**Union Formation and Dissolution among Second Generation Turkish Immigrants in West Germany**

**Introduction**

Since the 1960s, most of Europe has been experiencing a shift in their demographic behaviors theorized as the Second Demographic Transition. Although we assume that this change shows distinct features in each country in terms of pace and order, we can easily assert its existence by just looking at its reflection on family dynamics. Delay in the timing of family formation and cohabitation patterns are some of the transformations which are linked to European societies (Lesthaeghe, 2014). The concern of this paper is how this transformation manifests itself in the context of the immigrant population living in West Germany. While migration influxes change the social fabric of cities and neighborhoods and bring out a multicultural atmosphere, they themselves produce new demographic behaviors, social, economic structures and cultural attitudes. Especially descendants of the first generation immigrants may find themselves in the middle of the two diverge background; the one belonging to the recipient country and the other to their parents' culture. For the purpose of tracing the direction of this transformation, working on partnership dynamics among immigrant generations is significant and efficient.

The aim of our study is to support and improve existing knowledge by identifying similarities and differences at the timing of the first union, type of union and dissolution patterns among descendants of Turkish immigrants and natives of West Germany. As Turkish immigrants are the most populous immigrant group in Germany, and their descendants in Germany have been entering young adulthood, it is significant to analyze union trajectories. Our study will contribute to the existing literature by investigating various union types and dissolution patterns of Turkish descendants in Germany using data from Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics (pairfam). This study employs event-history models to analyze transitions from (1) celibacy to first partnership, (2) celibacy to the first marriage/first cohabitation, and (3) cohabitation to marriage or separation, and marriage to divorce. As union trajectories are crucial to understand integration mechanisms of immigrant populations in the host country, we will be able to refer to theoretical hypotheses concerning this process as well.

**Literature Review**

There are several mechanisms that is suggested to figure out how immigrants produce new demographic behavior or tend to preserve the one they have in origin. In this sense, partner choice and fertility preferences among immigrants are well studied in the migration literature. However, since migration has significant effect on union formation and dissolution among immigrants, it seems relevant to use same theoretical hypothesis in explaining their matrimonial practices. The first hypothesis, the socialization, argues (Kulu & Milewski, 2007) that a person's preferences in life course is a product of values and norms which is prevalent in where one grown up to. Therefore, this hypothesis assumes that union trajectories of immigrants are similar to those living in the origin country if their childhood take place in the sending country. It also posits that experience in origin country shape life choices of immigrants in the long run and do not show resemblance to natives in destination. As a result, possibility of convergence among natives and immigrants is seen relevant for future generation rather than first comers. On the contrary, adaptation hypothesis (Hervitz, 1985), predicts that immigrants conform to demographic, social

and economic behavior of natives. Although this is not a sudden transformation since they are going to find and define a place in existing social structure and way of living, gradually, they grow accustomed to the choices of mainstream society regardless of where they come from. The third hypothesis is selectivity (Hannemann & Kulu, 2015), which suggest that migration is a selective phenomenon in itself, that is, immigrants are already a special group having different life preferences than sending country. Their nuptiality preferences, then, are proximate to native population in destination before moving. This selectivity may originate from social, cultural and economic capital of a person. Finally, assuming that migration has some psychological, economic and social cost to immigrants, disruption hypothesis (Adserà & Ferrer, 2014) envisions that the native-immigrant gap is more pronounced in terms of partnership trajectories, since structurally marriage market of receiving country and the available opportunities may not accord with the one that immigrant familiar with, or the lack of co-ethnic partner may result in deviation from partnership practices performed in origin.

All these four hypothesis find some evidence in empirical research on second-generation immigrants in European context thanks to available data on partnership histories of respective group such as TIES, GGS and other country specific surveys. Hannemann and Kulu (Hannemann & Kulu, 2015) investigate the union trajectories of immigrants and their descendants in the UK by using the Understanding Society study and event-history analysis. For the union trajectories of immigrants descendants, they conclude that the second generation maintains the patterns of their parents while there are small deviations and approximation towards British natives, suggest that second generation are under influence of both mainstream and family culture. Similarly, Ariane Pailhé assumes this trend among the children of immigrants in France (Pailhé, 2015). Methodologically piece-wise constant exponential models are employed to Trajectories and Origins Survey. In general, she finds that descendants form their first union later in their life. In addition to this, there is strong evidence that descendants have lower direct marriage and increasing cohabitation trends although it highly differs according to the social, cultural and economic background of immigrants. For instance, while Turkish males and females tend to maintain the traditional marriage pattern, descendants of Southeast Asian show high convergence with the French pattern. This proves that even there is an adaptation process, convergence takes long time since prevalent behavior in origin still reflect to children of first generation. As a matter of fact, this trend applies much of the immigrant descendants in European context. Russian immigrants in Estonia do not follow similar path as much as native counterparts such as long duration of cohabitation and postponement of marriage. While dissolution patterns seem to resemble each other, the way immigrant descendants form their first union does not seem matching with natives, rather following more conservative path and maintain behaviors of first generation (Rahnu, Puur, Sakkeus, & Klesment, 2015).

Support for the socialization hypothesis also comes from another recent study of second generation immigrants in Europe. Helga de Valk is the first scholar using TIES while studying immigrants and their descendants in the context of the Netherlands. She finds that the second generation of Turkish and Moroccan immigrants tend to marry rather than cohabit. However, Turkish descendants follow a more traditional path in terms of timing of the first union than Moroccan immigrants. That is, mean age at first union and mean age difference among partners is lower for Turkish than Moroccans. Thus Moroccans seem to be in the midst of Turkish immigrants and Dutch natives(De Valk, 2008). While addressing this trend, it is significant to consider influence

of parents, peers and institutional context. For instance, the second-generation youth with parents having modern background delay entry into the first union. Turkish immigrants' child having non-coethnic peers will tend to build co-residential union late since they made-up a personal contact with available partnership practices of native populations (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2010). In case of immigrants from same origin country show totally distinct partnership patterns, institutional context may be good indicator to figure out variations. For instance, in Swedish case, welfare state system provides same opportunity structure and financial support in housing for both immigrants and native, thus, Turkish immigrants get chance to follow early union formation practices of Swedish people or traditional Turkish way of marrying early.  On the other hand, in Germany,  union formation is related with having access to paid job, thus both natives and Turkish second generation postpone partnership formation to later ages(Hamel, Huschek, Milewski, & De Valk, 2012).


## Data and Methodology

This study uses the pairfam study aka German Family Panel (pairfam), which was initiated in 2008 and funded by German Research Foundation. The principle question in pairfam is to understand partnerships and basic family trajectories in Germany. The study themes can be divided into five headings; partnership, parenthood, intergenerational relationships, child development and social embeddedness. The first wave of pairfam, which was conducted in 2008-9, covered 12,402 people in total. Each cohort, namely those born between 1971-73, 1981-83 and 1991-93, consists of 4,000 men and women. We use event-history analysis techniques in our research. Our dependent variables will be timing of first union, type of first union (timing of first cohabitation, and timing of first marriage, separately) and dissolution (timing of marriage for cohabiting individuals, timing of separation for cohabiting individuals, and timing of divorce for married individuals). We will use gender, educational background, employment status, cohorts, value orientations towards marriage/cohabitation, religiosity, union duration, partner choice, age at first union and parity as covariates while analyzing causes of variation in the timing of the events specified above.

In this study, we define the second generation Turkish immigrants as people born in Germany and having at least one parent born in Turkey. Timing of first union indicates the date at entering the first union. We will distinguish between direct marriage and cohabitation after celibacy. We will also analyze transition to marriage after the first cohabitation. This type of analysis will provide an opportunity to observe whether those Turkish immigrants who cohabit apply this as a short or long term strategy. Finally, dissolution is defined as separation from cohabitation and divorce from a marriage. The transitions that will be studied are presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Partnership transitions to be studied**
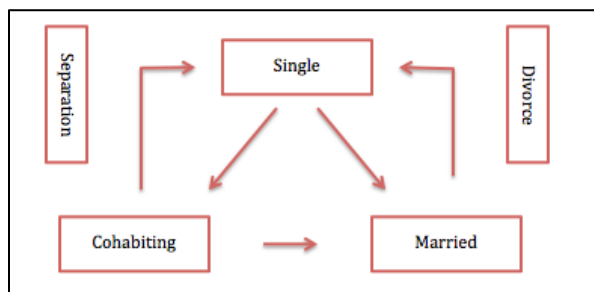
**Expected Results**

In line with previous studies, we expect to see partial convergence of family trajectories between second-generation Turkish immigrants and native counterparts. However, we assume that timing of first union, type of first union and dissolution will follow different patterns. That is, we presume that while timing and dissolution dynamics are somehow similar among children of Turkish immigrants and natives, cohabitation will be unfavorable type of union among Turkish but preferred for natives.

**References**

Adserà, A., & Ferrer, A. (2014). *Immigrants and Demography: Marriage, Divorce, and Fertility*.

De Valk, H. (2008). Union and family Formation. In M. Crul & L. Heering (Eds.), *The position of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation in Amsterdam and Rotterdam : the TIES study in the Netherlands* (p. 188). Retrieved from https://www.imiscoe.org/publications/library/2-imiscoe-research-series/39-the-position-of-the-turkish-and-moroccan-second-generation-in-amsterdam-and-rotterdam

Hamel, C., Huschek, D., Milewski, N., & De Valk, H. (2012). Union Formation and Partner Choice. In M. Crul, J. Scheider, & F. Leile (Eds.), *The European Second Generation Compared* (p. 225). https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048516926

Hannemann, T., & Kulu, H. (2015). Union formation and dissolution among immigrants and their descendants in the United Kingdom. *Demographic Research*, *33*, 273–312. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2015.33.10

Hervitz, H. M. (1985). Selectivity, Adaptation, or Disruption? A Comparison of Alternative Hypotheses on the Effects of Migration on Fertility: The Case of Brazil. In *Source: The International Migration Review* (Vol. 19). Retrieved from https://about.jstor.org/terms

Huschek, D., de Valk, H. A. G., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2010). Timing of first union among second-generation Turks in Europe. *Timing of First Union among Second-Generation Turks in Europe*, *22*, 473–504. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2010.22.16

Kulu, H., & Milewski, N. (2007, December 20). Family change and migration in the life course: An introduction. *Demographic Research*, Vol. 17, pp. 567–590. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2007.17.19

Lesthaeghe, R. (2014). The second demographic transition: a concise overview of its development. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, *111*(51), 18112–18115. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1420441111

Pailhé, A. (2015). Partnership dynamics across generations of immigration in France: Structural vs. cultural factors. *Demographic Research*, *33*, 451–498. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2015.33.16

Rahnu, L., Puur, A., Sakkeus, L., & Klesment, M. (2015). Partnership dynamics among migrants and their descendants in Estonia. *Demographic Research*, *32*, 1519–1566. https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2015.32.56