of the relationship between her and her family members in Ecuador. She complains about a lack of communication with all of them, especially her mother, and describes how she felt "a stranger in my own house" even though she had been the "pillar of the household" (Monica) for many years. Nevertheless, she assures me that her brother will receive me and help out with interviewing her mother.

Eugenia

My first contact with the Gonzalez family in Guayaquil indeed happened through Monica's brother Jaime Jr. He closely inquired into my interests before he introduced me to his mother. Eugenia at first showed no desire to have any kind of intimate conversation about her life or the history of her family. Only when I offer to stop the conversation and the research with her family, does she start asking me questions about her daughter Monica and agrees to an interview. The biographical self-presentation then follows a similar pattern of a certain rejection. Eugenia is driven into the conversation by her wish to get information about her daughter. She might also think that having this interview with me brings her closer to Monica in some way. From a formal perspective, the resulting interview text barely shows any

narration flow. Instead, she tries to closely control the story she is presenting. The individual and family story that she finally presents resembles the societies' ideal image of Ecuadorian family life, in which she, as a mother, raises the children and grandchildren while her husband works restlessly to assure the family well-being. This family history starts, according to middle class norms, with her marrying her husband at the age of 18, and the children being born after that date. The biographical case reconstruction though shows that her factual history is another one. Eugenia was born in 1960 in a rural area not far from Guayaquil, in a poor peasants' household. At the age of 10, she was sent to live with an older cousin and to work in middle-class households in the centre of the rapidly growing coastal city of Guayaquil (see Moser 2009: 8f.). Eugenia was actually only 14 years old when her oldest son Jaime Jr. was born. She lived together with her future husband in the marginal neighbourhood of *Cristo del Consuelo*, a swampy area that was gradually being made habitable. Three years later, in 1976, Monica was born. Eugenia now only did domestic work when some neighbour needed her services to wash clothes or for short-term childcare. Her – by now – husband, Jaime Sr., worked as a guardian at the national housing bank and managed to secure a loan for a house in a residential area (*ciudadela*). In 1982, they moved into the newly constructed *ciudadela Sauces*, the “housing solution for the middle class” (El Universo 28/04/2011), and, in 1988, her third child, Jazmine was born. Eugenia's difficulty in telling a life story can also be related to her sufferings as a young girl, living separated from her parents, working at such an early age, and the early pregnancies that led her so soon into a dependency relationship to her husband. As the history unfolds, this hypothesis becomes even more plausible. She also might lack a certain biographical scope of action and significant changes in lifestyle, which are the necessary biographical conditions for presenting a life story (Rosenthal 1995, 99ff.). In her life as a housewife and mother, she experienced physical and/or psychological violence by her husband. In 1998, at the age of 38, and on the eve of a severe economic and political crisis in Ecuador, her last daughter Celine was born. With the subsequent inflation and dollarization of the national economy, the family, depending mainly on Jaime Sr.'s income, was hit hard. In 2003, Monica emigrated to Spain, and some months later Jaime Sr. died of a heart attack. Having lost her husband and being distanced from her oldest daughter, Eugenia fell into a depression. After years of dependence on Jaime Sr.'s income, she herself needed to assure the upbringing of her younger daughters, aged 15 and 5 years old. Her son, Jaime Jr. was already married at this point and responsible for a stepdaughter. Eugenia started an informal street trade with imported clothes, but a little later Monica took over the financial burden until 2009, when responsibilities were re-negotiated, and Eugenia temporarily took up the informal clothes business again. In the years following Jaime Sr.'s death, Eugenia became the main person responsible for the care of her youngest daughter Celine and the children of Jaime Jr. and of her middle daughter Jazmine, who were born between 2005 and 2007. In sum, Eugenia's family position and traditional role has not changed significantly over time. Her sporadic involvement in the productive sphere does not seem to have an influence.

After this short description of the individual present-day perspectives and the biographical courses, the question still remains of what happened in the family history that led to such an ambiguous relationship between mother and daughter, in which emotional distance and the need to overcome it are co-present. And how is it that Monica's need to feel that she belongs to the family is not being reciprocated by her family members after she had

(over)fulfilled the familial expectations for almost six years? Her brother even states in a spontaneous comment that Monica would only be “another burden” (Jaime Jr.) if she were to decide to return. And, finally, what role does the crisis in Spain play in this family dynamic?

The family figurational process

In the late 1980s and the 1990s, the Gonzalez Family was a middle-class family that underwent a lengthy process of upward social mobility while depending on one income. They imitated the ideal of the single male breadwinner model with a patriarchal organisation typical of middle-class families. Based on their own experience of early pregnancies and heavy work, the parents strictly applied a Catholic-conservative set of norms that restricted the individual (sexual) freedom of their children and led to various conflicts inside the family. While Jaime Jr. rebelled, Monica submitted to the rules and took advantage in attracting all her father’s affection. The intrafamilial violence of Jaime Sr. towards his wife created a kind of alliance between the mother Eugenia and son Jaime Jr. on one side and the father Jaime Sr. and daughter Monica on the other. As a result, Monica, as the second-born child and daughter, ranked higher in her father’s preferences than her older brother. Probably, Eugenia, from a present-day perspective, feels some guilt about her role in implementing that model and for the negative impact it had for Monica’s development and which in the end has also shaped the relationship with her until the present day.

The financial, economic and political crisis that hit Ecuador, especially between 1999 and 2002, led to the impoverishment of the middle and lower classes of society. The Gonzalez family was also faced with downward social mobility. The patriarchal single male breadwinner model was becoming more and more unsustainable. At the same time, Monica’s plans to migrate together with her friend Julia became more concrete, and, while her mother supported her in a kind of passive way, her father was informed last. The economic situation of the household might have influenced his decision to let Monica go.

The first familial turning point happened in 2004 after the death of the father, Jaime Sr. By that time, Jaime Jr. was already married and taking responsibility for his own family. From the moral point of view of his father, the fact that his son’s wife was a former single mother further deteriorated his family position. So, instead of him, it was the migrant daughter Monica who underwent a status passage inside the family. She kept the promise that she had made to her father and covered almost all the expenses that the household was to have, including transport and schooling fees for her younger sisters. Being legitimised by the appointment through her father as head of the family, she exercised the role of main breadwinner and also reproduced the traditional family system of values and norms. Over the next few years this would lead her into conflict with her brother and his wife as well as with her younger sister Jazmine, who shortly after the death of her father ran away with a man and got pregnant. Monica as well as Jaime Jr. were outraged at first about that breach of family norms. Monica blamed Jazmine and her mother and punished them by reducing the remittances. But only shortly afterwards, she showed compassion, and the whole family agreed on accommodating Jazmine, her newborn baby and her partner.

The event that mainly triggered the familial turning point was the death of the father, who needed to be substituted in some way. It occurred in the context of an economic crisis, in which the family faced severe downward social mobility. It was also Monica's migration and her social mobility in the Ecuadorian reference frame that made her status passage inside the family possible. Finally, it was the previous figurational process of the family itself, with its value system, intrafamilial violence and certain alliances that marked the multipolar power-balances and which led to the way the turning point takes place. The key characteristics of the new family figuration were its more fragile balance of power, the father being replaced by his daughter, and connected to this, the family's much higher level of transnationality as she was exercising his role from afar.

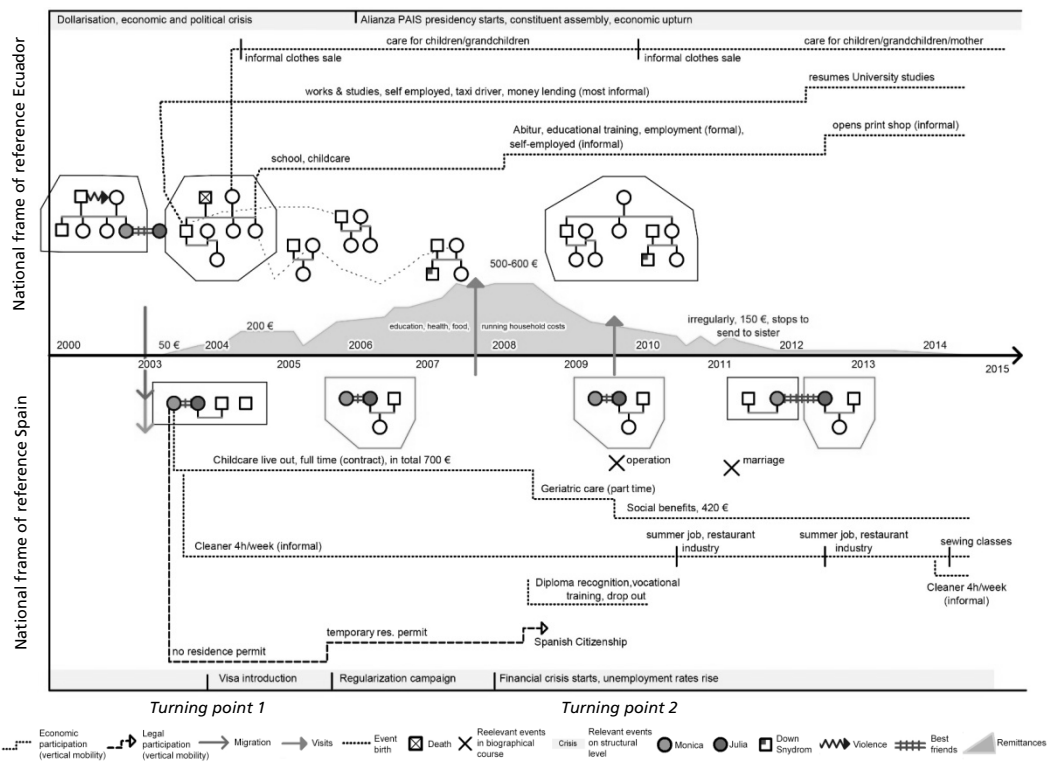
After a period of conflicts and distancing, the family members in Guayaquil got into closer interdependency. Jaime Jr. moved back into the family home, and they depended closely on each other in daily care routines. In the same period, during almost six years (2004-2009), the household income was substantially being provided by Monica. She assured the education of her youngest sister Celine, enabled the other sister Jazmine, by that time a mother of two, to finish school and enter the labour market, and she allowed Jaime Jr. to focus mainly on his own nuclear family and not worry too much about his mother and sisters, even though it would normally have been his responsibility according to traditional role ascriptions. But despite her being the main economic pillar, Monica felt estranged during her first visit in 2007, "like someone extra" (Monica) in her own house. She started a fight with her brother on normative grounds concerning the relation between their mother and his wife. In 2009, before her surgery, she returned to Guayaquil, reconciled with her brother and negotiated a redistribution of the financial burden, which would now mainly be attributed to him.

This second familial turning point in 2009, and with it an intrafamilial status passage for Monica and her brother, is also linked to a variety of factors on the micro, macro and meso level. Monica was ill and facing a surgery. It was a moment when she feared that she would not be able to be the provider any longer. Also, her biographical project of resuming her formal education played a role, as it reflected her past experiences of educational interruptions, the reduced working hours in the present and the future prospects of leaving the domestic sector. Also, the biographical turning point of her own marriage and desire to become a mother is of importance. On the macro level, it is Spain's economic crisis that reduced her possibilities of generating an income, while individual possibilities for her family members had been growing in the context of the political change and economic upturn in Ecuador. Also, outside the family figuration, there was a change in the possibilities of her friend Julia to support Monica, as she was in a moment of her life where she had to prioritize her own nuclear family. Again, inside the figuration, there was – on the one hand – the more or less stabilized economic position of Jaime Jr. and her sister Jazmine, and – on the other hand – the figurational process itself, which was marked by an emotional distancing between Monica and above all her mother – an outcome of the conflictual family dynamics prior to Monica's migration. The figurational process after 2009 is marked by a de-trans-nationalization and a loss of function of the separated members for each other, while cohesion inside the separate households grows. In Ecuador, the mutual interdependencies intensified in terms of care practices, economic contributions and the claims on the family house by Jaime Jr. and Jazmine. Meanwhile, Monica experi-

enced a process of individualization that lowered the importance of her collective family identity, in her words “becoming more selfish” (Monica) and taking on the roles of wife and potentially a mother to-be.

In the aftermath of this turning point the financial as well as the communication flow between Monica and her family members in Guayaquil reduced drastically. Yet negotiations on obligations and privileges continued. Jaime Jr. was only partially able and willing to cover the needs of the mother, Eugenia, and youngest sister, Celine. At the moment of the interview, Celine needed one more year to graduate from high school. For her to have any prospect on the Ecuadorian labour market, she would need to go to university, and the mother, Eugenia, was very worried who of the older siblings could and would support her.

Graph 1: Social Genogram of the Gonzalez family and individual social mobility, 2000-2014



Graph 1 gives a simplified overview of the interconnected lives of the family members in separate households located in different national contexts between 2000 and 2014. It shows the trajectories of the individual family members mainly in the life sphere of work (upper part) and, in the case of Monica, also her legal status trajectory (lower part). Both types of trajectories represent processes of individual social mobility. It also shows important life cycle events, such as deaths and births, changes in the household compositions, remittance sending and visits. The lifetime events are contextualized by the historic

time and the change in macro structural context in Spain and Ecuador. What can be seen here is how Monica first enables her siblings to pursue their individual paths by sending a constantly increasing amount of financial remittances (2004/2005-2008) that eventually leads into their upward social mobility. The money she sends exceeds by far the amount previously earned by her father. When she herself experiences the biographical turning point in 2009 and the downward social mobility outside and inside the family, the household in Ecuador is stable enough to sustain itself. While looking specifically at the period between 2008 and 2012 (when the uncertainty about future prospects during the crisis was highest), it becomes visible that there are various factors on the macro, meso and micro level that are interconnected and shape this turning point of the family figurational process. The economic crisis in Spain is only one of them.

7. Conclusions

Through the results of my analyses presented above, my aim is to show that the influencing factors on the dynamics of change, i.e., on turning points, of family figurations are located inside the figuration on the biographical and relational level and outside the figuration on the contextual level. In transnational families, these different and interconnected factors are located in the different national reference frames of the individual family members and in the transnational space. The presented case is characterized by two more or less abrupt changes in the form of turning points, when power balances between some family members shift essentially. These turning points are influenced by the trajectories of societal integration, i.e., participation in different spheres of society, of the individual family members in Bilbao and Guayaquil which are, in turn, shaped by their individual life courses and the specific contexts and conditions (different macro-economic developments in both countries, migration policy, etc.). The high degree of transnationality of the Gonzalez family life during a certain period of time is also due to the lack of a sufficiently developed welfare state in the society of origin and the family being the crucial unit of survival, in which the expectations towards the migrant member to sustain the family are high.

Even though the organisation of family life during periods of migration shows certain specific characteristics (here, for example, the more fragile power balances after the substitution of the head of household), its essential logic is rooted in the long-term and gradual evolution of family constellations. In the presented case, social ascendance into the middle class and the excessive imitation of the class-specific model of the ideal family set the stage for the subsequent figurational process: the way the relationships between Monica and her father and the other family members unfolded before his death explains why, after almost six years when she was the main provider, her brother considers her “another burden” (Jaime Jr.) instead of showing some solidarity regarding her possible return. It also explains why the migrant daughter feels that she does not belong to the family anymore and therefore prioritizes her individual needs, while at the same time she and her mother somehow try to remedy this distant relationship, and why there are still expectations towards her in supporting the youngest sister Celine in her educational trajectory (Monica also still perceives the obligation towards her deceased father). Under conditions of transnationality, it is the change in one national context (e.g. an economic crisis), and

therefore in the living conditions of one or several of its members, that can impact the family as a whole. But again, the way it impacts the family (e.g. de- or re-transnationalisation, and therefore relaxing or confirming its vital functions, challenging or confirming hierarchies and inequalities) is inscribed in the logic of the long-term negotiation processes and emotional dynamics, and in the resulting conflicts and alliances; i.e. in the figurational process itself. The biographical significance of the economic crisis for the individual family member is, in turn, connected to the relational interdependency over time and is inscribed into the common construction of the family history.

The figurational process perspective makes mechanisms of gender inequalities visible in their ambiguity and, in some cases, also in their intersection with other determinants. The educational trajectory of the youngest sister, Celine, could come to a too early end partly because she was born latest, during the process of downward social mobility of the family, only five years before the death of her father. The middle sister Jazmine suffered like her older sister Monica from the strict patriarchal family system, but, thanks to the care of her mother and the economic support of the migrant Monica, who feels deeply responsible and committed to the principles her father had established, she was eventually able to live a self-determined life with her own nuclear family. The first-born son, Jaime Jr., also suffers from the established family system that puts him in second place behind Monica, but at the same time this frees him in a way from his traditionally ascribed responsibilities. Monica, after a reinterpretation process during her migration, perceives the bubble her father held her in (having many restrictions, while at the same time enjoying many privileges that the other siblings did not have) as something very negative that has fundamentally marked her life. But she still mainly blames herself for it. The efforts she undertook to support her family, she mainly did because of the promise she had made to her father before his death. This latent critique of the very strictly applied traditional notion of family that develops during her migration is not yet present enough in Monicas' biographical self-presentation to be transferred back to Guayaquil as the innovative normative structures or systems of practice that Levitt (1998) describes as *social remittances*. The father, Jaime Sr., resembles the ideal model of head of household and single breadwinner, who led his family to social ascendance while applying a strict Catholic-conservative system of values and norms. He accepted the conflicts that come with it, but when the Ecuadorian crisis stroke at the end of the 1990s, his position weakened, and the whole model was questioned. Eugenia's life history reflects the classic trajectory of early mother and dependent housewife, who throughout most of her life was engaged in multiple care duties (at present towards her grandchildren, her youngest daughter and her mother) and at times, had to engage in precarious productive activities.

Finally, analysis shows how the productive and reproductive tasks (i.e. the mutual dependencies) among the family members are organized. It demonstrates that the individual processes of social mobility in different national societies are connected to one another and at the same time shape the social mobility process of the whole family. The findings here reaffirm the conclusions already reached at by Grasmuck and Pessar (1991), Besserer (2002), Berger and Weiß (2008) and Rocío Gil (2006) that processes of social positioning marked by determinants of inequality, such as class, migration, gender, generation or sibling (ordinal) position have to be understood from a transnational perspective.

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Ada Ruis

Building a new life and (re)making a family.

Young Syrian refugee women in the Netherlands navigating between family and career.

Abstract:

This article presents results of a qualitative analysis based on biographic narratives of three young, well-educated women from Syria. They arrived in the Netherlands between 2015 and 2017 in the context of family reunion. The central question is how young Syrian women navigate between two major projects that ask for their agency, being family and work. It is argued that both occupational career development and the building of a family are 'agentic projects' that aim to contribute to the establishment of a new life and to regain continuity. The analyses demonstrate that both projects are closely intertwined. Agency emerges as highly relational and intersecting with the women's position in the life course, timing of life events, ability to adapt career goals to the new situation, and impact of social contexts on family relations.

Key words: refugee family resettlement, life course perspective, agency, displacement and gender, young refugee mothers, biographic narratives.

1. Introduction

This article discusses results of a qualitative analysis based on biographic narratives of three young well-educated women from Syria, who arrived in the Netherlands between 2015 and 2017. Due to their specific stage in the life course, important life events and changes regarding their family coincide with main changes and requirements related to the building of a new life as a refugee in a host country. Balancing work and family life is challenging for many young parents and as such young Syrian women do not differ from their Dutch contemporaries. However, their circumstances are fundamentally different. Unlike Dutch young women, they have to get used to a new language, a new - highly complex - society, and they have to reformulate their goals and find new ways to achieve them. Moreover, they are cut off from extended family members and former social networks that used to support them.

The presented case studies are based on data from an ongoing five-year ethnographic research among Syrian (reunited) refugee families. Longitudinal qualitative research can

add to the understanding of subjective perceptions as well as sense-making and decision-making processes of people (Sleijpen et al. 2013; Bek-Pedersen/Montgomery 2006; McMichael et al. 2011). By focusing on the specific position of the women in the life course as well as on family dynamics that occur as a consequence of resettlement, this article aims to gain insights into ways in which young female refugees shape their agency towards (the combination of) a professional career and family responsibilities and how their agency develops.

In the following, I will first provide some background information about asylum policies and Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. Subsequently, I will explain the main theoretical concepts used in the article and refer to methodology. Then, I will describe the cases through the themes that appear from my analysis. Finally, I will discuss patterns that emerge when comparing the presented cases and will situate these patterns within the theoretical frame of the article.

2. Syrian refugee families in the Dutch context

As in other European countries, especially in the years 2015 and 2016, relatively large numbers of refugees from Syria arrived in the Netherlands. Since 2016, a rising number of them arrived in the context of family reunion (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2019). Family reunion migrants mostly receive their temporary residence permit soon after their arrival. Refugees with a temporary residence permit are not allowed to choose their place of residence. Dutch administration expects all municipalities to house a certain number of status holders and they are centrally allocated to a place of residence (Dagevos et al. 2018: 44; VluchtelingenWerk Nederland n.d.).

Adult refugees with a temporary residence permit have to participate in civic integration courses and to pass exams in language and knowledge about Dutch society and labour market within three years after the starting date of their temporary residence permit. Children of primary school age mostly join a language class, after which they can continue in Dutch elementary education; younger children can join a pre-school. In some municipalities, joining a regular school class and a language class can be combined. Minors between 12 and 18 usually first enter international transitional classes before they move into secondary or vocational education (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland n.d.).

The level of education of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands varies widely. Syrian refugees – both male and female – aged between 25 and 34 are the highest educated. Elderly people more often have lower or no educational qualifications. Young people under the age of 24 are also less likely to have a degree in higher education, as the war and the flight from Syria often interrupted their school careers (Dagevos et al. 2018: 95-107).

Currently, most Syrian refugees have a temporary residence permit for a period of five years. After that, they can apply for a permanent residence permit and then for Dutch nationality. However, they need to have fulfilled the civic integration requirements and their prospects depend on the assessment of the Dutch government concerning the safety situation in Syria at that moment (Immigratie en Naturalisatie Dienst 2019).

3. Theoretical concepts and methods

Agency and *family* are central concepts in this article and will be elaborated more into detail, preceded by a brief outline of the *life course perspective* that provides the broader frame for this study.

Life course perspective

The life course perspective combines several theoretical concepts that provide guidelines to reach a better understanding of how life courses evolve and are embedded in social relations as well as social, cultural and historical contexts. This involves the understanding of continuity and change in human lives in relation to changing contexts. Elder et al. (2003; 2015) discern five paradigmatic principles that provide guidance for such research.

Human development and aging are lifelong processes. Therefore, a *long-term perspective* is needed to reveal patterns of (dis)continuity in individual life courses. *Time and place* are essential as “individual life course is embedded in and shaped by historical times and places over a lifetime” (Elder et al. 2015: 32). Equally, *timing of life events and transitions* affect people in different ways depending on their position in the life course. Transitions in the life course refer to changes in social roles or responsibilities that are related to age, gender and life stage, such as a marriage, childbirth or a new step in a career. Turning points are events that profoundly change the course of life (Elder et al. 2015: 20). The importance of timing of events, transitions and turning points involves that specific historical circumstances have different consequences and are differently experienced by young people and older people. Gender, as well as socio-economic status and ethnicity, can initiate cumulative processes of positive or negative dynamics in people's lives that further increase differences (Crockett 2002: 5; Elder et al. 2015: 7, 10). Finally, *agency* and *family* (as part of the broader principle of people's *linked lives*) provide crucial insights into ways people actively deal with social change in the context of their relationships with significant others and a specific society (Elder et al. 2003; Elder et al. 2015).

Agency

Agency is a multi-layered concept with several intersecting dimensions. On a psychological level, agency is part of human striving for goals and ideals. As such it relates to intentionality and the pursuit of (culturally defined) ‘projects’ (Ortner 2006: 139-147). The intentional striving and working on projects involve choices and strategies that aim to achieve a ‘good’ – meaningful – life. Ideals about a ‘good life’ and a desired future are shaped by history, personal identity – among which age and gender – and social environment (Buitelaar 2014; Crockett 2002). Consequently, they reflect cultural values, norms and models available in this environment. Building a life in exile requires adaptive strategies: the new situation may necessitate a review and reformulation of ideals, goals and ways to achieve them. Ideals not only fuel personal goals and agency but goal attainment also positively affects self-esteem and future agency. By that it can contribute to an advantageous cumulative cycle of progress (Crockett 2002: 10; Elder et al. 2015: 20-24).

However, personal freedom in the pursuit of goals and projects is far from unrestricted. Several scholars point out that the emphasis in many studies on individual agency and autonomy ignores interdependencies and social structures of power and inequality (Ghorashi et al. 2018; Kağıtçıbaşı 2005; Mahmood 2005; Ortner 2006; Pham 2013). As agents are embedded in social environments and interpersonal relationships, agency is relational and personal ambitions are always negotiated in relation to significant others. Equally, the results of agentic action can be unintended (Crockett 2002: 4; Ortner 2006: 130). Pham (2013) speaks of ‘bonded agency’. She argues that social relations should not just be seen as constraining or enabling agency, but as constituting the very structure and expression of it (Pham 2013: 36). Furthermore, being bonded should not be understood as the opposite of being free. Agency can also be expressed by enduring and negotiating conditions of bondedness and by working on self-fulfilment within that given context (Mahmood 2005: 18; Pham 2013: 31).

Family

Family can be seen as a work of agency because it is shaped and modified by people. That is why Morgan speaks of ‘doing family’ (Morgan 2011: 5, 22-24). To understand the concept of family, it is needed to pay attention to how family members perceive and shape their roles and positions.

Family is embedded in social, cultural and historical contexts. Experiences gained as a family in the past can instruct actions in the present and the future, and absent relatives can motivate family members’ agency. Additionally, family relationships are not static but change and develop over time and due to events and (changing) circumstances (Morgan 2011: 9-12). Ideas about the meaning of family and how to ‘do’ family in a ‘right’ way are shaped by culture and the social environment in which they originated.

Displacement brings radical changes and challenges to the ways family members’ lives are linked. Gender roles and parent-child relations may change (Bushin 2009; Foner/Dreby 2011; Nauck 2005). Different rates and paces of adjustment by parents and children are frequently reported (Foner/Dreby 2011; Gardner 2002; McMichael et al. 2011). Often mastering the new language with more ease and speed, especially older children and youth frequently become *cultural brokers* and translators for their parents and younger siblings. These role reversals imply that parents are more dependent of their children, and (older) children face more responsibilities than before.

In summary: agency is a capacity for action that is created in and enabled by a specific social and relational context. Family is both a work of joint agency of family members and a main social context that creates and enables personal agency of family members. Building a life in exile as a family not only requires reformulation and renegotiation of personal goals and ways to achieve them, but also reshaping of family relations and rebalancing personal and familial projects. Capacity for agency, changing family relations and changing responsibilities interplay with position in the life course, gender and biography of family members.

Methodology

The data presented in this paper are based on an ongoing ethnographic research (e.g. Madden 2010)¹. Twelve households are followed during the five-year period of their temporary residence permit. Data are mainly collected through participant observations, as well as topical and biographical interviews. The families differ considerably in terms of educational level and age of parents and children. The focus in this article is on young women who recently started a family. The fact that they are all well-educated reflects the link between generation and education, as explained in the second section: they belong to the highest educated generation of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. Thus, the cases do not represent families in the research with parents and children in a different life stage.

Next to the core families under study, Syrian families from the extended networks of the prime participants in the research form an outer circle. I do not collect data in these families on a regular and systematic base, but generally following their developments allows me to get a broader view and to collect additional information that can shed light on questions that appear among core families. This is demonstrated by the third case in this article, which is based on information from a family in the outer circle.

Biographic stories throw light upon agency, decision-making and meaning-making in the context of displacement. By telling their stories, people provide information about their quest for a new life and the meanings they attach to their experiences. Stories about the past are always coloured by the present and by people's aspirations for the future. Thus, biographic stories reconstruct the past, but also inform about the present and about objectives and strategies towards the future (Bek-Pedersen/Montgomery 2006; Buitelaar 2014; Eastmond 2007).

The analysis of the stories followed different angles of the life course perspective. First, I looked to the stories from the perspective of developmental dynamics of the life course related to timing of life events, transitions and turning points. Second, I looked thematically to the stories from the perspective of the other described guiding principles that link the development of human lives to social change: agency (as expressed in ideals, goals, strategies and choices), linked lives of family members (as expressed in intergenerational relations, gender roles and networks), social context (as expressed in experiences related to Dutch society and policies). Analysis by coding added new (inductive) themes that reflect the perspectives of the interlocutors (Hennink et al. 2011: 40-45). Third, I tried to discover patterns of continuity in the stories by iteratively relating the findings on agency and family in the specific social contexts to timing of life events, transitions and turning points.

4. Three cases of young women

This section presents the biographical narratives of three young Syrian women. The first two cases concern two women in the core of the research and are more detailed. The third

1 Within the scope of this article, the ethnographic embeddedness of the material is less elaborated.

case is of a woman in the ‘outer circle’. Her case adds to the understanding of patterns, as it differs in terms of timing of career and family planning as well as dependence caused by migration.

Case 1: Rania²

Rania is 23 years old and was born in a middle class neighborhood in Damascus in a Sunni Muslim family of Palestinian descent. She arrived in the Netherlands in October 2015, at the age of 20. By that time, she had finished secondary school and studied Architecture for two years at Damascus University. Her parents are well-educated and both had jobs in Syria. Rania has a five years older brother and an eight years younger sister.

Looking back on her upbringing, Rania states that education has always been important in her family. Her parents, especially her mother, emphasized that she had to study hard in order to go to university. Among the most important values that her parents instilled in her are self-confidence and self-reliance.

It is that I can take care of myself. Independence. That I am not allowed to say that I cannot do something. You always should try! (laughing, while imitating her parents) ‘Why you can’t do that? Why other people can do that and you cannot? If someone else can do it, you can do it as well!’ That is what I learned from them: go on, don’t give up.

The war disrupted Rania’s regular life and made her grow up fast. The most shocking event was for her the breaking up of her family: in 2014 her brother received a study visa for the USA and departed. Less than one year later Rania’s father left for the US as well. He intended to apply for asylum in order to reunite the family, but his application was refused. On his way back he had to change planes in Amsterdam, but instead he applied for asylum in the Netherlands and stayed there.

Reunion and starting a new life

In the autumn of 2015, Rania arrived in the Netherlands with her mother and her sister Elma. It had been exactly seven months after her father’s application for asylum. Her father had just moved from the asylum seekers’ centre to an apartment in a provincial town in the middle of the country. After a short stay in an application centre, they moved into the apartment.

Rania describes the first year in the Netherlands as a confusing and most difficult phase³. Everything was new and it took quite a long time until things got started, as for instance language courses. Fortunately, she and her parents spoke some English, so that they were able to communicate with representatives of organizations and the municipality.

2 The life story interview with Rania took place in April 2018 and was mainly in Dutch. Occasionally, she used Arabic, in case of certain words that she found difficult to translate. At the time of the interview, Rania was more than 7 months pregnant. In describing the case I also use references based on other meetings with her and her family.

3 Rania’s description reminds of what is called ‘liminal phase’ in anthropology. In the field of refugee studies Victor Turner’s concept of liminality is frequently used (e.g. Ghorashi et al. 2018).

I couldn't do anything here in the first period, I did not know about things, the rules, the schools for Elma... We really needed someone's help. That is why we had a contact person.⁴ We had appointments with her every week or two weeks, at her office. When we received letters and such, we took all the letters with us, we wrote down all our questions, and then we asked her everything and she really helped us.

Among the things that Rania learned from the contact person is that she should be persistent. The contact person explained that she should repeat her questions to public service agencies – by mail or by phone – if an answer took too long. And that is what she did from the start: she did not wait and see, but was proactive in communicating with all sort of organizations.

A couple of months after her arrival in The Netherlands, Rania started her civic integration course. Within a year she passed the language exams on a B2 proficiency level, which is required to start in Dutch higher education.

Changes in family relations

The moving to the Netherlands caused major changes in the family relations, especially in Rania's role. Due to her age and because she learned Dutch rather quickly, she became the family's main broker to Dutch society.

In Syria my parents did not need my help. Absolutely not. It was totally the other way around. We were the ones who asked for their help. They were capable to do and arrange everything. Here it is different and that is very difficult for them.

Besides getting new responsibilities towards her parents, Rania's relation with her sister Elma changed profoundly. Elma was 12 years old upon arrival in the Netherlands and did not easily find her way into Dutch education. Rania became the main contact person for Elma's schools and advises, translates, and thinks along with her parents about what to do concerning Elma.

It is easier for me than for Elma. I finished a complete period in Syria and here I can continue with the next step. That is clearer than Elma's situation. To get integrated into the educational system and learn the language, I think it is the best to have either my age and a diploma of secondary education from Syria, or to be much younger, so that you start early in primary education and have time to grow into it. But Elma is sort of in between. That is really the most difficult.

Life changing events

Rania mentions three positive turning points in her life: her marriage, her studies, and her motherhood.

The lead-up to her marriage started when she was still in Damascus with her mother and sister. Her father incidentally met with a young Palestinian from Damascus, called Anas, in the reception centre for asylum seekers at the airport of Amsterdam. They shared their stories and stayed in touch afterwards. The good contact with Rania's father encour-

4 The contact person was working for the Dutch Council for Refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland), an independent NGO, that looks after the interests of refugees.

aged Anas's interest in his daughter as a marriage candidate.⁵ He asked her father for permission to get into touch with Rania. This resulted in a visit by his parents in Damascus to Rania, her mother and Elma. After her arrival to the Netherlands, Rania and Anas got engaged and met each other frequently before they decided to marry.

Anas entered the Dutch labour market relatively soon. He was accepted in a special program for highly educated refugees in a big company and got a permanent job. In the summer of 2017, almost two years after their engagement, Anas exchanged his apartment in Amsterdam for a bigger apartment in the village where Rania lived. They married in August and subsequently Rania moved from her parents' house to the new apartment.

Less than one month after her marriage Rania started studying Architecture at a university of applied sciences. Moreover, she got pregnant. Although struggling with the language and finding it hard to connect to Dutch students, Rania is highly motivated. Her studies are a crucial part of her plan to work hard in order to be able to start a new life. Both Anas and her parents support her. Anas helps her to prepare for examinations and her mother cooks for her when Rania is busy.

In May 2018 Rania's daughter Lana was born. For Rania and her family Lana's birth is especially joyful because, in Rania's words, "it makes our family bigger again".

Balancing family project and career project

Rania's main challenge now is to combine her studies and the care for Lana. She believed from the start that she can make it, because her parents and Anas help her. After a break of four months, Rania resumed her studies. She obtained enough ECTS points (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) for admission in the second year of the bachelor program and now she does not need to go to class every day anymore. This enables her to care for Lana and study at home two days a week.

She feels that she is doing well and got used to her new life. Anas still helps her with her studies, but this year is easier for her. He also cares for Lana when he is at home. Her mother cares for Lana during the three days that Rania has classes. And her sister, fond of Lana, mostly visits her after school on the days that Rania is at home.

Case 2: Zena⁶

Zena is 27 years old and from a modern middle class Damascene suburb. She is from a Sunni Muslim family and has three younger brothers and a younger sister. Her parents are well-educated and both have a job at a Syrian Ministry. When talking about her childhood, Zena looks happy. She had a joyful childhood with lots of playing outside with her brothers and the children from the neighbourhood.

5 Later on, Anas reflected on this procedure by saying: "Family, and what Rania learned from her parents, is very important. That is our tradition and our culture. My child will learn as well from her grandparents, so (*laughing*) it is very important to choose the right grandpa and grandma!"

6 The life story interview with Zena took place in two parts in September and October 2017 and was mainly in Dutch. Occasionally, she used Arabic. At the moment of the interview, Zena was 6 months pregnant with her second child. The information in this article is also based on other meetings with her and her husband.

After finishing secondary school, Zena studied Business and Finance. Soon after she received her certification, the war started. As a young adult, who just had become a starter at the labour market, she experienced the social and economic consequences of the war first-hand.

After my studies, I was at home without a job. Because of the war, banks could not employ new personnel and some banks even closed. So I stayed at home, looking for work, but I could not find anything. Next, I followed a computer course and finished it with a state examination. But I still couldn't find a job. Then my parents helped me by looking for work at their ministry. Not a paid job, but a traineeship. That worked out and I could do two internships, each of them three months.

During the internship Zena met Kareem, an electrical engineer who worked in the same department. They fell in love and before long Kareem and his family visited Zena's family to ask for her hand. After an engagement of six months, they married and moved in an apartment close to Zena's parents.

After Zena's internship, again she was at home without a job. Kareem still worked at the Ministry but did not earn enough to make ends meet. Moreover, he wanted to leave Syria and find a safe place to live for him and Zena. However, Zena had become pregnant and did not want him to leave during her pregnancy.

In February 2014, Zena gave birth to her daughter Safa. This urged Kareem even more to find a better place to live, as Safa was often ill and health care in Damascus was poor. Kareem left when Safa was four months old. Two and half months later, he arrived in the Netherlands, where he applied for asylum and family reunion. Meanwhile, Zena and Safa stayed with Zena's parents.

This period I do not want to remember. It was difficult, really difficult. It was the first time that I felt so responsible. I was worried about Kareem and about my daughter. When she was ill, what should I do in the night? It helped me that I lived together with my family again. My parents helped me very much.

Reunion and starting a new life

In March 2015, Zena and Safa arrived in the Netherlands after a separation of nine months. Kareem still lived in an asylum seekers' centre (ASC) by that time. The centre was an old holiday resort and they had their own home. This period was characterized by happiness of being together and hope for the future.

After two months in the ASC, they moved to a house in one of the big cities of the Netherlands. It was not an easy start. Kareem and Zena did not know the city yet and did not know people who could help them. The contact person of the municipality only offered help in arranging water, electricity, internet supplies.

We did not know where to go. We went to IKEA, but we only had €3000⁷ and we wanted a sleeping room and a sofa. This money was not enough for even one room! So, the three of us slept on the air mattress for one month (laughs). We did not know how to handle it and we did not know our way around. But basically, we were happy.

7 Refugees receive a loan from the municipality to where they are allocated, at the moment that there is a house available for them. The amount of money that they receive differs between municipalities.

The positive spirit of the first period increased by the arrival of Zena's brother and four siblings of Kareem in the Netherlands. Although living in other parts of the country, they visited each other in weekends and holidays.

Mutual dependence and life changing events

Now that Zena and Kareem had a house, time had come to start language and civic integration courses. They enrolled in courses with different schedules, so that they could alternate the care for Safa. This situation changed as Kareem was encouraged by the municipality to take part in a pilot program for higher educated refugee students at the university of applied sciences. This caused much stress, because the program was too intensive to combine with the care for Safa and with Zena's lessons. Eventually, both of them missed numerous lessons and flunked their exams. Zena had to leave the language school and enrolled in another school that she disliked as lessons were less intensive and more basic. Kareem returned to his former language school.

Safa went to pre-school when she became two and half years old and Zena and Kareem regained their former balance: both followed their courses and shared the care for Safa and the household. Kareem had some job interviews but that did not result in an actual job. A main change occurred as Zena became pregnant. She was aware that a new baby would not bring her closer to a study or work, but Safa was getting older and they strongly desired another child.

By the end of January 2018 Zena gave birth to her daughter Hala. The first weeks after Hala's birth, Zena's sisters in law assisted the family before the couple resumed caring for their daughters together.

Three months after Hala's birth Kareem started a training in entrepreneurial skills, facilitated by the municipality. He worked out a plan for a restaurant, but at the end of the training the municipality declined his plan and forced him to accept any work available on a short term. That is how he became a deliverer of online orders at a big grocery store.

Balancing family project and career project

For Zena Kareem's work involves a big change. Before, he used to bring Safa to school and picked her up at the end of a school day. Now she has to do everything alone and always has to take Hala with her. She decided to postpone her ambitions, as she considers it her responsibility to stay at home at this stage.

I would like to work, of course! In Syria I also wanted to work, I always wanted to work! But my duty now is to stay at home with the children. They are simply too young. I cannot bring Hala to a day care yet. And we also do not have the money for that.

Zena relates her situation to her life stage: she has to build a family and a career at the same time. In the Dutch context, without her parents around, this is very hard.

It is difficult for me that I have to do everything at the same time. I am building a new life and I am building a new family at the same time. In Syria, I would have finished my studies and then I would work, and after that maybe I would become a mother, but I would already have work. Here, I have to pay for a new study, to learn everything about this country, the rules, the language and everything, and then I have to raise my children, build my family, care for... That is very difficult. To do

everything at the same time. Maybe, if my mother had been here, close to me, maybe then I would have gone to school or university, or to work. But it is different here. Maybe when Hala goes to pre-school..., then I can care for myself.

Case 3: Basma

Basma is a young woman in the ‘outer circle’ of the research⁸. She is 30 years old and from a Sunni Muslim family from the city of Aleppo. She holds a PhD and was a starting assistant professor at the university. In 2015 she married Shadi, a fellow PhD student. Eventually Shadi did not finish his PhD but fled the country shortly after the wedding. He arrived in the Netherlands in the summer of 2015. The reception centres for asylum seekers were overcrowded at the time and it took a relatively long time until Shadi received his temporary residence permit and could apply for family reunion. Basma therefore only arrived in the Netherlands in January 2017. Meanwhile, Shadi had been very active. He wanted Basma to find a good situation at her arrival. While still living in an ASC, he contacted universities and companies and succeeded in getting a job at one of the companies.

When Basma arrived Shadi had already acquired a house, had a job and had started a Dutch language course. Therefore, Basma spent much time alone in the house, waiting for a place in a language course. Moreover, in contrast to other family reunion migrants, the municipality did not offer her any programs. She remained out of sight since Shadi had a job and they did not receive social welfare benefits, often a main motive for municipalities to invest in newcomers (Razenberg et al. 2018). Because it took a long time until she could enter a language class, she did not easily meet other people.

When she finally was able to join a language class, she got pregnant. Basma had a difficult pregnancy and her language study stagnated. After the birth of her son Ziad, she fell into a depression. She first thought that it was a postpartum depression but later on realized that it might be caused by her whole situation. She is lonely in the Netherlands, her parents and two sisters are still in Aleppo, her brother is in Turkey. She talks with them several times a day by WhatsApp and sends them videos of little Ziad. During the day, she is mostly alone as Shadi is working. Nevertheless, she lacks time to concentrate on her language skills as Ziad is keeping her busy.

She still dreams of continuing her academic career, but she would need to improve her English considerably; in Syria fluency in English was not a prerequisite in academia. Sometimes she goes for a stroll with Ziad in the baby carriage, but it makes her feel sad that she does not have any goal; she is just walking. She had not realized that it would be so difficult to build up a new life in the Netherlands and that she might need to start all over again. “I never thought that I would get into this position”, she says. She mentions an Arabic expression: “A year for yourself and a year for your family” and adds: “I had many years for myself and now I have to compensate for that”.

8 See the section about methodology. The material from Basma’s case is less extensive, as she does not belong to the core families participating in the research. The information presented here is based on field notes of several meetings and informal conversations with her in 2017 and 2018.

5. Findings

Analysis of the stories shows that the women's abilities for agency intersect with several dimensions of the life course perspective as presented in the theoretical frame. I ordered them into three categories: 1) temporal dimensions, which relate to timing of life events and transitions; 2) motivational and strategical dimensions, concerning ideas about the life one would like to live, regarding both family and career; 3) social dimensions, relating to family relations and a wider social context.

The findings are arranged according to the emphasis they show, but due to their strong entanglements there is significant overlap between them.

Timing of events

Rania's story stands out by a high density of key life events since resettlement and simultaneously it sticks out by a quick reestablishment of the progressive trend in her life course. A combination of elements in her story makes the timing of migration in her life course fortunate. First, at arrival in the Netherlands, she was still unmarried. Not having responsibilities for young children yet, she was in a position that enabled her to learn the Dutch language and to complete the civic integration program rather quickly. Second, thanks to the fact that she had finished an important educational stage in Syria, she could enter into the Dutch educational system relatively easy. Third, in Syria she was still a fresh student and had not yet started a job career. In fact, Rania continued what she started in Damascus with a 'delay' of two years in which she set the foundation for the continuation of her career project as well as the start of her family project.

Timing of migration in the life course was less fortunate for Zena and Basma. Both married in Syria and arrived as family reunion migrants, following their husbands. Zena already had a child at arrival in the Netherlands. She and her husband had to coordinate childcare and attending the civic integration courses. During her pregnancy she succeeded to complete the language and civic integration courses, but on a lower level than she aimed for. Zena finished her studies in Syria but did not start a job career yet because of the war. In the Netherlands, she again is unable to work because the municipality forced her husband to work fulltime.

Basma was not a mother yet at arrival in the Netherlands. The period of separation of her husband was relatively long as was the waiting period before she could start her language course. Once started with the course, she was unable to complete it due to her pregnancy. Thus, timing of pregnancy and childbirth was disadvantageous with respect to her civic integration trajectory. Regarding timing of career development, Basma already started a career in Syria. Being ahead of her husband in Syria, in the Netherlands a serious gap between them in terms of career development occurred. Moreover, this gap increased due to her being out of sight of the municipality, her pregnancy and motherhood. Since she had a good position in Syria, the difference with her present situation is large.

Motivations and strategies

All three women aim for a professional career as well as for a family. They show different forms of agency, regarding the reestablishment of a career path. While Rania takes a goal-oriented and systematic approach, both Zena and Basma are still in the process of figuring out how (and if) they can continue with the trajectory they started in Syria. Zena has decided to postpone her career until a moment that it can be combined with her family responsibilities. This choice reminds of what Pham (2013) describes as bonded agency: Zena made a decision within the given context and decided to endure it for the time being. Basma is still in the stage of her civic integration trajectory, and therefore in the process of meeting the conditions to rebuild a career. Her agency is bonded by her position in the family and her being between stages.

Characteristic in Rania's case are the high values regarding education and (economic) independence that feature throughout her story. She frequently expresses values with which she has grown up and that are connected to strong study and work ethics. So far, these ethics are guiding her and help her to achieve her goals. This suggests a continuation of values that were guiding her prior to the war, and the ability to transmit them to the new context. In addition, formative experiences in the first period after resettlement may have stimulated Rania's agency as well. As an unmarried young adult, she became a broker for her family and very quickly learned how to arrange things in the new situation. This role encouraged her ability to cope independently.

In all cases family planning does not seem to be affected by civic integration courses or ambitions to study or work. The women mentioned several reasons for this: wanting the family to grow again (Rania), not wanting the age difference with an older child to become too big (Zena), having the age to start a family (Basma).

An explanation for the emphasis on the family project at this stage may be found in a combination of life stage of the parents and main motives for migration: safety of the family and the future of children (Bushin 2009; Foner/Dreby 2011). Now that the couples find themselves in a safe country and finally can live the life together that they aimed for, it seems the right moment to get a child. In addition, women are more in control of their family project, while goals related to the career project ask for considerable adaptation and are subject to external influences that are unpredictable and difficult to handle.

In all cases, the newborn children are part of the plan for a desired future. Building a family may be seen as a strategy to regain continuity and recovery of broken (extended) families. The birth of a child in the new country can represent future, positive change, and a confirmation of the connection with the new country.⁹

While a career plan does not seem to temper family planning, having children does affect career planning. Especially when career goals and strategies have not yet been reformulated in view of the new society, as with Zena and Basma, childbirth can provoke challenging questions regarding the reestablishment of a career path.

9 This interpretation is also fed by findings in other families that participate in the research and had a child after resettlement in the Netherlands.

Family relations and social context

The presence or absence of parents and extended family members feature in all stories. Rania faces increased responsibilities towards her parents and sister, but simultaneously their presence offers a source of continuity and facilitates the combining of study and childcare. Moreover, she receives motivational and moral encouragement from her parents that supports her to recreate continuity in her life. In other words, Rania's family and career project include her parents and sister; equally, her family and career projects are part of theirs.

In the cases of Zena and Basma, continuity between the generations is lacking. The broken link with parents and a broader social network complicate the building of a career and increases dependence on their husbands. The women have to tackle several highly demanding projects simultaneously in a context where the possibilities to rely on the assistance of family and friends are limited.

In practice, Dutch policies unintentionally seem to reinforce unequal gender relations by measures that aim at the quick economic independence of refugees and mostly address men (Razenberg et al. 2018). Zena and her husband intended to share the responsibility for their children and to work both. Basma remained unnoticed by the municipality and became isolated due to her husband's successful start. Thus, these policies led to a gendered division of labour that neither the women – nor their husbands – aimed for.

6. Conclusion

This article discussed how three young Syrian women who arrived as family reunion migrants in the Netherlands navigate between two major projects that ask for their agency, being family and career. Due to their specific stage in the life course, important life events and changes regarding their family coincide with main changes and requirements related to the building of a new life as a refugee in a host country. It is argued that both career development and the building of a family are agentic projects that aim to contribute to the establishment of a new life and to regain continuity. However, challenges that the women and their families face in the new social context go with changes in family and gender relations and affect the agency of women.

Arguments arising from the analysis of the biographic stories point to three dimensions that affect agency, either positively or negatively: 1) temporal dimensions, concerning timing of life events and transitions; 2) motivational and strategical dimensions, concerning ideas about the life one aspires to live; 3) social dimensions, relating to family relations and a wider social context.

Timing of career development, family development, and resettlement appears to affect the starting position and agency of women. It was found that a successful career in Syria can cause a significant drop in the Netherlands, especially when the timing of resettlement and childbirth slows down the integration trajectory compared to that of the husband. Alternatively, creating a basis for the career project before the start of the family project can support the combination of a career and a family.

Regarding the motivational and strategical dimensions, goal orientation can support the (re)establishment of a career path and contribute to a progressive cycle. However, adaptation and reformulation of personal career goals appear as difficult. As Dutch society is so different, it takes time to discover whether ideas about the life one would like to live can be pursued and are realistic. Educational and career pathways can benefit when women have taken a leading position from the moment they arrive.

As for the social context, absence of extended family members and social networks are a major hindrance for young Syrian women in the process of (re)establishing a career and a family in a new country at the same time. Conversely, the presence of family, especially parents, can be a vital source of support and contribute to the recovery of a progressive trend in the life course. Furthermore, governmental gender-blind policies may unintentionally increase dependence of young women and may contribute to isolation and pressure on them and their families. Having children in the first years of resettlement is – from the perspectives of the women – not a choice to refrain from a career. Neither do problems in (re)establishing a professional career primarily relate to restrictive views of the women or their husbands on gender roles. In fact, these policies may cause that women are forced to step backwards and end up in a more dependent situation than they came from.

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Together or apart? Spousal migration and reunification practices of recent refugees to Germany

Abstract:

This study examines migration and reunification processes among recent male and female refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria in Germany. Specifically, we analyse different types of spousal migration practices (joint arrival versus arriving alone) and the probability of reunification with the left-behind partner after one year of geographic separation, and to what extent this is shaped by socio-economic conditions, children, family networks, and the legal situation of married men and women. Using data from the first and second wave of the *IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees*, collected in 2016 and 2017 in Germany, and applying logistic regression models, we disentangle the heterogeneity of refugees' migration processes. The results show that couples with minor children are more likely to migrate together compared to childless couples or those with adult children only, and that men and women's solo migration is associated with the presence of other family members at the destination country. The probability of reunifying with the left-behind partner after one year of separation mainly depends, again, on family networks, with differential effects for men and women. Furthermore, male first-movers' legal status in Germany is important for a quick reunification with their wives. Our research shows that forced migration in the here studied geographic context is a gendered process and that several characteristics of male migration do not apply to women. Furthermore, conventional explanations for economically motivated migration decisions and patterns must be adapted to the case of forced migration.

Key words: family reunification, couple migration, forced migration, refugees, Germany

1. Introduction

The number of forcibly displaced people worldwide reached its peak in 2018 with approx. 70.8 million persons, 29.4 million of whom are either international refugees or asylum seekers (UNHCR 2019). The great majority flees to neighbouring countries. Nonetheless, the on-going conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and other countries have also contributed to sharply rising numbers of people arriving in high-income countries elsewhere to claim asylum. Germany is one of the major destination countries with more than 740,000 men and women submitting their initial asylum application in 2016 (BAMF 2018). Per-

mits for family reasons have increased sharply worldwide (UNHCR 2019), but also in Germany (BMI/BAMF 2019).

Quantitative studies on refugee¹ populations in European destination countries are scarce, even more so when it comes to their family arrangements, family reunification processes, and differences between sexes. So far, studies examining refugees and their family structures focus on the life satisfaction of refugees in Germany (Gambaro et al. 2018), on the labour market and educational integration into the host society (Bürmann et al. 2018; Bähr et al. 2019; Brücker et al. 2019; OECD 2017) or on transnational activities with family members in origin or transit countries (Bakker et al. 2014). Further research deals with ICT communications and channels of contact of recently arrived refugees in Germany (Baldassar 2016; Witteborn 2015). Finally, the mental well-being, post-traumatic stress and psychological problems of refugees have been studied extensively (Schouler-Ocak/Kurmeyer 2017).²

Research on partnership arrangements and gendered migration processes mainly focuses on economically motivated migration. Most of these quantitative studies deal with Mexican male and female migrants to the United States of America (Kanaiaupuni 2000; Cerrutti/Massey 2001; Curran/Rivero-Fuentes 2003; Cerrutti/Gaudio 2010), as one of the largest and best-established migratory systems, with the *Mexican Migration Project* providing valuable data on gendered migration practices. Focussing on Sub-Saharan African migration to Europe, several studies analyse family migration dynamics. Many of these publications are based on data collected within the framework of the *Migrations Between Africa and Europe* project (Beauchemin et al. 2015; Caarls/Mazzucato 2015, 2016; Caarls/Valk 2017; Caarls et al. 2018; Toma/Vause 2013; Kraus 2019). There are also some noteworthy qualitative studies examining female migration from Sub-Saharan Africa (Vives/Vazquez Silva 2017), gendered family migration processes in Southeast Asia (Fresnoza-Flot 2018; Parreñas 2005), as well as family migration in the regional context of Mexico and Central America (Dreby 2010; Schmalzbauer 2010; Baldassar/Merla 2014). Moreover, several studies examine partnership-related migration dynamics for the case of the 1950s–1970s *Gastarbeiter* ('guest workers') from Southern Europe and Turkey and subsequent generations, mostly in Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium (González-Ferrer 2007; Guveli et al. 2016). Yet it remains unclear if and to what extent labour migrants' family arrangements and spousal migration practices show similar patterns compared to those of refugees.

This study brings the literature on refugees into conversation with the literature on family and spousal migration processes by addressing the following three research questions: What are the characteristics of international refugees' spousal migration practices regarding type, pace, and eventual reunification at destination? How are socio-economic status, children, family networks, and legal aspects related to these differential arrangements? And finally, what are the differences in the migration processes of male and female refugees? An-

1 Throughout the article we use the terms 'asylum seeker', 'refugee' and '(forced) migrant' interchangeably, all three referring to persons who arrived at a specific country of destination, and filed an asylum application. Thus, we do not account for the outcome of their asylum procedure, nor their current legal status.

2 For an overview of the state of the art of research on family life in the context of forced migration see Sauer et al. 2018.

swering these questions enables us to compare refugees to previous findings on other types of migrants and to disentangle potential diverging patterns between these groups.

Previous research has discussed whether different forms or categories of migration should be considered at all (Long 2013; Richmond 1993; Zetter 2007, 2015). On the one hand, motives and causes for different forms of migration overlap. Therefore, the dichotomisation between external coercion and internal voluntariness as well as a clear distinction between political and economic motives for migration is difficult (Castles 2007; Collyer/Haas 2012; Crawley/Skleparis 2018; Koser/Martin 2011). On the other hand, refugee families show important differences to other migrant families. For most refugees, the possibility of migrating to a third country involves forced separation from the family and limited control over the events of the flight, so that their migration experiences differ significantly from migrant families who have consciously opted for separation (Robertson et al. 2016). Furthermore, different types of migrants are granted different rights to move across national borders and reside in other countries. The right of residence is also accompanied by rights such as access to the labour market or possibilities of family reunification (Morris 2002; Söhn 2013). Against the background of these two opposing views, one of the aims of our contribution is to examine refugees' migration dynamics, and to compare this specific group to existing literature, which focuses mainly on labour migrants.

The empirical analysis builds on the first two waves of a recent and hitherto unique dataset, the refugee sample of the *German Socio-Economic Panel (IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees)*, carried out in 2016 and 2017). Containing questions not only on the current family situation and the whereabouts of both partners, but also on aspects of the person's migration history and the legal situation, it allows for quantitative analyses of family arrangements and spousal migration practices of refugee families. Our focus is on married men and women originating from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, currently the three major countries of origin of refugees in Germany.

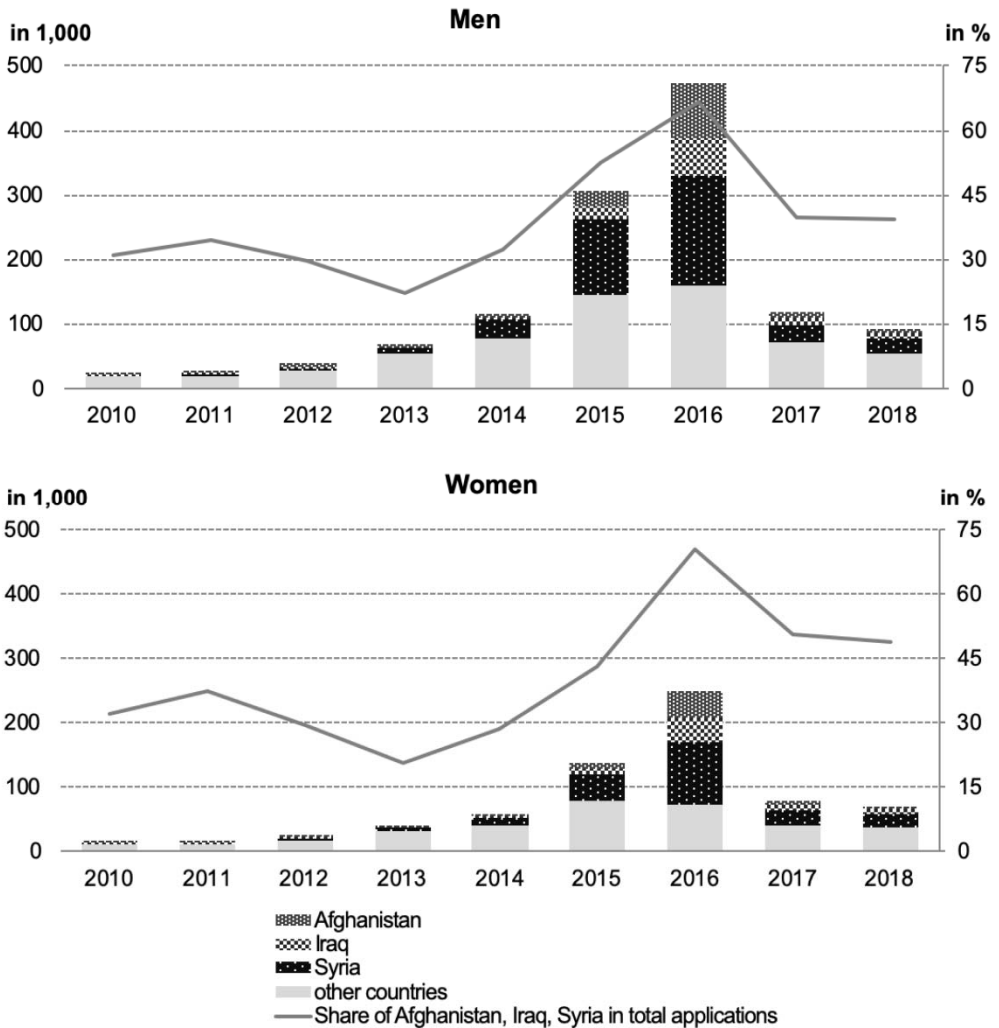
The contributions of this study are twofold; first, we complement and enhance the existing literature on family migration and reunification by examining hypotheses about gendered family migration processes in other contexts and applying them to the case of forced migration. Second, our results show specific migratory and demographic patterns for refugees and their families in Germany. These results may help in opening up the black box of refugees' family reunion processes, providing valuable insights for other European destination countries with large refugee communities, such as France, Italy or Sweden.

2. Forced migration from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria and the situation of refugees in Germany

Between 1990 and 2018, 4.8 million people applied for asylum in Germany (initial and subsequent applications). A preliminary peak with about 438,000 persons was reached in 1992 (BAMF 2019b). After that year, the number of applications began to decline, partly due to more restrictive asylum policies and procedures, as well as the end of the civil war in former Yugoslavia, reaching its lowest level with approx. 20,000 applications annually between 2006 and 2008. Since then, the numbers of asylum seekers in Germany steadily

increased once again (as illustrated in Figure 1): In 2014, slightly more than 202,000 people lodged an initial asylum application, in 2015 the number more than doubled to nearly 442,000, further rising to 722,000 in 2016 (BAMF 2019b). Due to rising institutional barriers in transit countries, as well as the closure of the ‘Balkan route’ and the EU-Turkey agreement in March 2016, the number of new asylum seekers arriving in Germany has since fallen sharply. In 2017 and 2018, less than 200,000 asylum applications were filed (BMI/BAMF 2019; BAMF 2019b).

Figure 1: First-time asylum applications in Germany by sex and country of origin, 2010-2018



Data: BAMF (different years): Das Bundesamt in Zahlen. Nürnberg: BAMF.

Most of these refugees fled from the crisis regions of Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (BAMF 2019b). Excepting 2013, between 2010 and 2018 more than one-third of first-time asylum applications were filed by people from these three countries (see Figure 1). The proportion of people holding these three citizenships as a share of total applications has rapidly increased, accounting for 50 per cent in 2015, 68 per cent in 2016, and 44 per cent in 2017 and in 2018 (BAMF 2019a). Whereas the number of rejections of asylum applications was very low for Syrians (2018: less than 1 per cent), it was much higher for Afghans and Iraqis (2018: 50 and 54 per cent, respectively; BAMF 2019b). The official data on asylum seekers in Germany reflect a male-dominated sex ratio for Afghan and Syrian asylum seekers (about two-thirds were male), whereas it is relatively balanced for Iraqis (50 to 60 per cent male). While this proportion is rather robust for Afghanistan, it slightly changes for Syria. From 2010 to 2013, about 60 per cent of the first asylum applications by Syrians were lodged by men, in 2014 and 2015 the proportion increased to 71 and 74 per cent, respectively, and dropped in 2016 (64%), 2017 and 2018 (52%).

By focusing on asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, this article concentrates on refugees from three countries which have suffered from civil war, instability, severe insecurity, and violent conflicts. Broadly speaking, Syrians fled mainly from civil war and its direct and indirect effects, Afghans mostly fled from Taliban rule, and Iraqis escaped from the ISIS and the 'War on Terror' (Hessels/Wassie 2003). The main difference between the three countries may be the temporal dimension of the flight movements: Contrary to Syrian flight migration in a few short years peaking in 2015, migration has been a fundamental coping and survival strategy throughout the history of Afghanistan and increasingly over the past four decades (van Houte 2016), and has a longer history for Iraq as well. Furthermore, flight patterns and routes as well as the duration of time between departure from the country of origin and arrival in Europe and Germany vary across the three countries (Brücker et al. 2016; Crawley et al. 2016).

The context of reception shaped by destination governments has a major impact on legal family reunification processes, providing different options for specific groups of asylum seekers: For Germany, this context is shaped mainly by the constitutional right to asylum, refugee protection pursuant to the Geneva Convention on Refugees, subsidiary protection, and a tolerated status called 'temporary suspension of deportation' (BMI/ BAMF 2019). Each protection status is associated with different legal rights, including family reunification. Only persons who have received asylum in accordance with the German constitution or the Geneva Convention have an unrestricted legal right to family reunification. The right to family reunification applies to the nuclear family, i.e. for adult applicants, this refers to their spouse or registered partner as well as unmarried children aged under 18 years. In the case of minor applicants, this refers mostly to their parents (Grote 2017). In March 2016, for refugees with subsidiary protection status, family reunion was halted, but partially resumed in August 2018. For persons with a temporary suspension of deportation, family reunification is not possible.

3. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Family and couple migration decisions, trajectories, and outcomes may take a variety of diverse forms and patterns, involving different actors at the household or family level making a typology of these arrangements challenging. For economically motivated migration from Mexico to the United States of America, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) developed a typology distinguishing between three main forms of migration: 1) independent, which captures single men or women who migrate alone; 2) family unit, corresponding to families who migrate together; and 3) family stage, which captures families in which one spouse – typically the husband – migrates first and the other spouse and children may follow in a subsequent stage.

Traditionally, in family stage migration processes women are considered as “secondary” or “associational” migrants (Kanaiaupuni 2000; Cerrutti/Massey 2001) who do not actively take part in household decision making, but who are rather left behind at the place of origin (Cerrutti/Massey 2001: 188). In some cases, they may follow their husband for matters of family reunification rather than for being economically active themselves (Kanaiaupuni 2000). Female independent migration is still rather scarce from many countries of origin (Toma/Vause 2013). However, migration flows in other geographic contexts are, in fact, highly feminised as it was the case for Latin American migration to Spain in the early 2000s (Bueno García/Vono de Vilhena 2009), or the circular migrations of female workers in the service sector from Eastern to Western and Central Europe (Lutz 2004).

In the context of forced migration, however, it may be more likely that refugees attempt to enter the destination country with the entire family (Kofman 2004), because leaving the partner and children behind in a dangerous area of conflict may not be regarded as an option. Yet family stage migration processes of refugees often occur involuntarily or as a temporary strategy (Jastram/Newland 2003; Sample 2007). In that case, members of an extended family may pool their resources to send their most capable members away, in order to find a place from where to send money home to support the others. Another approach may be to send the most vulnerable, often children, away (e.g. in the case of forced recruitment). But, in most cases, family reunification is the first priority for refugees upon receiving status (for an overview see UNHCR 2013). Furthermore, refugees in high-income countries are more likely to be male, and as a consequence a large number of women-headed households may be found in refugee camps in lower-income countries (Martin 2009). Another explanation for the unequal distribution of male and female refugees across countries may be based on the difficulties of entering destination countries through legal channels, and men are expected to endure suffering and hardships during the journey and the illegal situation at destination more easily than women are.

In the remainder of this section, we discuss different theoretical approaches that deal with the major drivers of family migration and reunification processes in the context of international migration, and whether they are relevant to understanding refugee couples' migration dynamics. With this in mind, we derive our hypotheses. Besides financial resources also the existence and number of children, family networks and family support, as well as legal conditions at destination are factors that have been identified to be related to spousal migration and reunification practices.

Financial resources

Socio-economic status has been found to be crucial for family migration and reunification processes in the context of economically motivated migration. The economic situation of a couple is likely to influence the decision of whether to migrate together, or to have one partner migrate first and “once he or she settled in the host country and enough economic returns have been made to pay for the arrival of other family members” (Haagsman 2015: 27). In the context of forced migration, van Hear (2014: 100) argues that “the form of migration and ultimately its outcomes are shaped by the resources that would-be migrants can muster and that in turn the capacity to mobilize such resources is largely determined by socio-economic background or class”. It can be assumed that refugees applying for asylum in Germany were financially better-off before leaving their country of origin than those who are still at origin or in neighbouring countries, since reaching more distant countries usually implies higher costs (Jastram/Newland 2003; González-Ferrer et al. 2014). Also, for couples who are financially better off, it might be easier to travel directly to the planned country of destination with the entire family (e.g. by plane), compared to economically poorer families, who might leave the country of origin together, but due to scarce financial resources may be forced to leave one partner behind in a transit country (Jastram/Newland 2003), reducing the chances of arriving together at destination. In most contexts, it is the husband who leaves his wife and children in the country of origin or of first asylum to make the journey alone (Jastram/Newland 2003). In our first working hypothesis we anticipate:

H1a: Couples with higher financial resources in their country of origin are more likely to migrate and arrive at destination jointly than couples who are economically worse off.

The financial status of a couple should also be important for the reunification at destination. In most cases, family reunification with their left-behind family members is the first priority for refugees upon their arrival at destination. Although reunification via the legal channel is not linked to economic prerequisites, financial resources should help reunification through other channels. Our hypothesis is:

H1b: For couples with high financial resources, reunification with the partner at destination should occur faster than for couples who are economically worse off.

Existence and number of children

Previous research on labour migrants found a positive relationship between the number of children and the probability of male out-migration (Massey/Espinosa 1997), while mothers of young children in particular have relatively low propensities of migrating or joining their partner in travelling to destination (Kanaiaupuni 2000). Furthermore, children are an important factor influencing the decision of joint versus independent migration and the pace of the reunification processes (Caarls 2015). It is likely that refugee couples with minor children intend to migrate jointly, because leaving the partner with dependent minors back at origin or in a transit country may imply major risks for the family. Literature on labour migrants has found a negative relationship between joint couple migration and

the number of non-adult children in the household (González-Ferrer 2007). This is also expected to be true for forced migrants, since moving with a larger number of persons is more challenging in terms of financial and organizational resources. Moreover, for labour migrants, the age of minor children is crucial. Literature distinguishes between school-age and younger children. Once at destination, children aged six and above can attend school and hence do not represent an obstacle for parents' work and saving capacities (González-Ferrer 2007). However, the integration into the destination labour market of refugees is very slow, especially for women, as has been shown in recent studies (Brücker et al. 2019). Hence, the age of minor children may not matter as much for refugees, but their number should be important. We hypothesise the following:

H2a: Joint couple migration is more likely among couples with minor children, compared to childless couples or those with adult children only. The number of minor children, however, should be negatively related to joint couple migration.

For labour migration, Caarls (2015) found that having children reduced the likelihood of reunification at destination and González-Ferrer (2007) showed that the number of children a couple has did not impact the pace of reunification with the left-behind wife. We hypothesize that this might be different for forced migrants. Following the same rationale as in the previous paragraph, reunification with the left-behind partner should be quicker if couples have minor children; however, having a higher number of them should delay the reunification process (Di Barbiano Belgiojoso/Terzera 2018). We anticipate the following:

H2b: For couples that did not arrive jointly at destination, reunification should occur faster if they have minor children, compared to childless couples or couples with adult children only. The number of minor children, however, should be negatively related to the pace of reunification.

Family networks and family support

Migrant networks have been found to be one of the most important predictors for the initial decision to migrate as well as migration propensities (Massey 1990; Massey et al. 1987; Palloni et al. 2001; Winters et al. 2001). They can provide practical, emotional and informational support (Ryan et al. 2009). Particularly, the presence of the extended family, especially parents, is important (Staver 2008). Forced migration is fraught with uncertainties and the existence of migration networks at the potential country of destination may reduce these uncertainties (Koser/Pinkerton 2002; Barthel/Neumayer 2015). First, relatives that have arrived earlier at destination may have set positive examples showing that migration is feasible. Second, previously arrived refugees may provide social capital and destination-specific knowledge, e.g. on visas processes or travel routes (Neumayer 2005). Family networks not only have the function of providing information but they can also provide financial support. Studies on marriage migrants and labour migrants show that family reunification can take place despite the couple's difficult economic situation with the support of social and family networks (Di Barbiano Belgiojoso/Terzera 2018; Fresnoza-Flot 2018).

Until the late 1990s, it was assumed that migrant networks facilitate migration in the same way for both sexes. However, more recent research shows that networks have dif-

ferent effects on female and male migration (Pessar 1999). Generally, female migration is seen as “more risky” than male migration (Heering et al. 2004). As a consequence, women benefit more than men from the presence of network members other than partners at destination as it is especially important to diminish these risks and uncertainties (Toma/Vause 2013; Winters et al. 2001). Women’s networks often consist of close family members who can be trusted to protect and look after women and “provide reliable information and the necessary support” (Toma/Vause 2014: 976). Hence, as the risks involved in forced migration processes are considerably higher, we assume that family networks are even more important for refugees and in particular for women. Thus, with regard to family networks, we formulate the following:

H3a: The availability of family networks at destination is crucial for the solo migration of one partner compared to joint couple migration. The presence of extended family members at destination should be particularly relevant for female-initiated compared to male-initiated spousal migration processes.

Furthermore, the time until reunification at destination of separated couples should be linked to the presence of other family members at destination. Family members at destination may provide necessary resources and destination-specific knowledge, which can facilitate and accelerate processes of family reunification (Barthel/Neumayer 2015). We hypothesize:

H3b: The availability of family networks at destination should facilitate a faster reunification with the left-behind partner.

Legal status

For economic migrants, the pioneer spouse applies for legal family reunification as soon as they are legally allowed to do so, following the legal family reunification programmes of destination countries (Fresnoza-Flot 2018). In the context of forced migration, individuals who have to leave behind their family, once they reach safety, the reunification with their spouse and children is in most cases the key priority (Wilmsen 2011). In general, the legal framework of the destination country influences not only which immigration possibilities family members have, but also which normative family model is promoted and who is included in the family concept (Geisen 2014). There is an increasing gap between the pluralisation of normative family models of Western societies and the prevailing migration policy, which structurally follows the norm of the nuclear family and does not recognize other culture-specific family relationships (Staver 2008; Kofman et al. 2011). Furthermore, strict policies and legal conditions may slow down or even prevent family reunification (Glick 2010). We anticipate that:

H4: A secure legal status of the first-mover, which allows legal family reunification, should enable a faster reunification with the partner at destination.

4. Data and methods

Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees

The empirical analyses draw on data collected as part of the *German Socio-Economic Panel*, addressing people who seek asylum in Germany.³ The first wave of the *IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees* was carried out in Germany in 2016, the second wave in 2017. The sample was drawn from the German Central Register of Foreigners (*Ausländerzentralregister*), which covers all non-German nationals who have settled in Germany for longer than three months. The sampling was based on a stratified multi-stage clustered sampling design (Kroh et al. 2018). In the first stage, 170 sample regions across Germany were selected. In the second stage, a random sample was drawn from the addresses provided by the immigration offices within each sample region. Different sampling probabilities according to an individual's country of origin, current legal status, age, as well as sex were assigned. The sampling frame covered all adult individuals (aged 18 or older) who arrived in Germany between 2013 and 2016 and who have filed an asylum application at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) or were hosted as part of specific programmes of the federal government or of a federal state (*Bundesland*), regardless of the outcome of their asylum procedure and their current legal status. The dataset contains representative data on persons who applied for asylum in Germany between 2013 and 2016, including individuals whose asylum procedure was still on-going at time of the data collection, were granted asylum, or with a ban on deportation.

Since the survey was implemented as a household survey, the sampled persons – the so-called ‘anchor respondents’ – as well as all other adult individuals cohabiting in the same household were interviewed. The questionnaire was available in seven languages (German, English, Arabic, Farsi, Kurmanji, Pashto, Urdu). The overall response rate was about 50 per cent (Kroh et al. 2018). In total, 7,430 face-to-face individual interviews – thus persons who participated in at least one of the two waves – in 4,994 households were conducted. 26 per cent of the respondents participated in both waves (Brenzel et al. 2019). Design weighting procedures allow for representative analysis on both the household and the individual level.⁴

Analytical sample

The initial sample of interviewed refugees comprises men and women from various countries of origin (Afghanistan, Albania, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Kosovo, Pakistan, Serbia, Somalia and Syria, among others). We restrict our analyses to individuals who were born in Afghan-

3 The *IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees* is a joint project of the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research, and the Research Centre on Migration, Integration, and Asylum of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF-FZ). It is designed as an annually repeated panel study of refugee households that will prospectively be implemented into the German Socio-Economic Panel.

4 For more detailed information on the IAB-BAMF-SOEP dataset refer to Jacobsen et al. 2017; Kroh et al. 2016; Kroh et al. 2018; Brenzel et al. 2019.

istan, Iraq or Syria. Refugees from other origins were excluded, since their sample sizes were relatively small and no valid conclusions regarding the effect of the country of origin could be drawn. Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria are the largest groups in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP data. They also represent the most common countries of origin of refugees arriving in Germany in recent years (see Figure 1). In total, the survey includes data on 5,647 adult individuals born in Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria, and holding the citizenship of the respective country, drawn from the sampled anchor respondents and their spouses (in case they were also interviewed). Hence, other respondents living within the same household, such as adult children, parents, or siblings were dropped from the sample. Anchors that were single (including divorced and widowed) at the time they were first interviewed or had an unmarried partnership were also excluded, as well as those with unknown marital status. We also had to drop observations of anchors and/or partners with missing data regarding the spouse's place of residence. Somewhat more than two-thirds of the cohabiting partners participated in an interview; for cohabiting spouses that were not interviewed and those residing elsewhere in Germany, we do not know their exact date of arrival in Germany and thus cannot compute whether they arrived together or prior/after the anchor person. However, respondents who were interviewed in both waves were asked who – the respondent themselves or their partner – arrived in Germany first. For the sake of increasing the size of our sample, we used this information to derive their date of arrival. Finally, persons who arrived in Germany before 2013, before age 17 or after age 50, or with missing information on age or sex were also deleted. The remaining sample covers 2,107 opposite-sex couples. As we are interested in information upon arrival, a cross-sectional dataset was constructed with one observation per respondent, although for some of the respondents we have two measurement points (corresponding to waves 1 and 2).

Dependent variables and method

The empirical part of this analysis consists of two steps; in the first step, we analyse whether spouses arrived together in Germany or whether one of them arrived first and the other stayed behind. Hence, our dependent variable is binary with two possible outcomes: 1 if the spouses arrive in Germany together and 0 if one of them arrives earlier, leaving the other behind⁵. As the outcome variable is dichotomous, logistic regression models are estimated. Based on current research, we expect different dynamics underlying male- and female-initiated migration processes. Therefore, the statistical analyses are carried out in separate models for men and women, examining how the covariates have different effects for married women who arrived together with their husband compared to married women who migrated alone, and vice versa for men. The models for women include 836 individuals who migrated together with their husband and 146 who arrived first (N=982). The models for men contain 894 observations of joint and 436 of male-initiated migration (N=1,330).

5 If the difference between both partners' arrival in Germany was one month, they were considered as 'joint migrants'. The analyses were also performed classifying couples with 2 or 3 months of difference between their arrivals at destination as 'joint migrants' with no substantial differences in the obtained results.

In the second step, we examine only those couples who did not arrive at destination together. Therefore, all couples who arrived in Germany together were dropped from the analysis sample. Moreover, couples for whom we do not know the exact date of arrival for at least one of the partners – and thus cannot compute the duration of stay at destination –, or the duration of stay was less than 12 months at survey were dropped. Again, a binary dependent variable was constructed, taking the value of 1 if the couple has reunified in Germany after having been separated for 12 months or less, and 0 if the couple was still separated at the time of the interview or the duration of separation took more than 12 months. The sample sizes for this second step are 32 women whose husband already had arrived at destination versus 77 who were still separated or whose partner arrived after more than one year (N=109). For males, 122 were reunified with their partner versus 219 who were still separated after 12 months (N=341). Again, logistic regression is used.

Independent variables

Due to the rather small sample sizes, especially for women in the second step, only a limited number of explanatory variables could be included in the multivariate analyses. Some variables are used for both steps of the analyses, others only in the first or the second, depending on the hypotheses being tested. We present the descriptive statistics for the first step only, as displayed in Table 1 (Table A1 in the appendix shows the descriptive statistics for step 2). All variables are measured at the level of the first-mover or the corresponding sex in case they migrated together.

Our hypotheses focus on the financial situation, family networks and family support, as well as the existence and number of children as explanations for spousal migration practices. The financial situation is operationalized by 1) relative subjective net income before flight and 2) direct or indirect migration to Germany. The respondents were asked to remember the time before the war, crisis or conflict in their respective country of origin and to compare their net income at that time with the income of other people in their home country. This variable has four categories: “above average”, “average”, “below average”, and “not/never worked”. The latter category includes men and especially women who did not work at the time (or never did), and therefore did not obtain any income. Not surprisingly, this variable shows important differences by sex: about 68 per cent of women and only 4 per cent of men indicated that they did not work⁶. Among women, 12 per cent had an average or below average net income, respectively, while 6 per cent had an income above the average, whereas among men 27 per cent had a net income below average, 42 per cent average, and 22 per cent above average. To proxy the financial situation in the country of origin, we added a dummy variable measuring whether Germany was the first country they moved to (“directly to Germany”) or whether they lived in another country for at least three months (“indirectly via another country”). We assume that those who could afford a direct journey to Germany were financially better off. Approximately two thirds of the women and men indicated that they took a direct travel route to Germany⁷.

6 All percentages are weighted.

7 It is possible that the respondents did not answer truthful to this question, as they might fear that a transit stay in any other EU country before arriving in Germany might have negative consequences

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of independent variables by sex; joint arrival versus arriving alone (step 1)

		Joint		Women				Joint		Men			
		N	%	Wife first	N	%	Total	N	%	Husb. first	N	%	Total
Age at arrival (mean years)		29.2		35.9		30.2		34.2		32.6		33.5	
Country of origin	<i>Syria</i>	526	57.1	100	61.5	626	57.8	560	58.5	338	67.8	898	62.9
	<i>Iraq</i>	155	17.2	23	15.0	178	16.9	163	17.3	56	11.1	219	22.7
	<i>Afghanistan</i>	155	25.7	23	23.5	178	25.3	171	24.2	42	21.1	213	14.4
Arrival period	<i>before 2015</i>	199	12.4	35	11.9	234	12.3	207	11.0	101	13.4	308	12.1
	<i>2015 and after</i>	637	87.7	111	88.1	748	87.7	687	89.0	335	86.6	1,022	87.9
Schooling (years)	<i>0 - 6</i>	268	32.8	44	27.1	312	32.0	254	31.7	98	19.9	352	26.3
	<i>7-11</i>	248	28.2	36	24.6	284	27.6	296	31.5	122	28.8	418	30.3
	<i>12+</i>	280	34.29	54	34.0	334	34.3	280	29.7	186	43.9	466	36.3
	<i>missing</i>	40	4.7	12	14.3	52	6.2	64	7.1	30	7.4	94	7.2
Migration reasons	<i>only flight reasons</i>	373	45.4	66	44.8	439	45.3	425	47.5	189	47.2	614	47.4
	<i>also other reasons</i>	458	54.2	79	55.0	537	54.3	464	52.2	245	51.6	709	51.9
	<i>missing</i>	5	0.4	1	0.2	6	0.3	5	0.3	2	1.2	7	0.7
Net income before flight	<i>not/never worked</i>	592	70.3	85	55.2	677	68.0	16	2.8	17	5.8	33	4.2
	<i>below average</i>	91	11.1	20	18.4	111	12.2	223	25.8	117	28.4	340	27.0
	<i>average</i>	100	10.9	27	16.3	127	11.7	369	43.5	172	41.2	541	42.4
	<i>above average</i>	36	5.2	11	8.9	47	5.8	245	24.7	107	18.6	352	21.9
	<i>missing</i>	17	2.6	3	1.2	20	2.3	41	3.2	23	6.0	64	4.5
Flight route	<i>indirectly via other country</i>	296	30.9	48	25.0	344	30.0	342	33.5	141	33.3	483	33.4
	<i>directly to Germany</i>	540	69.1	98	75.0	638	70.0	552	66.5	295	66.7	847	66.6
Children	<i>no minor child</i>	129	19.5	30	19.1	159	19.4	124	17.8	121	35.5	245	26.0
	<i>1-2 children < 18</i>	308	41.8	51	45.8	359	42.4	331	41.6	149	34.7	480	38.4
	<i>3+ children < 18</i>	393	38.4	65	35.1	458	37.9	436	40.2	162	28.8	598	34.9
	<i>missing</i>	6	0.3	0	0.0	6	0.3	3	0.4	4	1.0	7	0.6
Received family support	<i>no</i>	696	86.8	112	81.6	808	86.0	755	88.5	383	87.0	1,138	87.8
	<i>yes</i>	132	12.1	33	18.4	165	13.0	135	11.1	51	12.4	186	11.7
	<i>missing</i>	8	1.1	1	0.0	9	1.0	4	0.4	2	0.6	6	0.5
Family members in same locality	<i>no</i>	731	87.0	108	75.9	839	85.3	770	88.0	345	85.4	1,115	86.8
	<i>yes</i>	105	13.0	38	24.1	143	14.7	124	12.0	91	14.7	215	13.2
	Total	836	84.7	146	15.3	982	100.0	894	53.5	436	46.5	1,330	100.0

Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, wave 1 & 2, 2016-2017 (unweighted N, weighted percentages); due to rounding percentages may not total 100%.

To test our hypotheses on the effect of existence and number children on the type and pace of spouses' migration, a categorical variable distinguishing between "no minor child", which includes childless couples as well as couples with children aged 18 and older only, "1-2" and "3+" children, was used. Children born in Germany after arrival of the

for their on-going asylum application due to the EU Dublin Regulation. However, these potential inaccuracies are not expected to be different for individuals arriving with their partner compared to those arriving alone, and thus should not make a major difference regarding the results.

first-mover were excluded. Nearly one in five women and one in four men is childless or has adult children only.

Family networks were operationalized by 1) family support and 2) the presence of other family members in the same locality/region in Germany. The respondents were asked whether any relatives already residing in Germany supported them at the time they arrived. We constructed this variable as a dummy, distinguishing between individuals who received support from their family and those who did not. The large majority did not receive this kind of support (86 per cent of women, 88 per cent of men). Furthermore, the dataset contains a number of questions concerning the place of residence of different family members (spouse, children, siblings, parents, and other close relatives). We use a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent had at least one of these family members in the same locality in Germany or in the same household versus not having any family members nearby. Only about 15 and 13 per cent of the women and men, respectively, had family members living either in the same household or in the same locality. Unfortunately, it remains unclear since when these other family members resided in Germany and whether they arrived together with, before or after the respondent. Cross-tabulating this variable with the variable on received family support shows that individuals with family members present in the same locality are the ones who receive less family support and vice versa. This might indicate that many of the family members living nearby actually did arrive together with the respondent, while those who give support are the ones already residing in Germany.

Furthermore, several independent variables controlling for basic demographic and migration-related aspects were included in the models (see Table 1). Age at arrival is a continuous variable ranging from 17 to 50 with a mean age of 30 for women and 33 years for men. For the period of arrival, we used two categories (“before 2015” and “2015 and after”). The variable country of origin distinguishes between Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, a measure for years of schooling – collapsed into the categories “0–6” “7–11” and “12+ years” – was included. 32 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men attended school for only six years or less (including not at all), while 34 per cent of the women and 36 per cent of the men attended school for 12 years and more. This means that more than one-third completed secondary education, which confirms the educational selectivity of refugees from these three origins arriving in Germany, especially for highly educated women. The respondents were also asked for the main reasons for leaving their country of origin by selecting several responses. Based on this, we constructed a dummy variable aiming at capturing different motives for leaving the country of origin and distinguishing between respondents who imply fled (“only flight reasons”), and those who also gave other reasons (“reasons beyond flight”).⁸ Somewhat more than half of the male and female respondents also indicated reasons beyond flight as motives for leaving their country of origin. Finally, as the survey consists of three different survey samples (called M3, M4, M5), a control variable distinguishing between them was added.

8 “Flight reasons”: fear of violent conflict or war, fear of forced conscription into military or armed organizations, persecution, ethnic/religious/etc. discrimination; “reasons beyond flight”: poor personal living conditions, country’s general economic situation, move to where my family members were, my family sent me, because family members had left this country, because friends/acquaintances had left country, other reasons.

In the second step, a reduced number of covariates was included, since not all measures are associated with the reunification of the left-behind partner and, technically speaking, sample sizes in this second step are even smaller (see Table A1 in the appendix). Of the key independent variables, only the measures for net income, children, and the presence of family members were incorporated into the models. The control variables were the same, save for the measure for country of origin, as very few women from Afghanistan and Iraq remained in the reduced sample. Furthermore, we assume that reunification with the partner is associated with the current legal status of the first-mover. Therefore, we aggregated the information on the residence title into two categories. The first one represents all permits that allow a more or less secure residence and the legal reunification with the spouse (and children) and covers the following status groups: entitlement to asylum according to the German constitution, refugee protection pursuant to the Geneva Convention on Refugees, or subsidiary protection⁹. About 64 per cent of women and 59 per cent of men hold one of these titles. The second category comprises all other – rather insecure – residence titles.

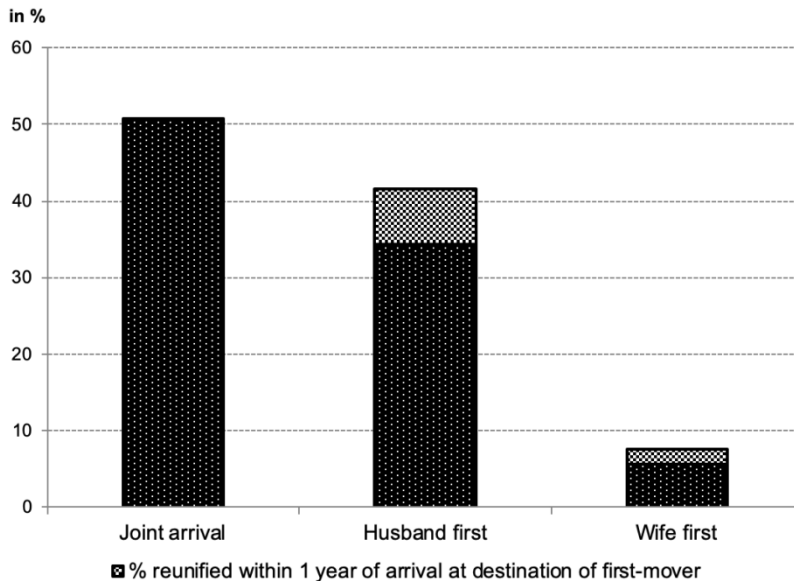
5. Results

Figure 2 shows that flight from the three origins to Germany is male-dominated: Slightly more than half of all couples arrived together, for more than 40 per cent of all couples the man arrived first, and for only 8 per cent the woman was the first-mover. The graph also shows that within 12 months after arrival, 18 per cent of the husbands and almost 27 per cent of the wives were reunified with their left-behind partners at destination. This indicates that also in the context of forced migration it is rather uncommon that married women arrive at the destination country before their spouses, and if they do so, their partner follows them relatively quickly.¹⁰

9 The majority of respondents arrived before the suspension of legal family reunification in March 2016.

10 The Kaplan-Meier survival estimates in Figure A1 in the appendix show a similar picture of couples in which the wife migrates first, which experience a faster reunification with their husband than couples for whom the man arrives first.

Figure 2: Order of spousal migration and share of reunified couples



Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, waves 1 & 2, 2016-2017 (weighted percentages).

Joint arrival versus arriving alone

In this first step, we analyse the determinants for joint couple migration compared to arriving alone, i.e. leaving behind the spouse (hypotheses 1a, 2a and 3a). Table 2 displays the results as odds ratios; covariates are included in a stepwise fashion. Models W1 to W2 present the odds ratios for women, while models M1 to M2 show those for men. In the models for women we compare married women who arrived together with their husband to married women who migrated alone, and vice versa for the models for men. Models W1 and M1 include the demographic and migration-related control variables, as well as the measures for financial status. The age of the respondent is significantly related to the type of spousal migration, but the effect goes in opposite directions for both sexes: while younger women are more likely to arrive together with their husband, among men the older ones are more likely to arrive together. Yet for men the significance disappears once adding the children's variable. The finding for women is opposite to the results of González-Ferrer (2007), who found a positive effect of the woman's age on joint migration for Turkish couples in Germany. However, she did find a negative relationship between years elapsed since marriage and joint migration, arguing that newly married couples are less prone to separate compared to couples who have been married for longer. Potentially, the negative age effect for female first movers in our models captures the negative effect of union duration, information that our data do not provide. Refugee men from Afghanistan and Iraq are more likely to arrive together with their wives compared to their counterparts from Syria, which could be related

to the fact that crisis-driven migration from Iraq and, in particular, Afghanistan to Germany is older (i.e. well-established networks and communities exist), making joint migration relatively easier. Regarding educational attainment, the effects point into the same direction for both sexes, but only reach statistical significance for men: highly educated men with 12+ years of education are more likely to migrate alone, leaving their wives behind. Apparently, the positive link between education and spousal migration that has been found for labour migrants in other contexts (Gupta 2003; Toma/Vause 2013) does not hold true for refugees, for which the underlying mechanisms might be different. The other control variables do not show any significant effects.

Table 2: Logistic regression models predicting joint arrival (versus arriving alone) by sex (step 1); odds ratios

		Women		Men	
		W1	W2	M1	M2
Age at arrival		0.91*** (0.01)	0.90*** (0.01)	1.02** (0.01)	1.00 (0.01)
Country of origin (Ref. Syria)	<i>Iraq</i>	1.36 (0.38)	1.34 (0.38)	1.94*** (0.35)	1.85*** (0.34)
	<i>Afghanistan</i>	1.11 (0.31)	0.97 (0.28)	2.45** (0.50)	2.23** (0.46)
Arrival period (Ref. before 2015)	<i>2015 and after</i>	1.14 (0.28)	0.95 (0.24)	1.09 (0.17)	1.10 (0.18)
Schooling (years) (Ref. 0-6)	<i>7-11</i>	1.19 (0.32)	1.30 (0.36)	1.17 (0.20)	1.22 (0.21)
	<i>12+</i>	0.97 (0.26)	1.09 (0.31)	0.71** (0.12)	0.75* (0.13)
Migration reasons (Ref. only flight reasons)	<i>other reasons</i>	1.05 (0.20)	1.09 (0.22)	1.00 (0.13)	0.99 (0.13)
Net income bf. flight (Ref. average)	<i>not/never worked</i>	1.41 (0.40)	1.48 (0.42)	0.60 (0.24)	0.66 (0.27)
	<i>below-average</i>	1.16 (0.41)	1.37 (0.49)	0.88 (0.14)	0.90 (0.14)
	<i>above average</i>	0.97 (0.42)	0.97 (0.43)	1.09 (0.17)	1.12 (0.18)
Travel route (Ref. Indirectly)	<i>directly to Germany</i>	0.89 (0.18)	0.95 (0.20)	0.69*** (0.09)	0.69*** (0.09)
Children (Ref. no minor child)	<i>1-2 children < 18</i>		1.48 (0.41)		1.81*** (0.31)
	<i>3+ children < 18</i>		1.75** (0.48)		1.85*** (0.34)
Received family support (Ref. no)	<i>yes</i>		0.94 (0.23)		1.30 (0.25)
Family members in same locality (Ref. no)	<i>yes</i>		0.32*** (0.08)		0.67** (0.11)
N		982	982	1,330	1,330
Pseudo R ²		0.10	0.13	0.08	0.10

Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, waves 1 & 2, 2016-2017 (unweighted); standard errors in parentheses; controls for survey waves M3–M5; missing values in independent variables included as separate category, but odds ratios not displayed. * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Regarding the financial status, we hypothesized that higher financial resources at origin should be related to migrating and arriving together at destination (H1a). Looking at the results for women, it appears that those with lower financial resources (not/never worked and below-average income) are more likely to migrate together with their husband. Although statistically not significant, it might be an indication that these women are more dependent on their husband and his economic resources and thus these couples travel together. For men, the odds ratios correspond to the anticipated direction: while those who did not work or who had below-average income are less likely to migrate together, above-average income is associated with joint arrival in Germany. However, these results also do not reach statistical significance. Furthermore, women and men who undertook a rather direct travel route to Germany are more likely to having arrived alone compared to those who had a prior stay in at least one other country of three months or longer, though significance is only reached in the models for men. Possibly, direct migration is a proxy not for higher financial resources, but rather an indication of a couple's migration strategy. The first-mover might take a direct route to Germany, which might be associated with higher costs, and thus wives and children stay behind. In sum, both measures for the financial situation of the first-mover fail to confirm adequately hypothesis H1a.

Models W2 and M2 added the variables for children and for family support and family members at destination. We hypothesized that joint migration is related to having minor children and their number (H2a). The results show that couples with minor children are more likely to arrive together compared to couples without minor children. The magnitude of the effect increases with the number of children. However, the difference between having 1 or 2 versus 3+ minor children is statistically not significant. Thus, hypothesis 2a can be partially supported: while the existence of minor children favours a joint migration of couples, the number of them does not matter.¹¹

Finally, with regard to family support and family members at destination, we anticipated that family networks are crucial for the solo migration of one partner compared to joint migration, in particular for women (H3a). Beginning with the availability of family members at destination, the odds ratios show that men and women with other family members in their household or locality are more likely to migrate alone, partly confirming our hypothesis. Family networks thus seem to be an important predictor for family stage migration processes in the context of forced migration. We assumed that the presence of extended family members at destination should be particularly relevant for female-initiated compared to male-initiated spousal migration processes. Apparently, in the context of forced migration, men also rely on family networks when they arrive at destination alone. It also has to be considered that possibly these other family members, in fact, arrived at destination together with or even after the respondent. Thus, no causal interpretation can be made, but the results may give us an indication that the role of the extended family is crucial for different migration strategies of couples. If the flight of the couple occurs within a broader context of family migration dynamics, solo migration of one of the partners seems to be a valid option. This is confirmed by additional analyses, in which we substi-

11 Complementary analyses showed that mother-child separations are rather uncommon among the refugee women in our sample, meaning that minor children in particular mostly stay and move together with their mothers. (Temporary) father-child separations, however, are slightly more frequent.

tuted this variable with a broader measure, which covers family members residing *anywhere* in Germany (not only in the same locality). This other variable also shows a negative effect on joint couple migration; however, it does not reach statistical significance. This might be a further hint that the relatives residing in the same locality actually did arrive at destination together with the respondent. Interestingly, our second variable for family networks – having received support from relatives already living in Germany – shows opposite effects for men and women, but is statistically not significant.

Reunification at destination versus not (yet) reunified

Table 3: Logistic regression models predicting reunification at destination within one year of arrival (versus not reunified) by sex (step 2); odds ratios

		Women			Men		
		W3	W4	W5	M3	M4	M5
Age at arrival		0.97 (0.03)	0.94 [†] (0.03)	0.94 [†] (0.03)	1.01 (0.02)	1.01 (0.02)	1.00 (0.02)
Arrival period (Ref. before 2015)	2015 and after	0.60 (0.36)	0.51 (0.33)	0.56 (0.36)	0.85 (0.25)	0.86 (0.26)	0.80 (0.24)
Schooling (years) (Ref. 0-6)	7-11	2.56 (1.57)	3.43 [†] (2.32)	2.93 (2.09)	0.50 [†] (0.18)	0.48 ^{**} (0.17)	0.46 ^{**} (0.17)
	12+	1.97 (1.23)	3.21 [†] (2.19)	3.00 (2.06)	0.72 (0.22)	0.74 (0.23)	0.67 (0.22)
Migration reasons (Ref. only flight reasons)	other reasons	0.89 (0.42)	0.82 (0.41)	0.84 (0.42)	1.45 (0.36)	1.44 (0.36)	1.30 (0.34)
Net income bf. flight (Ref. Men: average) (Ref. Women: ever worked)	not/never worked	2.63 [†] (1.41)	3.21 ^{**} (1.91)	3.06 [†] (1.83)	0.72 (0.46)	0.78 (0.51)	0.61 (0.45)
	below-average				0.79 (0.23)	0.72 (0.22)	0.70 (0.22)
	above average				1.33 (0.39)	1.23 (0.37)	1.26 (0.38)
Children (Ref. no minor child)	1-2 children < 18		0.65 (0.55)	0.68 (0.57)		1.08 (0.34)	1.09 (0.36)
	3+ children < 18		2.18 (1.74)	2.26 (1.86)		1.57 (0.56)	1.61 (0.60)
Family members in same locality yes (Ref. no)			0.35 (0.23)	0.35 (0.23)		1.86 ^{**} (0.55)	1.74 [†] (0.52)
Legal status (Ref. other status)	secure status			1.28 (0.72)			3.07 ^{***} (1.02)
N		109	109	109	341	341	341
Pseudo R ²		0.08	0.16	0.15	0.04	0.05	0.08

Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, waves 1 & 2, 2016-2017 (unweighted); standard errors in parentheses; controls for survey waves M3–M5; missing values in independent variables included as separate category, but odds ratios not displayed. ^{*} $p < 0.1$, ^{**} $p < 0.05$, ^{***} $p < 0.01$.

In the second step, we analyse the factors that determine whether or not couples reunified with their partner at destination within the first year after the first-mover's arrival (hy-

potheses 1b, 2b, 3b and 4). Table 3 presents the odds ratios for the logistic regression models predicting whether a reunification took place, accounting for nearly the same covariates as in the first step, which again are included in a stepwise manner (models W3 to W5 for women, models M3 to M5 for men).

Models W3 and M3 include demographic and migration-related characteristics, and the measures for financial status. For female first-movers, their age at arrival shows a significant and negative effect, indicating that older women, compared to their younger counterparts, are less likely to have reunified with their left-behind partners within one year. For women, we also find a strong effect of having 6+ years of schooling, compared to having a lower level of education, while this is negative for men.

With regard to the financial situation at origin, we hypothesized that higher financial resources are associated with a faster reunification (H1b). For men, the odds ratios show the expected directions. Male first-movers reunified later if they did not work, or had a below-average net income in their country of origin. Men with an above-average income had higher odds of being together with their wives at destination within one year of arrival. However, none of these effects reaches statistical significance. Yet there is a slightly significant ($p < 0.12$) effect of having had an above-average versus average income. For women, very small sample sizes within the different categories of the net income variable obliged us to use a slightly different measure, which only distinguishes between having never worked versus having worked already. There is a strong positive effect for women who have never worked. It is likely that these wives rely more heavily on their husbands' financial resources, and thus reunification occurs faster, which is in line with the findings that for women with less economic resources, joint migration with their husband is more probable.

In models W4 and M4 the measures for children and for the presence of other extended family members at destination are added. Hypothesis 2b predicted a higher likelihood of reunification of couples with minor children. However, none of the effects is statistically significant. For women, when distinguishing between the number of children, there is a positive and significant effect ($p < 0.05$) of having 3+ children versus having only 1–2 of them. Thus, hypothesis 2b could be confirmed only in part; men join their wives faster at destination when the couple has a larger number of children.

Hypothesis 3b predicted that family networks should accelerate the reunification with the left-behind partner. Surprisingly, the effect goes in opposite directions for men and women. While women who can count on other family members nearby reunify later with their partner ($p < 0.11$), men with a local family network have a higher likelihood that their spouse will join them within one year of arrival. Accordingly, hypothesis 3b can be confirmed for men only.

Finally, the last column (models W5 and M5) accounts for the legal status of the first-mover to test hypothesis 4. The results should be viewed as exploratory and cautious interpretation is required, as there are several limitations in the way the variable for legal status was measured. There is a positive effect of having a secure status on the likelihood of reunification with the left-behind spouse, although it only reaches statistical significance for men. Though not surprising, it is remarkable that men with a secure legal status in Germany have a 3.07 times higher probability of reunification with their wives compared to those in a rather insecure situation. Thus, hypothesis 4 can be confirmed for men. One can assume that left-behind women join their husband via the legal channel of family reunification ('de ju-

re'), while left-behind male partners rather try to come to Germany independently on the legal status of their wives, pursuing a 'de facto' reunification strategy.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Worldwide increasing numbers of residence permits for family reasons show that family migration processes are an increasingly important phenomenon, not only in the context of forced migration after wars and civil unrest, but also in other settings in which leaving behind close family members might not be a valid option (e.g. climate-driven migration). A shift from seeing migration as a purely economic strategy for income maximisation of the household or the family, usually based on circular migrations of only one family member, towards resettlement of entire family units can be observed globally. However, the extent and the determinants of bringing family members to the destination country, as well as the factors influencing the pace of spousal migration processes in the context of forced migration, remain largely unexplored so far. This is surprising, given the issue's salience and the large numbers of refugee families in European societies. Moreover, the family represents a "key source[s] of social and instrumental support for new migrants" (Glick 2010: 498) and the process of migration may change, reinforce or provoke conflicts in family ties (Glick 2010; Massey et al. 2006), and can affect refugees' well-being at the destination (Gambaro et al. 2018).

This paper has explored spousal migration processes of refugees in Germany, a country which has in recent years been characterised by relatively large inflows of asylum seekers from different countries of origin. The most common countries of origin were covered by this study – Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. In addition to providing descriptive findings, we have examined different types of spousal migration trajectories, the propensity of reunification of geographically separated couples within one year, and to what extent this is shaped by socio-economic conditions, the existence and number of minor children, family networks, as well as asylum status-related aspects for married men and women. The analyses point to several main conclusions: First, the great majority of couples from forced migration contexts arrive together at the destination country, or the husband arrives first with his wife staying behind in an origin or transit country. Only a small share of married women arrives without their partner at the destination country. The dominance of male pioneer migrants is in line with migration flows consisting of other groups of migrants (mainly labour migrants) and in other geographic settings. Second, the existence of minor children is crucial for a couple's joint arrival at destination. Parents of young children may feel additional pressure to keep the family unit together and jointly bring their offspring into safety. Third, our analyses did not arrive at statistically significant results regarding our expectations that economically better-off couples are more likely to come together to Germany and that – in case they migrate alone – reunification at destination occurs faster. Putting this into a broader context, it might be important to keep in mind that individuals from the three examined countries of origin, who actually make it to Germany represent a selected group of the respective origin populations, not only in terms of their sex and age distribution, but also in terms of their socio-economic profiles

(which diverge from the national averages). Although research is scarce (for an exception see Stoewe 2018), it can be assumed that individuals who manage to undertake the long and oftentimes dangerous trip from Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria to Germany or other parts of Western and Central Europe are positively selected in terms of their socio-economic status compared to those who stay at origin or who remain in Middle Eastern countries such as Jordan or Turkey. Overcoming long geographic distances implies a relatively high amount of financial resources (González-Ferrer et al. 2014) as well as knowledge about migration routes, means of transportation, smugglers, and more. Therefore, less well-off refugees are less likely to arrive in Germany, unlike those with a certain level of education and financial means. This might explain why our data does not show significant effects for the financial resources of couples on their migration strategy, as couples with at least one partner in Germany are relatively homogenous regarding their economic conditions. Fourth, the existence of family members at destination, and particularly those residing in the same household or locality, is crucial for the solo migration of one partner, which holds true for both women and men. Although the data did not allow for a detailed examination of the exact timing and sequencing of the migration events of couples in relation to those of their extended family – thus no ‘classic’ network effects could be traced – the results showed that spouses’ migration practices are linked to the migration dynamics of other relatives. Fifth, our study shows that male first-movers have a higher probability of reunifying with their wives within the first year after their arrival if they have a ‘secure’ residence permit, assuming that they tend to use legal family reunification channels. In contrast, female first-movers are followed relatively quickly by their partners, apparently not necessarily relying on procedural family reunification channels.

Although this study provides valuable insights into the partnership arrangements and practices of recently arrived refugees, several limitations must be acknowledged. Despite the unique information on family migration patterns covered by the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey, most of the limitations are data-related. First, only few questions on past events were asked and several aspects on the timing of some measures are missing. For example, we do not know since when other family members have been living in Germany and whether they arrived together with or before/after the respondent. Furthermore, the data do not provide information on when the respondent obtained their current legal status, nor can people with subsidiary protection status be identified clearly. Moreover, details on the exact order of events over a couple’s family and flight trajectory could be used for event-history analyses, which would allow for a more detailed examination of the exact timing and pace of reunification of both partners. Second, the analysis would improve if we could include information on both partners or at the household level into the same model. However, the dataset only provides individual information (such as age, education, income) for the respondent and their cohabiting spouse when they were also interviewed. Yet for partners residing elsewhere in Germany or abroad this information is missing. Third, although we control for the country of origin in the first step of the analyses, we could not perform more detailed analyses for each of these countries due to small case numbers, especially for female respondents. Furthermore, the sample sizes for the other countries of origin contained in the dataset were too small to include them into the analyses. For instance, although migration flows from Eritrea to Germany are also dominated by asylum seekers, diverging patterns regarding their spousal migration practices may ap-

pear, since the predominant reasons for flight and the prevailing migration regime are different from those of refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the current study provides new perspectives and innovative theoretical and empirical insights to existing research on family migration processes of refugees. This is especially important as our findings show that previous research and hypotheses for mainly economically driven migration are not necessarily transferable to the context of forced migration. Moreover, our research demonstrates that migration is a highly gendered process, and that this also holds true for the family migration processes of refugees. Future research could apply the hypotheses presented in this study to other destinations of forced migrants in order to deepen our understanding of family migration processes of refugees. Investigating the effect that receiving contexts with different legal conditions and diverging struggles and possibilities for the successful integration of refugees may have on families' migration process is a relevant issue for further research.

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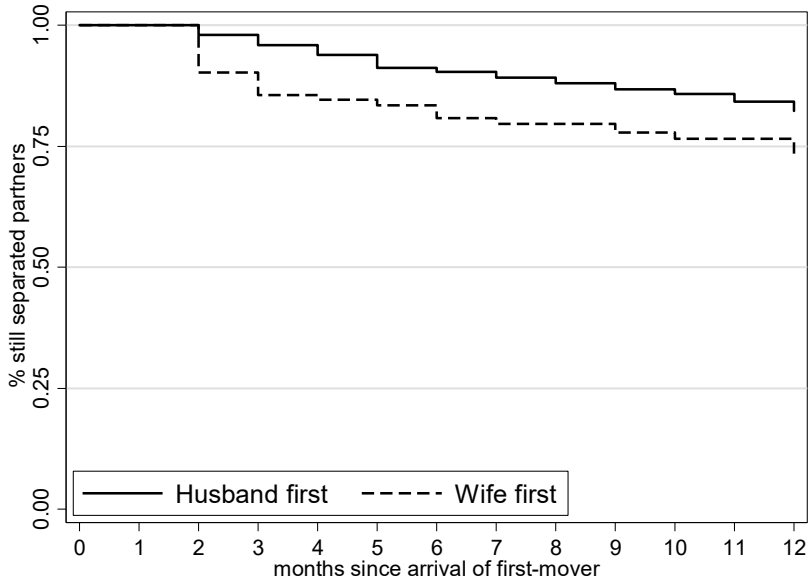
Appendix

Table A1: Descriptive statistics of independent variables by sex; reunified versus not reunified within one year of arrival of first-mover (step 2)

		Women						Men					
		Reunified		Not Reunified		Total		Reunified		Not Reunified		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age at arrival (mean years)		32.9		36.6		35.7		34.2		32.5		32.8	
Arrival period	<i>before 2015</i>	10	16.8	15	9.3	25	11.1	31	23.3	50	15.2	81	16.4
	<i>2015 and after</i>	22	83.2	62	90.7	84	88.9	91	76.7	169	84.8	260	83.6
Schooling (years)	<i>0 - 6</i>	8	35.0	25	26.1	33	28.2	29	27.5	41	16.8	70	18.4
	<i>7-11</i>	11	36.2	16	18.9	27	23.0	24	16.5	65	30.8	89	28.7
	<i>12+</i>	11	24.2	30	35.2	41	32.6	60	46.7	100	46.7	160	46.7
	<i>missing</i>	2	4.7	6	19.8	8	16.2	9	9.3	13	5.7	22	6.2
Migration reasons	<i>only flight reasons</i>	16	58.2	36	43.6	52	47.1	74	44.1	98	47.1	146	46.7
	<i>also other reasons</i>	16	41.8	41	56.4	57	53.0	48	55.9	119	51.1	193	51.8
	<i>missing</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.8	2	1.6
Net income before flight	<i>ever worked</i>	10	20.5	34	49.0	44	42.2						
	<i>not/never worked</i>	22	79.5	37	43.5	59	52.0	4	2.4	11	6.3	15	5.8
	<i>below average</i>							29	22.8	63	29.9	92	28.8
	<i>average</i>							49	47.3	84	39.8	133	41.0
	<i>above average</i>							37	26.2	49	16.9	86	18.3
	<i>missing</i>	0	0.0	6	7.6	6	5.8	3	1.3	12	7.1	15	6.2
Children	<i>no children < 18</i>	3	5.4	14	16.5	17	13.9	29	24.7	64	36.3	93	34.5
	<i>1-2 children < 18</i>	8	45.3	33	49.0	41	48.1	40	45.0	78	33.9	118	35.5
	<i>3+ children < 18</i>	21	49.4	30	34.5	52	38.0	53	30.3	74	28.5	127	28.8
	<i>missing</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.3	3	1.1
Family members in same locality	<i>no</i>	25	82.4	52	71.5	77	74.1	90	76.3	179	87.8	269	86.1
	<i>yes</i>	7	17.6	25	28.5	32	25.9	32	23.8	40	12.2	72	13.9
	<i>missing</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Legal status	<i>secure status</i>	21	39.0	49	30.9	38	32.9	104	85.5	147	41.6	87	37.4
	<i>other status</i>	10	59.8	28	69.1	70	66.9	15	13.5	72	58.4	251	62.5
	<i>missing</i>	1	1.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	1.0	0	0.0	3	0.2
	Total	32	23.8	77	76.2	109	100.0	122	15.2	219	84.8	341	100.0

Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, waves 1 & 2, 2016–2017 (unweighted N, weighted percentages); due to rounding percentages may not total 100%.

Figure A1: Kaplan-Meier survival estimates of reunification with left-behind partner by sex of first-mover



Data: IAB-BAMF-SOEP, waves 1 & 2, 2016-2017 (weighted).

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What role does timing play in migrants' transition to marriage? A comparison between endogamous and exogamous marriages

Abstract:

Couple formation and migration are the result of interrelated decision-making processes in the life cycle. Using data from the “Social Condition and Integration of Foreign Citizens (SCIF)” survey, conducted in Italy in 2011-2012 by Istat, we aim to investigate how the timing of migration events affects the type and timing of marriages in the destination country. Time-related models investigate the competing-risk transitions to endogamous and exogamous marriages with Italian spouses. Obtained results provide evidence of the complexity of today's migrations, and they indicate the coexistence of various patterns among first-generation migrants in Italy, characterised by a plurality of origins, with different projects and behavioural models. The “interrelation of events” hypothesis explains the transitions to both endogamous and exogamous marriages among women, while men usually spend more time finding a partner and achieving economic stability. Despite this general picture, our analysis shows different and original pathways shaping transitions to marriage by reason of migration and considering a number of demographic and migratory characteristics.

Key words: migration, family formation, Italy, event history analysis, interrelation of events

Introduction

In Italy, immigration is a more recent phenomenon than in northern European countries, but nevertheless, the first generation of migrants has settled, as highlighted by official sources and literature (Barbiano di Belgiojoso et al. 2008; Ambrosini et al. 2014; Perez 2018). One expression of this change is the increased number of marriages with at least one foreign-born partner, which now constitute a significant percentage of stock data: as of 2017, 14.5% of marriages consisted of couples with at least one foreign-born partner. In particular, before the economic crisis, register data (Gabrielli/Paterno 2016; Terzera/Barbiano di Belgiojoso 2018) showed notable growth of marriages performed in Italy between an Italian-born partner and a foreign-born partner (hereinafter defined as exogamous WIT – with an Italian – marriage): exogamous WIT marriages of immigrants increased from 9,900 in 1996 to 24,600 in 2008. They subsequently reduced to less than 18,000 per year during the economic crisis (2008-2015) and then increased again in the

next two observed years (reaching 20,000 in 2017). In 2017, they represented 10.5% of total marriages and 72.1% of marriages with at least one foreign-born partner.

In particular, referring to marriages performed in Italy, official data shows that those between an Italian man and a foreign woman are more predominant than those between an Italian woman and a foreign man (77.2% and 22.8% of total exogamous WIT marriages, respectively). The 2017 ranking of exogamous WIT marriages by area of birth of the foreign partner places marriages with partners from the EU in first place (more than 6,000), followed by marriages with partners from Central and Eastern non-EU Europe (5,700), and those with partners from Central and South America (3,700).

As highlighted at the international level (e.g., Kofman 2004), the combination of origin and gender results is crucial to understand family dynamics, and this is also confirmed for Italy. The composition of exogamous WIT marriages in Italy by gender and country of origin of the migrant partner is determined by a complex set of factors, such as: different origins, recent feminisation of the inflows (Impicciatore/Strozza 2015), strategies of integration by gender, characteristics of the “marriage market”, and exogamous/endogamous attitudes of immigrant communities (Rossi/Strozza 2007).

In Italy, despite the significant growth of partnerships and marriages with at least one foreign partner, it was only 10 years ago that quantitative research began to focus on this topic (Dalla Zuanna et al. 2009; Conti et al. 2013), with the cross-sectional approach being predominant. Using information obtained from ad hoc surveys (often at regional or local level), scholars have described the different typologies of families and households and their characteristics (Terzera 2006; Simoni/Zucca 2007; Tognetti Bordogna 2011), focusing mainly on partner choice rather than union timing (Lagomarsino 2006; Bonizzoni 2007, 2015; Ambrosini 2008). In particular, following the “status exchange theory”, numerous studies looked at the matching of partners in couples formed between Italians and foreigners, identifying exchange forms between partners (Maffioli et al. 2012, 2014; Guetto/Azzolini 2015; Gabrielli/Paterno 2016; Azzolini/Guetto 2015, 2017).

Focusing on individuals rather than on the couple dynamics and mate-matching choices, our paper aims at providing original results to the existing literature by analysing the role of the timing of the competing transitions to first exogamous WIT marriage and to first endogamous marriage of migrants who arrived to Italy unmarried. As far as we know, it is still a neglected topic in Italy, because the transition to marriage has been studied predominantly at the local level and/or considering marriages between migrant partners with the same origins: endogamous marriages (Bonomi/ Terzera 2003; Terzera 2006; Gabrielli et al. 2019).

In particular, we focus on migrants who were aged 16 over and were unmarried on arrival in Italy, and we analyse the timing of their marriage in Italy by adopting an event history approach. We use data from the multipurpose household sample survey on “Social Condition and Integration of Foreign Citizens (SCIF)”, which at the time of writing represents a unique source of data representative at the national level with retrospective in-depth information about migrants and their subsequent transition to first marriage (Perez 2018).

This article is structured as follows. The next section contains the theoretical framework and our research hypotheses. The third section introduces the survey data, the sample characteristics, the method of analysis, and the variables. Subsequent sections present the results of the descriptive and multivariate analyses. The final section discusses the main results.

Theoretical background

International research (Kofman 2004; González-Ferrer 2006; Kulu/Milewski 2007) has focused increasing attention on the relationship between couple formation and migration, as well as the mechanisms that affect mate-matching processes. These topics first attracted interest among researchers in North America and the Asia-Pacific region, and subsequently in Europe, highlighting the important role of different socio-demographic dimensions (Mulder/Wagner 1993; Clark et al. 2009; Kalter/Schroedter 2010; Baykara-Krumme 2017; Azzolini/Guetto 2017; Hannemann et al. 2018; González-Ferrer et al. 2018).

One crucial aspect of marriage among migrants concerns the timing of the migration and marriage events. Elder (1985) is one of the first to use a temporal perspective in understanding demographic events: “life course theory tells how lives are influenced by their life stages in the historical context and ... how transitions in life cycle consequences affect subsequent transitions” (Elder 1998:9). Although this approach has become widespread, only recent research has focused on the mechanisms by which migration affects subsequent life events, such as marriage and having children (Kulu/Milewski 2007; Lopez Ramirez 2009; Kalter/Schroedter 2010; Baykara-Krumme 2017; Gabrielli et al. 2019).

In contrast to other hypotheses¹, the “interrelation of events” hypothesis refers specifically to the timing of events. It relies on the interdependencies of the family and migratory processes in the life course of individuals (Kulu/Milewski 2007). In particular, this hypothesis observes couple formation and migration, focusing on the interrelationship between both events, considered as important “parallel paths” that shape the life trajectories of migrants (Mulder/Wagner 1993; Milewski 2007, 2010). Observing that migration can be motivated by marriage, although marriage timing and individual “marriageability” can also be affected by migration, this hypothesis assumes that timing of migration and couple formation may be conflated because both decisions are undertaken jointly (Hill 2004; Lindstrom/Giorguli Saucedo 2007; Sánchez-Domínguez et al. 2011). Therefore, migrants have a high probability of getting married soon after their migration when the main aim of migration is forming a family (Stark 1988; Boyle et al. 1998; González-Ferrer 2006). In particular, Niedomysl et al. (2010) defined “marriage migration” as marriages that occur within one calendar year after arrival. This pattern is somewhat reinforced by Italian law, which grants legal status to those individuals that migrate for family reunification or that marry an Italian partner.

In addition, some studies highlight the relationship between migration intentions and family-related events (Erdala/Ezzati 2014; Bettin et al. 2018; Barbiano di Belgiojoso/Terzera 2018). Therefore, intentions on arrival can affect the timing of family events. For example, an intended short stay in the host country, or an intention to move on to a third country, can discourage family events in the short term.

1 Adaption, socialisation, status enhancement, and selection hypotheses are also traditionally used to explain migrants’ demographic behaviour. However, we need data about stayers in the origin country and migrants and non-migrants in the destination country to test these hypotheses. Therefore, due to the characteristics of our data, we do not consider them nor include them in the theoretical background.

Similarly, the “disruption hypothesis” suggests that the migration itself, as well as the periods preceding and following it, is a stressful event due to drastic changes in daily life and an interruption of social networks. In other words, in the period immediately after migration, family events might be postponed due to the disruptive factors and difficulties related to the migration itself, or to the new environment (Toulemon 2004).

The disruption hypothesis has been formulated to explain the effect of migration on having children (see, e.g., Milewski 2007, 2010). However, the disruptive effect of the migration may also impact other relevant life events, such as marriage. On the one hand, migration may entail a longer time finding a partner, especially when the reason for migration is less directly linked to union formation (Carlson 1985; Landale 1994; Parrado 2004; Parrado/Flippen 2005; Kulu/Milewski 2007). On the other hand, according to Italian law, formal marriage is one of the requirements for proceeding with legal reunification of the foreign partner or for naturalisation when it concerns an Italian partner. Postponement of marriage because of migration would presumably only affect couples where both partners can migrate autonomously (i.e., EU nationals).

There is consensus in the international literature on the role played by gender and origin background both in the marital trajectories and in the choice of partners (Kofman 1999; Tognetti Bordogna 2004; González-Ferrer 2007; Clark et al. 2009; Ishizawa/Stevens 2011; Barbiano di Belgiojoso/Terzera 2018).

Many studies (e.g., Stevens/Swicegood 1987; Qian/Lichter 2007) showed that, traditionally, men mostly migrate independently and for work-related reasons, while women are more likely to move for family-related reasons (Mincer 1978; Heering et al. 2004). Notwithstanding, some studies have shown that women also migrate in order to secure a better quality of life, which could include not only access to higher wages but also access to wider “partner” markets and freedom from restrictive social environments (Castles/Miller 2003; Hill 2004; Sánchez-Domínguez et al. 2011; Esteve/Bueno 2012; González-Ferrer et al. 2016). From this perspective, the determinants of the spouse selection among immigrants seem to be strongly gendered (Sassler 2005; Adserà/Chiswick 2007; Sohel/Yahirun 2011).

One additional factor that influences couple formation is the country of birth of first-generation migrants, which proxies for the cultural background (Carlson 1985; Kulu/González-Ferrer 2014; Azzollini/Guetto 2017) according to the gender roles that favour or prevent gendered autonomous migration (Schoorl 1990; Ishizawa/Stevens 2011; Pailhé 2015; Beauchemin et al. 2015).

With a geo-cultural approach, Therborn (2004) conceptualises gender patterns, ranking the countries from traditional to egalitarian. Gender indicators are simple classification tools used to distinguish the gender profile of countries. The Gender Inequality Index (GII), measuring the inequality between the achievements of women and men in three dimensions (reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market), well reflects this geo-cultural approach. The 2012 GII shows that Morocco, the Indian subcontinent and sub-Saharan Africa are the countries and regions with the greatest gender disadvantages (i.e., greater inequalities and less egalitarianism), as compared to advanced-economy countries and some Eastern European countries (Table 1).

This offers an interpretative key referring to migration patterns. For example, on one hand, in contexts characterised by traditional values and less egalitarian gender norms,

men are typically the breadwinners, and the pattern of “importing brides” is often prevalent (González-Ferrer 2006). On the other hand, in more egalitarian contexts, women migrate autonomously or are often the forerunner of the migration (Ambrosini 2015). Moreover, in recent analyses (Bijwaard 2010), migrants are distinguished by area of origin, taking “the different cultural and background characteristics” into account, and this distinction often shows diversity in family behaviours (González-Ferrer et al. 2016:3). In this regard, some studies on this topic have restricted analysis to a single country of origin (Milewski/Hamel 2010; Hamel et al. 2012; Esteve/Bueno 2012; Baykara-Krumme 2017), while others considered more than one country of origin (e.g., Guetto/Azzolini 2015). The first approach allows the specificities of the country of origin to be taken into account, but it impedes a generalisation and comparison among family migration models that, conversely, is made possible by the second approach, which is preferred when investigating migrants’ life courses (Clark et al. 2009; Vitali/Arpino 2015). The place of birth is particularly significant in the Italian context, as it is characterised by a wide diversity of immigrants’ origins (Barbiano di Belgiojoso/Terzera 2016, 2018; Gabrielli et al. 2019).

Other research has also placed particular focus on assortative mating after migration to the USA, Canada, Australia (Pagnini/Morgan 1990; Jones/Luijckx 1996; Tzeng 2000; Kalbach 2002; Rosenfeld 2002, 2005; Meng/Gregory 2005; Qian/Lichter 2007) and, more recently, European and Asian immigration countries (Kalmijn/van Tubergen 2006; Bélanger/Wang 2011; Jones 2011; Lanzieri 2011).

The empirical evidence on this topic identified the individual characteristics that tend to be associated with endogamous or exogamous marriage. The literature recognises that three factors affect the choice between endogamous and exogamous marriage: structural opportunities for meeting members of one’s own group, the influence of “third parties” (Kalmijn 1998:400) on marriage behaviour, and individual preferences to marry within or outside the group (Kalmijn 1998). Although the distinction between the three effects is theoretically meaningful, in practice, indicators for any of the different dimensions sometimes include elements of the others (Kalmijn/van Tubergen 2010).

Structural factors are significant determinants of exogamous unions and shape the available opportunities for getting married inside or outside the group (Blau/Schwartz 1984). Members of larger groups are more likely to form endogamous unions, since they more often meet members of the same group; skewed sex ratios can constitute a structural force towards out-marriage, and this unbalance seems to matter more for men than for women in shaping their partner choices, both for native and immigrant partners (Pagnini/Morgan 1990; Schroedter/Rössel 2013). A synthetic overview of the percentages of residents and the sex ratio of migrants in Italy by country/area of origin highlights that the overall presence is very fragmented, and that among many countries/areas of departure, the sex ratio of the different collectives is unbalanced (Table 1).

The second factor – the influence of “third parties” on marriage behaviour – is represented mainly by the cultural and religious orientation of the national-origin group and is associated with values, beliefs and practices mainly spread by family and religious community (Kalmijn/van Tubergen 2006, 2010). This dimension is discussed using the gender roles and country of birth as a proxy for cultural background (Kofman 1999; González-Ferrer 2007; Clark et al. 2009; Ishizawa/ Stevens 2011).

The third and most important factor comprises people's norms, values and preferences regarding interaction and marriage. It was assumed that an unmarried person searches for a potential spouse who is attractive in terms of socio-economic and cultural resources (Kalmijin/van Tubergen 2010).

Lastly, the crucial role of human capital also emerged in other perspectives. Some studies (Lehrer 1998; van Tubergen/Maas 2007) showed that the most highly educated migrants are often encouraged to search for potential partners outside their own ethnic group.

Research hypotheses

In line with the international literature synthesised so far and the characteristics of the available data, we try to identify the timing of marriage after migration and the main determinants of migrants' competing risks of transition to first exogamous WIT marriage and to first endogamous marriage in Italy.

We expect different time-related patterns by gender (H1). Among women, due to their being less frequently autonomous migrants and more often family-orientated migrants, we expect to find evidence of the interrelation of marriage and migration with the highest probability of marriage shortly after migration. Conversely, among male migrants, we expect to find a low probability of getting married in the first period after migration, followed by a recovery at a later date in the migration experience according to the disruption theory hypothesis. Compared to women, men's migration is more often because of reasons other than marriage, and they therefore spend more time before deciding to form a family and then searching for a partner.

With regard to the fundamental role of the reason of migration in the study of timing of familial events in migration, we expect that when the reason is to form a family, migration and marriage should be very close (H2). In other words, affective reasons at migration (including engagement, affective relationship and informal partnerships) indicate that migration and family formation are part of the same project. Therefore, they foster the transition to marriage, reducing the time between migration and (endogamous and exogamous) marriage regardless of gender. Concerning other reasons for migrating to Italy, we expect them to have the effect of postponing the transition to both endogamous and exogamous WIT marriages, as these migrants have aims other than starting a family. Similarly, the initial migratory reason as well as future migratory intentions should have an additional effect on the transition to marriage: the intention to stay in Italy permanently indicates that migration and family formation are part of the same project; conversely, temporary or undefined initial intentions should indicate the opposite.

We expect that the origin background, expressed by the country of birth, strengthens the impact of gender in the transition to first marriage, as well as the inclination towards endogamous or exogamous marriage. On the one hand, the probability of getting married is strongly determined by norms, culture and gender roles in the country of origin. On the other hand, the combination of gender and origin refers also to the structural characteristics of the population in the destination country (size, gender balance, macro-area of resi-

dence). Following the literature, we hypothesise that the “cultural background” dimension prevails among women, while the “structural characteristics” affect mainly men. Women tend to link migratory and family projects more frequently than men, and they are therefore more conditioned by the cultural context of their origin. Among men, this link (family-migration) is less direct, and so the conditions of one’s own community in the host country affect the transition to marriage more frequently than for women. In particular, we hypothesise that migrant women coming from countries with more egalitarian gender roles have a higher probability of exogamous marriage (H3). Vice versa, we expect that women coming from contexts with more traditional gender roles have a higher probability of endogamous marriage.

We do not expect similar results among men, but as a consequence of the structural characteristics of the migrant group in the destination country, we expect a higher propensity to endogamous marriage among male members of the most sizeable communities in Italy and to exogamous marriage among male members of the most gender-unbalanced communities (H4).

According to the literature and besides our main hypotheses, we also test if some human capital characteristics (level of first employment in Italy and educational level) play a different role in the transition to endogamous and exogamous WIT marriages. In particular, we expect that migrants with high human capital anticipate exogamous WIT marriage and delay endogamous marriage. Following the literature, migrants with a high education level and/or a highly skilled job on arrival have fewer options to find a partner with the same human capital within the endogamous marriage market and so orientate themselves to the Italian marriage market, which is the largest market and where these characteristics are a “bargaining chip” in the transition to marriage. At the same time, migrants with low human capital are expected to have higher probabilities of marrying, with marriage being a way to increase their economic condition.

Finally, we assume that a family’s agreement to allow migration is considered as one of voices of the “third parties”: the family. Migration is often a choice negotiated within the family (Milewski/Huschek 2015; Zantvliet et al. 2015; Caarls/Mazzuccato 2016), and therefore we expect that the family’s agreement (the parents’ agreement in our case) facilitates the transition to marriage when there is a family migration project. However, we hypothesise an overall positive effect of disagreement from the family on the transition to exogamous marriages. If the migration is a family plan, a marriage with someone external to the ethnic group is more likely to trigger family disagreement than marriage to a partner of the same origin, with the disagreement being based on the partner rather than the migration, while if the migration is not a family project, family disagreement could encourage migrants to search for potential partners outside their own ethnic group.

Data and methods

Data was taken from the “Social Condition and Integration of Foreign Citizens (SCIF)” survey, conducted by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) in 2011-2012. Among the Italian multipurpose household surveys, it is the only one designed to collect

data on families with at least one foreign citizen and to provide original information on foreign nationals living in Italy. The cross-sectional survey covers a random sample of about 9,000 households and provides information on the living conditions, behaviours, characteristics, attitudes and opinions of foreign citizens in Italy, including individual retrospective histories on migration, family formation, education and occupation.

In our analyses, we consider a net sub-sample of 6,595 migrant adults (aged 18 and over at interview) who arrived unmarried (thus, never married before migration) in Italy at the age of 16 or over.² We analyse, as events, the self-reported first marriage between foreign and native individuals (exogamous WIT marriage), and, alternatively, entry into first marriage between migrant partners of the same country of origin (endogamous marriage)³: 882 individuals experienced a first exogamous WIT marriage and 2,612 individuals experienced a first endogamous marriage. In addition, we consider, only for descriptive purposes, 277 immigrants that had a marriage with a migrant partner from a different country of origin. It should be noted that both types of marriages concluded in Italy and elsewhere are included in the analysis: once arrived, the migrant can get married in Italy, or can temporarily return to the country of origin to conclude the marriage there.

In the descriptive analyses, we use weighted data in order to provide results which are representative for the population residing in Italy. After a cross-sectional description of marriage typologies by gender and area of origin, we use an event history approach to observe the timing of occurrence of (endogamous or exogamous WIT) marriages after the migration event (Courgeau 1989; Courgeau/Lelievre 2006; Kulu/Milewski 2007). We emphasise the gender dimension by conducting our analyses separately for men and women.

In this context, we estimated Kaplan-Meier survivor functions as well as piecewise constant exponential models to study the competing risk transitions to exogamous WIT marriage and endogamous marriage. The duration until the first marriage is operationalised in terms of time passed since arrival in Italy, and respondents were right censored if they had not yet been married at the time of the survey. We also right censored (at the time of their marriage) those individuals whose first exogamous marriage was with a non-Italian partner.

The basic idea behind employing a piecewise constant exponential model is to split the time axis into intervals, and to assume the transition rates to marriage to be constant in each of them, but potentially changing across them (Blossfeld/Golsch/Rohwer 2007). In particular, we split the first two years after arrival into four intervals (six months each) in order to analyse marriages that occurred immediately after migration (less than one year).

2 We defined 16 and over as the threshold based on the fact that even if the legal age limit for marriage is 18, in most countries this age limit may be reduced to 16. For a detailed description of the age limit country by country, see https://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/09/FT_Marriage_Age_Appendix_2016_09_08.pdf.

3 The original dataset operationalises the mate-matching of different ethnic backgrounds by using the country of birth of the spouses, as the number of second-generation adults (individuals born in Italy with an ethnic background and aged more than 18 years old) is low in Italy according to the census data. We excluded 902 individuals in cohabitation from the analyses at interview (as there was insufficient time-related information on cohabitation): this can produce undefined selection bias in the results, particularly at younger ages and for specific countries of origin, not considering undocumented union (in particular, exogamous WIT unions – see Maffioli et al. 2012; Gabrielli/Paterno 2016).

We have chosen this approach as it enables us to account for the intrinsic non-monotonic shape of the rate along time (recurrent in many social phenomena) and for the impossibility of measuring time-varying covariates. This model's virtue thus lies in its flexibility as an instrument of analysis keeping the mathematical and computational features of the statistical exercise at a reasonable level.

Regarding the predictors, we include the following respondents' characteristics (see Appendix Table 1 for further details) in the models:

Country/area of birth – grouped into 7 and 14 categories, respectively, in the Kaplan-Meier survivor estimates and in the parametric analyses (*reference* Romania)⁴. We define these groups according to the sample size and the similarities of their family dynamics and gender roles.

Educational level – four categories: primary or less (*reference*, 3-10 years of age), lower secondary level (11-13 years of age), upper secondary level (14-18 years of age), tertiary level. We assume that respondents completed their education (mostly abroad) and reached their highest educational level before marriage.

First job in Italy – four categories: unemployed, unskilled or low level (*reference*), skilled or middle level (groups 5 and 6 of ISCO), highly skilled or high level (groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 of ISCO). We consider the first job after arrival in Italy and before marriage (if it has occurred). In particular, we defined as “unemployed” the respondents who started their first job after marriage or who have never had a stable occupation in Italy.

Reasons for migration – we include three dummy variables (*reference* no) regarding the main push factors of migration to Italy, which are not mutually exclusive. *Labour reason*: includes the “difficulty in finding an adequate job” in the origin country and the “desire to improve income and life wellbeing”; *Affective reason*: includes “engagement”, “marriage”, “reunification with relatives” and “escape from family problems”⁵; *Other reasons*: includes the remaining reasons (new experiences, study, health, war, persecution, not my decision, other).

Dummy variable for *parents' agreement about migration* (*reference* yes).

Migratory project on arrival in Italy – this is separated into three categories: to live in Italy forever (*reference* permanent intention), to live in Italy for a limited period (temporary intention) and “do not know” (indefinite intention).

Two further control variables are included in the model. They represent, respectively, the age-structure and geographical-settlement characteristics of respondents that we take into account in the models:

Age on arrival in Italy – 5-year classes (*reference* 18-22 years). We expect a reversed U-shape pattern along the age classes.

4 The two main reasons supporting our choice of Romania as the reference category are: currently – as well as at the time of the survey – Romanians are the most numerous migrant group and have a quite balanced gender structure. Thus, their family formation behaviours represent an average profile in Italy.

5 Affective reasons could also be a proxy for a pre-migration relationship – information that is not available in the survey.

Macro-area of residence on arrival in Italy – four categories: North-East (*reference*), North-West, Centre, South & Islands. Internal mobility within the macro-area is not significant (only 14% of interviewees changed their residential macro-areas between arrival in Italy and the interview). We expect a significant negative impact of the southern *areas of residence* on transition to marriage (men and women), with the southern areas being less populated by migrants and a proxy for economic conditions that are usually worse in the south compared to the north.

Descriptive results

Before proceeding with the analysis, it should be noted that in Italy, in 2012, 40% of the over 4 million foreign residents came from three countries: Romania, Albania and Morocco (Table 1). The remaining foreign residents had a variety of origins that are strongly characterised by gender. The main communities have a more balanced sex ratio than the smaller ones (Table 1).

A brief description of the immigrants' matrimonial conditions at the time of the survey appears in Table 2. Among the 6,595 foreign nationals included in our subsample, the majority are married (60.6% vs 39.4% single) and most are married to a spouse from the same origin country (39.4%). Four out of five foreigners in exogamous marriages have an Italian spouse. Women are more often involved than men in exogamous marriages (especially exogamous WIT marriages; 28.6% and 7.0%, respectively). Men are characterised by higher percentages of singles compared to women (42.6% and 35.4%, respectively), as well as a higher percentage of endogamous marriage (44.9% and 32.7%, respectively).

Table 1: Percentages of residents (population register - Anagrafe) and sex ratio (year 2012) of foreign born; Gender Inequality Index (GII) of the countries and areas included in the analyses. Year 2012.

Area/Country of birth	Percentage of residents 2012(i)	Sex Ratio on residents 2012 ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾		GII 2012 ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	
		Average	Std dev.	Average	Std dev.
Romania	20.7	76.4	---	0.34	---
Ukraine and others ^(a)	8.6	34.9	0.36	0.29	0.12
Albania	11.2	108.5	---	0.27	---
Poland and others ^(b)	3.8	41.7	0.32	0.17	0.22
Balkan countries ^(c)	5.1	114.5	0.09	0.18	0.13
China	4.9	102.9	---	0.18	---
Philippines	3.2	75.1	---	0.45	---
Sub-Indian Continent ^(d)	8.5	158.8	0.18	0.53	0.14
Other Asia	1.6	154.3	0.65	0.38	0.39
Morocco	10.1	117.9	---	0.53	---
Other North Africa	4.2	164.8	0.10	0.43	0.30
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.6	157.3	0.49	0.58	0.12
Latin America	7.7	59.1	0.23	0.41	0.09
Advanced economies	3.8	64.9	0.29	0.11	0.02
Total	100.0				

Notes: (i) percentages of total foreign born residents in 2012 (equal to 4,036,992, 99.6% of the total foreign residents); (ii) for the areas, the value is the weighted average, with weights the percentages of resi-

dents; (a) in addition to Ukraine, this group includes also Byelarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Russia; (b) in addition to Poland, this group includes also Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia and Estonia; (c) this group includes Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Croatia and Macedonia; (d) this group includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka; (e) this group includes 31 countries that have developed economy, advanced tech infrastructure, when compared to other nations, and a per capital GDP that exceeds \$15,000, although there are a few exceptions.

Source: Elaborations on on-line data of Istat (<http://stra-dati.istat.it/>) and of United Nations (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>).

We observe a large heterogeneity of status typologies by area/country of birth. Singles are predominant among migrants born in Romania, Latin America, the Philippines, Ukraine and other former Soviet Union countries (these three groups show percentages higher than 45%). Endogamous marriages range from 61.1% for Moroccans to 11.3% for immigrants coming from advanced economies. The highest percentages of exogamous WIT marriages are among immigrants coming from advanced economies (53.9%) and from Poland and other EU countries of Eastern Europe (44.8%), while the lowest percentages are among immigrants from the Indian Subcontinent, the Philippines and China (respectively, 1.8%, 2.9%, and 3.6%).

Table 2: Percentages of marriage typologies by gender and area/country of birth.

Characteristics	Weighted number of individuals	Marriage's typologies (row percentages)			
		Single	Endogamous	Exogamous with IT	Exogamous with no IT
<i>Gender of respondents</i>					
Men	3,613	42.6	44.9	7.0	5.5
Women	2,982	35.4	32.7	28.6	3.3
<i>Area/Country of birth</i>					
Romania	1,330	50.4	37.6	10.2	1.8
Ukraine and others ^(a)	410	45.8	22.9	26.4	4.9
Albania	671	27.9	57.2	13.3	1.7
Poland and others ^(b)	257	39.2	12.4	44.8	3.7
Other Baltic countries ^(c)	215	25.4	47.6	12.5	14.6
China	155	40.2	54.3	3.6	1.9
Philippines	202	45.9	47.2	2.9	4.1
Sub-Indian Continent ^(d)	483	38.9	53.8	1.8	5.5
Other Asia	168	35.5	25.6	32.1	6.9
Morocco	640	29.1	61.1	4.4	5.5
Other North Africa	417	35.6	47.8	9.8	6.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	520	39.7	42.0	9.5	8.7
Latin America	663	46.6	21.3	28.7	3.5
Advanced economies ^(e)	461	30.9	11.3	53.9	3.9
<i>Total</i>	6,595	39.4	39.4	16.8	4.5

Notes: (a) in addition to Ukraine (85%), this group includes also Byelarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Russia; (b) in addition to Poland (80%), this group includes also Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia and Estonia; (c) this group includes Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Croatia and Macedonia; (d) this group includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka; (e) this group includes 31 countries that have developed economy, advanced tech infrastructure, when compared to other nations, and a per capital GDP that exceeds \$15,000, although there are a few exceptions.

Source: Authors' elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012)

A second result concerns the timing of the first marriage after migration, analysed by means of the Kaplan-Meier survival estimator. It shows, along the migration period, the probability of experiencing a first marriage by typology: endogamous and exogamous WIT marriages (Figure 1). Hereinafter, due to the small sample size, we do not consider exogamous marriages between migrants from different countries.

The results highlight relevant gendered differences in the timing of the first marriage. More specifically, the transition to endogamous marriage is more rapid among women in the first period of migration (in particular on arrival in Italy and in the following 6 years), and afterwards they become less frequent, while for men, the survivor function continuously decreases with time. Furthermore, after 15 years in emigration, over 70% of men have recorded a first endogamous marriage, compared to 50% of women. Interestingly, the Kaplan-Meier survival estimator shows a high number of women that have formed an endogamous marriage immediately upon arrival (less than one year). The percentage of "marriage migrants" (Niedomysl et al. 2010) among women is 46.8% (of the total number of marriages), while it is only 12.5% among migrant men.

Focusing on the areas of birth⁶, the lowest probability in the transition to endogamous marriage in Italy is among migrants from advanced economies, followed by Latin Americans and migrants from Eastern European countries of the EU. The other areas show higher probabilities and more similar patterns. In the transition to exogamous marriage in Italy, the highest percentages of "marriage migrants" are among migrants from advanced economies (40.0%) and non-EU Eastern Europe (34.2%); in contrast, Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have the lowest percentages of "marriage migrants" (respectively, 19.0% and 18.1%).

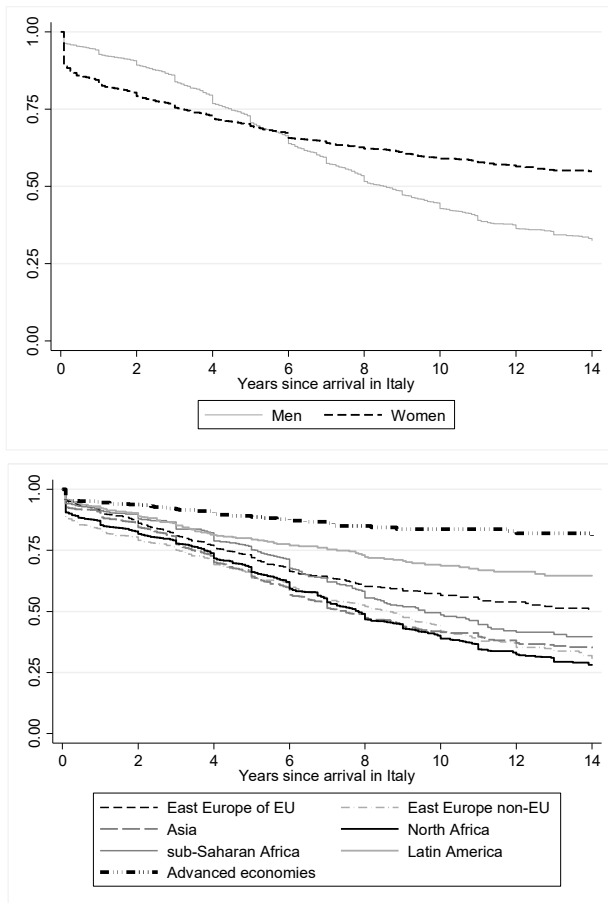
First exogamous WIT marriage is observed (as in Figure 1) more among women than men: the Kaplan-Meier survival function of women shows a continuous decrease with time, and in particular, within the first years after arrival in Italy (32.9%, while men represent only 12.9%).

The analyses by area of birth show reversed patterns in respect to endogamous marriage: the transition is observed mostly among migrants from advanced economies, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Latin Americans also have the largest percentages of endogamous marriage migration (44.2%), while migrants from Eastern European countries of the EU have the lowest (22.6%).

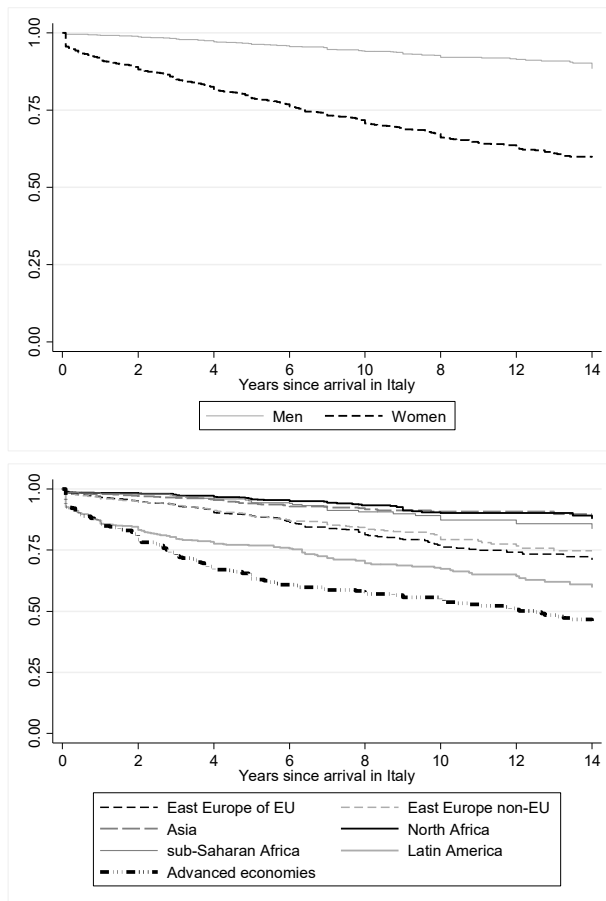
⁶ For ease of readability of the graph, we do not consider, in this case, single country of birth.

Figure 1: K-M survival estimates for first-endogamous marriage (1) and for first-exogamous WIT marriage (2) by gender and area of birth.

1. First endogamous marriage



2. First-exogamous WIT-marriage



Source: Authors' elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012)

Parametric results

The results of the piecewise constant exponential model (Table 3) shed light on some understudied aspects of the transition to marriage (endogamous marriages vs exogamous WIT marriages). The baseline hazard ratios are not shown here as they have very similar patterns to those reported in Figure 2.

Overall, we observe, both for men and women, a reverse U-shaped effect of age on arrival for both endogamous marriage and exogamous WIT marriage. Moreover, the peaks are at ages 23-27, with the only two exceptions being women in the transition to endogamous marriage (peaking at ages 18-22) and men in the transition to exogamous marriage (peaking at ages 28-32).

Unsurprisingly, and according to descriptive analyses, relevant differences emerge by gender and country of birth. Migrant women from Albania, the Balkans, the Indian Subcontinent and North Africa have the highest propensity for endogamous marriage, while those from Latin America and advanced economies have the highest ratios of marrying an Italian partner compared to Romanians.

Among men, we have similar patterns despite some exceptions. Migrants from Poland, the Philippines, Africa, Latin America and advanced economies have the lowest probability ratio of endogamous marriage. Migrant men coming from the same countries, such as Poland, Latin America and advanced economies, have the highest probability ratios of exogamous WIT marriage. In addition, Albanian and North African (in particular, Moroccan) men have a higher probability of an exogamous WIT marriage than those from the reference country.

The favourable economic conditions in the area of settlement, approximated by the macro-area of residence, positively affect the transition to endogamous marriage, especially among men: the lowest hazard ratios are in the south and the islands, and in central Italy. Conversely, we do not have a clear geographical pattern when looking at the macro-area effect on the transition to exogamous WIT marriage.

Education level has a different impact by gender. We found a greater probability of forming an endogamous marriage among educated men (medium/high level of education), while among women, the effect of education is not statistically significant for the same typology of marriage. The opposite is true for exogamous WIT marriage: highly educated women have a greater probability of forming a union, while education has no significant effect on exogamous marriage of men.

The results concerning the first job after migration and (possibly) before marriage indicate a double effect: unemployment increases the probability of marriage regardless of gender and the origin background of the partner, while a high-skilled occupation seems to be a positive determinant of exogamous WIT marriage, while it is negatively associated to endogamous marriage.

Information about the reasons for migration is equally interesting. Among men, labour-based migration increases the probability of forming an endogamous couple, while among women, it assumes a significant and negative effect in the transition to exogamous WIT marriage. Among women, affective motives foster the transition to marriage regardless of the origin background of the partner. Surprisingly, among men, these motives considerably reduce the probability of marrying a co-national. In addition, migration for other reasons (study etc.) reduces the probability of endogamous marriage, but increases the hazard ratio of exogamous WIT marriage among men.

Table 3: Determinants of first-endogamous marriage and of first-exogamous WIT marriage by gender. Piecewise constant exponential models^(a). Hazard ratios.

Variables	First-endogamous mar.		First-exogamous WIT mar.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<i>Age at arrival (ref.: 18-22)</i>				
16-17	0.74***	0.56***	0.74	0.56 ***
23-27	1.34***	0.90	2.03 ***	1.52 ***
28-32	1.16*	0.78**	2.37 ***	1.39 **
33+	0.61***	0.33***	0.48 *	1.04
<i>Country/Area of birth (ref.: Romania)</i>				
Ukraine and others	0.83	0.39***	— ^(b) ***	2.03 ***
Albania	1.11	2.28***	2.09 *	1.05
Poland and others	0.64*	0.31***	3.64 **	2.14 ***
Other Baltic countries	1.03	1.84***	1.89	0.89
China	0.86	1.00	— ^(b)	0.20 ***
The Philippines	0.63**	1.10	— ^(b)	0.28 **
Sub-Indian Continent	0.98	1.97***	0.30	0.49
Other Asia	0.28***	0.57**	3.01 ***	2.34 ***
Morocco	0.93	1.89***	1.26	0.59 *
Other North Africa	0.68***	3.29***	3.53 ***	0.79
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.62***	0.98	0.68	0.99
Latin America	0.61***	0.53***	2.86 **	2.08 ***
Advanced economies	0.19***	0.26***	9.69 ***	1.42 **
<i>Area of residence on arrival in Italy (ref.: North-East)</i>				
North-West	0.97	0.84	0.82	0.95
Center	0.86**	0.92	0.65	0.80
South and Islands	0.76***	0.60***	0.81	1.04
<i>Educational level (ref.: Primary or less)</i>				
Lower secondary	1.22**	1.10	1.44	1.36
Upper secondary	1.24***	1.04	1.65 *	1.77 ***
Tertiary	1.40***	1.25	0.95	1.69 ***
<i>First job (ref.: Low level)</i>				
Unemployed	3.43***	4.63***	4.11 ***	6.23 ***
Middle Level	0.85**	0.69***	0.96	1.30 *
High level	0.86	0.48***	2.33 ***	1.90 ***
<i>Labour reason of migration (ref.: No)</i>				
Yes	1.11*	0.98	0.69	0.71 ***
<i>Affective reason of migration (ref.: No)</i>				
Yes	0.65***	1.65***	2.07 ***	1.60 ***
<i>Migration for other reasons (ref.: No)</i>				
Yes	0.80**	0.54***	1.41 *	0.95
<i>Parents' agreement about migration (ref.: Yes)</i>				
No	0.94	0.92	1.39 *	1.04
<i>Migration project at arrival (ref.: Permanent)</i>				
Temporal	0.10	1.16*	0.67 *	0.61 ***
Do not know	0.85**	0.87	0.76	0.80 **
No. of (unweighted) subjects	3,441	3,154	3,441	3,154
No. of (unweighted) failures	1,588	1,024	170	712
No. of (unweighted) observations	21,446	16,703	21,446	16,703

Note: ^(a) the baselines are here not shown as they result very similar to the ones reported in Figure 2; ^(b) too few cases. Legend: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Authors' elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012)

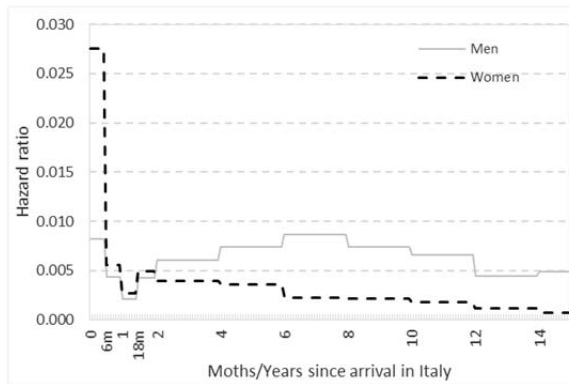
Parents' disagreement with the decision to migrate significantly and positively affects exogamous WIT marriage. Temporal or indefinite intentions about the migratory project in Italy reduce the transition to first marriage, but the initial migratory project has an impact among women: temporary migrants are less likely to marry an Italian.

As far as the timing after arrival in Italy is concerned (Figure 2), two different patterns emerge by gender, confirming the descriptive analyses: regardless of the type of marriage (endogamous or exogamous), the hazard ratios for women are the highest on and soon after (around 6 months) arrival in Italy. They decrease consistently in the following years.

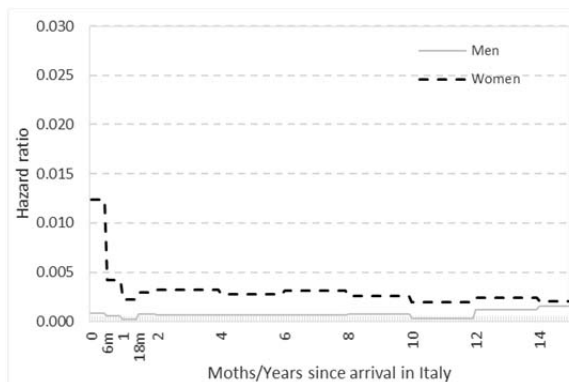
Among men, the same peak in the 6 months after arrival is observed only for endogamous marriage, but at a reduced level of hazard ratio. After that, the hazard ratio of endogamous marriage assumes a reverse U-shaped pattern and peaks at 6–8 years after arrival. Men have very low hazard ratios of exogamous WIT marriage, which slightly increase with their permanence in Italy.

Figure 2: Baseline hazard ratios of transitions to first-endogamous marriage (1) to first-exogamous WIT marriage and (2) by gender. Months since migration.

1. First-endogamous marriage



2. First-exogamous WIT marriage



Note: No further control variables are included in the models.

Source: Authors' elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012).

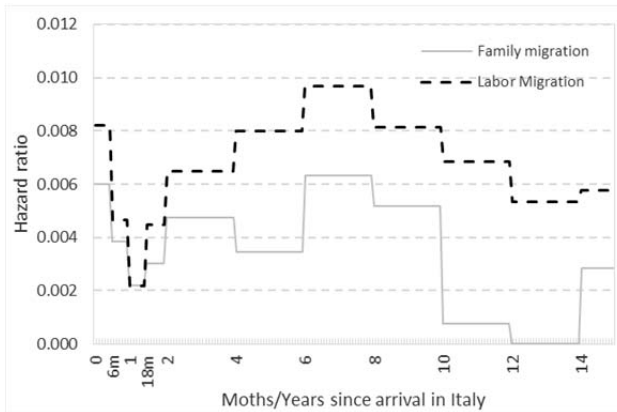
The differential patterns by gender are also evident when looking at reasons for migration (Figure 3). Men and women present similar patterns to those shown above, regardless of the reason for migration, but at different levels: for women, the highest hazard ratios on arrival in Italy occurred if they migrated for family reasons; for men, the most clear reverse U-shaped pattern, which peaks at 6–8 years after arrival, occurs in the transition to endogamous marriage if they migrate for labour reasons.

Interestingly, additional peculiarities emerge. For men who migrated for family reasons, the peak of the hazard ratio in the six months after arrival is not as high as that of women. At the same time, women who migrate for labour reasons do not have the same reverse U-shaped pattern as that of men.

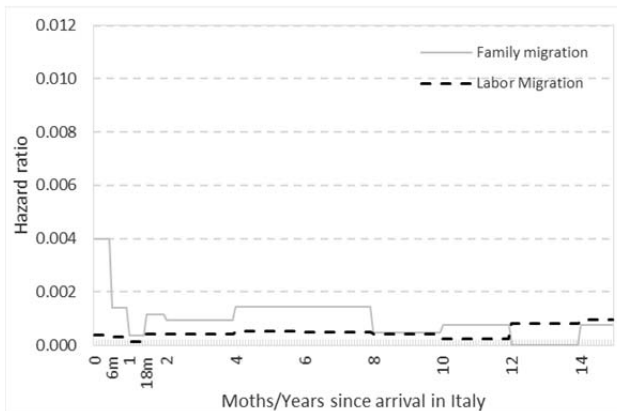
Figure 3: Baseline hazard ratios of transitions to first-endogamous marriage (1) to first-exogamous WIT marriage (2) by gender and reason of migration. Months since migration.

1. First-endogamous marriage

Men

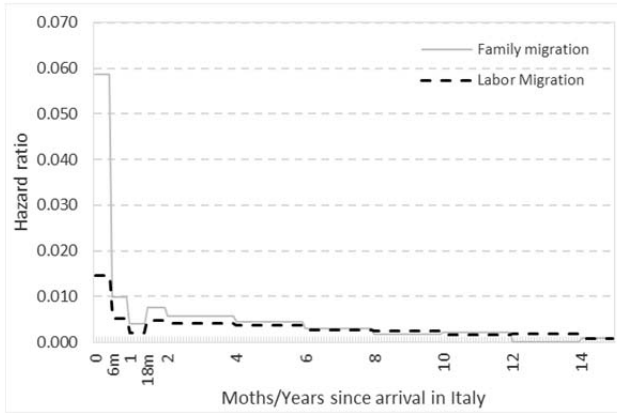


2. First-exogamous WIT marriage

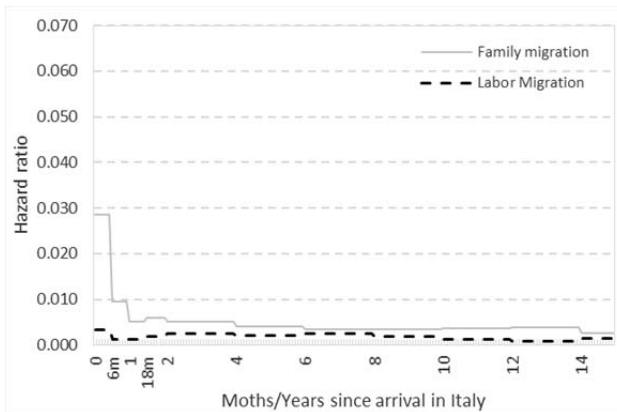


1. First-endogamous marriage

Women



2. First-exogamous WIT marriage



Note: No further control variables are included in the models.

Source: Authors’ elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012).

Discussion and conclusion

The results provide evidence for the complexity of today’s migrations and indicate the coexistence of various patterns among first-generation migrants in Italy characterised by a plurality of origins with different projects and behavioural models.

More specifically, the results illustrate the way in which the Italian marriage market operates by outlining gendered differentials in the timing of forming exogamous and endogamous marriages.

The “interrelation of events” hypothesis seems to better explain the transitions to both endogamous and exogamous WIT marriages among women (H1), who have the highest

probability of being “marriage migrants” (Niedomysl et al. 2010). Conversely, men usually spend more time achieving economic stability before finding a partner. However, the postponement and recovery patterns among them (typical of disruption hypotheses) are much more evident in the transition to endogamous marriages than exogamous ones, where we found constant and low transition rates.

This differentiation along gender lines is particularly evident when looking at reasons for migration (H2). Affective reasons for migration are of crucial importance for women who transit to an endogamous marriage. Conversely, men who migrate for labour reasons postpone the transition to endogamous marriages.

Interestingly, despite this general picture, our analysis shows different and original paths as well. Among men, the pattern of marriage migration does not significantly differ according to the reason for migration. At the same time, female labour migrants do not have the same time-related pattern in the transition to marriage that is typical for male labour migrants. Thus, in our analyses, the gender role seems to be more important than the reason for migration in defining the timing of endogamous marriage.

A further and different picture emerges for exogamous WIT marriages. The general patterns differ more according to the reason for migration than by gender: affective reasons stimulate the transition to exogamous WIT marriage regardless of gender, while labour reasons postpone it. This result could be related to two factors: exogamous WIT marriage is frequently a strategy for gaining integration in the host country (by achieving naturalisation); in addition, this could indicate that an individual could already be in contact with his/her future partner before migration. Unfortunately, the data do not allow us to define the legal status of migrants on arrival in Italy, or the process of regularisation.

In addition, our results confirm the important role of the context of origin, by gender, as an expression of the system of values and norms, and of the culture, in shaping the transition to marriage (Kalmijin 1998; Kalmijin/van Tubergen 2010). Women from countries with more egalitarian gender roles have a higher propensity for exogamous marriage, while women from countries with more traditional gender roles have a higher propensity for endogamous marriage (H3). Conversely, and confirming previous results (Schroedter/Rössel 2013), among men, a structural perspective prevails: men of small/ medium-sized communities in Italy with higher gender imbalances show lower transition rates to endogamous marriages and higher transition rates to exogamous marriages (H4).

The results support our hypotheses about the impact of human capital on marriage transition for women, but only for the transition to exogamous WIT marriage among men. In addition, having a high level of employment seems to be more powerful as a “bargaining chip” among both women and men. Unemployment fosters the transition to marriage not only for exogamous marriage, as expected, but also for endogamous marriage.

It should be noted that this study has three main limitations that should be taken into account. First, the data do not allow us to consider affective relationships and informal partnerships from a longitudinal perspective. Thus, we cannot know if the respondent had already met his/her future spouse before migration. This could reduce the time before the transition to first marriage after the migration event. However, the dummy “affective reason” for migration and the variable “migration project on arrival in Italy” should control for this bias. Moreover, Italian law allows legal reunification only for those in formal or

marital union, and thus the risk of wrongly assuming the partner's migration as "independent" should be low.

Second, the use of event-history methods is limited, since most variables included in the models are observed as time-invariant. Moreover, little information is related to the pre-migration period or concerns the migration event itself. For example, we cannot consider an irregular status at migration that will undoubtedly postpone endogamous marriage as well as enhancing the probability of an exogamous WIT marriage in the destination country (to reduce the time required to achieve legal status). Unquestionably, longitudinal data would be the most appropriate source, since it would allow us to follow migrants throughout their migration experience, using time-varying variables and determining the casual nexus between migration and marriage (Elder 1985; Terzera 2011; Mussino et al. 2015). Unfortunately, due to the lack of longitudinal data for Italy, such an approach is not feasible. Despite this limitation, the cross-sectional SCIF data provide retrospective information about the timing of specific events (such as marriage or migration), which represent an original contribution to the general knowledge by applying time-related analyses.

Third, we have retrospective information due to the cross-sectional nature of the data. Migration and marriage are considered major life events, and thus we do not expect any memory problems to have affected the data. However, we should take into account the possibility of bias due to re-emigration (Ortensi 2015; Ortensi/Barbiano di Belgiojoso 2018). We could have missed all the migrants who have already left Italy (such as return migrations or onward migrations). Few data are available for re-emigration in Italy; however, the empirical evidence (Barbiano di Belgiojoso/Ortensi 2013) shows that at the time of the survey, less than 10% of migrants declared their intention to leave Italy. In addition, the selections generated by returnees and onward migration are sometimes complementary (*ibid.*): onward migration seems to be more related to both a search for better opportunities on the part of educated migrants, favoured by legal conditions and a coping strategy against unemployment, while flows toward the countries of origin are less linked to unemployment, and thus the migration experience seems to be related to withdrawal on the part of those individuals with more limited capabilities.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the obtained results meaningfully and originally contribute to the international debate related to the timing of union formation of single migrants in the destination country, which also depends on the settlement process, such as integration into the labour market and the socio-economic context, and/or on discrimination faced in Italian society.

The current Italian legislation (introduced in 2002 with the "Bossi-Fini Law") requires that third-country citizens applying for or renewing their residence permit must have regular employment. Thus, it reduces the chance of permanent regular settlement in Italy in cases of unemployment or irregular work, and consequently, it negatively affects couple formation. In particular, according to our results, male migrants are the most disadvantaged in the transition to union, as they remain single in many cases or need long periods of settlement in the host country before forming a couple.

The recent economic crisis negatively affected employment conditions and increased the unemployment rate more among immigrants (in particular, men) than among natives (Bonifazi/Marini 2014). At an individual level, the financial uncertainty deeply influenced demographic behaviour, delaying couple formation and childbearing in early adulthood. In the last

few years, marriages with at least one foreign partner (in particular, the ones with both partners being foreign) significantly decreased in Italy (Gabrielli et al. 2017).

These matters require reducing or removing the link between having a regular job and obtaining a residence permit in order to favour migrants' settlement/integration and couple-formation processes. Moreover, it is important to provide more regularisation channels and legal entry routes in order to avoid ex-ante (and not only ex-post through periodical regularisations) negative consequences of irregular status for migrants, in particular with respect to handling family-related issues.

In the end, policies supporting the reconciliation of work, family, and private life (such as employment protection and non-discrimination measures, cash benefits, health protection, maternal leave at work, and childcare provisions) may encourage couple formation among migrants.

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Appendix

Table 1: Description of the variables included in the models.

Variables	Categories	N.	%
Age at arrival	16-17	650	9.9
	18-22	2,513	38.1
	23-27	1,869	28.3
	28-32	914	13.9
	33+	650	9.9
Area of residence at arrival in Italy	North-East	2,250	34.1
	North-West	1,411	21.4
	Center	1,660	25.2
	South&Islands	1,274	19.3
Educational level	Primary or less (7 yrs. or less)	756	11.5
	Lower secondary (8-10 yrs.)	1,795	27.2
	Upper secondary (11-15 yrs.)	3,057	46.4
	Tertiary (16 yrs. and more)	986	15.0
First job before union	Unemployed	2,174	33.0
	Low level (Ateco level: 7, 8)	1,588	24.1
	Middle Level (A. level: 5, 6)	2,391	36.3
	High level (A. level: 1-4)	441	6.7
Labor reason of migration (lack of work, earn more, better quality of life)	No	2,230	33.8
	Yes	4,365	66.2
Affective reason of migration (affective reasons, family problems)	No	4,670	70.8
	Yes	1,925	29.2
Migration for other reasons (e.g. study or humanitarian reasons)	No	5,359	81.3
	Yes	1,236	18.7
Parents' agreement about migration	No	4,638	70.3
	Yes	1,957	29.7
Project of permanence at arrival in Italy	Permanent	2,237	33.9
	Temporal	2,232	33.9
	Do not know	2,126	32.2
Total		6,595	100.0

Source: Authors' elaboration using SCIF survey (2011-2012)

Mirko K. Braack & Nadja Milewski

A different perspective on exogamy: Are non-migrant partners in mixed unions more liberal in their attitudes toward gender, family, and religion than other natives?

Abstract

Classic assimilation theory perceives migrant-native intermarriage as both a means to and a result of immigrants' integration processes into host societies. The literature is increasingly focusing on marital exogamy of immigrants, yet almost nothing is known about their native partners. This explorative study contributes to the literature on migrant integration and social cohesion in Europe by asking whether the native partners in exogamous unions have different attitudes toward gender equality, sexual liberalization, family solidarity, and religiosity/secularization than natives in endogamous unions. Our theoretical considerations are based on preference, social exchange, and modernization theories. We use data of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) of seven countries. The sample size is 38,447 natives aged 18 to 85, of whom about 4% are in a mixed union. The regression results of the study are mixed. Persons in exogamous unions show greater agreement with family solidarity, are thus less individualistic than those in endogamous couples. Yet, mixing is associated with greater openness to sexual liberalization and gender equality as well as more secular attitudes. These findings can only partially be explained by socio-demographic control variables. Hence, immigrants in exogamous unions with natives may integrate into the more liberal milieu of their host societies, in which natives continue to place a high value on providing support to family members.

Key words: Exogamy, gender equality, attitudes, partner choice, migrant assimilation, Generations and Gender Survey

1. Introduction

Increasing shares of migrants in European host societies have affected receiving countries by creating a change of opportunities on partner markets. It is still true that non-migrant natives are usually in unions with other natives, and migrants are generally in unions with other migrants (Schroedter/Kalter 2008). However, in European countries with larger migrant populations, there appears to be a slight increase in mating preference for members of minority groups as partners (Potârcă/Mills, 2015), and the numbers of intermarriages are on the rise (Qian/Lichter 2011). In Europe, the average crude mixed marriage rate is

0.8 per thousand persons, and about 15% of the total number of marriages in 2006 and 2007 were intermarriages (Lanzieri 2012).

Classic and new assimilation theories perceive marriages between majority and (migrant) minority groups as a means to or/and a result of immigrants' integration into their host societies (Alba/Nee 1997; Aldridge 1978; Gordon 1964). Elwert (2018) highlighted that "intermarriage lies between the poles of social openness and social restraints" (Elwert 2018: 14); it is connected with social structure (Blau 1977; Blau/Becker/Fitzpatrick 1984), and social status (Davis 1941). Numerous studies have focused on the migrant partners in mixed couples in Europe and the US, including on their determinants and trends in partner choices (e.g. Baykara-Krumme/Fuß 2009; Beck-Gernsheim 2006; Chiswick/Houseworth 2011; Chi 2015; Lichter/Qian/Tumin 2015; Pagnini/Morgan 1990). Research on the so-called intermarriage premium effect (Furtado/Song 2015; Lee/Bean 2004) works with the implicit assumption that the native partner facilitates (further) social integration of the migrant partner. However, to date almost nothing is known about the native partners in these unions (Elwert 2018).

This is somewhat surprising, as the literature promotes the perception that people in mixed marriages could be "seen as the ultimate boundary breaker" (Rodríguez-García 2015: 13). This basic assumption, however, has rarely been contested (Milewski/Gawron 2019). Our paper is of an explorative nature and aims to increase our knowledge about the native partners in such unions, who are as diverse as the immigrants themselves.

For the natives, there are different possible types of mixed unions with migrants, which coincide with different societal and legal conditions for meeting, mating, and marrying the potential partner. First, the marriage markets in older member states of the European Union include a growing percentage of descendants of the immigrants who arrived in the 1950s and 1960s (Eurostat 2014). Second, migrants from European and non-European countries today, especially women, move more often as singles than the classic work migrants who arrived in the 1960s did (Anthias/Lazaridis 2000). Some research has indicated that being in a mixed union may foster the possibilities of permanent residence in Europe for migrants from non-European countries (de Hart 2015; Koopmans/Michalowski/Waibel 2012). Migrants from countries belonging to the European Union have the privilege of freedom of movement (Verwiebe 2008). In the member states of the European Union, the share of European migrants is still lower than the share of non-European migrants (Mau/Büttner 2011), but the number of intra-European couples has been increasing (Schroedter/de Winter/Koelet 2015; Verwiebe 2008). Third, marriage migration may not be a new phenomenon, but as a result of globalization, in which also marriage markets are globalized, it is increasing (Elwert 2018). Non-migrant men and women can meet and mate with potential spouses abroad and "import" them (Constable 2003; Kim 2010; Niedomysl/Östh/van Ham 2010). In the case of marriage migration, the native partner is the starting point of the integration of the migrant into the society at destination. In these marriage market segments, natives – like migrants – may need to overcome legal obstacles created by integration and migration policies, as well as prejudices or even sanctions imposed by their social networks, if they form a mixed marriage (Alba/Foner 2014; Carol 2013; Contucci/Sandell 2015; Rodríguez-García 2010; Schlueter/Meuleman/Davidov 2013).

In our study, we pose the research question of whether natives in mixed unions are not only a selected group in their attitudes toward diversity (as expressed in their partner choice), but whether they also have more liberal values and attitudes in other social or cultural dimensions compared to their native counterparts in endogamous unions. Our paper contributes to the literature in two ways. First, we investigate natives in a mixed union because they are assumed in the scientific literature to play a prominent role in the integration processes of the migrant partner and the children of the mixed couple. Second, we focus on values and attitudes, which have rarely been included in previous research on exogamy (Huschek/de Valk/Liefbroer 2011), but which are essential for understanding social change. We study attitudes toward sexual liberalization, gender equality, and family solidarity as well as religiosity, because these attitudes are crucial both for individual union formation and for the self-concept of societies. Despite variations within Europe, these dimensions are intertwined because all of them are subject to modernization processes (Gerhards 2010; Inglehart 1997; Norris/Inglehart 2012).

In the second section of our study, we summarize the theoretical considerations and the previous research on partner choice and exogamy, and relate them to social attitudes. Modernization theories serve as the backdrop of our research, as opinions on immigration (Rustenbach 2010) and on diversity (Brown et al. 2018) are seen as important elements in value shifts toward individualism. A mixed couple is defined as a union (marriage or cohabitation) between a native who lives in his/her country of birth and an immigrant who is not living in the country of his/her birth or who is a child of at least one parent who was not born in this country. In the third chapter, we introduce our data, which cover seven European countries of the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey, and our analytical strategy. In the fourth chapter, we present the results of the multivariate regression models. Finally, we discuss our results and the limitations of our analyses, as well as the implications of our findings for future research.

2. Background: Theoretical considerations and empirical findings

2.1 Mate selection and exogamy from the natives' perspective

Mate selection may follow two main paths. On the one hand, “opposites may attract each other”, and on the other hand, mate selection may be homogamous in nature, “like marries like” – with reference to a wide variety of traits” (Goode 1964: 33), and endogamous, “marriage within the group” (Rosenfeld 2008: 3) (Burges/Wallin 1943). Previous research suggests that both of these paths complement each other (Kalmijn 1998); e.g., partners may start the mate selection process based on a preference for homogamy and then “cast a wider net” to more heterogeneous options if they are not successful. Economic theories, which assume that marriage is about gaining benefits for both partners, support both types. In positive assortative mating, the traits of the partners supplement each other and increase the benefit of a marriage, whereas in negative assortative mating, partners marry when substitutes are most effective (Becker 1973).

Classic status exchange theory (Davis 1941) views intermarriages as a possibility of status exchange (e.g. Gullickson/Fu 2010). This theory assumes that a high socio-economic status of a partner belonging to a minority group can be exchanged with the majority status of the native partner. In the end, both partners would presumably benefit from the union (Sassler/Joyner 2011). With respect to migrant status, the literature provides mixed evidence on the question of whether exogamy is also associated with heterogamy in other socio-demographic characteristics. Some quantitative studies (e.g. Glowsky 2011; González-Ferrer et al. 2018; Medrano et al. 2014; Schroedter/Rössel 2014; van Wissen/Heering 2014) have shown that exogamy is often accompanied by heterogamy in other traits, such as age, education, and cultural characteristics, and have traced this pattern back to status exchange mechanisms. Others see exogamy as having little connection to heterogamy in other characteristics, and explain intermarriage with a migrant using homogamy/preference theories (Çelikaksoy/Nielsen/Verner 2006). They suggest that resources such as education are more important for partner choice than, for example, ethnicity (Çelikaksoy/ Nekby/Rashid 2010). This pattern may be traced back to a tendency of single people to “sort along class lines” (Choi/Tienda 2017: 302). Social class may have a greater influence on meeting potential partners than ethnicity (Cohen 1977; Lampard 2007).

The mechanisms of mate selection in mixed unions are related not only to social class, but also to gender. Therborn (2004) showed how family and gender roles have changed throughout the world over the years, but pointed to the continuous differences between men and women who are “embedded in social and economic relations of inequality” (Therborn 2004: 127). Men and women in these relations have been influenced by different ideals such as romantic love and how they identify themselves through unions (Giddens 1992), and this affects how they practice gender roles (Evans 2017). Gullickson and Fu (2010) highlighted gender differences in classic status exchange theory (Merton 1941). They suggested that the socio-economic characteristics of minority-group men are more valued than such characteristics of minority-group women on partner markets. According to household economics (Becker 1973), such gender differences are the result of a gendered work division, which maximizes the productivity of the commodities of a family, i.e., through specification in household work for women and labor market participation for men.

In an empirical study, Glowsky (2011) investigated German men who marry women from poorer countries. These native men tend to be retired or unemployed, and they exchange access to citizenship for specific attributes of migrant women, such as migrant women’s physical attractiveness and being of younger age than themselves. A similar finding of exchanging youth and attractiveness has been reported for Spain, but for both native men and women who are in a mixed union with a migrant (González-Ferrer et al. 2018). Findings for Germany show that men often search for their mates abroad, rather than finding their partners in the residential migrant population of the host society. By contrast, native women depend more on the opportunity structures of the local partner market and are more likely to find a migrant partner there than to search them abroad (Nauck 2009).

In addition to heterogamy in individual social characteristics and gendered patterns, intermarriages reflect the diversity and the migration history of European countries:

While immigration is a relatively new issue in Eastern European countries (Salt 2011), in Western Europe different migrant generations and contexts coexist. In former colonial powers, natives may have more similarities to migrants from former colonies, due to a shared religion, and might have more differences to Eastern European migrants (Medrano et al. 2014). In the older member states of the European Union, growing diversity stems largely from the immigration of Muslims (Modood 2003; van der Noll 2014). For countries in Eastern Europe, the experience of being a host country is new, and the numbers and the origins of the immigrants in these countries differ from those in Western Europe. Immigration patterns also vary greatly by country. In the Baltic countries minority groups are the result of migration in the Soviet era (Puur et al. 2018). For Poland, changing European politics have changed the partner market: women in mixed unions tend to have partners from Western Europe, while men tend to have partners from other Eastern European countries (Slany/Żadkowska 2017). In multiethnic countries such as Russia (Soroko 2018), the role of different Christian confessions creates still other opportunities and barriers for members of majority and minority groups to mate (Werth 2008).

Whereas this literature on mixed partner choice among natives is rather scarce, there is even less literature on the scope, internal dynamics of conflict and negotiation, and social consequences of marital mixing for natives (Rodríguez-García 2015). Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2013) suggested a shift of power inside mixed unions, which bears the potential for problems in these partnerships. Williams emphasized the exposure of persons in mixed unions to their environment, i.e. they experience scrutiny by almost every part of a society (Williams 2010). Women in a mixed union report that they experience prejudices and discrimination when their partner is a migrant more often than men do (Breger 1998; de Hart 2006).

2.2 *Exogamy and social attitudes*

Previous literature on partner choice has suggested that cultural aspects also matter. Based on preference theory, the partners may have similar values, opinions, and tastes (Kalmijn 1998). Values and attitudes toward culture have rarely been directly investigated in previous research on exogamy, though (Huschek/de Valk/Liefbroer 2011). Rather, empirical studies implicitly assume that native-migrant unions may be associated with cultural differences between the partners, and that the native partner (i.e. mainly referring to Europeans) may hold the “more modern” attitudes. Such stereotyping has been fueled by scientific and public discourses on immigrant assimilation in western receiving countries, which detected a “fault line” (Alba 2005:41) between majority and minority groups caused by religion and/or culture. Specifically, the attitudes toward sexual liberalization and gender equality are seen as crucial for immigrant integration in western countries (Norris/Inglehart 2012). As these dimensions are key for partner choice, we want to elaborate how exogamy and social attitudes could be associated.

According to socialization theories, value orientations evolve in early life, reflect the life conditions in preadolescent years, and are very stable over the life course (Inglehart 1997). Theories of modernization mostly work on the assumption that a shift occurred from materialist values – i.e., safety, familism, collectivism – toward postmodern values –

i.e., an emphasis on a high quality of life, self-expression, individualism – in the last decades, especially in Western European countries (Inglehart 1997; Inglehart/Welzel 2010). This value shift is visible in attitudes toward religion, gender roles, or establishing a family (Inglehart/Norris 2003; Norris/Inglehart 2012). Moreover, this shift could be the source of conflicts within a society, because older birth cohorts and more “conservative” individuals may lose their familiar surroundings and must adapt to changing societies (Inglehart/Ponarin/Inglehart 2017). Modernization theories suggest that boundaries based on national or ethnic group identity may become less important if living conditions are secure and self-expression is highly valued. In such societies, individual wellbeing is a crucial factor in fostering (interpersonal) trust (Rustenbach 2010) and tolerance (Inglehart 1997). Thus, modernization processes may also imply an attitudinal shift toward greater openness to population diversity (Inglehart 2018).

What do these modernization theories and previous empirical findings imply for natives in a mixed union with a migrant? The perception of immigration and migrants is mainly influenced by economic determinants; i.e., skilled and highly educated people are more likely to have positive attitudes toward migrants (Mayda 2006). It has also been shown that exogamous unions are more common among people who are highly educated (Carol/Lesczensky 2019) or have postmodern value orientations (Khatib-Chahidi/Hill/Paton 1998; Mays 2012). Thus, exogamy may be an expression of pro-diversity attitudes. On the other hand, mixed unions may serve as a coping strategy when value shifts have occurred in the society. A mixed union may enable native spouses to adhere to more traditional gender roles (Refsing 1998). One such example are men in the US who marry Asian wives, assuming that these women will be more conservative than those in the US (Constable 2005). A qualitative study in Germany has provided mixed evidence about children and their parents; Khounani (2000) showed that natives in endogamous couples combine aspects of “tradition” and “modernization”. Compared to these natives, the partners in a mixed, intra-European couple (in his study, the partners were mainly from Scandinavia) tend to be more “liberal,” and the partners in a mixed couple with a non-European partner (usually from Iran or Turkey) tend to have more “traditional” family values and attitudes toward childrearing.

In our study, we concentrate on four dimensions of attitudes which are indicative of individualism/collectivism and modernization: gender equality, sexual liberalization, secularization/religiosity (following Norris/Inglehart 2012), and family solidarity. Perry (2014, 2016) showed that people in the US with a higher religiosity in adulthood and religious upbringing are less likely to be in a mixed union. For many natives in Europe, religion is becoming less important (Adamczyk 2013), but public discourses and contention about Islam indicate that the issue of religion – still or again – matters in European societies (Storm 2012). In religiously mixed unions, both partners have to negotiate how they practice their own religion and that of their partner in day-to-day life. They could mix the two, or one partner may give up his or her affiliations and traditions (Tseng 1977).

Religiosity, in turn, is associated with other social attitudes, most prominent among them are attitudes toward sexual liberalization and gender equality (Norris/Inglehart 2012). There is also the role of family solidarity which could account for differences between collectivistic and individualistic behavior, and in which we can differentiate between immigrants and European natives. There is evidence of a higher intergenerational

solidarity in migrant families compared to natives (Carnein/Baykara-Krumme 2013) and to families in the migrants' country of origin (Baykara-Krumme 2013). The latter aspects are related to the question of modernization as well (Inglehart 1997).

2.3 Working hypotheses

To conclude our literature review and theoretical considerations about associations of mixed couples and attitudes toward culture and religion, we formulate working hypotheses to guide our empirical study. We treat the couple type (mixed vs. endogamous) as the main explanatory variable and attitudes as dependent variables. This allows us to take into account unions of short and longer durations, as well as the possibility of value changes in an existing union. Although values evolve in younger ages and seem to be relatively stable, social attitudes could change over an individual life course. This could be the case depending on aging and changes in the responsibilities for others, or as the result of a highly significant event in society people share, or as the consequence of an individual life event or specific experiences (Hofer/Reinders/Fries 2010). In mixed partnerships, individuals may change their attitudes as a reaction to experiences of discrimination, which could affect our analysis. We could, however, not take into account how attitudes had influenced the partner choice initially or whether/why they have changed in the course of the union. We aim at exploring what attitudes individuals in mixed unions have, in order to test the assumption that the native partners in mixed unions are forerunners in migrant integration and social cohesion.

Hence, our first and main hypothesis proposes an association between exogamy and social attitudes toward gender, family, and religion, with different possible scenarios. On one hand, we can consider mixed unions to be a coping strategy for natives who had been confronted with modernization and had been searching for a more conservative partner with whom they could share these values. These natives may consider religion to be an important factor in life, and sort their public and private spheres along conservative gender and family roles. Exogamy may therefore be associated with more traditional attitudes. On the other hand, we might assume that choosing a migrant partner and living in a mixed partnership requires a person to cross social boundaries and to resist discrimination against migrants in the host society. This would mean that being in a mixed union is an expression of pro-diversity attitudes, which could, in turn, be associated with more liberal attitudes (exogamy and association of attitudes – hypothesis/H1). We estimate separate models for men and women, because previous research has provided different results for men and women.

Second, we account for the socio-demographic composition of the sample. The natives, who have higher education levels, who are younger, who are in a subsequent union, and who live in a non-marital union, may have more liberal attitudes. We examine intra-European variations using country clusters, assuming there are more liberal attitudes in the older EU member states as well as in the northern countries (Gerhards 2010; Liebert 2003; Walby 2004). Controlling for socio-demographic composition of the groups in the sample and country of residence would presumably decrease the differences in attitudes between natives in mixed and endogamous marriages (if there should be any) (compositional hypothesis/ H2).

We control for heterogamy regarding other traits – i.e., comparative education – of the partners. Such heterogamy would moderate the association between exogamy and attitudes. Thus, controlling for heterogamy is expected to reduce the effect of the mixed union (heterogamy hypothesis/ H3).

In addition, we investigate the role of marriage migration in exogamous unions. Relating to discussions of previous studies of men and women in such unions, we would expect natives in a couple with a marriage migrant to be more conservative (marriage migration hypothesis/ H4).

3. Empirical analysis

3.1 *Data and sample*

We used the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), which is an international survey coordinated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE 2005) designed to yield a better understanding of family relations. It contains data collected between 2004 and 2013¹. We chose the GGS primarily because it contains information on attitudes of the respondents (Vikat et al. 2007). In addition, it includes a sufficient number of natives in mixed couples for a multivariate analysis. However, these data did have some limitations. We used cross-sectional data, which do not allow us to draw conclusions on causality. The data only contain information on stable unions, and provide rather limited information on the partner. Therefore, we want to emphasize that our analysis has an explorative character.

The GGS data enable us to compare older member states of the European Union and destinations for migrants (Belgium) data from 2008 to 2010, France (2005), Germany (2005), Sweden (2012 to 2013) as well as new members and new destinations for migrants Poland (2011 and 2012) and Lithuania (2006), which were subject to temporary restrictions on free movement for the first years of their memberships. Our sample also contains data of the non-EU member state Russia (2004 to 2008). As our research interest is only about natives in co-residential couples, we excluded migrant respondents (of both the first and the second generation), and singles. We constructed two study samples, separated by gender. The sample for men consists of 18,361 persons; the sample for women comprises 20,086 individuals.

To address the questions regarding marriage migration, we constructed one subsample for each sex (786 women and 696 men) that consists exclusively of natives in mixed unions.

1 This paper uses data from the GGS Wave 1 (doi:10.17026/dans-z5z-xn8g), See Gauthier, A. et al. (2018) or visit the GGP website: (<https://www.ggp-i.org/>) for methodological details. We used wave 1, version 4.3 of 2016 (UNECE 2005).

3.2 Variables

We used four dependent variables which captured attitudes toward culture and religion. These were sexual liberalization², gender equality³, individualism (family solidarity)⁴, and secularization⁵. These items were based on Likert scales and ranged from 1 to 5. For all four dependent variables, a low score indicates a more conservative, collectivistic, or religious point of view, and a high score was connected to more liberal attitudes, individualism, or secularism.

The main independent variable captures whether a person is in a mixed union or not: we defined that those natives, born in the country of residence with both parents also born in the country of residence, are in an endogamous union if their partner is also a native (0). If the partner was not born in the country of residence, or if the partner had not been a citizen of the country of residence since birth, we identify the person as migrant and thus the couple was regarded a mixed union (1). For our subsamples of only exogamous natives and the question of whether the partner is a marriage migrant or not, we considered how much time had passed between arriving in the destination country and the start of the union. Cases with less than one year in the host country before starting a union were defined as marriage migration (1). If the migrant partner had been in the host country longer than a year, migration and union formation were presumably not correlated. Thus, we did not classify such relationships as resulting from marriage migration (0).

We use country of residence as a group variable in multilevel analyses⁶. Additional independent variables accounted for individual socio-demographics, and couple characteristics. The birth years of the respondents were grouped into ten-year intervals. To examine education, we pooled the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels into one of three groups: low (corresponding to primary education), medium (corresponding to lower and upper secondary level, as well as post-secondary level), and high educational level (corresponding to tertiary education). The education of the partner was constructed in a similar way and was used to pinpoint educational homogamy/heterogamy between the partners.

For the order of partnership, we used the question of whether the respondent had any previous partnerships and combined the question for the number of union dissolutions with this. If there was any previous partnership, we identified the actual partnership as a subsequent and not the first one. The variable of whether the partners were married (1) or were in a non-marital relationship (0) was constructed by combining the marital status given and the question as to whether respondents were married with their current partner.

Further controls were the number of children and the union duration, which was measured by using the year of data collection and the information of the starting year of the union.

2 Items captured attitudes toward divorce and homosexuality.

3 Items captured women's gender roles, such as motherhood and labor force participation.

4 Items captured responsibility of children in caring for and giving financial help to their parents.

5 Items captured the importance of religious ceremonies in life-course rituals.

6 The smallest group of women is 1,839, the largest group is 6,376, there are 2,869.4 on average. The smallest group of men is 1,704, the largest group is 5,408, the average is 2,623.

3.3 *Methods*

For the question of attitudes to sexual liberalization, gender equality, individualism (family solidarity) and secularization, we estimated a linear multilevel regression model for each dimension, considering the hierarchical structure between the individual and the contextual level (Olive 2017). This was necessary to account for the differences among European countries in these questions. We present a two-level random effect generalized least squares regression model with the country of residence as cluster (Rabe-Hesketh/Skrondal 2008). Results are displayed as regression coefficients. The first models contain the main explanatory variable of whether the native is in a mixed union or not and the birth cohort. The second models add the rest of the independent variables described above. Our last analysis reduces the sample to exogamous unions in order to account for marriage migration, as this is specific to mixed unions.

4. Results

4.1 *Descriptive findings on exogamy*

In a bivariate overview of our samples (for women see Table 1.1 and for men see Table 1.2) 4% of the native women are part of a mixed couple, as are 4% of the native men. There are differences between the countries, with the highest frequencies of women in mixed couples in Russia (7%), Belgium (5%) and France (5%), and the lowest in Lithuania (3%) and Poland (1%). The highest numbers of men in mixed couples can be found in Sweden (6%) and Russia (6%), and the lowest in Lithuania (3%) and Poland (1%). Men and women in mixed couples have higher proportions of highly educated individuals; the share of highly educated natives in mixed unions is 7 percentage points higher for men and 6 percentage points higher for women compared to endogamous unions. The share of subsequent unions is higher in exogamous unions (among women 10 percentage points and among men 11 percentage points). Marriage migration is more common for native men (25%) than for women (19%).

Native women have higher scores for attitudes toward sexual liberalization and gender equality, i.e., women are more “liberal” in social attitudes, however they are more religious than men. There are hardly any differences for family solidarity (higher scores indicating a higher degree of individualism and lower scores more collectivistic/familistic attitudes) between the sexes. By country, men and women in the older member states of the European Union have higher scores for such attitudes than those natives in Eastern Europe and Russia, with the most liberal attitudes in Sweden (results not displayed). By couple type (see Table 1.3), both native men and women in mixed couples throughout Europe have slightly higher mean scores for secularization and for sexual liberalization. Native men in mixed couples also have slightly higher mean scores for attitudes toward gender equality. Again, there are no significant differences for family solidarity.

Table 1.1: Descriptive overview of the sample for native women, by couple type

		Endogamous couples		Mixed couples		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Country of residence	Belgium	1,741	94.7	98	5.3	1,839	9.2
	France	2,351	94.6	134	5.4	2,485	12.4
	Germany	2,276	96.0	94	4.0	2,370	11.8
	Sweden	1,821	95.4	88	4.6	1,909	9.5
	Poland	6,284	98.6	92	1.4	6,376	31.7
	Lithuania	2,169	96.7	73	3.3	2,242	11.2
	Russia	2,658	92.8	207	7.2	2,865	14.3
Birth cohort	1924-1929	194	1.0	7	0.9	201	1.0
	1930-1939	1,540	8.0	89	11.3	1,629	8.1
	1940-1949	2,888	15.0	138	17.6	3,026	15.1
	1950-1959	4,365	22.6	178	22.6	4,543	22.6
	1960-1969	4,258	22.1	189	24.0	4,447	22.1
	1970-1994	6,055	31.4	185	23.5	6,240	31.0
Education (respondent)	Low	1,357	7.1	40	5.1	1,397	7.0
	Medium	10,282	53.3	347	44.1	10,629	52.9
	High	5,104	26.4	248	31.6	5,352	26.6
	mv	2,557	13.2	151	19.2	2,708	13.5
Order of partnership (respondent)	1st	16,417	85.1	578	73.5	16,995	84.6
	2nd+	2,883	14.9	208	26.5	3,091	15.4
Relative education to partner	Homogamy	11,493	59.6	404	51.4	11,897	59.3
	Higher Level	2,733	14.2	100	12.7	2,833	14.1
	Lower level	2,496	12.9	127	16.2	2,623	13.1
	mv	2,578	13.4	155	19.7	2,733	13.6
Union type	Cohabitation	2,860	14.8	149	19.0	3,009	15.0
	Marriage	16,440	85.2	637	81.0	17,077	85.0
Union duration (in years)	≤ 5	2,898	15.0	146	18.6	3,044	15.1
	6-10	1,839	9.5	73	9.3	1,912	9.5
	11+	13,945	72.2	537	68.3	14,482	72.1
	mv	618	3.2	30	3.8	648	3.2
Number of children	0	2,803	14.5	120	15.3	2,923	14.6
	1	4,623	23.9	177	22.5	4,800	23.9
	2	7,542	39.1	282	35.9	7,824	38.9
	3+	4,332	22.5	207	26.3	4,539	22.6
Marriage migration of partner	No	na	na	634	80.7	na	na
	Yes	na	na	152	19.3	na	na
Total		19,300	96.1	786	3.9	20,086	100

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004-2013), authors' calculations. Note: mv=missing values, na=not applicable.

Table 1.2: Descriptive overview of the sample for native men, by couple type

		Endogamous couples		Mixed couples		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Country of residence	Belgium	1,723	94.8	94	5.2	1,817	9.9
	France	1,973	95.1	101	4.9	2,074	11.3
	Germany	1,954	95.6	90	4.4	2,044	11.1
	Sweden	1,597	93.7	107	6.3	1,704	9.3
	Poland	5,333	98.6	75	1.4	5,408	29.5
	Lithuania	2,927	96.8	97	3.2	3,024	16.5
	Russia	2,158	94.2	132	5.8	2,290	12.5
Birth cohort	1924-1929	373	2.1	15	2.2	388	2.1
	1930-1939	2,252	12.8	97	13.9	2,349	12.8
	1940-1949	3,212	18.2	155	22.3	3,367	18.3
	1950-1959	3,989	22.6	150	21.6	4,139	22.5
	1960-1969	3,565	20.2	146	21.0	3,711	20.2
	1970-1994	4,274	24.2	133	19.1	4,407	24.0
Education (respondent)	Low	1,266	7.2	33	4.7	1,299	7.1
	Medium	10,007	56.6	337	48.4	10,344	56.3
	High	4,217	23.9	214	30.7	4,431	24.1
	mv	2,175	12.3	112	16.1	2,287	12.4
Order of partnership (respondent)	1st	15,229	86.2	510	73.3	15,739	85.7
	2nd+	2,436	13.8	186	26.7	2,622	14.3
Relative education of partner	Homogamy	10,517	59.5	375	53.9	10,892	59.3
	Higher Level	2,088	11.8	87	12.5	2,175	11.9
	Lower level	2,855	16.2	121	17.4	2,976	16.2
	mv	2,205	12.5	113	16.2	2,318	12.6
Union type	Cohabitation	2,310	13.1	92	13.2	2,402	13.1
	Marriage	15,355	86.9	604	86.8	15,959	86.9
Union duration (in years)	≤ 5	2,445	13.8	115	16.5	2,820	13.9
	6-10	1,445	8.2	68	9.8	1,532	8.2
	11+	13,228	74.9	492	70.7	13,349	74.7
	mv	547	3.1	21	3.0	660	3.1
Number of children	0	2,946	16.7	115	16.5	3,061	16.7
	1	4,178	23.7	159	22.8	4,337	23.6
	2	6,771	38.3	267	38.4	7,038	38.3
	3+	3,770	21.3	155	22.3	3,925	21.4
Marriage migration of partner	No	na	na	524	75.3	na	na
	Yes	na	na	172	24.7	na	na
Total		17,665	96.2	696	3.8	18,361	100.0

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004-2013), authors' calculations. Note: mv=missing values, na=not applicable.

Table 1.3: Descriptive statistics: attitudes, by sex, couple type, and country (difference between means)

	Country	Women Difference = mixed – endogamous	Men Difference = mixed – endogamous
Sexual liberalization	Belgium	-0.1	0.0
	France	-0.1	-0.1
	Germany	0.1	0.2
	Sweden	0.0	0.0
	Poland	-0.1*	0.2
	Lithuania	0.0	-0.1
	Russia	0.0	0.2
	Total sample	0.1**	0.2***
Gender equality	Belgium	0.0	0.0
	France	0.1	0.0
	Germany	0.0	0.1
	Sweden	0.0	0.0
	Poland	-0.1*	0.0
	Lithuania	-0.1	-0.1*
	Russia	0.1	0.1*
	Total sample	0.0	0.1***
Individualism (family solidarity)	Belgium	0.0	-0.3***
	France	-0.1	-0.2
	Germany	-0.1	-0.1
	Sweden	-0.2**	-0.2**
	Poland	0.1	0.0
	Lithuania	-0.1	-0.1
	Russia	0.0	0.0
	Total sample	0.0	0.0
Secularization (religiosity)	Belgium	-0.1	0.1
	France	-0.1	0.4*
	Germany	0.1	-0.1
	Sweden	0.0	0.1
	Poland	0.1	0.2
	Lithuania	0.3***	0.3**
	Russia	0.1	0.0
	Total sample	0.2***	0.3***

Note: Differences between the mean scores for natives in mixed and endogamous couples.

Read as, e.g., in the total sample native women in mixed unions have a 0.1 point higher score in attitudes to sexual liberalization than natives in an endogamous union, indicating that natives in mixed unions are more liberal.

T-test: * $t \leq 0.05$; ** $t \leq 0.01$; *** $t \leq 0.001$.

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004-2013), authors' calculations ($N_{\text{women}}=20,086$, $N_{\text{men}}=18,361$).

4.2 Multivariate results for attitudes toward culture

Results for all four attitudes are displayed in Table 2.1 for women and 2.2 for men.⁷ We start by testing our main hypothesis of an exogamy effect (H1).

7 We focus on the results of the pooled country dataset containing the seven countries. We estimated the same models in addition separately for each country. We found in almost all countries similar

The first dimension is sexual liberalization. If we only control for couple type and birth cohort (W1.1 & M1.1), women and men have significantly higher scores – indicating more modern attitudes – if they are in a mixed union. This effect becomes smaller and no longer significant for native women (W1.2), if we control for individual determinants and couple characteristics. And also for men the effect gets weaker after controlling, but remains significant with a 0.1 point higher score for being in a mixed union (M1.2).

Table 2.1: Results of linear regression models for attitudes among native women

		Sexual liberalization		Gender equality		Individualism (family solidarity)		Secularization	
		W1.1	W1.2	W2.1	W2.2	W3.1	W3.2	W4.1	W4.2
Type of couple (Ref. endogamous)	Mixed	0.14***	0.02	0.05	-0.04	-0.06*	-0.12***	0.18***	0.06
Birth cohort (Ref.: 1930-1939)	1924-1929	-0.15*	-0.25***	-0.19***	-0.27***	-0.25***	-0.29***	-0.06	-0.15
	1940-1949	0.24***	0.20***	0.21***	0.19***	0.13***	0.11***	0.19***	0.15***
	1950-1959	0.36***	0.29***	0.29***	0.26***	0.04	0.01	0.30***	0.22***
	1960-1969	0.52***	0.41***	0.42***	0.36***	0.06**	0.02	0.42***	0.30***
	1970-1994	0.52***	0.40***	0.42***	0.41***	-0.03	-0.06*	0.40***	0.29***
Education (Ref.: medium)	Low		-0.30***		-0.20***		-0.06**		-0.31***
	High		0.22***		0.24***		0.02		0.30***
Order of partner- ship (Ref.: 1st)	2nd+		0.46***		0.32***		0.30***		0.50***
Relative education (Ref.: homogamy)	Higher level		-0.09***		-0.02		0.07***		-0.10***
	Lower level		0.14***		0.03*		-0.05**		0.16***
Union type (Ref.: marriage)	cohabitation		0.30***		0.19***		0.12***		0.47***
Union duration (Ref.: ≤5 years)	6-10		0.16***		0.18***		0.14***		0.26***
	11 + more		0.16***		0.24***		0.24***		0.31***
Number of children (Ref.: 0)	1		-0.22***		-0.26***		-0.07***		-0.19***
	2		-0.22***		-0.22***		0.01		-0.26***
	3+		-0.27***		-0.21***		0.07***		-0.32***
R ² within		0.061	0.069	0.071	0.079	0.003	0.003	0.025	0.053
R ² between		0.242	0.567	0.036	0.455	0.528	0.383	0.201	0.676
R ² overall		0.036	0.145	0.035	0.150	0.006	0.071	0.016	0.118

Note: * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$. Missing values not displayed.

Multilevel linear regression model, dependent variables range from 1=conservative/collectivistic/religious to 5=liberal/individualistic/secular. Country of residence used as cluster, results displayed in regression coefficients.

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004-2013), authors' calculations. N=20,086.

results for the mixed union as well as for the controls like for the pooled sample. But only few of the effects were significant, which is surely related to the small sample size and the large confidence intervals.

Table 2.2: Results of linear regression models for attitudes among native men

		Sexual liberalization		Gender equality		Individualism (family solidarity)		Secularization	
		M1.1	M1.2	M2.1	M2.2	M3.1	M3.2	M4.1	M4.2
Type of couple (Ref. endogamous)	Mixed	0.20***	0.12***	0.13***	0.07**	-0.05	-0.09**	0.30***	0.20***
Birth cohort (Ref.: 1930-1939)	1924-1929	-0.09*	-0.12**	-0.15***	-0.18***	-0.27***	-0.27***	-0.17**	-0.18***
	1940-1949	0.22***	0.19***	0.19***	0.18***	0.10***	0.09***	0.21***	0.17***
	1950-1959	0.28***	0.25***	0.24***	0.24***	0.04*	0.04	0.27***	0.22***
	1960-1969	0.37***	0.32***	0.35***	0.34***	0.03	0.03	0.35***	0.27***
	1970-1994	0.39***	0.34***	0.39***	0.47***	-0.03	0.12***	0.37***	0.31***
Education (Ref.: medium)	Low		-0.10***		-0.05*		-0.06**		-0.24***
	High		0.24***		0.25***		0.02		0.37***
Order of partnership (Ref.: 1st)	2nd+		0.37***		0.27***		0.27***		0.52***
Relative education (Ref.: homogamy)	Higher level		-0.07***		-0.08***		0.04*		-0.11***
	Lower level		0.09***		0.00		-0.11***		0.21***
Union type (Ref.: marriage)	Cohabitation		0.27***		0.14***		0.10***		0.38***
Union duration (Ref.: ≤5 years)	6-10		0.12***		0.18***		0.12***		0.19***
	11 + more		0.17***		0.26***		0.24***		0.31***
Number of children (Ref.: 0)	1		-0.14***		-0.21***		0.05**		-0.18***
	2		-0.18**		-0.16***		0.07***		-0.23***
	3+		-0.22***		-0.13***		0.10***		-0.31***
R ² within		0.040	0.048	0.075	0.071	0.003	0.003	0.025	0.054
R ² between		0.026	0.591	0.004	0.410	0.609	0.430	0.000	0.760
R ² overall		0.026	0.101	0.042	0.141	0.007	0.060	0.018	0.109

Note: * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$. Missing values not displayed.

Multilevel linear regression model, dependent variables range from 1=conservative/collectivistic/religious to 5=liberal/individualistic/secular. Country of residence used as cluster, results displayed in regression coefficients.

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004-2013), authors' calculations. N=18,361.

For the second question of gender equality, the first models produce a pattern similar to that for sexual liberalization, which suggests that people in mixed unions have more modern attitudes. Note that model W2.1 shows that the effect is insignificant for native women, whereas model M2.1 indicates that the effect of being in a mixed union is significant for native men, with a score that is more than 0.1 points higher. The insertion of further independent variables decreases the effect of the couple type, and, interestingly, changes its direction for women (W2.2). Hence, for native women, exogamy is shown to be associated with having more traditional attitudes toward gender equality, all other variables held constant.

The third dimension is individualism based on attitudes to family solidarity. Here we find a different pattern than in the previous two dimensions. Under control of characteristics of couples and individual determinants, native women and men in mixed unions have significantly lower scores for individualism; i.e. they have more collectivistic attitudes and support family solidarity more if they are in a mixed union (W 3.2 & M 3.2).

The fourth question relates to secularization and religiosity. Similar to the attitudes toward sexual liberalization and gender equality, being in a mixed couple has a positive (and significant) effect for native men and women (W4.1 & M4.1), indicating their higher degree of modern attitudes. In terms of effect size, mixing has the greatest impact on secularization among all four dimensions tested. Controlling for characteristics of couples and individual determinants, the effects become smaller both for men and women, but the direction remains the same (W4.2 & M4.2). For native men it is still significantly elevated if they are in a mixed union, whereas we can no longer find a significant effect for native women.

4.3 *Effects of controls*

In line with previous literature, our findings show that for all four attitudinal dimensions, being younger is connected to more openness toward modernization, and being older is associated with having more conservative values. Having a higher level of education is linked to having more liberal views, and living in a non-marital cohabitation is associated with more openness. However, we also find that these individual determinants have only a small influence on the effect of the couple type, which only partially supports our working hypothesis regarding compositional differences between exogamous and endogamous unions (H2).

The couple type effect is moderated by other independent variables. In our exogamy hypothesis (H3), we had assumed that exogamous unions are more likely to be subsequent unions, and that such couples are also likely to be more heterogamous in terms of other traits. Indeed, the main effect of the couple type becomes weaker when controlling for the order of partnership. Thus, being in a subsequent union is connected to having more individualistic and more secular attitudes. However, the controls for educational homogamy/heterogamy are not as clear as hypothesized. Compared to women in couples with educational homogamy, women who are less educated than their partner tend to have more modern attitudes regarding sexual liberalization, gender equality, and secularization, but more traditional attitudes regarding family solidarity. By contrast, women who are more educated than their partner score higher in individualism, but have less modern attitudes regarding sexual liberalization, gender equality, and religiosity. For men, we find that being better educated than their partner is associated with lower scores and less modern attitudes, while being less educated than their partner is associated with higher scores, and, thus, with having more liberal attitudes (except regarding individualism (family solidarity)). Hence, we find a gendered pattern in which men tend to display “modern” behavior when their partner is better educated than they are. These men also have more liberal attitudes. But for women, we find that although being better educated than their partner is a rather modern pattern of partner choice, it is not associated with having more modern attitudes.

The control variable on union duration produces similar results for each of the four dimension; the longer a union lasts, the more liberal, individualistic, and secular are their attitudes. The results on the control for the number of children indicates that having a larger family is connected with more traditional attitudes toward sexual liberalization and religiosity, but with more modern/individualistic attitudes toward gender equality and intergenerational obligations. Regarding the country of residence, we find large differences between the Western and Eastern European countries for all four dimensions. People in Poland, Lithuania, and Russia are significantly more conservative and supportive of the

collective and the family than the women and men in the older member states of the European Union. We also see small differences within the cluster of the older member states; we find the most liberal and the most individualistic attitudes in Sweden as compared to natives living in France, Belgium, and Germany. These results are in line with previous literature, which demonstrated differences between European countries.⁸

4.4 Marriage migration

We also estimate models to get a better understanding of the role of marriage migration (Table 3). Note that the sample size is even smaller for this subsample and the confidence intervals become rather large. Therefore, we refrain from interpreting the significance and size of the coefficients, but explore the direction of the effect only. In principle, we find a similar pattern as for the samples of all persons in unions when we compare those natives whose partner is a marriage migrant to those in a mixed union with a migrant who did not move for union formation (be it either a single first-generation migrant, or a migrant child born abroad or at destination of his/her migrant parents). Having a marriage migrant as partner is associated with higher secularization and more openness toward sexual liberalization and gender equality. Thus, our working hypothesis regarding a higher degree of traditionalism among natives in a couple with a marriage migrant has to be rejected (H4). The effects of the independent variables are similar to those described in section 4.3.

Table 3: Results of linear regression models for attitudes among exogamous natives

Attitudes toward ...		Women		Men	
		W1	W2	M1	M2
Sexual liberalization					
Marriage migration (Ref.: no)	Yes	0.04	0.03	0.14	0.07
Gender equality					
Marriage migration (Ref.: no)	Yes	0.19**	0.20**	0.11	0.06
Individualism (family solidarity)					
Marriage migration (Ref.: no)	Yes	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.05
Secularization					
Marriage migration (Ref.: no)	Yes	0.13	0.11	0.01	-0.03
N		786	786	696	696

Note: * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$.

Models 1 controlled for birth cohort, Models 2 additionally controlled for individual variables and characteristics of the couple.

Source: GGS, Wave 1 (2004 to 2013), authors' calculations.

⁸ Moreover, we find that exogamy is associated with almost the same results across Europe, so that the moderating effect of the country differences cannot explain our results.

5. Discussion and conclusion

As intermarriages reflect opportunity and social structures, as well as the host society's openness to immigrants, such unions are special cases in terms of mate selection. Moreover, intermarriages are indicative of majority-minority group relations, and, thus, of the level of social cohesion in the country. Consequently, scholars who have studied intermarriage generally agree that mixed unions facilitate migrant integration, and therefore reflect attitudes toward out-groups and the level of social change in a society. Whether mixed unions are long-lasting or end in disruption and divorce may serve as the ultimate test of majority-minority relationships. In addition, examining mixed unions is helpful for understanding the socialization of migrant children, as children born to parents in mixed unions have to deal with their parents' different cultural and social backgrounds. Given that it is often assumed that the native partner in a mixed union influences the migrant partner and their joint children, we found it somewhat surprising that only a few studies have actually investigated the characteristics of the native partner in a mixed union. Thus, the aim of our research was to examine the attitudes of natives in mixed unions. This empirical study was based on the underlying assumption that the decision to enter a mixed partnership reflects openness to out-groups and population diversity. Against this background, we posed the research question of whether the social attitudes of natives in exogamous unions differ from those of natives in endogamous unions.

In order to investigate this question using quantitative data, we had to deal with the well-known scarcity of data on minority populations in Europe. In the end, we decided to use pooled data from seven European countries (GGS), as this was the only way to obtain a sample that included a sufficiently large number of mixed unions, as well as information on the attitudes of the partners. However, our study has several limitations. Although the number of mixed unions in Europe has been growing, the prevalence of intermarried natives is still rather small. Hence, our sample size of natives in exogamous unions was rather small, and the size of the effects found was also quite small. It is important to keep these limitations in mind in the following discussion, in which we offer our interpretations of the results of our analysis.

Our main working hypothesis was that there is an association between being in a mixed marriage and attitudes. We used four different attitudinal dimensions to test this hypothesis, all of which are included in modernization theories, and are correlated with attitudes toward diversity. Three of these dimensions – sexual liberalization, gender equality, and religiosity/secularization – feature prominently in public and scientific debates on migrant integration and cultural diversity in Europe today. The fourth dimension captures attitudes toward family solidarity. This dimension is also related to modernization, but has received less attention in current integration debates. We worked with competing hypotheses. First, we posited that compared to natives in an endogamous union, natives in a mixed union may be more resistant to modernization; i.e., they may be more religious, and they may have more conservative attitudes regarding gender and family roles. If these natives are more “traditional” than average, they may perceive immigrants or marriage migrants as secondary options in the partner market. Thus, exogamy may be a means of coping with resistance to modernization. Crossing ethnic boundaries could imply that a native is less liberal in terms of his/her other attitudes. Alternatively, it could

mean that the native is more liberal in terms of his/her attitudes regarding culture and religion; i.e., that s/he is more open to modernization in general, and has positive views on diversity. In the latter case, exogamy would also be associated with more individualistic attitudes on other dimensions. Interestingly, our study provided evidence for both hypotheses. Being in a mixed marriage was found to be associated with higher levels of secularization and more openness towards sexual liberalization and gender equality, i.e., pointing toward more individualistic values, but with more traditional attitudes toward family solidarity; i.e., pointing to more collectivist values.

These findings are noteworthy for three reasons. First, family solidarity is one dimension of modernization theory that is also subject to change. We expected to find that as individualism increased, family solidarity would also become less important, especially as we used variables that referred to intergenerational relationships and to support of the elderly by the younger generations. In modern Western European countries (despite cross-country variation), care responsibilities are often delegated to the welfare state. We may conclude from our finding that exogamy was associated with a higher degree of familism, and that crossing the “ethnic line” in union formation is a modern behavior that reflects traditional attitudes. Perhaps these natives perceived the choice of a migrant partner as a secondary option that enabled them to form a family; i.e., they cast a wider net in order to avoid being single. Crossing ethnic boundaries when choosing a partner was, however, found to be associated with having more liberal attitudes toward sexual liberalization and gender equality, and with lower religiosity. Our observation that these three dimensions are linked is in line with the literature. But our findings challenge Inglehart’s individualism/collectivism dichotomy. In “real life,” individuals may “mix” traditional and modern elements, and show a value synthesis (Klages 2002). Exogamous unions may be such a case, as it appears that the partners often have divergent attitudes.

Second, we assessed the role of marriage migration. Our assumption was that natives who are in a union with a marriage migrant had more conservative attitudes than natives in other exogamous unions. However, our results did not support this hypothesis. As this subsample was very small, we were unable to examine this potential association in detail. We could not, for example, distinguish the migrant partners by their migrant generation, country of origin, or religious affiliation. Placing all migrant partners in one category may be too simple, as it does not account for the diversity in European immigrant populations. This limitation may explain this finding. Whether a European native married a person from a religiously distinct country (Foner/Alba 2008; Koopmans 2015), a first-generation migrant from another EU country, or a member of the second migrant generation might also make a difference.

The third point we want to raise is that the pattern of the association between exogamy and attitudes is similar for women and men (regardless of whether they are marriage migrants). Hence, our results do not indicate that there are gender differences in the likelihood of using exogamy as a strategy for coping with modernization processes, or in openness to diversity. If exogamy is a strategy for coping with modernization or constraints on the partner market, then its association with social attitudes would be similar for both sexes. However, we found differences by gender in the socio-demographic background variables. The education of the respondent and the comparative education of the partner were shown to have more explanatory power for the exogamy effect among wom-

en than among men. This result suggests that future research should continue looking into mixed partner choice from the natives' perspective, with a focus on gendered patterns and social attitudes.

Unfortunately, our analyses were based on cross-sectional data. Hence, the study of attitudes allows for two potential interpretations. Attitudes may influence either the partner selection as such or the reason for seeking the union. Future research should, therefore, investigate how attitudes affect partner choice among natives and immigrants. We also need to acknowledge that our sample contained only existing unions. Previous literature has shown that exogamous unions have a higher risk of dissolution than endogamous unions (e.g., Milewski/Kulu 2014). At the same time, divorce tends to be associated with more modern attitudes. Therefore, it is likely that natives who ever had an exogamous union were underrepresented in our sample. We would, however, expect that this underrepresentation led to an underestimation of the impact of exogamy on attitudes.

As cultural differences between the partners in mixed unions are often cited as potential explanations for difficulties in the partnership or union disruption, future research should include information on values, attitudes, and opinions in analyses, and, of course, in data collections. Ideally, future studies would also compare the attitudes of the partners in each couple, which we were not able to do with our data source. We may speculate that what matters in determining whether a union endures is not just how conservative or liberal the partners are, but whether they are well-matched and get along.

Finally, we want to take a step back and focus our attention on the prevalence of intermarriage among natives in Europe. Although some of the previous literature reported that the number of mixed unions has been increasing, the prevalence of exogamous unions among natives is still rather small: i.e. of the natives in our data, only about 4% were in a mixed union. We suggest that future research on modernization processes and social cohesion focus not only on gender issues and religiosity, but on attitudes regarding diversity in a perhaps increasingly hostile Europe (Turper et al. 2015); and investigate how these dimensions are interrelated, and how the societal climate affects partner choice and the family life in mixed unions.

To conclude, our findings imply that the social adaptation process of migrant partners may be facilitated by exogamy in partnerships, because migrants may integrate into a more liberal milieu if they have a native partner. At the same time, the natives in these mixed marriages tend to have more traditional attitudes toward the family in general. Both the percentages of mixed unions and the patterns of our results regarding the attitudes of natives in such unions suggest that the widespread assumption that exogamy is the ultimate boundary breaker and an indicator of social cohesion in increasingly diverse European immigration countries should be challenged more frequently in empirical studies.

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Titles, abstracts and key words in German

Titel, Zusammenfassungen und Schlagwörter in deutscher Sprache

S. 264-286

Christian Schramm

Dynamics of change in transnational families – Biographical perspectives on family figurations between Spain and Ecuador

Wandlungsdynamiken in transnationalen Familien – Biographische Perspektiven auf Familienfigurationen zwischen Spanien und Ecuador

Zusammenfassung:

Der Artikel beschreibt Figurationsprozesse in transnationalen Familien und nutzt dazu die Analyse von biographischen Selbstdarstellungen und Lebensverläufen von getrennt lebenden, aber miteinander verbundenen Familienmitgliedern in Bilbao/Spanien und Guayaquil/Ecuador. Er fragt nach den Faktoren innerhalb und außerhalb der Familie, die das Aushandeln der labilen Machtbalancen zwischen Geschlechtern und Generationen beeinflussen, und welche Auswirkungen das hat für das Positionsgefüge, das familiäre Normensystem, gegenseitige Erwartungen und die Aufgabenverteilung. Besonderes Augenmerk liegt dabei auf der Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise in Spanien zwischen 2008 und 2014, und wie dieser abrupte Wandel in den Kontextbedingungen in einer Nationalgesellschaft das transnationale Familienleben beeinflusst. Die Ergebnisse zeigen die Bedeutung des langfristigen, sich bereits vor der Migration entfaltenden, familialen Figurationsprozesses für die Art und Weise, wie sich das transnationale Familienleben gestaltet. Sie zeigen auch, wie die verschiedenen beeinflussenden Faktoren während der Migrationsphase, verortet in verschiedenen Nationalgesellschaften und im transnationalen sozialen Raum, mit der Dynamik dieses langfristigen Prozesses verflochten sind.

Schlagwörter: transnationale Familien, Migration, Biographieforschung, Figurationen, Wandlungsprozesse in Familien, Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise 2008

S. 287-302*Ada Ruis***Building a new life, and (re-)making a family.
Young Syrian refugee women in the Netherlands navigating between family and career****Ein neues Leben beginnen und eine Familie (wieder)herstellen: Wie junge geflüchtete Frauen aus Syrien in den Niederlanden zwischen Familie und Beruf navigieren****Zusammenfassung:**

Dieser Artikel stellt die Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Studie vor, welche auf biographischen Erzählungen von drei jungen, gut gebildeten Frauen beruht, die aus Syrien geflüchtet sind. Sie sind im Rahmen der Familienzusammenführung zwischen 2015 und 2017 in die Niederlande gekommen. Das zentrale Anliegen des Artikels ist es zu untersuchen, wie diese jungen syrischen Frauen ihre ‘agency’ einsetzen, um den Anforderungen in zwei wichtigen Bereichen, ihren Familien und bezüglich ihren beruflichen Ambitionen, gerecht zu werden. Sowohl bei der Entwicklung von beruflichen Karriereperspektiven als auch bei der Etablierung eines Familienlebens handelt es sich um Projekte, die sich – so das Argument, das sich aus der Untersuchung ergibt – stark auf die ‘agency’ der Betroffenen beziehen und dazu dienen sollen, ein neues Leben aufzubauen und Kontinuität herzustellen. Die Analysen zeigen, dass diese beiden Projekte miteinander verwoben sind. ‘Agency’ entpuppt sich hier als ein hochgradig relationales Konzept, das eng verknüpft ist mit der jeweiligen Lebenssituation der Individuen, dem Zeitpunkt von wichtigen Lebensereignissen, der Fähigkeit Karriereziele an neue Situationen anzupassen und den Einflüssen des sozialen Umfelds auf die familiären Beziehungen.

Schlagwörter: Flüchtlingsfamilien; Lebenslaufperspektive, Agency, Vertreibung und Gender; junge geflüchtete Mütter, biographische Erzählung

S. 303-332*Elisabeth Kraus, Lenore Sauer & Laura Wenzel***Together or apart? Spousal migration and reunification practices of recent refugees to Germany****Zusammen oder getrennt? Paarspezifische Migrations- und Familiennachzugspraktiken von neu angekommenen Geflüchteten in Deutschland****Zusammenfassung:**

Die vorliegende Studie untersucht Migrations- und Familiennachzugsprozesse verheirateter Männer und Frauen aus Afghanistan, Irak und Syrien in Deutschland. Konkret analysieren wir verschiedene Formen paarspezifischer Migrationspraktiken (gemeinsame versus getrennte Ankunft) und die Wahrscheinlichkeit des Familiennachzugs der im Ausland verbliebenen Partner*in innerhalb eines Jahres und inwieweit diese auf sozioökonomische Bedingungen, die Existenz und Anzahl von Kindern, Familiennetzwerke sowie die rechtliche Situation von verheirateten Männern und Frauen zurückzuführen sind. Auf Basis der Daten der ersten und zweiten Welle der Geflüchtetenstichprobe des Sozio-oekonomischen Panels (IAB-BAMF-SOEP), die 2016 und 2017 in Deutschland erhoben wurden, untersuchen wir die Heterogenität der Migrationsprozesse von Geflüchteten. Die Ergebnisse der logistischen Regressionsmodelle zeigen, dass die Chance einer gemeinsamen Migration für Paare mit minderjährigen Kindern – im Vergleich zu kinderlosen Paaren und Paaren mit nur erwachsenen Kindern – steigt, und dass die Alleinmigration von Frauen und Männern mit der Anwesenheit des erweiterten Familiennetzwerkes am Zielort verbunden ist. Die Wiedervereinigung mit dem/r im Ausland verbliebenen Partner*in hängt ebenfalls von familiären

Netzwerken am Zielort ab, allerdings mit unterschiedlichen Effekten für Männer und Frauen. Außerdem ist für einen schnellen Familiennachzug von im Ausland verbliebenen Frauen der rechtliche Status von ihren zuerst migrierten Männern wichtig. Unsere Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Fluchtmigration in dem hier untersuchten geografischen Kontext ein geschlechtsspezifischer Prozess ist und bestimmte Faktoren unterschiedlich auf die Migration von Frauen bzw. Männern wirken. Darüber hinaus zeigt sich, dass Zusammenhänge und Erklärungen ökonomisch motivierter Migrationsentscheidungen und -praktiken sich nicht ohne weiteres auf Fluchtmigration übertragen lassen, sondern angepasst werden sollten.

Schlagwörter: Familiennachzug, Migration von Paaren, Fluchtmigration, Geflüchtete, Deutschland

S. 333-360

Giuseppe Gabrielli, Elisa Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Laura Terzera, & Anna Paterno

What role does timing play in migrants' transition to marriage? A comparison between endogamous and exogamous marriages

Welchen Einfluss hat die Aufenthaltsdauer auf das Timing der Heirat? Ein Vergleich zwischen endogamen und exogamen Eheschließungen

Zusammenfassung:

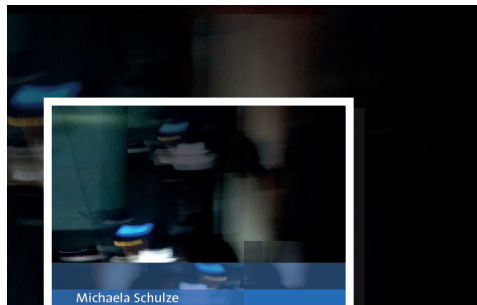
Die Gründung eines Paarhaushaltes und Migration sind das Resultat verschiedener, miteinander verwobener Entscheidungsprozesse im Lebenslauf. Ziel der Studie ist es, die Rolle von temporalen Aspekten im Zusammenhang mit der internationalen Wanderung von Personen in Beziehung zum Heiratsverhalten dieser im Ankunfts-kontext zu setzen. Genutzt werden Daten, die das Italienische Nationale Institut für Statistik (ISTAT) im Rahmen der Umfrage zur „Sozialen Lage und Integration von ausländischen Bürgern“ (SCIF) im Zeitraum 2011-12 in Italien erhoben hat. Mit Methoden der Ereignisdatenanalyse werden die konkurrierenden Übergänge in eine endogame beziehungsweise exogame Ehe mit einem/r italienischen Ehepartner/in analysiert. Die Herkunft, Wanderungspläne und Verhaltensmodelle der ersten Migrantengeneration in Italien sind sehr divers. Unsere Ergebnisse spiegeln diese Diversität wider, indem sie die Komplexität der heutigen Wanderungsbewegungen und die Gleichzeitigkeit von verschiedenen Mustern offenlegen. Die Hypothese über die Interdependenz von Ereignissen ist dabei in der Lage, Erklärungen für endogame und exogame Eheschließungen der Migrantinnen zu liefern. Die Heiraten der Migranten hingegen scheinen durch die Dauer geprägt zu sein, die diese aufwenden, um eine Partnerin zu finden und ökonomische Stabilität zu erlangen. Zusätzlich werden in die Analyse migrations-spezifische Variablen und sozio-demografische Merkmale einbezogen, sodass verschiedene Pfade beim Übergang in die Ehe sichtbar werden.

Schlagwörter: Migration, Familiengründung, Italien, Ereignisdatenanalyse, Ereignisinterdependenz

S. 361-386*Mikro Braack & Nadja Milewski***A different perspective on exogamy: Are nonmigrant partners in mixed unions more liberal in their attitudes toward gender, family, and religion than other natives?****Ein anderer Blick auf Exogamie: Sind Nichtmigranten in Partnerschaften mit Migranten in ihren Einstellungen zu Geschlechterrollen, Familie und Religion liberaler als andere Einheimische?****Zusammenfassung:**

Partnerschaften zwischen Zuwanderern und Angehörigen der Mehrheitsgesellschaft werden in der Assimilationstheorie als Ergebnis und Ausgangspunkt von Integrationsprozessen betrachtet. Während diese aber vorrangig auf Migranten und weniger auf Nicht-Migranten fokussiert, betrachtet unsere explorative Studie das Thema Integration in Europa mit Blick auf Nichtmigranten. Die Forschungsfrage ist, ob für diese die Unterstützung für Diversität und Exogamie in der Partnerwahl einhergeht mit Unterschieden in Einstellungen zu sexueller Liberalisierung, Geschlechtergleichstellung, familiärer Solidarität und Säkularisierung. Die theoretischen Überlegungen beziehen sich auf Präferenz-, Austausch- und Modernisierungstheorien. Genutzt werden Daten des Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) aus sieben Ländern mit 38,447 Nicht-Migranten im Alter von 18 bis 85, von denen etwa 4% in einer Partnerschaft mit einem Migranten sind. Die Ergebnisse der linearen Regressionen zeigen einerseits eine Verbindung zwischen Partnerschaften mit Migranten und einer stärkeren Betonung familiärer Solidarität, andererseits eine höhere Zustimmung zu Fragen der sexuellen Liberalisierung, Gleichstellung und Säkularisierung. Dies bedeutet, dass sich Migranten in exogamen Partnerschaften in liberalere Milieus der Aufnahmegesellschaft integrieren können, in denen gleichzeitig jedoch die Familie einen größeren Stellenwert hat.

Schlagwörter: Exogamie, Geschlechtergleichstellung, Einstellungen, Partnerwahl, Integration, Generations and Gender Survey



Mariam Irene Tazi-Preve

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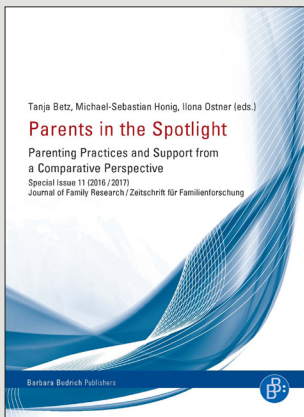
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