Love without boundaries?

A quantitative sociological inquiry into transnational marriages of

Turkish and Moroccan Belgians

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Academic year: 2019-2020

GHENT
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Transnational marriages in Belgium: Analysis of origin and destination effects.

Working paper as Van der Bracht, K., Dupont, E., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. Transnational marriages in Belgium: Analysis of origin and destination effects.

Partner migration in the Moroccan community. A focus on time and contextual evolutions.

Published as book chapter as Dupont, E., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. (2017). Partner migration in the Moroccan community. A focus on time and contextual evolutions. In *Moroccan migration in Belgium: More than 50 years of settlement,* eds. Timmerman, C., N. Fadil, I. Goddeeris, N. Clycq, & Ettourki, K., 105-124. Leuven University Press.

Partner choices in long established migrant communities in Belgium.

Published in Historical Life Course Studies as Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. (2017). Partner choices in long established migrant communities in Belgium. *Historical Life Course Studies* 4, 20-40.

Divorce within Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium.

Accepted for publication in European Journal of Population as Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. Divorce within Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium.

Love at second sight: remarriages in Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium.

Acknowledgements

Ik denk dat mijn dankwoord het onderdeel van mijn doctoraat is waarnaar ik het meeste uitkeek om het uit te schrijven. Maar toen het eindelijk zo ver was, er geen andere dingen meer geschreven moesten worden en ik mijzelf had toegelaten om er aan te beginnen, kreeg ik eerst niets op papier. Niet omdat ik niemand om te bedanken heb of omdat er geen zaken zijn om dankbaar voor te zijn. Integendeel. Bij momenten en zeker naar het einde toe, was het soms lastig. Daarom wil ik jullie bedanken voor alle steun die jullie mij gaven en het vertrouwen in mij. Ik weet niet waar ik moet beginnen. Maar ik probeer het toch.

Bart. Bedankt voor alle steun en vertrouwen die ik van jou gekregen heb. Jij hebt me gemotiveerd om toch door te zetten wanneer het even niet meer ging. Bedankt voor alle ruimte en vrijheid die je mij gegeven hebt en je geloof dat het allemaal wel ging goed komen.

John en Frank, jullie bijdrage als co-promotoren was uiteraard ook van groot belang. Jullie expertise heeft mijn doctoraat gemaakt tot wat het nu is, ook al was het soms wel een uitdaging om met één promotor en twee co-promotoren altijd alle feedback te verwerken en naar iedereen even goed te luisteren. Dankjulliewel.

Ook wil ik graag mijn juryleden bedanken om tijd vrij te maken om zo aandachtig en met oog voor detail mijn doctoraat te lezen, mij boeiende vragen te stellen en om die toga's te willen aantrekken voor mij.

Carine, Deborah, Astrid en Virginie. Jullie bespaarden me heel wat praktische en administratieve kopzorgen. Bedankt om altijd klaar te staan met jullie hulp.

Ik wil al mijn collega's van de vakgroep heel hard bedanken om van mijn tijd aan de Korte Meer zo'n zalige tijd te maken. Ik ga de koffiepauzes, lunchkes, gangbabbels, ijspauzes, Hederaweekendjes, café avonden, congressen en nog zoveel dingen nooit vergeten. Door jullie had ik zeer hoge standaarden tijdens mijn zoektacht naar een nieuwe job. In het bijzonder wil ik nog een paar van jullie extra bedanken.

Barbara. Jouw ongebreidelde enthousiasme werkte aanstekend. Ik ken niemand die zo oprecht sympathiek is als jij en je toverde dan ook steeds een glimlach op mijn gezicht.

Amelie. De laatste jaren van mijn doctoraat was jij er ook bijna altijd bij, bij de meetings met Bart, John en Frank. Bedankt om die met mij te doorstaan (inclusief hun gebabbel over onder andere hun vakantieplannen) en om mijn werk altijd heel grondig te voorzien van feedback. Door jou kon ik met een gerust hart slapen dat er zeker geen kleine foutjes waren ingeslopen.

Vera. Allereerst wil ik jou heel hard bedanken voor de voorbije maanden. Ik kon met al mijn duizenden praktische vragen, onzekerheden en frustraties altijd bij jou terecht. Ik weet dat je het jammer vond dat ik er niet kon bij zijn bij jouw verdediging, en vooral bij jouw dankwoord. Daarmee zeg ik het nu: het was een eer om die zijdezachte herinneringen met jou te beleven.

Anouk. Jij was één van mijn allereerste bureaugenootjes. Wat heb ik geluk gehad met jou. Door jou voelde ik me onmiddellijk op mijn gemak op de vakgroep. Ik kon met jou over alles praten, wat vaak resulteerde in uitgebreide koffiekletsen en epistelmailtjes. Mijn liefdesleven is nog nooit zo goed geanalyseerd geweest.

Laura. Bedankt voor de spreuken die je aan de muur achter mijn bureau had gehangen die jou aan mij deden denken, omdat je vond dat het zo leeg was toen

ik eens had opgeruimd. Zelfs nadat ik er weg was, hebben die spreuken mij nog goed geholpen. Ik spreek me niet uit over welke juist.

Heleen, Karen, Ama en Xiaoling. Met jullie heb ik mijn tijd in onze vrouwenbreau afgesloten. Bedankt om ervoor te zorgen dat een doctoraat niet alleen hard labeur, maar ook een feestje kan zijn. Met behulp van een giga wereldbol, een paar hunkjes aan de muur, een minikerstboompje mét lichtjes, en uiteraard jullie aanwezigheid, was het altijd leuk toekomen en soms moeilijk weggaan.

Karen. Ik denk niet dat ik lieg wanneer ik zeg dat jij degene bent met wie ik het vaakst in een kamer geslapen heb. Jij was er al bij van in het begin, toen nog in dat kotje naast onze bureau. Bedankt voor alles wat je gedaan hebt, al was het al gewoon door je rustgevende aanwezigheid.

Ama. Na, en misschien dankzij, die ene hamburgeravond, werd jij meer dan een gewone collega. Er is niemand op de hele vakgroep met wie ik liever een weekendje opgesloten zou hebben gezeten in een bepaalde binnenkoer. Ik wil jou, Marieke en Elisa al bedanken voor de geweldige huisfeestjes en overheerlijke gezellige brunches. Elisa, jij komt straks nog aan bod ;).

Sam, Pieter en Nathan. Na altijd op een vrouwenbureau te hebben gezeten, kwam ik uiteindelijk bij jullie terecht. In het begin was het wel wat aanpassen. Gedaan met de roddeluurtjes. Bedankt om er in die laatste maanden te zijn voor mij en dat ik op jullie pech potje mocht staan. Sam, jij snapt als geen ander de shiny-obsessie, en ik heb dan ook al heel hard genoeten van onze boeiende whatsapp gesprekken.

Wendelien, Anouk, Sarah, Karen, Lies en Chloë. Jullie kunnen niet geloven hoeveel jullie aanmoedigingen, dansuitjes en saunadates voor mij hebben betekend. Jullie zijn stuk voor stuk schatjes.

Mijn nieuwe collega's, en in het bijzonder Anke, Pieter, Eline, Saidja en Lotte. Bedankt om ervoor te zorgen dat er toch voldaan werd aan mijn hoge standaarden wat betreft een nieuwe job, om mij zo goed te verwelkomen, voor jullie interesse in dat doctoraatsgedoe, en om zo mijn mentaal welbevinden en veerkracht te verhogen.

Tim en Karolien. Ik ken jullie al van toen ik nog een puber was, toen in ons samenspelgroepje. Nu, meer dan tien jaar later, heb ik al de eer gehad om getuige te zijn op jullie huwelijk en ben ik blij dat ik deze mijlpaal nu ook met jullie mag delen. De voorbije jaren heb ik steeds heel hard genoten van onze etentjes, en ik kijk er naar uit om er in de toekomst nog veel meer te doen, nu dat deze chaosperiode voorbij is.

Farooq, mijn meest moiste gymbuddy die ik ooit zal hebben, mijn favoriete beatboxer en fretzakske. Bedankt om af en toe met mij jouw voorhoofd en nekhaar te trainen, jeneverkes te drinken op de kerstmarkt, foto's van je mewmews te sturen (en van jezelf met mewmewfilter) en mij op tijd en stond te vragen hoe het met mij gaat.

Elisa. Telkens wanneer ik op mijn bek ging, letterlijk of figuurlijk, of ik in een stront stapte, bleef je toch aan mijn zijde staan. In de eerste plaats om mij eens goed uit te lachen, maar ook om mij dan terug recht of er uit te helpen. Maar in het algemeen: bedankt om er altijd voor mij te zijn wanneer het wat moeilijker ging, mij af en toe te weerhouden om grote vergissingen te maken en mijn duetpartner te zijn bij 'Promiscuous girl'.

Carine, Carl en Stan. Mijn bijna schoonoudjes en mijn nieuwe grote broer. Vanaf de eerste dag dat ik jullie had ontmoet, voelde ik mij direct al een deel van jullie familie. Bedankt voor de soms wel heel straffe gin tonics, de foodbaby's die jullie me al bezorgd hebben, de amusante Dourtijden en jullie geloof in mij.

Mama en papa. Ook al ben ik al even het huis uit, het voelt nog steeds aan als thuis komen wanneer ik langs kom. Bedankt voor alle kansen die jullie mij hebben gegeven, voor jullie steun, om mij mijn eigen weg te laten gaan en om mij een warme thuis te geven waar er altijd wel koffie, Elton John en lekkere pralinekes klaarstaan. Bedankt om zonder al te veel gemor mijn teksten na te lezen, mij er aan te doen herinneren dat ik inderdaad nog een dankwoord moest schrijven omdat ik het zo had uitgesteld en mij te stimuleren om dit af te werken door te zeggen dat we daarna eens goed gaan eten. Daar hou ik jullie aan.

Joannes en Frederik, mijn kleine broertjes. Bedankt om mij op de hoogte te houden van alle nieuwtjes in gameland (en dan vooral van Pokémon) elke keer ik op bezoek kwam, mij te tonen dat dekentjes multifunctioneel kunnen zijn en dat mannen ook gigantische dessertlovers kunnen zijn. Dat geldt trouwens ook voor jou, papa.

Zusje. Ik heb de voorbije jaren enorm genoten van onze logeerpartijtjes, gezamenlijke werkmomenten, dansfeestjes en het was ook leuk dat jij mijn make-up veel beter kon doen dan ikzelf. Bedankt voor alles, ik ben trots dat ik jouw grote zus ben.

Nic. Als laatste kom ik bij jou terecht. Nic, mijn schatje, mijn toekomstige man, waar moet ik beginnen. Bedankt om er onvoorwaardelijk te zijn en mijn laatste loodjes helemaal niet als loodjes te doen aanvoelen. Om mij te vergezellen op mijn pauzewandelingen, mij heel Temse rond te voeren met de auto op zoek naar het juiste taartje, met mij te slowen op harde techno muziek en om mijn luidkeelse gekweel te tolereren tijdens het koken (en om soms zelfs stiekem mee te zingen). En niet te vergeten, bedankt om van jouw huisje ook mijn thuisje te maken. Ik kon me geen betere plek voorstellen om mijn doctoraat af te werken.

Summary

Summary

Today, a large proportion of immigration streams to Western Europe consist of transnational marriages – marriages with a partner from the country of origin –, as part of family reunification streams (Myria, 2017). The concern exists, however, that these marriages would slowdown the integration process (Heyse et al., 2007). Moreover, the choice for a partner from the country of origin might be seen as an obstacle to the integration process because the migrant might be less bound to the receiving society but rather connects to the country of origin, or it might even be regarded as a sign of failed integration (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Lichter, Carmalt, & Qian, 2011).

In contrast to transnational marriages, intermarriage is often considered an expression of successful integration by both policymakers and scholars (see for example Alba & Golden, 1986; Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Gordon, 1964; Kulu & González-Ferrer, 2014; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Gordon (1964) specifically saw marital assimilation, or intermarriage, as the third stage, in a seven-step process towards complete (civic) assimilation. On a group level as well, intermarriage might lead to more frequent interaction between different social groups (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990).

In this dissertation, I reflect on the social component of integration and more specifically on partner-choice patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. I argue that applying the same reasoning concerning intermarriage and integration to transnational marriages might be problematic given that transnational marriages are the logical outcome of a migration process and are often part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). These marriages take

place within a transnational space: a space that makes each subsequent migration substantially easier and that facilitates transnational marriages through transnational bonds (Haug, 2008). Given the existence of a transnational space, the partner choice of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might be oriented on (1) co-ethnics in the receiving society (local intra-ethnic marriage), (2) people with another ethnicity in the receiving society in general and the ethnic majority in particular (mixed marriage), and (3) non-immigrants in the origin society (transnational marriage).

Through successive generations and over time, the orientation of immigrant groups might shift as the strength of group boundaries between immigrants (and their descendants) and the ethnic majority, and between immigrants (and their descendants) and non-immigrants in the origin society changes. In this respect, partner-choice patterns of immigrants can be perceived as a clear indicator of the strength of group boundaries.

Even though this orientation might be influenced by a myriad of factors, I perceive this orientation in this dissertation as the product of three sources of influence: (1) integration processes, perceived as exposure to the receiving society, (2) characteristics of the receiving society, and (3) networks between migrant communities in sending and receiving societies of migrant groups. Furthermore, I add a life course perspective that includes a focus on divorce and second marriages.

To examine these influences as well as the life course perspective, this dissertation focuses on transnational marriages of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, given the frequent occurrence of transnational marriages within these groups, they are large enough to examine structural influences, and they are long established to discern evolutions in marital behaviour. Multilevel and event history analyses were performed on data from the Belgian national

register. The data contains all partnerships (i.e. marriages and legally registered cohabitations) of migrants originating from third countries, formed between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2008. Two conditions were required for inclusion: (1) at least one partner was a resident in Belgium before the partnership, (2) with a third-country nationality at birth.

The results reveal that when only considering first marriages, the orientation of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians shifts from a transnational one to a local one. In addition to this, second-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are even more likely to prefer local intra-ethnic marriages to transnational ones. Even though mixed marriages have the lowest prevalence among Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, they are rising, not only over the course of 15 years, but within our time frame as well (from 2001 until 2008). The prevalence of mixed marriages has risen to a greater extent for the second generation compared to the first generation. Therefore, stronger boundaries are present between the first generation on the one hand, and the ethnic majority and the local community on the other hand, while the boundaries between the first generation and their co-ethnic in the country of origin are weaker compared to the second generation.

Although the prevalence of transnational marriages was waning within our timeframe, it remains a very popular choice, however. Especially when there is a shortage of potential partners, Turkish and Moroccan Belgians use their transnational networks, embedded in a strong system of migration, to broaden their search for a partner towards the country of origin. For immigrant groups with less firmly established networks, for example Algerian and Congolese immigrant groups in Belgium, structural conditions in the country of residence might play a more salient role in the partner choice of immigrants. Therefore, networks play a pivotal role in the encouragement and facilitation of transnational marriages.

Even though the declining levels of transnational marriages indicate a stronger orientation towards the local marriage market, especially amongst the second generation, boundaries within the local intra-ethnic marriage market appear to be much stronger for divorced migrants. This likely results from the strong emphasis on family and associated disapproval of divorce, stigmatization and reputation damage (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Welslau & Deven, 2003), necessitating divorcees to seek a partner in their country of origin. Therefore, the transition from an orientation towards the marriage market in the country of origin, to an orientation towards the marriage market in the country of residence, is not linear.

Especially first-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are oriented towards the marriage market in their country of origin when remarrying, which is probably the most logical choice for them, given that their transnational networks to the former communities might be more solid and recent. Therefore, besides personal preferences, transnational marriages are often an answer to challenges in the local marriage market, whether it be structural constraints of the marriage market in the country of residence, or the status of divorcee.

Samenvatting

Vandaag de dag bestaat een groot deel van de immigratiestromen naar West-Europa uit gezinsherenigingsstromen, waar transnationale huwelijken – dit zijn huwelijken met een partner uit het land van herkomst – een groot deel van uitmaken (Myria, 2017). De bezorgdheid bestaat echter dat deze huwelijken het integratieproces zouden vertragen (Heyse et al., 2007). Bovendien kan de keuze voor een partner uit het land van herkomst worden gezien als een obstakel voor het integratieproces omdat de migrant vooral gebonden zou zijn aan het land van herkomst en minder aan de ontvangende samenleving (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Lichter, Carmalt, & Qian, 2011).

In tegenstelling tot transnationale huwelijken, worden gemengde huwelijken vaak beschouwd als een uiting van succesvolle integratie (zie bijvoorbeeld Alba & Golden, 1986; Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Gordon, 1964; Kulu & González-Ferrer, 2014; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Zo zag Gordon (1964) huwelijksassimilatie, of het aangaan van gemengde huwelijken, als de derde fase in een proces van zeven stappen naar volledige (maatschappelijke) assimilatie. Ook op groepsniveau zouden gemengde huwelijken tot meer frequente interactie leiden tussen verschillende sociale groepen (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990).

In dit proefschrift reflecteer ik op de sociale component van integratie en meer specifiek op de partnerkeuzepatronen van Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen. Ik argumenteer dat het toepassen van dezelfde redenering met betrekking tot gemengde huwelijken en integratie op transnationale huwelijken problematisch kan zijn, gezien het feit dat transnationale huwelijken vaak het logische gevolg zijn van het migratieproces en dat zij deel uitmaken van bredere groepsprocessen (Williams, 2013). Deze huwelijken vinden plaats binnen een transnationale ruimte: een ruimte die elke volgende migratie aanzienlijk

eenvoudiger maakt en die transnationale huwelijken mogelijk maakt door de aanwezigheid van transnationale banden (Haug, 2008). Door het bestaan van deze transnationale ruimte, kan de partnerkeuze van Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen gericht zijn op (1) mogelijke partners met dezelfde etnische achtergrond in de ontvangende samenleving (lokaal intra-etnisch huwelijk), (2) mogelijke partners met een andere etnische achtergrond in de ontvangende samenleving en de etnische meerderheid in het bijzonder (gemengd huwelijk), en (3) niet-immigranten in de samenleving van herkomst (transnationaal huwelijk).

Omdat de sterkte van groepsgrenzen tussen immigranten (en hun nakomelingen) en de etnische meerderheid, en tussen immigranten (en hun nakomelingen) en niet-immigranten in de oorspronkelijke samenleving kan veranderen doorheen opeenvolgende generaties en in de loop van de tijd, is het aannemelijk dat de oriëntatie van migrantengroepen ook verschuift. In dit opzicht kunnen partnerkeuzepatronen van immigranten worden gezien als een duidelijke indicator van de sterkte van groepsgrenzen.

Hoewel deze oriëntatie door een aanzienlijk aantal factoren beïnvloed kan worden, beschouw ik deze oriëntatie in dit proefschrift als het product van drie invloeden: (1) integratieprocessen, opgevat als de blootstelling aan de ontvangende samenleving, (2) kenmerken van de ontvangende samenleving, en (3) netwerken tussen migrantengemeenschappen in de ontvangende samenleving en de samenleving van herkomst. Verder voeg ik een levensloopperspectief toe dat focust op echtscheidingen en tweede huwelijken.

Om deze invloeden en het levensloopperspectief te onderzoeken, richt dit proefschrift zich op transnationale huwelijken van Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen, aangezien transnationale huwelijken binnen deze groepen vaak voorkomen, deze groepen groot genoeg zijn om structurele invloeden te onderzoeken, en ze reeds lange tijd gevestigd zijn om evoluties in

partnerkeuzepatronen te kunnen onderscheiden. Multilevel en event history analyses werden uitgevoerd op Belgische rijksregistergegevens. Deze gegevens bevatten alle partnerschappen (d.w.z. huwelijken en wettelijk samenwoningen) van migranten uit derde landen, gevormd tussen 01/01/2001 en 31/12/2008. Twee voorwaarden waren vereist voor opname: (1) minstens één partner was een inwoner van België vóór het partnerschap, (2) met een nationaliteit van een derde land bij de geboorte.

De resultaten tonen aan dat wanneer alleen rekening wordt gehouden met eerste huwelijken, de oriëntatie van Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen verschuift van een transnationale naar een lokale partner. Vooral Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen van de tweede generatie geven een sterke voorkeur aan lokale intra-etnische huwelijken in plaats van transnationale huwelijken. Hoewel gemengde huwelijken het minst vaak voorkomen bij Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen, stijgen ze niet alleen in de loop van 15 jaar, maar ook binnen ons tijdsbestek (van 2001 tot 2008). De prevalentie van gemengde huwelijken steeg in sterkere mate voor de tweede generatie dan voor de eerste generatie. We kunnen daarom besluiten dat grenzen meer robuust zijn tussen de eerste generatie enerzijds en de etnische meerderheid en de lokale gemeenschap anderzijds, terwijl de grenzen tussen de eerste generatie en potentiële partners in het land van herkomst zwakker zijn in vergelijking met de tweede generatie.

Hoewel de prevalentie van transnationale huwelijken binnen ons tijdsbestek afneemt, bleef het echter een zeer populaire keuze. Vooral wanneer er een tekort is aan potentiële partners, gebruiken Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen hun transnationale netwerken, ingebed in een sterk migratiesysteem, om hun zoektocht naar een partner te richten op het land van herkomst. Voor migrantengroepen met minder stevig verankerde netwerken, zoals bijvoorbeeld de Algerijnse en Congolese migrantengroepen in België, kunnen structurele omstandigheden in het land van verblijf een meer opvallende rol spelen bij de

partnerkeuze van migranten. Netwerken spelen daarom duidelijk een centrale rol bij het aanmoedigen en faciliteren van transnationale huwelijken.

Hoewel de daling in de prevalentie van transnationale huwelijken wijst op een sterkere oriëntatie op de lokale huwelijksmarkt, vooral bij de tweede generatie, lijken de grenzen binnen de lokale intra-etnische huwelijksmarkt veel robuuster te zijn voor gescheiden migranten. Dit is waarschijnlijk het gevolg van de sterke nadruk op familie en de bijbehorende afkeuring van echtscheiding, van stigmatisering en van reputatieschade (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Welslau & Deven, 2003), waardoor gescheiden migranten eerder een partner zoeken in hun land van herkomst. Het blijkt dus dat de overgang van een oriëntatie op de huwelijksmarkt in het land van herkomst naar een oriëntatie op de huwelijksmarkt in het land van verblijf niet lineair verloopt.

Wanneer men hertrouwt, zijn het vooral Turkse en Marokkaanse Belgen van de eerste generatie die zich richten op de huwelijksmarkt in hun land van herkomst. Voor hen is dit waarschijnlijk de meest logische keuze, gezien het feit dat hun transnationale netwerken met de voormalige gemeenschappen meer solide en recent zijn. Naast de voorkeur voor een transnationaal huwelijk, zijn deze huwelijken vaak een antwoord op uitdagingen binnenin de lokale huwelijksmarkt, of het nu gaat om structurele beperkingen van de huwelijksmarkt in het land van verblijf, of de gescheiden status.

Part I. Framing the research

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Transnational marriages

1.1.1 Transnational marriages and integration

Today, a large proportion of immigration streams to Western Europe consist of transnational marriages, as part of family reunification streams (Myria, 2017). Family reunification processes are part of a strong system of chain migration that stimulates an on-going influx of first-generation migrants (Lievens, 1999, 2000; Reniers, 1999). As a consequence, the concern exists that these marriages would slowdown the integration process (Heyse et al., 2007). Moreover, the choice for a partner from the country of origin might be seen as an obstacle to the integration process because the migrant might be less bound to the receiving society but rather connects to the country of origin, or it might even be regarded as a sign of failed integration (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Lichter, Carmalt, & Qian, 2011). This goes hand in hand with the conception of integration as a matter of personal choice of migrants, a conception that neglects how integration might be restricted by contextual constraints (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015).

In addition to the aforementioned, transnational marriages are, in the perception of the public and policy makers, often associated with the practice of arranged marriages (the parents and/or wider family set up the marriage), with forced marriages (at least one of the partners is forced to accept the marriage), and with marriages of convenience (when the marriage is, at least by one of the partners, contracted with the sole aim of getting a residence permit) (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Caestecker, 2005; Callaert, 1997; Coene, 2005; Heyse et al.,

2007; Timmerman, 2006). While forced marriages and marriages of convenience are illegal, marriages that are arranged to some degree are not outlawed as they are based on mutual consent. However, while it is true that parents might be important agents in the partner selection process, especially in cultures with a strong family system where marriage and divorce are often collectivized (Callaerts, 1997; de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Milewski & Hamel, 2010), this does not rule out the fact that children can still act as active agents and make their own choices (Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). Furthermore, a gradual change, from 'parental decision' to 'matchmakers' within Belgian Turkish communities, reflects the evolution towards more autonomy in the partner choice of descendants (Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018).

In contrast to transnational marriages, intermarriage is often considered an expression of successful integration by both policymakers and scholars (see for example Alba & Golden, 1986; Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Gordon, 1964; Kulu & González-Ferrer, 2014; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Gordon (1964) specifically saw marital assimilation, or intermarriage, as the third stage in a seven-step process towards complete (civic) assimilation. On a group level as well, intermarriage might lead to more frequent interaction between different social groups (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990).

The meaning of integration is a contested one, however. In public discourse, the term 'integration' generally denotes a process of becoming culturally similar to the members of the mainstream society. This understanding of integration, however, aligns more with the process of assimilation, which is generally used by scholars to refer to the situation of immigrants who, over generations, 'become similar' to the mainstream society, or "the decline of an ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural and social differences" (Alba & Nee, 2003, p.11). Scholars often use 'integration' to refer to immigrants' structural

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incorporation into the core institutions of the receiving society over generations, such as in education and employment, and it might include participation in informal social relations in local communities as well (Alba, Reitz, & Simon, 2012; Schneider & Crul, 2010). This process occurs over generations (Nee & Alba, 2012).

An illuminating explanation of the distinction between the concepts of assimilation and integration is found in the canonical work of Berry (1997) who states that

> From the point of view of non-dominant groups, when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures, the Assimilation strategy is defined. (…) When there is an interest in both maintaining one's original culture, while in daily interactions with other groups, Integration is the option; here, there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, while at the same time seeking to participate as an integral part of the larger social network (p. 9).

However, scholars have also not reached agreement on the interpretation of Berry's widely accepted definition of integration as well (Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007). Often, the concepts of adaptation, assimilation, and the multicultural society are employed as synonyms of (successful) integration (Lesthaeghe, 200; Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007). Moreover, often, integration is seen as a two-way process, that is dynamic and mutual: assimilation (or integration) requires some level of change and acceptance by the mainstream (Nee & Alba, 2012; Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003). As a consequence, integration is considered as an 'essentially contested concept' (Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007).

In addition to his, even though the general consensus holds that integration is multi-dimensional, scholars often disagree on what the relevant dimensions of integration are (Snel, Engbersen, & Leerkes, 2006). Even though multiple dimensions can be distinguished, the most often used distinction is made between structural integration – the rights, participation and status within the core institutions of the receiving society, such as employment and education – and social-cultural integration. (Dagevos & Schellingerhout, 2003; Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; Snel, Engbersen, & Leerkes, 2006; Vermeulen & Penninx, 1994). The latter can be further divided into cultural integration or acculturation – cognitive, behavioural, and attitudinal conformity to the dominant norms of receiving societies –, interactive or social integration – social intercourse, friendship, marriage, and membership of organizations –, and identificational integration – feelings of belonging (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; King & Skeldon, 2010).

Even though these dimensions are strongly related rather than mutually exclusive (Odé, 2002; Snel, Engbersen, & Leerkes, 2006), I will reflect on the social component of integration, and more specifically on partner-choice patterns of immigrants. Even though integration can be considered as a two-way process, the reception side – partner choice-patterns of the ethnic majority – will not be examined directly. Throughout this dissertation, the term 'marriage' as a pars pro toto will be used for all marriages and legally registered cohabitations, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

1.1.2 Towards a new perspective on transnational marriages

Even though partner-choice patterns of migrants reflect the social component of integration, perceiving the choice for a transnational marriage as an indicator of failed integration might be problematic.

Transnational marriages take place within established transnational communities (Williams, 2013). The existence of such transnational communities is caused by a strong migration networks between the sending and receiving societies (Reniers, 1999). Hence, these networks might be understood as interpersonal ties that connect former migrants and non-migrants in the origin and receiving society (Massey et al., 1993). From a migration system perspective, these networks are the outcome of successive stages (de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008). As such, migration networks are endogenous and are created by the act of migration itself (de Haas, 2010). Therefore, migration might induce the existence of a transnational space; a space that makes each subsequent migration substantially easier and that facilitates transnational marriages through the transnational bonds (Haug, 2008). Transnational marriages are, in this respect, the logical outcome of a migration process and are part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). Especially nowadays, given the easy travel, mass media, and fast communications, frequent contacts with the origin community are easily maintainable which might result in a preserved allegiance to the community of origin and therefore an extended marriage market that expands to the country of origin (Lesthaeghe, 2000). Given the existence of a transnational space, the partner choice of immigrants (and their descendants) might be oriented on (1) co-ethnics in the receiving society (local intra-ethnic marriage), (2) people with another ethnicity in the receiving society in general and the ethnic majority in particular (mixed marriage), and (3) non-immigrants in the origin society (transnational marriage).

Through successive generations and over time, the orientation of immigrant groups might shift as the strength of group boundaries between immigrants (and their descendants) and the ethnic majority, and between immigrants (and their descendants) and non-immigrants in the origin society changes. In this respect, partner-choice patterns of immigrants can be perceived as a clear indicator of the strength of group boundaries.

Even though this orientation might be influenced by a myriad of factors, I perceive this orientation in this dissertation as the product of three sources of influence: (1) integration processes, perceived as exposure to the receiving society, (2) characteristics of the receiving society, and (3) networks between migrant communities in sending and receiving societies. Furthermore, I add a life course perspective that includes a focus on divorce and second marriages. Each of the aforementioned influences as well as the life course perspective constitute the research aims of this dissertation and will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

First, concerning the social component of integration, integration relates to associations between the ethnic minority and majority, and thus indicates the strength of boundaries between them (Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007). Over generations and through time, therefore, group boundaries between the ethnic minority and majority might weaken which results in more frequent associations (Alba & Nee, 2003). This likely happens at a different pace, depending on the specificities of the ethnic minority group, such as their cultural and social characteristics. In this dissertation, I include the transnational space in which associations and relations might be established. Therefore, the degree of integration might play a role in the choice for transnational marriages as well since the distance to non-migrants in the country of residence might enlarge.

Second, I focus on the specificities of the receiving society. Partner choices are not only a matter of personal choice, but might be affected by structural constraints as well (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; Lesthaeghe, 2000). More specifically, marrying transnationally is not only the outcome of the individual migrant's aspirations and attitudes, but is also the product of the social context one lives in (Itzigsohn & Giorguly-Saucedo, 2005; Surkyn, 2000). As Kalmijn (1998) points out: "marriage patterns result from both preference and opportunity. (…) endogamy does not necessarily point to a personally felt social distance toward a certain outgroup" (p. 397). Therefore, this dissertation focuses on the structural characteristics of the place of residence.

Third, partner-choice patterns are part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). The partner choice does not only take place at the individual level, but at the collective level of the immigrant group as well: the group might become an accepted part of civil society, or it might isolate itself (Penninx, 2005, 2007). Group-related characteristics, such as religion, and historically rooted conditions of immigrant groups might impact the partner-choice patterns as well, over and above evolutions in partner-choice patterns and current structural conditions. Historically rooted conditions, in this dissertation, refer to the strength of immigration networks that came into being by push and pull factors (Schoorl et al., 2000). Given that strong networks are likely to perpetuate the initial migration streams (Reniers, 1999), they are likely to encourage transnational marriages (Haug, 2008; Lievens, 2000). Therefore, partner-choice patterns might still bear the traces of these initial conditions.

Fourth, not only do I conceptualize partner choices as the product of the interplay between individual, structural, and group-related characteristics, I try to offer a more nuanced and exhaustive perspective by applying a life course perspective on marriages. This perspective acknowledges the specificity of first marriages, by taking into account divorce and remarriage patterns. Evolutions

in partner-choice patterns may be affected by divorce patterns. These divorce patterns are, therefore, important in understanding the firmness and stability of group boundaries. After divorce, immigrants might encounter constraints of the marriage market which might force them to change their partner choice when remarrying (Choi & Tienda, 2017). Especially within migrant groups in which a strong emphasis on family prevails, divorce might lead to stigmatization and reputation damage (Welslau & Deven, 2003; Hooghiemstra, 2003). In addition to this, learning mechanisms might lead to the adaption of their partner choice in second marriages. Therefore, this dissertation might shed more light on processes that may counteract changes and trends in partner-choice patterns of first marriages.

1.2 A focus on Belgium

As already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, a large proportion of immigration streams to Western Europe consist of family reunification streams. For all 28 European countries in 2008, 27.7% of all first residence permits were granted on the basis of family reasons. For Belgium and its neighbouring countries, these numbers were even higher: 44% for Belgium, 43.4% for Germany, 45.3% for France, and 38.5% for the Netherlands (Eurostat, 2019). Most of these migration streams consist of migrants with a history of labour migration, who have come from less prosperous countries to seek a better live in Western European countries (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007).

Given the fact that transnational marriages are often perceived by the public and policy makers as an obstacle to the integration process, or as a sign of failed integration, or even equalling arranged marriages, forced marriages, or marriages of convenience, many EU member states try to target and control marriage migration. As an important side effect, they influence the partner

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choice of migrants by restricting family reunification (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2015; Charsley, 2013). Belgian migration and integration policies seem to have adopted this kind of thinking as well, by installing increasingly strict policies to counter fraud, such as marriages of convenience and forced marriages (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005; Corbus, n.d.).

Theoretical debates about assimilation and integration have been dominated by scholars from the United States that stem from the United States' experience with immigrants in the 20th century (Bloemraad, 2007). In Europe, however, the theoretical debate on assimilation has not been as strong and, as a consequence, national integration situations and contexts are hardly sufficiently exploited (Schneider & Crul, 2010). However, grand encompassing ideas or perspectives on immigrant integration are hard to define, given the differences in historically rooted social, political, and economic institutions and structures within receiving societies, different demographic and other social trends, and characteristics of the different migrant groups (Alba & Foner, 2014; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012).

On average, Americans are considerably more religious compared to Western Europeans, and their institutions stimulate a greater acceptance of non-Christian religions (Foner & Alba, 2008). Therefore, strong particularistic ethnic and religious institutions are important stepping stones for assimilation, and a bridge towards inclusion in the United States. Racial boundaries, are, however, quite strong in the United States, making interethnic marriages more frequent compared to interracial marriages (Kalmijn, 1993; Qian & Lichter, 2001).

In Europe, however, religion might be an important barrier to the integration and inclusion process. Historically, a large proportion of immigrants in Western Europe had a Muslim background (Foner & Alba, 2008). Non-Christian

religions, however, and especially Muslim immigrants are viewed with great skepticism in Western Europe, where religion is seen as a problem, rather than a solution for immigrants (Foner & Alba, 2008). In the United States, however, the religious background was mostly Christian (Foner & Alba, 2008). In Europe, migrants, and especially those of non-European origin, are often disregarded, belittled, and even discriminated against (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013). Moreover, the ethnic majority reports attitudes of ethnocentrism and racism (Coffé, Billiet, & Cambre, 2002; Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009) which, in turn, affect the ethnic minority who often experience and are aware of these attitudes of ethnocentrism, racism, and discrimination (Alanya, Swyngedouw, Vandezande, & Phalet, 2015; Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018).

Moreover, in Western Europe, Muslims are often problematic groups in terms of legal and socioeconomic status (Foner & Alba, 2008). Furthermore, religion and the state have been historically more intertwined in Western Europe compared to the United States., making it harder for Muslim migrants to claim their own space within Western European societies (Alba & Foner, 2014). As a consequence, ethnic enclaves are viewed as problematic in Europe, while they are valued as a possible pathway to integration in the United States (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). Therefore, as concerns migrants in Western Europe, Connor (2008) claims that: "these lower levels of immigrant receptivity seem to correspond to a reactive effect where religious resilience actually deepens" (p. 394). These ethnic boundaries are even stronger compared to racial boundaries (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009), while the opposite applies to the United States, as already mentioned.

Another difference between the United States and European context lies in the used terminology. Given that the assimilation approach may best work in settings that reward groups that quickly adjust to the norms and values of the

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receiving society – such as the United States – and that the integration approach may be more effective in settings where welfare states reduce inequalities – such as in some Western European countries –, it makes sense that European (and Canadian) scholars use the concept of 'integration' rather than 'assimilation' to refer to the outcome of the immigrant experience (Alba, Reitz, & Simon, 2012).

Given the aforementioned, a more specific framework within the European context, and in this case more specifically on partner-choice patterns of immigrants in Belgium, is needed that considers the historically rooted social, political, and economic institutions and structures (Alba & Foner, 2014; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012).

The structural context in which immigrants find themselves might provide opportunities, such as education which might reduce the social distance between them and the ethnic majority, and impact partner choices (Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo, 2005). However, if migrants are marginalized and excluded, this social distance will increase.

Especially the prevailing and evolving immigration and integration policies and resulting legislation, shape the specific context where migrants live, and enable or inhibit transnational marriages (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2015; Charsley, 2013). The right of family reunification was codified for the first time in Belgium in the Immigration Act of 15 December 1980 (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). Throughout the years, increasingly strict policies were installed to counter fraud, such as marriages of convenience and forced marriages (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005; Corbus, n.d.). Especially in 2011, which is three years after the investigated timeframe within this dissertation – marriages established between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009 –, the conditions for family reunification became severely restricted (Corbus, n.d.; Lens, 2013). As a direct consequence,

the possibility of establishing transnational marriage was restrained as well. Therefore, the prevalence of transnational marriages, as well as a more 'natural' evolution in these marriages can be examined, before this government intervention.

1.3 A focus on Turkish and Moroccan Belgians

Examining transnational marriages of migrants requires migrants group that enable us to carry out this inquiry as thoroughly as possible. They should meet three conditions for this end. First, and quite obvious, transnational marriages have to occur frequently within these groups at least at some point in time. Second, these migrant groups have to be large enough. Structural influences may vary to a greater extent amongst larger groups, making these influences more easily observable compared to smaller groups. Moreover, larger groups equal larger sample sizes, which reduces the margin of error and increases the possibility of making well-grounded claims. Third, these groups have to be long established to account for changes in marital behaviour due to integration processes, amongst others, and to follow these groups long enough to adopt a life course perspective.

The first condition requires migrant groups in which transnational marriages often occur. Typically, three types of transnational marriages are distinguished (Heyse et al., 2007). The first one – which is also the focus of this dissertation and by far the largest group in Belgium (Desmet, Leys, & Ronsijn, 2011) – consists of migrants residing in Belgium, who marry a partner from their country of origin. This phenomenon is typical, but not exclusive for groups who entered Belgium as labour migrants, or the so-called guest workers, via bilateral agreements. A second type comprises transnational marriages from more prosperous countries. The last type are native Belgians marrying

transnationally, typically with a young bride, often called, rather condescendingly, 'mail order brides'.

Morocco (32%) and Turkey (10.8%) hold the first and second place of countries of origin from which partners originate (Desmet, Leys, & Ronsijn, 2011). For reference, the former Soviet Union holds the third place, with only 4.5%. Not only are transnational marriages the most prevalent amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians[1], family reunification is one of the most used immigration route for these groups: in 2009, 62.4% of Moroccan, and 51.2% of Turkish first residence permits were granted on the basis of family forming migration (Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014).

Furthermore, Moroccan and Turkish Belgians meet the second requirement concerning the group size. They are the two largest groups of migrants in Belgium originating from third countries in 2001; 40.6% originates from Morocco and 22% from Turkey (Directorate-general Statistics Belgium, n.d.). Compared to the third and fourth largest groups, the discrepancy is clear: 4.9% originates from Congo, and 3% from Algeria.

The first large Turkish and Moroccan immigration streams started from the 1960s onwards, and thus their migration spans different generations (Lievens, 1999; Reniers, 1999), which fulfills the third and final criterion.

We can conclude that Turkish and Moroccan Belgians meet the aforementioned three conditions in a more than sufficient manner and are therefore the best-suited migrant groups to carry out a study on transnational marriages. Not surprisingly, they are already the subject of a large bulk of research conducted on immigrants in Belgium (see e.g. Van Kerckem, Van der Bracht, Stevens, & Van de Putte, 2013; Eeckhaut, Lievens, Van de Putte, & Lusyne, 2011, & Lievens, 1999).

1.4 Dissertation outline

This dissertation opens with a theoretical sociological framework. First, Chapter 2 incorporates a lexicon with a clarification of frequently used terms throughout this dissertation.

Chapter 3 addresses our concept of integration. In this chapter, I give an overview of integration and assimilation theories and their critics. These include the classical assimilation theory, the segmented assimilation theory, and the new assimilation theory. Finally, the boundary theory is discussed.

Chapter 4 discusses the importance of applying a multidimensional perspective for understanding partner choices of migrants. In doing so, it argues why we should not only consider integration theories when trying to explain partner choices of migrants. By considering personal preferences, the influence of third parties, and structural barriers that may act alongside integration processes, I consider inhibiting and promoting factors shaping different partner-choice patterns.

Chapter 5 elaborates on the structural conditions touched upon in Chapter 4 and provides insight into the receiving society. Therefore, it goes beyond the structural conditions of the marriage market, and incorporates conditions of the Belgian society as a whole. First, a historical overview of immigration to Belgium is offered. Second, this chapter discusses immigration trends from the 1950s onwards. The third part describes the Belgian Immigration Act and its amendments in relation to family reunification immigration streams to Belgium. The fourth part focuses on divorce regulations with a focus on the changes in divorce law that impact divorce possibilities of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. The fifth part briefly touches upon the legislation governing residence security and its consequences for remarriage possibilities of more recently migrated transnational partners. The sixth part focuses on integration

policies in Belgium. Finally, the seventh part focuses on discrimination, racism, and ethnocentrism in Belgium.

Chapter 6 covers the importance of migration networks for Turkish and Moroccan migration. Given the strong influence of third parties (Chapter 5), strong networks might encourage transnational marriages. First, this chapter offers a theoretical overview of the formation and perpetuation of migration networks and systems. Second, these theories are applied to Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium specifically.

The research aims and questions are outlined in Chapter 7. First, the research aims are discussed in the form of the four strategies already outlined in Section 1.1.2. Second, I address the specific research questions, and how the empirical studies of this dissertation will tackle these.

Before the in-depth examination of these research questions in the empirical chapters, I describe the methodological framework in Chapter 8. This chapter contains a description of, as well as the rationale behind the choices that were made concerning our data, main variables, and analytical strategies.

After the theoretical and methodological frameworks, I proceed to the empirical chapters in Chapters 9 to 13.

This dissertation finishes with a conclusion- and discussion-section in Chapter 14. This includes a summary of our main findings, the contributions of this dissertation, its limitations and directions for future research, and the implications.

Chapter 2. Lexicon

Belgian resident with a non-Belgian nationality at birth: a migrant who migrated at least 1 year before the legal registration of the marriage to Belgium.

Migrants: migrated to Belgium from another country, or were born in Belgium with a non-Belgian nationality at birth.

Third countries: countries outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland.

Marriage: Throughout this dissertation, the term 'marriage' will be used as a pars pro toto for all marriages and legally registered cohabitations, unless explicitly stated otherwise. In chapters 11 and 12, however, only marriages are included.

Marriage migrant: a partner from the origin country, who arrived in Belgium within the context of the marriage within the same year of, or later, than the establishment of the marriage. The marriage is therefore the condition for legally entering and residing in Belgium.

Marriage migration: migration within the context of the marriage. After migration, the migrated partner is considered a marriage migrant.

Intra-ethnic marriages: marriages between a Belgian resident with a non-Belgian nationality at birth and a partner with the same nationality at birth. An important qualification has to be made here: even if the term specifically states 'ethnic', it is actually an indication of the nationality at birth of both partners. Even though we would prefer to categorize marriages based on ethnicity, this was impossible given the available information in our dataset.

Synonym: ethnic homogenous marriages.

Subsets: transnational marriages and local intra-ethnic marriages

We distinguish three patterns of partner choice: transnational marriages, local intra-ethnic marriages, and mixed marriages:

Transnational marriages: marriages between a Belgian resident with a non-Belgian nationality at birth, and a partner residing in the origin country, thus with the same nationality at birth. The transnational partner arrived in Belgium the same year of, or later, than the establishment of the marriage. After migration to Belgium, this partner is considered a marriage migrant.

Local intra-ethnic marriages: marriages between two Belgian residents with the same non-Belgian nationality at birth.

Mixed marriages: marriages between a Belgian resident with a non-Belgian nationality at birth, and a Belgian resident with a different nationality at birth. Mostly, this nationality at birth concerns a Belgian or other Western European nationality at birth. The empirical chapters that include mixed marriages, will provide more detailed information on the nationality of mixed partners.

Synonyms: ethnic heterogamous marriages, interethnic marriages, intermarriage (as the broad category of interethnic, or ethnic heterogamous marriages)

Chapter 3. Integration and assimilation

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part gives an overview of theories on integration and assimilation and their critics. The second part focuses more specifically on boundary theory. For an explanation of our understanding of integration as a concept, and the use of partner-choice patterns as the social component of integration, I refer to Section 1.1.1. For the difference between the American and European context and their conception of integration, I refer to Section 1.2.

3.1 Integration and assimilation theories

3.1.1 The classical assimilation theory: Anglo-conformity, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism

From the early 1900s until the middle of the 1960s, classical assimilation theories dominated the view of immigrant adaptation (Bloemraad, 2007). Gordon (1964) can be considered as one of the most important proponents of the classical formulation of the assimilation theory: assimilation as the decline of an ethnic distinction and the accompanying cultural and social differences (Nee & Alba, 2012). Assimilation is conceptualized as a linear process, with full assimilation as the final stage.

The canonical formulation of the classical assimilation theory can be traced back to the work of Chicago School sociologist, Robert E. Park and Ezra Burgess, where they introduced the concept of the *race relation cycle* in 1924: "when groups come into contact (…) relations are conflictual and competitive.

However, (…) eventually moves towards assimilation or the 'interpenetration and fusion' of groups" (Park & Burgess, 1924, p. 735). The endpoint, therefore, is cultural fusion. This formulation was refined by the seminal work of Gordon in 1964 (see infra). Anglo-conformity, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism constitute the three main conceptual models of assimilation in the United States (Hing, 1993).

The melting pot metaphor and the Anglo-conformity model align best with the original conceptualization of assimilation, and are therefore considered as two types of assimilation (Kazal, 1995). Anglo-conformity, or Americanization, refers to the one-sided process of assimilation: immigrants conform to a pre-existing Anglo-Saxon type (Gordon, 1978; Zangwill, 2017). Anglo-conformity is the assimilation process in which the immigrant culture is completely replaced by the North-American culture (Shaull & Gramann, 1998).

The melting pot metaphor is used to describe the process of assimilation (Gordon, 1978). This metaphor reflects the evolution of a heterogeneous society towards homogeneity. An important condition is the overcoming of structural barriers to obtain full assimilation. As we read in Kennedy (1944):

> Most authorities on population problems agree that intermarriage is the surest means of assimilation and the most infallible index of its occurrence. America has long been described as a great and bottomless melting pot into which have been thrown peoples from all parts of the world. Boiling and seething there together, they will, it is believed, ultimately lose all distinguishable marks of their diverse backgrounds; and some fine day American society will become one homogeneous group—a single amalgam blended of the many and varied types brought to our shores by the great waves of immigration of the past century (p. 331)

In other words, the melting pot metaphor refers to groups creating a new society in which both the culture of the receiving and immigrant society change (Gordon, 1978; Shaull & Gramann, 1998). An important assumption of the melting pot is the merging of Anglo-Saxon elements with cultures of other immigrant groups resulting in a new type of society (Kivisto, 2004; Zangwill, 2017). Interethnic marriage is linked with this metaphor of the melting pot because it would indicate the erosion of social, cultural, and psychological boundaries between ethnic groups (Lieberson & Waters, 1988).

Even though Gordon visualized cultural pluralism, or multiculturalism, as a form of assimilation, many scholars conceptualized it as an alternative to assimilation or even as antithetical to assimilation (Gordon, 1978; Kazal, 1995; Zangwill, 2017). The roots of the pluralism theory can be traced back to 1915, in the work of Kallen (1915) who argued that in order to become a full participant in American society, one should not surrender his own culture and traditions (Gordon, 1961; Kallen, 1915). Cultural pluralism promotes group identity and recognizes unchanging ethnocultural allegiances, which do not cease in the second and third generation (Pianko, 2008). On the contrary, ethnic differences are maintained and are even encouraged (Shaull & Gramann, 1998). As a consequence, different ethnic groups function together with other ethnic groups as a whole (Palmer, 1976). The salad bowl metaphor in the US, or the mosaic metaphor as its Canadian counterpart, are the conceptual antitheses of the melting pot metaphor (Palmer, 1976; Peach, 2005). They have often been used to describe a multicultural, or pluralistic society.

Gordon (1964) envisioned seven stages of assimilation that distinguish between cultural and structural elements: (1) acculturation, or cultural assimilation (2) structural assimilation, or integration (3) marital assimilation, or intermarriage (4) identification assimilation, (5) attitude reception assimilation, (6) behaviour reception assimilation, and (7) civic assimilation. According to Gordon (1964),

the first stage, acculturation, is inevitable and largely a one-way process; the minority adopts the core culture, which remains unchanged. This is a large divergence from the original work on assimilation by Park & Burgess (1924) who argued that acculturation was the end point. Gordon further hypothesized that once structural assimilation – the minority group entering the structure of the receiving society – took place, all the other stages will naturally follow and the process will be irreversible. Structural assimilation was therefore key to the maturing of the integration process into civic assimilation – the absence of value and power conflicts – which is in essence political assimilation (Bloemraad, 2007). The origin of the use of intermarriage as a measure of assimilation, being the next step in the assimilation process, can be therefore traced back to this line of reasoning. Each consecutive generation adjusts to a larger extent to the receiving society, and consecutive generations are therefore the 'motor' of assimilation, yielding assimilation inevitable in the end (Kivisto, 2015). Gordon (1961) argues that, while acculturation largely took place (in the United States), structural assimilation is still lacking (Haller, Portes, & Lynch, 2011).

3.1.2 Critics of the classical assimilation theory: the segmented assimilation theory and the triple melting pot

The notion of assimilation as being straightforward, its inevitability and its assumed endogenous nature – being the product of individual behaviour or choice –, has been criticized. First of all, critics argue that change does not only take place within the ethnic group considering that elements of minority cultures might be absorbed into mainstream culture as well. Second, the possible (intentional) exclusion of immigrant groups has to be acknowledged, given that American discriminatory and prejudiced attitudes and behaviour impede assimilation (Connor, 2010; Glazer, 1993; Kivisto, 2015). In Europe as

well, migrants, especially of non-European origin, are often disregarded, belittled, and even discriminated against which might work against optimal intergroup contact (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013; Pettigrew, 1998). Even though equal group status may be the prevailing norm as governments install anti-discriminatory laws, in reality there exists a lot of discrimination and even racism, hampering intergroup cooperation. As a consequence, the belief in assimilation has waned since the 1960s (Glazer, 1993).

Related to this, Kennedy (1944, p. 152) proposes a triple melting pot type of assimilation, instead of a single melting pot, that is occurring through intermarriage. Intermarriage (in New Haven) will only occur within, rather than across, religious boundaries; thus a triple religious cleavage: "(…) Protestant British-Americans, Germans, and Scandinavians intermarrying mutually; Catholic Irish, Italians, and Poles forming a separate intermarrying group; and Jews remaining almost completely endogamous" (Kennedy, 1944, p. 56). Thus, intermarriage is occurring across nationality boundaries, but is confined within Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish groups (Kennedy, 1944). Elaborating on this notion, Herberg (1955) developed a broader sociological theory that argued that religious boundaries would replace ethnic boundaries among immigrants of European origin in the United States. Furthermore, Pagnini & Morgan (1990) claimed that, at the beginning of the 20th century in the United States, endogamy was the norm for both natives and immigrants, and was the strongest within newly arrived immigrant groups from Southern and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, even though homogamy weakened in further generations, a strong generation homogamy still existed (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990). Glazer and Moynihan (1970) argued that even among white ethnic groups, assimilation proceeded very slowly, and that American society seemingly failed to melt.

In reaction to the straight-line notion of the assimilation theory, Portes and Zhou (1993) developed the segmented assimilation theory. This theory offers a framework for understanding the process through which the second generation becomes incorporated into the stratified (North-American), receiving society and the different concomitant outcomes (Zhou, 1997). In essence, the segmented assimilation combines micro-level assimilation processes with macro-level community contexts (Xie & Greenman, 2005). Different immigrant groups assimilate into different segments of society through the interaction of barriers, such as economic conditions, socioeconomic mobility, and the family structure (Haller, Portes, & Scott, 2011; Kivisto, 2015; Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Three barriers to successful adaption are distinguished: (1) racial discrimination, (2) de-industrialization and bifurcation of the American labour market and the growing inequality resulting in highly-paid professional occupations requiring advanced training and low-paid manual jobs, and (3) the consolidation of a marginalized population in the inner city, such as gangs and drug trade which provide an alternative path to staying in school (Haller, Portes, & Scott; Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Three possible patterns of adaptation are distinguished. The first aligns with the traditional notion of assimilation: acculturation and integration into the white middle-class through educational and economic success combined with stable families. The second pathway of downward assimilation into the underclass and even permanent poverty, includes second-generation migrants confronting barriers to successful adaptation combined with low parental human capital. The third one "associates rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's values and tight solidarity" (Portes & Zhou, 1993, p. 82). Enclave forming, or the preservation of ethnic culture and solidarity, might thus generate social incorporation rather than being a hindrance to it (Rodríguez-García, 2010).

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3.1.3 The new assimilation theory

In an attempt to resurrect the classical assimilation perspective, Alba and Nee (2003) proposed a new assimilation theory. They retain the core element of the classical assimilation theory by arguing that over generations, integration and the melting pot will occur. They acknowledge that certain institutions play an important role in assimilation processes, and that assimilation also requires some level of change and acceptance by the mainstream population, thus acknowledging the dynamic and mutual character of immigrant incorporation (Nee & Alba, 2012). According to them, the 'mainstream' is malleable, flexible, and inclusive, and can include the native middle-class, working-class, and even poor minorities (Alba & Nee, 2003; Haller, Portes, & Lynch, 2011). Alba and Nee further argue that cultural and social differences have little or no effect on interethnic interactions and relations (Bloemraad, 2007). Immigrants will choose to assimilate because discrimination is made illegal, and because opportunities are more ample within mainstream institutions. Moreover, they conceptualize ethnicity as a social boundary, related to social and cultural differences between groups, and that assimilation "may occur through changes taking place in groups on both sides of the boundary" (Alba & Nee, 2003, p. 11).

3.2 Boundaries

Boundaries are associated with processes of assimilation and exclusion of (ethnic) groups (Alba, 2006). The foundation of the boundary theory can be found within the work of Fredrik Barth (1969) who stated that the ethnic boundary defines the group, rather than the group's cultural content. Furthermore, ethnic identification is mainly based upon ascription and self-identification and might therefore change. These group identities are fluid and

are dependent on different situations and interactions. Furthermore, these boundaries are formed through interaction and specific kinds of inter-group relations. Ethnic groups are therefore maintained through processes of boundary maintenance, i.e. inclusion and exclusion.

Alba's work focuses on the boundaries which are institutionally created, instead of created by groups themselves. Alba (2005) distinguishes between bright and blurred boundaries. Bright and blurred boundaries have differential consequences for assimilation. As Alba (2005) puts it:

> There is no ambiguity in the location of individuals with respect to [a bright boundary]. In this case, assimilation is likely to take the form of boundary crossing (…) The counterpoint to a bright boundary is one that is or can become blurred. This could mean that individuals are seen as simultaneously members of the groups on both sides of the boundary or that sometimes they appear to be members of one and at other times members of the other. Under these circumstances, assimilation may be eased (…) assimilation of this type involves intermediate or hyphenated stages that allow individuals to feel simultaneously as members of an ethnic minority and of the mainstream. (pp. 24-25)

Briefly worded, bright boundaries promote exclusiveness, while blurred ones promote inclusiveness.

Boundaries are, however, dynamic rather than static and can therefore change over time, leading to different pathways to assimilation. For this, Alba (2005) uses Zolberg and Long's (1999) typology of boundary-related changes:

> Boundary crossing corresponds to the classic version of individual-level assimilation: someone moves from one group to another, without any real change to the boundary itself (…) Boundary blurring implies that the

social profile of a boundary has become less distinct: the clarity of the social distinction involved has become clouded, and individuals' location with respect to the boundary may appear indeterminate. The final process, boundary shifting, involves the relocation of a boundary so that populations once situated on one side are now included on the other: former outsiders are thereby transformed into insiders. (p. 23)

Since partnerships permeate the private sphere and are very intimate choices, group boundaries are most prominent and visible within this domain (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990). Studies found that race and ethnicity establish the most sturdy divides in the United States (McPherson et al., 2001). This was found in all sorts of relationships, ranging from the most intimate ones, such as a marriage (Kalmijn, 1998) to merely being acquainted with someone (Lawrence, 2000). When group boundaries between different ethnic groups are weak, mixed marriages are expected to be more frequent as ethnicity becomes a less salient feature. Vice versa, when boundaries originating from ethnic differences are strong, intra-ethnic marriages are more likely.

However, differences exist within ethnically homogeneous marriages as well. Therefore, within this dissertation I distinguish between transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages. Especially compared to second-generation migrants, transnational partners are socialized in a different country, with different customs. Moreover, first-generation migrants might prefer a transnational marriage given the fact that partners from the country of origin are more similar to them with respect to socialization processes and the cultural background, while second-generation migrants might prefer local intra-ethnic marriages for similar reasons (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007).

Chapter 4. The importance of using a multilevel perspective in understanding partner choices

This chapter discusses why it is important to apply a multilevel perspective for understanding partner choices of migrants. The first part argues why we should not only consider integration theories when trying to explain partner choices of migrants given that partner-choice patterns indicate group boundaries that transcend individual preference. Therefore, taking a multilevel approach might be fruitful. The second part gives an overview of the ingredients of this multilevel perspective, including the influence of third parties and the context one lives in.

4.1 Transnational marriages and integration

Chapter 3 addressed the assimilation and integration theories on how migrants would adapt in the receiving society. However, studying integration through behavioural components, such as partner-choice patterns, might be problematic, because it does not necessarily reflect the preference of the partners alone (Surkyn, 2000). Moreover, westernized motives might underlie the establishment of a transnational marriage. Especially for women, establishing a transnational marriage might be a way of emancipating oneself, and it might even contribute to women's empowerment (Lievens, 1997). Such a marriage might offer freedom and autonomy; after all, she knows the language, customs, traditions and so on (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Hooghiemstra, 2001). Especially in migrant groups with a collectivistic family system, the strong influence of the husband's family and the patrilocality tradition – the social system in which a

married couple resides with or near the husband's parents – might steer women towards the transnational marriage market (Lievens, 1999). By marrying a partner from the origin country, she can free herself from this influence, since they still live in the origin country.

In addition to this, while the choice for a transnational marriage might be considered antithetical to the integration process when we apply the classical notion of integration that states that intermarriage might indicate the erosion of social, cultural, and psychological boundaries between ethnic groups (Lieberson & Waters, 1998), the segmented assimilation theory offers a different perspective. Countervailing forces, such as structural boundaries (see the following section) and discrimination (see Section 5.7) might impede intermarriage, or even intergroup contact. Because close social relations between persons require frequent and intimate social contact (Blau, 1977), the structural opportunity theory can therefore explain choices that go beyond individual interests and preferences (Blau, 1994).

4.2 Ingredients of a multilevel perspective

This section draws from Kalmijn's (1998) theory on general factors that influence individual partner-choices, and therefore cause homogamy and endogamy. The first source are individual preferences, the second source is the influence of third parties, and the third source comprise the structural opportunities or constraints of the marriage market. Even though Kalmijn's theory is mostly aimed at intermarriage, conclusions can be drawn on how these sources stimulate intra-ethnic marriages, whether these marriages be local or transnational. For example, the allegiance of immigrants to third parties might extend to the country of origin, therefore providing a dual allegiance to the ethnic communities in the country of residence and origin. Moreover, structural

constraints might encourage transnational marriages rather than local intra-ethnic marriages.

4.2.1 Individual preferences: homogamy and endogamy

In general, it is often claimed that people prefer a partner who is similar to them, a phenomenon called homophily, or positive assortative mating (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Homophily results in homogamy, or assortative mating, which is a marriage between individuals who are similar to each other. In their study of friendship processes, Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) distinguish between status homophily and value homophily. Status homophily includes ascribed as well as acquired characteristics. Ascribed characteristics include race, ethnicity and age, while acquired ones consist of religion and education. Value homophily relates to one's attitudes, believes and aspirations. Especially individuals with similar status characteristics are more likely to interact with one another. As a consequence, networks of people are often homogeneous, as similarity breeds connection.

However, assortative mating might be more complicated when taking the educational attainment into account. On the one hand, exchange hypotheses argue that members of ethnic minority groups have a higher chance of interethnic marriage when their socio-economic status is higher (Meng & Gregory, 2005; Merton, 1941; Qian & Lichter, 2011). For example, better educated immigrants have higher intermarriage rates (Dribe & Lundh, 2008). Several explanations are valid here: higher educated immigrants might have a bargaining asset in the marriage market, education might make immigrants better able to adapt to the receiving society, and through education, the range of meeting places might expand, which increases the likelihood to encounter natives (Dribe & Lundh, 2008; Furtado, 2012).

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However, these processes must not be overstated; even though the general assumption holds that higher educational levels of immigrants stimulate interethnic marriages, research also points to the impact of barriers between immigrant groups and the native population (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). Especially cultural, ethnic, and religious barriers might inhibit interethnic marriages, leading highly educated immigrant women to the transnational marriage market (Yilmaz, Van de Putte, & Stevens, 2019). Moreover, a lack of appropriate partners with similar (tertiary) educational levels within the local marriage market might stimulate transnational marriages as well. This gendered effect of education has been found repeatedly: highly educated (Turkish and Moroccan) women have a higher likelihood to marry transnationally compared to women with a lower education, while the opposite is found for men (see for example Lievens, 1999; Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014).

4.2.2 Third parties – the meso-level

Third parties encourage intra-ethnic marriages because interethnic marriages might threaten the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group (Kalmijn, 1998). For this end, two strategies are often used. First, children are brought up with a strong sense of group identification, which encourages group solidarity as well. Second, third parties might apply group sanctions. Especially the family, church, and state are important actors for sanctioning. The first source of sanctions, the parents, generally do not have strong sanctions when children marry exogamously. The state, however, can potentially provide the strongest sanctions by drawing up legislations that prohibit intermarriage. The church takes up an intermediate position, since they might denounce interfaith marriages (Kalmijn, 1998). In what follows, I will specifically focus on the role

of parents in particular, and friends and family more generally given their emotional and physical proximity to immigrants. Even though the influence of church and state might change over time, parental influence might be more malleable.

Friend and family can affect migrants' partner choice by their social support (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011; Kalmijn, 1998). This influence is especially pronounced in migrant communities characterized by a strong internal cohesion and a high level of social control. In these communities, marriage and divorce are in many cases strongly collectivized, – both families are involved, not only the spouses (Merz et al., 2009; Timmerman, 2006). Evidence for higher levels of parental involvement amongst Turkish and Moroccan immigrants was found in the Netherlands (van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014), Germany (Straßburger, 2003), France (Milewski & Hamel, 2010), and in Belgium (Descheemaeker et al., 2009). This role can vary from merely giving advice, to playing a matchmaker, to even completely control the choice of partner (Kalmijn, 1998).

This does not rule out the fact that children can still act as active agents and make their own choices (Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). Furthermore, a gradual change, from 'parental decision' to 'matchmakers' reflects the evolution towards more autonomy in the partner choice of descendants, even though it remains high (Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018; Van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014) even though it remains high.

Moreover, not only do children have more autonomy in their partner choice, parents' stimulation is less geared towards the transnational market in recent years (Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). This shift might be caused by several factors. Cultural differences between the partner coming

from the country of origin and the partner residing in Belgium, such as differences in norms and expectations concerning gender roles, might put strain on transnational marriages (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman et al., 2009; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Apart from cultural differences, many more (related) problems may emerge. A first issue concerns the uncertainty about the motives of the migrated spouse because an individual can never be certain whether the partner marries for 'true love' or because of other, often less romantic, motives (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman, 2008). In addition, accurate knowledge about the situation in the destination country and Western European countries in general, is in many cases lacking, which might result in a distorted idealized image within the country of origin (Timmerman, 2008). Because of these reasons, Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might develop a careful attitude towards transnational marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Moreover, having experienced these risks and problems first hand, parents might be less keen to encourage their children to marry transnationally.

4.2.3 The marriage market: structural opportunities

The structural opportunity theory explains the regulation of relations between groups on a macro-level (Blau, 1977, 1994). The central argument holds that "population distributions and their relationships govern social opportunities and constraints (…) they determine the probabilities of certain social relations rather than others" (Blau, 1994, p. 169). Therefore, structural constraints or opportunities might heavily influence the availability of and contact opportunities for potential partners within the local marriage market (Blau, 1994).

When stripped down to its core properties, the structure consists of social positions, that are not only differentiated, but interrelated as well (Blau, 1977).

These social positions have labels, or parameters that can be categorized under two classes: nominal and graduated parameters.

> A nominal parameter divides the population into sub-groups with distinct boundaries. There is no inherent rank-order among these groups (…). A graduated parameter differentiates people in terms of a status rank-order. In principle, the status gradation is continuous, which means that the parameter itself does not draw boundaries between strata. (p. 7)

Sex, ethnicity, and religion are examples of the former, while income and education are examples of the latter. Intersecting parameters promote intergroup relations whereas consolidated ones impede them (Blau, 1977).

These social positions people occupy "find expression in role relations among persons in proximate positions that differ from those between persons in distant positions; the interrelations of elements are the associations among persons in different positions" (pp. 244-245). In short, interactions between groups depend heavily on how structural parameters intersect since they define social positions. People often base their interactions on social characteristics without even realizing it (Blau, 1977).

Moreover, Blau makes a few important predictions about the impact of the ecological structure on intergroup relations. Especially the following ones are important within dissertation: "Ingroup associations are more prevalent than outgroup associations" (Blau, 1977, p. 43), "Increasing heterogeneity increases the probability of intergroup relations (p. 98) and "The probability of intergroup relations increases with increasing size and density of the community" (p. 182). This implies that migrants living in bigger cities are more likely to establish intergroup relations, because bigger cities entail more heterogeneity; that more diverse cities also encourage intergroup relations for the same reason; and that

bigger migrant groups are more likely to only interact with their own group members (Blau, 1980).

Chapter 5. The receiving society

This chapter focuses on the Belgian society and therefore provides important background information that we must bear in mind when examining transnational marriages. Therefore, this chapter it goes beyond the structural conditions of the marriage market, and incorporates conditions of the Belgian society as a whole.

Transnational marriages are a complex matter, characterized by the intersection of multiple and continuous tensions. Or as De Bruycker and Pascouau (2011) fittingly put it:

> No migration policy can ignore the issue of family reunification. It is a central component of the rules governing the entry and residence of foreign nationals in countries' national territory. Consequently, any amendment to the legislation on foreign nationals, whether national or European, strikes to the heart of the family structure. Family reunification also has an impact on the structure and organization of the host society. Given its critical, sensitive and complex nature, therefore, it is important to have a clear understanding of the dynamics and forces that structure the issue of family reunification in both European and Belgian law. (p. 11)

The first part summarizes the Belgian migration history. The second part of this chapter discusses immigration trends from the 1950s onwards, as well as current immigration trends. The third part describes the Belgian Immigration Act and its amendments in relation to family reunification immigration streams to Belgium. The fourth part focuses on divorce regulations with a focus on the changes in divorce law that impact divorce possibilities of Turkish and

Moroccan Belgians. The fifth part briefly touches upon the legislation governing residence security and its consequences for remarriage possibilities of recently migrated transnational partners. The sixth part focuses on integration policies in Belgium. Finally, the seventh part focuses on discrimination, racism, and ethnocentrism in Belgium.

5.1 Backdrop: Belgium as a destination country

Ever since the early 20th century, Belgium can be considered a country of immigration. Around this time, the Belgian government attracted guest workers – mostly Italian and Eastern European – to work in the mining industry (Morelli, 1993). After the economic crisis of 1930, the conditions for migration to Belgium became more strict, but did not cease altogether. Initially, guest workers were only allowed to enter Belgium to work in the mining industry. After the Second World War, this was supplemented by additional guest workers that were needed to aid in the construction and heavy industry.

After the rise of Communism following the Second World War, most Eastern European labour migrants were retracted back to their home country which led to a huge gap in the supply of labour migrants, which in turn was filled by Italian and Greek guest workers (Morelli, 1993). Appalling conditions, however, led the Italian government to demand better working conditions for Italian guest workers (Morelli, 1993). The best known example of a calamity resulting from these conditions is the mining disaster in Marcinelles on August 8 1959, which resulted in 262 casualties, of which 136 were Italian immigrants.

To cope with the shortage of workers, bilateral agreements were drawn up between the Belgian government and governments of the countries that would 'supply' guest workers (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1992, Law on the approval

of the bilateral agreements of 1976). During the 1950s, bilateral agreements were installed with the governments from Spain (1956) and Greece (1957). After that, during the 1960s and the 1970s, the search was further diversified to other countries outside Europe, such as Turkey and Morocco. We will discuss this more in depth in conjunction to the legislation concerning family reunification (see infra).

5.2 Immigration trends from the 1950s onwards: the first generation

The past decades, a large influx of immigrants entered Belgium. From the 1950s until the 1990s the numbers roughly hovered between 40,000 and 60,000 immigrants entering the country, after which the numbers rose exponentially to 80,000 immigrants in 2001, and even 140,000 in 2016 (Statistics Belgium, 2018). In 2016, about 11% of the Belgian population had a foreign nationality (Myria, 2017). Especially family (re)unification, and, in more recent years, asylum streams were the main forces behind these large immigration streams of first-generation migrants to Belgium. More specifically, in 2005, 63.2% of all long-stay visa (Category D) were granted on the basis of family reunification, most of which were granted to Turkish and Moroccan migrants (FOD Buitenlandse Zaken, as cited in Heyse et al., 2007). However, in order to obtain an accurate picture of the first generation in our dataset, visa data may entail some problems which will be outlined in the following paragraph. As a consequence, I preferred the use of data on first residence permits.

Even though data on visa applications and first residence permits partly overlap, there are some important differences (Myria, 2016). Most importantly, visa data only tell us something about the person requesting the visa, and not about the resulting migration streams (Van Heyse et al., 2007). A positive decision on a visa application does not necessarily guarantee the entry of the

involved immigrant into Belgium. For example, he or she might not collect the visa, or might not enter the country even after collection; after a visa has been issued, the immigrant is subjected to an inspection at the border. Furthermore, the reason for migration might change during the stay, resulting in a different reason for the issuing of a residence permit compared to the visa application. Finally, because data on visa applications were harder to obtain while data on first residence permits are more readily available, we choose to shortly describe the first generation Turkish and Moroccan immigrants on the basis of data on first residence permits.

Since 3 March 2008, following the European Regulation on community statistics on migration and international protection, the national register contains data on the legal reason for migration to Belgium (reason for issuing a first residence permit) as provided by the responsible administration, the Immigration Office (CGKR, 2011). Before 2008, however, including the legal reason was only optional and it was the responsibility of the municipality in which the immigrant resides (Desmet, Leys, & Ronsijn, 2011; Timmerman, Martiniello, Rea, & Wets, 2015). Furthermore, in the case a migrant moved to another municipality before 2008, the information on the legal reason was deleted. In some cases, however, it is possible that this information has been added retrospectively after 2008, for example when the migrant applies for a residence document, or when he/she has to obtain a duplicate of their residence document.

For immigrants originating from Morocco in 2009, first permits for gaining legal residency in Belgium were granted on the basis of family forming migration i.e. marriage migration (62.4%), followed by family reunification of children (12.7%), family reunification of ascendants (10.7%), education (6.3%), humanitarian reasons (4.4%), and employment (3.3%) (Schoonvaere, 2014). For Turkish immigrants in 2009, the numbers are broadly comparable to those of Moroccan immigrants: the bulk of first permits for gaining legal residency in

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Belgium were granted on the basis of family forming migration (51.2%), followed by education (11.7%), family reunification of children (11.6%), humanitarian reasons (10.8%), family reunification of ascendants (6.4%), employment (5.7%), and international protection status (2.5%) (Schoonvaere, 2013). Asylum seekers are only included when they enjoy subsidiary protection or have been formally recognized as a refugee (Schoonvaere, 2014). Given the decline during the subsequent years in first residence permits granted on the basis of family forming migration – 33.8% for Moroccan immigrants and 27.2% for Turkish immigrants in 2016 – (Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014), the number of first residence permits granted on the basis of family formation is probably even higher during the period 2001-2008 than the number observed in 2009.

5.3 Belgian Immigration Act: tightening up the legislation

The legal side of family (re)unification in Belgium is very complex to say the least. This is mainly due to the partitioning into various categories present in the Immigration law and the illegibility of the provisions in the family reunification law. The right of family reunification was codified for the first time in Belgium in the Immigration Act of 15 December 1980 (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). Adding to the already existing complexity, this law was modified several times throughout the years and neglected the logical sequence of legal provisions. Finally, legal precedents contributed to the annulment of several legal provisions by the Constitutional Court and the State Council.

5.3.1 Bilateral agreements: The search for organized labour migration in Belgium (1964)

As previously mentioned, in the beginning of the 1960s, Belgian industries – and Western European industries overall – encountered a pressing shortage of workers in the industries, of which the mine, coal, and textile industries are the most important ones (Lievens, 1999). Combined with a flourishing economic climate, the Belgian government dealt with this by establishing bilateral agreements with the governments of Morocco (1964), Turkey (1964), Tunisia (1969), Algeria (1970), and the former Yugoslavia[3] (1970) to attract, predominantly male, guest workers from these countries to work in conditions that were unattractive to indigenous workers, such as a low wage (Akgündüz, 1993; Lievens, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014). As a consequence, the first organized migration of Turkish and Moroccans started around the 1960s, although the a lot of Moroccans arrived spontaneously at the beginning of the 1960s, and not exclusively through the organized recruitment channels (see Chapter 6; Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2015).

The bilateral agreements were transposed in the Law on the approval of the bilateral agreements on 13 December 1976, which allowed guest workers to relocate their family to Belgium, provided that they had been working in Belgium for three months and yield decent housing; 'family' being limited to spouses, children, and ascendants.

Up until 2011, the Immigration Act distinguished between applicants for family reunification originating (1) from European countries, (2) from countries with which Belgium had concluded bilateral agreements, and (3) from third countries, with the exception of countries in (2) (Heyse et al., 2017). For migrant groups that fall under the bilateral agreements, provisions were more favourable (hereinafter referred to as *privileged migrants*). Different rules apply

to migrants originating from European countries as well. In these countries, free movement of persons exists: European citizens can move and reside freely within the European Union (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). However, for third-country nationals, this freedom has been restricted (European Parliament, n.d.).

5.3.2 The immigration stop (1974)

A period of economic strain in the wake of the oil crisis in 1973 put an abrupt end to the necessity of guest workers (Reniers, 1999). This resulted in a halt to new labour immigration in 1974. The halt to new labour immigration in 1974 was translated in the Immigration Act of 28 June 1984 to reinforce the immigration stop (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). This law aimed at restricting chain migration, by banning *cascade reunification,* i.e. when a spouse or children relied on family reunification procedures for legally entering Belgium, they could no longer invoke family reunification procedures themselves for bringing other family members or spouses.

In practice however, the impact of this law was rather negligible, since privileged migrants and European citizens were exempt from this restriction (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). Given the immigration stop to new labour immigration, family reunification, i.e. immigration of the remaining family, became one of the main routes to enter Belgium for migrants originating from third countries, including Turkish and Moroccan migrants (Reniers, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014). Besides family reunification, family formation emerged, i.e. marriage as a legal condition to enter Belgium (Reniers, 1999). As a consequence, for most migrants originating from third countries, marriage migration became one of the few ways to enter Belgium (and Western Europe in general) (Caestecker, 2011; DEMO & CGKR, 2013). Even though transnational marriages are not considered 'family reunification' in the strict

sense of the word, they fall under the same regime and are thus considered as such; the legislator differentiates only in exceptional cases between family reunification and family formation (De Bruycker & Pascouau, 2011).

5.3.3 Restricting the asylum channel and protecting marriage migrants (1993)

In 1993, the Immigration Act was amended again (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). This time however, the amendment was geared towards restricting the asylum channel, given the peak of asylum seekers after the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Besides restricting the asylum channel, the amendments of this law aimed at protecting marriage migrants, instead of restricting marriage migration. The changes concerning marriage migration included the installment of an age restriction – both partners had to be 18 years old –, and a quicker granting of residence security. Again, the implementation of this law was limited to migrants originating from third countries only, with the exception of *privileged migrants* (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005).

5.3.4 The beginning of a more tight family reunification regime (2006)

In 2003, 22 European Union Member States adopted a European Directive concerning the right to family unification. This European Directive of 22 September 2003 was a legally non-binding European guideline, which protected a priori state sovereignty (De Bruycker & Pascouau, 2011). This guideline was formally transposed into Belgian law on 15 September 2006 and entered into force on 1 June 2007 to combat abuse of the law of family reunification such as marriages of convenience and forced marriages (Heyse et al., 2007; Sabbe, El Boujaddayni, Temmerman, & Leys, 2019).

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Conditions for family reunification now included having health insurance, decent housing conditions, and a minimum age of 21 years instead of 18. These conditions did not yet include an income requirement even though this was included in the European Directive (Heyse et al., 2007). For comparison, in the Netherlands, an income requirement of 120%[4] was implemented in 2004 (Kulu-Glasgow & Leerkes, 2011). Again, in the case of family reunification with spouses of privileged migrants, a derogation exists (De Bruycker & Pascouau, 2011). They are for example not subject to a minimum age of 21 years nor health insurance. Before this implementation, there were no strict requirements for family reunification, especially compared to neighbouring countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2012; Kulu-Glasgow & Leerkes, 2011).

Finally, this law placed legal cohabitations on an equal footing with marriage in family reunification law (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). Before 2006, the migration of a partner on the basis of a legally registered partnership was regulated by a circular from 1997. This was a discretional decision of the minister; a favour instead of a right (CGKR, 2009; De Bruycker & Pascouau, 2001).

5.3.5 Tight restrictions on family reunification (2011)

Family reunification was restricted significantly in the amendment of 2011, the final amendment to date, which aimed to further stepping up the fight against supposed abuse of the law on family reunification. Even though this amendment happened outside the investigated timeframe in this dissertation, – we only consider marriages until January 1st 2009 –, they had a large impact on Turkish and Moroccan migration. Since 2010, the Immigration Affairs Department

abolished the legal distinction between migrants whose migration was governed by bilateral agreements, and other migrants originating from third countries (Lens, 2013). This way, Turkish and Moroccan migrants no longer received a preferential treatment. This was transposed in the Immigration Act of 8 July 2011 (Corbus, n.d.; Lens, 2013). Only migrants who obtained their Belgian residence permit as guest workers as part of the bilateral agreements and had children or were married before migration, can still invoke the privileges of the bilateral agreements for bringing their family over, which is hardly anyone, however to date (Corbus, n.d.).

For other migrants originating from third countries, conditions for family reunification became severely restricted. These include the following: (1) strict housing conditions – migrants have to meet the requirements of real estate that is rented out as a main residence: the property has to comply with the basic standards concerning safety, health, and living quality, (2) sufficient income – at least 120% of the living wage –, and (3) the proof of the presence of a durable relationship – living together at least one year prior to the application for family reunification –, or having proof of being in a relationship at least two years before the application, or having a child together (Corbus, n.d.).

5.4 Divorce legislation

Problems concerning divorce legislation might arise in the case of transnational marriages, given the possibility to marry in the country of origin before migrating to Belgium (Koelet et al., 2009a). The country where one can petition for divorce, is only partly dependent on the country where one got married (Koelet et al., 2009a). When two partners got married in Turkey or Morocco, they can divorce in Belgium if one of the three following requirements is

satisfied: (1) they both have to live in Belgium or (2) they both have to have the Belgian nationality. If neither conditions are satisfied, it is sufficient that (3) only one partner lives in Belgium in addition to one of the following conditions: (a) the last habitual residence of the spouses was in Belgium, (b) the spouses file for divorce together, (c) the spouse who lives in Belgium is the defendant, or (d) the spouse who lives in Belgium is the petitioner and he or she has lived in Belgium for at least 12 months. The 'nationality of the marriage', i.e. the place where the marriage took place, is not important for the authority of a Belgian judge; the habitual residence is crucial. In practice, this means that anyone who has lived for at least 12 months in Belgium (even if it is illegal), can petition for divorce. In most cases, the judge will apply the Belgian law.

For the divorce to become official in Morocco or Turkey, it has to be acknowledged through a court decision in Belgium (or another country of residence) (Koelet et al., 2009a). Vice versa, a divorce in Turkey or Morocco has to be endorsed by a Belgian judge for the marriage to be acknowledged in Belgium. In most cases, Turkish divorces pose no problem. Moroccan divorces, however, cause more problems to be acknowledged, especially with respect to the acknowledgment of repudiations. In many cases, Moroccan and Turkish Belgians are advised to divorce in Belgium, to avoid these acknowledgment problems.

In 2007, a thorough reform of the divorce law for migrant couples was implemented. The four most important changes are (1) the acquiring of more rights for the economically weaker partner, (2) the abolition of divorce based on fault ground, (3) citing irreconcilable differences as a legal cause for divorce, and (4) a shortened period of factual separation before one can legally divorce. In 2000, one had to be factually separated for two years before being able to legally divorce, in 2007 this was shortened to three months at most for a divorce based

on irreconcilable differences filed by both partners, and 1 year when filed by only one partner (Koelet et al., 2009a).

5.5 Residence security and remarriage

An important condition for migrants to apply for family reunification is the requirement of a permanent residence permit. When entering Belgium, marriage migrants are granted a temporary residence permit on the basis of their marriage bond (or legal cohabitation) with a Belgian citizen, or with a legal Belgian resident. From 1994 until 2007, a permanent residence permit was issued after a positive verification of cohabitation after a period of prior marriage of a maximum of 15 months of marriage for migrants originating from third countries (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). For marriages established between 2001 and 2007 – the investigated timeframe in this dissertation runs from 01/01/2001 until 01/01/2009 –, therefore, a divorce after 15 months has therefore no influence on the immigration status of marriage migrants, which makes them in turn eligible for the establishment of a transnational marriage after divorce (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). However, the period to be eligible for a permanent residence permit was increased to three years, which was governed by the new Residence Act that took effect on 01/06/2007. Therefore, partners establishing their first marriage after 01/06/2007 (until 01/01/2009) might be more reluctant to divorce (see Chapter 14 for a discussion of this limitation).

5.6 Integration policies

In Belgium, after the devolution of the migrant integration policy to the regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels) in the 1980s[5], regional policies gradually began to diverge due to the difference between Flemish, Walloon, and Brussels nationalism, which led to considerable discrepancies and even opposing views in their integration policies (Adam, 2013; Loobuyck & Jacobs, 2009; Martiniello, 1995; Martiniello, 2013).

In Flanders, where a strong national identity exists because of a strong sense of cultural nationalism caused by the long struggle for linguistic rights and cultural autonomy, ethnic and cultural diversity were seen as problematic and newcomers were viewed as a threat to the Flemish culture (Loobuyck & Jacobs, 2009; Martiniello, 1995). This resulted in two different major sides dominating in Flanders. On the one hand, a more assimilationist approach demanded cultural homogeneity. On the other hand, a more progressive side tried a more conciliatory approach by promoting a multicultural society while still bearing traces of assimilationist tendencies, however. This resulted in an egalitarian multiculturalism, an approach which combines multiculturalism and assimilationism, that acknowledges the importance of the cultural identity of minorities, while simultaneously letting the Flemish culture take precedence (Loobuyck & Jacobs, 2009).

In Wallonia, where a more civic nationalism prevails, relatively little weight was being given to the cultural and ethnic dimensions of immigration, and thus specific policies for immigrants were almost automatically rejected (Martiniello, 1995). On the contrary: '(..) racism and ethnic problems were seen in official Walloon rhetoric as Flemish problems' (Martiniello, 2013, p. 126). As a consequence, a clear framework for integration policy was lacking. However, even though Wallonia was much more open towards newcomers, a transitional

interculturalism was endorsed later on, implying that conformation to the Belgian culture and identity is the ultimate objective.

The differences in civic integration trajectories for newcomers exemplify these differences between regions (Adam, 2013; Martiniello, 2013; Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003). In Flanders from 2001 onwards, compulsory civic integration trajectories were introduced (Adam & Jacobs, 2014). Only in 2016, however, the Walloon government introduced a fully mandatory integration pathway (European website on integration, n.d.). These integration courses teach '(...) you how to participate appropriately in the Belgian society' (Atlas-Antwerpen). This includes language courses, learning about childcare and schools in Belgium, learning which services may be of assistance in the search for work etc. Consequently, the aim of most integration courses in Belgium is to enable migrants to participate in the Belgian society (Live in Belgium, n.d.).

Finally, Brussels, being a highly diverse urban region, can be best described as a 'multicultural, multiethnic, multiracial and multifaith society' (Martiniello, 2013, p. 127). Brussels is, not surprisingly, the last Belgian region implementing compulsory civic integration trajectories, which took place in 2017 (European website on integration, n.d.).

Compared to other European countries which have adopted more restrictive policies, Belgium provided more generous procedures concerning migration, at least until 2011. It was not even until 1989 that Belgium adopted an official integration policy, because of the consensus on the provisional character of migration on both the migrant and host institutions side, who seemed to conceive migration only as a temporary adjunction to labour force (CGKR, 2009; Niessen, Schibel, & Magoni, 2003). The Royal Commission for Immigrant Policy was established in 1989 in the aftermath following the large electoral gains of the extreme right in Flanders (Lesthaeghe, 2000). This commission is aimed at

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guaranteeing respect of all rights of foreign populations, and formulated, to that end, a clear national policy:

> Immigrant communities are not supposed to assimilate and disappear in the Belgian melting pot of Flemings, Walloons or Bruxellois. Instead, they are fully entitled to maintain their identity and on community cohesion for as long as this does not run counter to Belgian law and constitutionally guaranteed individual freedom. This policy is direct at fostering functional integration, i.e. developing everything that is needed for linguistic and economic integration and at preventing social exclusion (Lesthaeghe, 2000, p. 43)

5.7 Discrimination, racism, and ethnocentrism

In Chapter 3 on integration and assimilation I already briefly touched upon discrimination and racism. Scholars argued that (racial) discrimination might hamper adaption, intergroup cooperation, and intermarriage by extension (Glazer, 1993; Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Ethnocentrism – discrimination on the basis of the ethnic group – and racism – discrimination on the basis of race – are important concepts in this respect, but are often conflated, however. The concept of 'racism' is often used, when one is actually referring to 'ethnocentrism' (Lechte, 2014). Furthermore, an important distinction has to be made regarding the processes on the institutional level and on the individual level. As Nieto (2004) explains accurately when explaining institutional racism:

> Although the beliefs and behaviors of individuals may be hurtful, far greater damage is done through institutional discrimination, that is, the systematic use of economic and political power in instructions (…) that

leads to detrimental policies and practices. (…) The major difference between individual and institutional discrimination is the wielding of power, because it is primarily through the power of the people who control institutions such as schools that oppressive policies and practices are reinforced and legitimated (…). Institutional discrimination generally refers to how people are excluded or deprived of rights or opportunities as a result of the normal operations of the institution. (pp. 46-47)

In Europe, migrants, and especially those of non-European origin, are often disregarded, belittled, and even discriminated against, even though equal group status may be the prevailing norm (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013). A study on the attitudes of residents in Flanders – the northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium – in 2001 towards 'old' and 'new' immigrants reveals that these residents have a moderately positive attitude towards the principle of asylum, but have taken, however, a negative stance towards asylum seekers (Meuleman & Billiet, 2003).

Moreover, this negative attitude expands towards new and old immigrant groups as well. Concerning 'new' immigrants, 65% reported being opposed to the settlement of Eastern European immigrants in Belgium. The ethnocentric attitudes towards old migrants, such as Turkish and Moroccan migrants – attitudes that were already present in the past (Coffé, Billiet, & Cambre, 2002) – remained stable. For example, 28% agreed with the statement that Belgium never should have brought in guest workers, and 27% believed that 'generally, migrants are not to be trusted' (Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009). These attitudes of individual persons must be seen, however, within the context in which they are formed; these attitudes are dependent on national context factors, such as immigration streams and unemployment rates (Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009).

On an institutional level, strong social divisions between the ethnic majority and minorities in Belgium exist, not only concerning education, but regarding the socio-economic status and occupation too (Corluy & Verbist, 2010; Phalet & Gijsberts, 2007; Phalet & Heath, 2011). Moreover, institutional discrimination occurs frequently; a study examining discrimination of ethnic minorities in the rental housing market reveals that ethnic minorities were discriminated against in almost one in five properties, already from the initial telephone contact (Van der Bracht, Coenen, & Van de Putte, 2015). This implies that the ethnic minority candidate was not invited to visit the property, while the ethnic Belgian candidate was. What is more, migrants who master the language of the receiving society are not less discriminated against compared to those who do not master the language.

Not only does the ethnic majority reports attitudes of ethnocentrism, the ethnic minority perceives this as such. For example, studies on Turkish migrants in Belgium showed that the influence of ethnic prejudice was strongly present in, and influenced the daily lives of these migrants (Alanya, Swyngedouw, Vandezande, & Phalet, 2015; Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018). In one study, 30% of the respondents experienced personal discrimination 'sometimes or often', and more than 30% of these respondents claimed that this perceived discrimination was based on their ethnicity (Alanya et al., 2015). In addition to this, minority members that experience discrimination are more likely to evaluate members of groups that discriminate more negatively (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005).

Chapter 6. From pioneers to migration systems: the importance of networks

The establishment of transnational marriages requires complicated and intense negotiations given the emotional and physical distance between the spouses and their families (Reniers, 1999). As a consequence, transnational marriages necessitate strong bonds, or networks, between communities in the countries of residence and origin. This chapter focuses on network theory and includes the push and pull factors that instigated migration, and led (and still lead) to the perpetuation of migration. By conceptualizing immigration as a collective experience, I discuss how strong networks can facilitate migration and are more likely to promote transnational marriages. First, I will give a theoretical overview of the establishment of a strong migration system. After that, I will apply it to the specific case of Turkish and Moroccan migration to Belgium.

6.1 A theoretical overview of the meso-level

Migration takes place when the outcome of travelling to another country appears to be more attractive compared to staying at the place of origin. Especially opportunity differentials on the political, economic, social, and cultural level have been examined (de Haas, 2010). Often cited examples are unemployment, a higher level of human development, and war and civil conflict (Borjas, 1989; Ravlik, 2004; Schoorl et al., 2000). However, the, mostly exogenous, macro-level factors that play a crucial role in the initiation of migration processes, possibly differ from the factors that lead to the perpetuation of migration (de Haas, 2010). These factors might be found on the

meso-level. In his work, Faist (1997) stressed the importance of the meso-level, or the level of collective and social networks. It is the link between the social structure and the individual decision-maker (Faist 1997; Haug, 2008).

The occurrence, stability, and persistent character of migration streams can be best understood from a migration system perspective. Such a system is the outcome of successive stages, each stage being reached through feedback effects (de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008). These feedback loops might be positive, and thus migration-reinforcing, or negative, thus migration-undermining (de Haas, 2010). In this respect, Massey and his colleagues (1993) conceptualized migration as a diffusion process, steered by networks. Indeed, existing networks make each subsequent migration substantially easier (Haug, 2008).

First, pioneers have to pave the way before the early adopters catch on. This can lead to limited chain migration by family members and close friends. Despite the lack of information on the destination country, they follow these pioneers to their new settlement because it is the place where most initial migrants have gone (de Haas, 2010). After that, migration networks take off, which are interpersonal ties that connect former migrants and non-migrants in the destination and origin country through bonds of kinship, friendship, and a shared community origin (Massey et al., 1993). Migration networks make the process of migration self-reinforcing through positive feedback mechanisms leading to cumulative causation (de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008): potential migrants may benefit from social networks and already established ethnic communities (Faist, 1997; Haug, 2008). These feedback mechanisms of networks explain why migration processes tend to become self-perpetuating and lead to new and larger migrant networks and migration systems by simultaneously increasing the aspirations and capabilities to migrate and reducing the risks and costs of prospective migrants (de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008; Wegge, 2009).

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These networks constitute location-specific social capital (Haug, 2008), or resources inherent in social ties (Faist, 1997). In this respect, they are endogenous and are created by the act of migration itself, and become relatively independent of the economic push and pull factors that initially triggered migration (de Haas, 2010; Massey, 1990). Other endogenous feedback effects include the migration industry, such as recruiters, and remittances, such as social and human capital. The conceptualization of networks as a location-specific form of social capital implies that migrants in receiving communities may act simultaneously as bridgeheads for family, close friends, or other group members, and as gatekeepers for outsiders (de Haas, 2010).

This self-perpetuating dynamic, and thus the condition to reach the threshold to convert chain migration to network migration, is only possible when a certain level of spatial clustering is present in the destination country through which a sense of community is established (de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008). Social relations from the origin communities are continued in the destination country, and these origin communities are, in that sense, transplanted (Haug, 2008). Therefore, social capital is transferred from the community in place of origin to the transplanted community in the destination country, making social capital both a push and pull factor because of its lack in the origin communities and its presence in newly formed communities.

Migration systems are the geographical structuring and clustering of flows and counter-flows of people, goods, services and information. In other words, these systems link families and communities in the origin and destination country (de Haas, 2010). A few important contextual feedback mechanisms in the sending and receiving communities that operate through migration are inequality and relative deprivation because of the presence of remittances, disrupted economies and labour markets in the origin country, ethnic enclaves in the receiving communities, and cultural change which leads to a culture of

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migration in the origin communities (de Haas, 2010). These feedback mechanisms change social and economic structures and tend to facilitate further migration by increasing the aspirations and capabilities to do so (Massey, 1990; de Haas, 2010).

6.2 Turkish and Moroccan migration systems: a historical overview

The first large Turkish and Moroccan immigration streams started from the 1960s onwards through government-led bilateral agreements, installed in 1964 (see Chapter 5; Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2015; Lievens, 1999; Reniers, 1999). These bilateral agreements were mainly established to supervise and accelerate labour immigration. Moroccan workers mainly went to France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, while Turkish workers went to Germany, the Netherlands, and, albeit in smaller amounts, to Belgium (Castles, 2008). Even though strong similarities exist between Turkish and Moroccan migrant groups in Belgium, including the period of arrival, similar legal conditions, and strong cultural resemblances such as religion, marriage, and family traditions (Reniers, 1999), important differences are present as well. These can be traced back to the differential recruitment strategies, which impacted migration systems and hence the prevalence of transnational marriages.

6.2.1 Organized labour migration: push factors

The Moroccan presence in Belgium predated Turkish immigration. Already since the 1920s, Moroccan workers were present in Belgian coal mines (Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2015). Moreover, in the early 1960s, a spontaneous and individual Moroccan labour immigration had already begun (Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2015). Morocco was experiencing a population growth while its

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economy was stagnating, which led to underemployment and unemployment (Schoonvaere, 2014). Coupled with an insufficient farm production, the population started to revolt (Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2017). As a consequence, emigration was facilitated from some of these underdeveloped areas to more prosperous countries, including Belgium (Castles, 2008).

The Moroccan migrant group in Belgium consist of a more diverse group compared to Turkish migrants. Moroccan guest workers originated from rural areas, such as the rural Rif and the Souss Valley, and from more urbanized parts, such as bigger cities and capitals of provinces, in the northern part of Morocco and the Atlantic coast (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Furthermore, these Moroccan migrants from urbanized parts were rarely married when they migrated, in contrast to emigrants from rural areas (both Turkish and Moroccan). For the latter group, migration was more or less a family or household project (Reniers, 1999).

In Turkey, we encounter similar conditions that encouraged emigration. Rapidly changing socio-economic conditions in Turkey were the main stimulating factors for emigration (Schoonvaere, 2013). After the Second World War, the Turkish government implemented a policy for integrating Turkey within the capitalist world economy by pushing a rapid capitalist transformation and mechanization in agriculture (Akgündüz, 2017). This led to a surplus of labour workers from rural areas. Therefore, the modernization of agriculture pushed many rural people onto the roads of migration by seeking economic improvement in Belgium, amongst others. Before the establishment of the bilateral agreements, spontaneous Turkish immigration to Belgium already began in 1963 (Gsir, Mandin, & Mescoli, 2015). The majority of Turkish guest workers originated from a cluster of central Anatolian provinces (Reniers, 1999). For example, almost one-third of Turkish migrants originated from

Afyon. Within this province, Emirdağ is probably the best known in Belgium (Akgündüz, 1993; Timmerman, 2008).

6.2.2 Conservative and innovative migration systems

To explain the differential selection of migrants and the resulting migration systems, Reniers (1999) borrows the distinction between conservative and innovative migration from Peterson (1958), which explicitly accounts for migration motives and migrants' aspirations:

> Conservative migration is to be seen as a response to a change in conditions, in order to retain what they have had. These migrants move geographically in order to remain where they are in all other respects. Innovative migration, on the other hand, is described (…) as indicating the movement of people as a means of achieving the new. (pp. 680-681)

Conservative migration, was typical for migrants originating from rural areas. As rural areas are characterized by stronger community ties, communities in the receiving and sending country remained in close contact with one another (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Furthermore, these migrants were often already married before migration (Schoonvaere, 2013). Therefore, this migration was initially conceived as a temporary family project that permitted households and families to continue living within their homeland (Reniers, 1999) since temporary migration diversifies the risks within households, and can lead to remittance streams (Massey et al., 1993, 1998).

After the stop on labour recruitment however, when it was clear that this kind of commuting between Belgium and Turkey was no longer possible, the family also moved to Belgium (see infra) resulting in a more permanent migration. The resulting migration system is more intrinsically connected to family

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reunification and family formation compared to innovative migration (Reniers, 1999). Therefore, we have to bear in mind that the concepts of chain migration, family reunification, and family formation, apply mainly on migrants originating from more rural areas.

The emigration of Moroccan migrants originating from urban areas and who were rarely married, is an example of innovative migration (Reniers, 1999). This type of migration has an important economic dimension, and was more individualistic and socio-cultural in nature as these migrants went looking for a better way of life. Their migration was therefore more permanent in character as migration was often part of an individual project, making Moroccan migrants, therefore, less inclined to return to Morocco (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999) and inhibiting the development of a strong migration system from these urban parts (Reniers, 1999).. As a consequence, Moroccan communities in Belgium are more fragmented; this heterogeneity concerns the marital status and education, religious-political orientation, and socioeconomic status at arrival (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Lesthaeghe, Surkyn, & Van Craenem, 2000; Reniers, 1999; Surkyn, 2000).

6.2.3 Family reunification: chain migration through transnational networks

Both the Belgian government and the guest workers perceived the arrangement to attract labour immigrants as only temporary. Therefore, given the seemingly provisional character of migration, no (structural) arrangements were made for a longer stay and the integration of these guest workers within Belgian society (CGKR, 2009; Niessen, Schibel, & Magoni, 2003). As Belgium encountered a period of economic strain in the wake of the oil crisis in 1973 and transitioned to a post-industrial society, manual labourers redeemed largely redundant (Reniers, 1999). This resulted in a halt to new labour immigration in 1974.

However, during that time, Turkish and Moroccan migration streams were perpetuated by family reunification processes, i.e. migration of the remaining family who settled in Belgium. Indeed, because commuting between the country of origin and Belgium was severely limited or even impossible during that time, many of the initial guest workers chose to stay and transfer their remaining family members to Belgium (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Therefore, the system of labour migration quickly evolved into a more solid system in which immigration was perpetuated through chain migration (Reniers, 1999). The initial chain migration was predominantly female, as women and children joined their husbands or fathers in Belgium (Timmerman, 2008). In short, during this period, labour migration transformed to chain migration given the strong ties with the country of origin, in Belgium mostly through kinship and marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2000).

6.2.4 Transplanted communities

Through chain migration, ethnic communities were reconstructed after 1974 and the already strong association between migration and kinship became almost exclusive (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These newly established ethnic communities were transplanted communities; when more guest workers were demanded, the initial guest workers, as pioneering migrants, nominated their friends and family from the same area (Reniers, 1999). This resulted in strong concentrations of Turkish and Moroccan migrants from small towns and villages which is still present today (Lievens, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997).

These transplanted communities resemble those from the country of origin and are therefore also called 'mirror communities' (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These transplanted communities are "able to uphold

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social, cultural and normative structures imported from the region of origin, including strong community and kin involvement" (Lievens, 2000, p. 101), fortifying the ties and resulting in a continuing commitment to the remaining family in Turkey and Morocco (Lievens, 2000; Timmerman, 2006, 2008). Not only the maintenance of contact and spreading of information about the benefits of migration, but frequent home visits as well, contribute to a migration culture in communities from which most of the migration originates (Heering, Van Der Erf, & Van Wissen, 2004; Snel, Engbersen, & Faber, 2016; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997; Timmerman, Lodewyckx, & Wets, 2009; Timmerman & Wets, 2011).

6.2.5 Family formation

After the phase of family reunification, a phase of family formation started in the 1980s (Lievens, 1999). This was the result of the firmly established networks between the origin and receiving communities and the presence of a culture of migration within the origin communities. During this time, even stricter immigration policies in the 1970s were implemented, during which entry was only given to migrants from third countries who were asylum seekers, skilled labour migrants, students, or spouses of residents in Belgium (see Chapter 5; Caestecker, 2011; Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014). Especially within a system of restricted migration possibilities, network connections are in this respect important cost-reducing factors (Reniers, 1999).

The establishment of transnational marriages requires complicated and intense negotiations given the emotional and physical distance between the spouses and their families (Reniers, 1999). For those marriages to be successful, mediating networks between the receiving and origin societies are crucial. These networks are actualized in solid ties between, and a strong cohesion within families and communities in the country of destination and origin (Lievens, 2000; Reniers,

1999). As I argued earlier, these solid ties are an important aspect in Turkish and Moroccan transnational marriages as they were established in the beginning of Turkish and Moroccan migration (Lievens, 2000).

These early-on established networks facilitate and canalize new migrations – mostly in the form of new partnerships –, and in turn reinforce the bonds between Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium and the country of origin and are, in that respect, self-reinforcing. Nowadays, transnational marriages are the embodiment of the resulting chain migration (Lievens, 1999, 2000; Reniers, 1999).

A distinction might be made between men and women in their migration motives, and thus between the main push factors in this stage. Overall, men have a greater intention to emigrate than women (Heering et al., 2004). Furthermore, they are more sensitive to the presence of a migration culture, whereas family networks are more important for women. Especially for men from rural areas, a feeling of relative deprivation is key. They have a greater intention to improve their own circumstances, pushed by a migration culture in their region: "those who stay are losers, those who leave are winners" (p. 335). Women are generally more tied to family relations. They are more oriented towards self-fulfilment and to provide for their family (Heering et al., 2004).

6.2.6. Diminutive causation of migration

Whereas in Turkish and Moroccan regions a culture of migration was an important push factor in explaining the high levels of willingness to migrate (Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerk, 2014), recent research reported a trend of 'diminutive causation' which negatively impacts this culture of migration (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013). Given the recently reported

decline in transnational marriages of Turkish Belgians (Van Kerckem et al., 2013), diminutive causation might impact migration aspirations of potential marriage migrants in particular (Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerk, 2014). A three-step process lies at the base of this diminutive causation. First, macro-level factors, including a lack of labour market opportunities, migration policies, and social reception such as discrimination, changed the opinions and beliefs of settled migrants. Second, migration-undermining feedback took place: these changed opinions and beliefs of settled migrations were reported to prospective migrants which reduced their migration aspirations. Third, this negative feedback resulted in a changed migration culture by affecting the motivation to migrate of aspiring migrants (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013).

Chapter 7. Research aims and questions

In this dissertation I reflect on the social component of integration, and more specifically on partner-choice patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. I argue that perceiving the choice for a transnational marriage as an indicator of failed integration might be problematic given that transnational marriages are the logical outcome of a migration process and are part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). These marriages take place within a transnational space; a space that makes each subsequent migration substantially easier and that facilitates transnational marriages through transnational bonds (Haug, 2008). Given the existence of a transnational space, the partner choice of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might be oriented on (1) co-ethnics in the receiving society (local intra-ethnic marriage), (2) people with another ethnicity in the receiving society in general and the ethnic majority in particular (mixed marriage), and (3) non-immigrants in the origin society (transnational marriage).

Through successive generations and over time, the orientation of immigrant groups might shift as the strength of group boundaries between immigrants (and their descendants) and the ethnic majority, and between immigrants (and their descendants) and non-immigrants in the origin society changes. In this respect, partner-choice patterns of immigrants can be perceived as a clear indicator of the strength of group boundaries.

Even though this orientation might be influenced by a myriad of factors, I perceive this orientation in this dissertation as the product of three sources of influence: (1) integration processes, perceived as exposure to the receiving society, (2) characteristics of the receiving society, and (3) networks between

migrant communities in sending and receiving societies. Furthermore, I add a life course perspective that includes a focus on divorce and second marriages.

The first part of this chapter outlines the research aims, which consists of the aforementioned three sources of influence and the life course perspective. These were already addressed in the introduction, but are added here again for clarity. The second part addresses the specific research questions related to these research aims, and how the empirical studies will tackle these.

7.1 Research aims

First, concerning the social component of integration, integration relates to associations between the ethnic minority and majority, and thus indicates the strength of boundaries between them (Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007). Over generations and through time, therefore, group boundaries between the ethnic minority and majority might weaken which results in more frequent associations (Alba & Nee, 2003). This likely happens at a different pace, depending on the specificities of the ethnic minority group, such as cultural and social group characteristics (Alba & Nee, 2003). In this dissertation, I include the transnational space in which associations and relations can be established. Therefore, the degree of integration might play a role in the choice for transnational marriages as well.

Second, I focus on the specificities of the receiving society. Partner choices are not only a matter of personal choice, but might be affected by structural constraints as well (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; Lesthaeghe, 2000). More specifically, marrying transnationally is not only the outcome of the individual migrant's aspirations and attitudes, but is also the product of the social context one lives in (Itzigsohn & Giorguly-Saucedo, 2005; Surkyn, 2000). As Kalmijn

(1998) points out: "marriage patterns result from both preference and opportunity. (…) endogamy does not necessarily point to a personally felt social distance toward a certain outgroup" (p. 397). Therefore, this dissertation focuses on the structural characteristics of the place of residence.

Third, partner-choice patterns are part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). The partner choice does not only take place at the individual level, but at the collective level of the immigrant group as well: the group might become an accepted part of civil society, or it might isolate itself (Penninx, 2005, 2007). Group-related characteristics, such as religion, and historically rooted conditions of immigrant groups might impact the partner-choice patterns as well, over and above evolutions in partner-choice patterns and current structural conditions. Historically rooted conditions, in this dissertation, refer to the strength of immigration networks that came into being by push and pull factors (Schoorl et al., 2000). Given that strong networks are likely to perpetuate the initial migration streams (Reniers, 1999), they are likely to encourage transnational marriages (Haug, 2008; Lievens, 2000). Therefore, partner-choice patterns might still bear the traces of these initial conditions.

Fourth, not only do I conceptualize partner choices as the product of the interplay between individual, structural, and group-related characteristics, I try to offer a more nuanced and exhaustive perspective by applying a life course perspective on marriages. This perspective acknowledges the specificity of first marriages, by taking into account divorce and remarriage patterns. Evolutions in partner-choice patterns may be affected by divorce patterns. These divorce patterns are important in understanding the firmness and stability of group boundaries. After divorce, immigrants might encounter constraints of the marriage market which forces them to change their partner choice when remarrying (Choi & Tienda, 2017). Especially within migrant groups in which a strong emphasis on family prevails, divorce might lead to stigmatization and

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reputation damage (Welslau & Deven, 2003; Hooghiemstra, 2003). In addition to this, learning mechanisms might lead to the adaption of their partner choice in second marriages. Therefore, this dissertation might shed more light on processes that may counteract changes and trends in partner-choice patterns of first marriages.

7.2 Research questions and empirical chapters

In what follows, the specific research questions and sub-questions related to the aforementioned research aims will be discussed in conjunction with the corresponding empirical chapters. From the aforementioned research aims, I derive the following research (sub-)questions:

1. Does the prevalence of transnational marriages evolve in accordance with integration processes?

   1a. Is there a generational shift discernible? (chapters 9, 10, 11)

   1b. Does the prevalence evolve through time for all generations? (chapter 10)

In this dissertation, partner-choice patterns are perceived as the social component of integration processes, and signal the strength of group boundaries. These group boundaries may exist between the ethnic majority and minority groups as well as between the ethnic minority in the country of residence and in the country of origin. Given that over generations, group boundaries might weaken and migrant communities might become gradually more integrated (Alba & Nee, 2003; Berry, 1992), Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might become more similar to the ethnic majority, whilst the distance

to co-ethnics in the country of residence enlarges. Moreover, this shift might happen for all generations, in addition to generational changes.

Previous research already showed a decline in transnational marriages for Turkish Belgians (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Chapter 10, therefore, tackles these changes by disentangling different time trends within the Moroccan community. Compared to Turkish communities in Belgium, Moroccan migration networks to Belgium are generally weaker (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997) which might translate in an even stronger decline of transnational marriages. This chapter separates different time related which include period effects which happen for the whole Moroccan community, generational changes, ageing, and changes through birth cohort. Moreover, Chapters 9 and 11 briefly touch upon generational changes as well, for a wider spectrum of origin countries.

2. How do current structural conditions influence the choice for a transnational marriage?

> 2a. Does the marriage market in the country of residence influence this choice? (chapters 9, 10, 11)

> 2b. Do changes in structural conditions of the marriage market in the country of residence influence the prevalence of transnational marriages? (chapter 10)

An important step to unravel the mechanisms behind transnational marriages, is to contextualize these marriages. This requires a disentanglement of the influence of individual and structural characteristics. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 tackle this question by implementing a multilevel perspective to distinguish between individual-level influences, or preferences, and the structural conditions of the marriage market in the country of residence. This perspective,

furthermore, acknowledges changes in these structural conditions that might impact the prevalence of transnational marriages. This will be addressed in Chapter 10.

3. Do historically rooted conditions of immigrant groups, in the form of strong networks between the origin and receiving societies, influence this choice? (chapter 11)

Similarly to Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, Algerian and Congolese immigration waves started around the same time, – (late) 1960s. However, Congolese Belgians are the only group that entered the country as students, asylum seekers, business men, tourists, or diplomats, as part of the Belgian assistance to the decolonization (Caestecker, 2011; Schoonvaere, 2010), instead of labour immigration. In Chapter 11, therefore, I try to the discern the (lasting) effects of the historically rooted conditions in the country of residence at the time of the first large migration streams of Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese immigrants while disentangling these from their specific cultural and social group-related characteristics, such as language and religion. Therefore, this chapter introduces mixed marriages, besides transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages. These different starting conditions affect and are affected by differences in migration networks, structural characteristics in the origin country, and integration processes. Therefore, this chapter applies a comparative framework by including Algerian and Congolese Belgians in addition to Turkish and Moroccan Belgians.

3. What is the stability of the different partner-choice patterns?

    3a. Do divorce rates differ between the different partner-choice patterns? (chapter 12)

    3b. Do these divorce rates evolve through time? (chapter 12)

Chapter 12 tries to formulate answers to these research questions. This chapter discusses patterns of divorce of first marriages established by Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, and sketches an evolution through time by comparing them to divorce patterns of marriages established between 1988 and 1990. The relation with partner-choice patterns is explored, by examining the difference in divorce risks of the different marriage types to understand the stability of group boundaries.

4. Do partner-selection patterns of the second marriage differ from the patterns of the first marriage?

    4a Does the prevalence of entering into a second marriage depend on partner-choice patterns of the first marriage? (chapter 13)

    4b Do partner-selection patterns in the second marriage differ according to (the stability of) partner-selection patterns in the first marriage? (chapter 13)

Chapter 13 tackles the fourth research question. This chapter examines the remarriage patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and explores whether the transition uncovered in first marriages extrapolate to second marriages as well. In this chapter, I account for the specificity of second marriages, by acknowledging that learning mechanisms might be at play (as seen in Chapter 11), and that the local ethnic marriage market might be more confined when

remarrying, leading the search for partners elsewhere. To outline differential mechanisms behind pattern-choice patterns in second marriages as complete as possible, this chapter examines differential remarriage rates by the partner choice in the first marriage. Moreover, it focuses on partner choices in the second marriages according to the first marriage in a comparative perspective.

Chapter 8. Methodology

To answer the main research questions and aims, quantitative methods on population data were used. The first part of this chapter describes this data. After that, additional selections within the empirical studies are outlined. The second part of this chapter outlines the operationalization of the dependent and main independent variables. The final part discusses the analytical techniques, with a specific focus on multilevel and even history analyses. In this final part, I review the analytical methods of each empirical study separately, supplemented with a graphical representation of the random part of the first, second, and third empirical study.

8.1 Data

8.1.1 Belgian national register

The analyses performed in the empirical studies are based on data from the Belgian national register, which constitute population data. The original data were retrieved on November 24, 2011 and include all Belgian migrant couples (based on their nationality at birth) with a nationality at birth from a third country, whose marital status changed (from single to married or legally cohabitating) between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2010. In total, 268,842 couples fitted these criteria.

Partner-choice patterns of immigrants are a clear behavioural indicator of integration processes and are therefore easily measurable. Using data from the Belgian national register has the additional benefit of providing a great quantity of cases, which are not random samples. Therefore, changes through time in

partner choices, as well as differences in partner-choice patterns between groups can be examined.

While these data are rich in size given that they include the complete population of migrants originating from third countries, they have a few shortcomings. For a more complete description of the limitations, I refer to section 14.4. For now, I will briefly consider the most relevant limitations related to the selection of migrants with a nationality at birth from a third country. First, migrants were selected based on their nationality at birth. Therefore, the data lack information on the ethnic background. Second, the extraction from the Belgian national register includes legally registered partnerships only. Therefore, it does not contain information on unregistered cohabitations and asylum seekers. Finally, the dataset lacks information on migrants with a nationality at birth that is not a third country. As a consequence, no information is available for migrants originating from a European country or for non-migrants with a Belgian nationality at birth. This has a four important consequences. First, a small proportion of the second generation might not be included, due to the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities in Belgium beginning in the early 1990s. as a result, second-generation migrants born after 1984 might be under-represented in the dataset. In our estimation, however, this is not a large group, as the large-scale naturalization programs occurred only in the early 1990s. Given that the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years, automatic naturalization eliminates only a small number of individuals from this group. Second, the third generation cannot be examined sinced they have the Belgian nationality at birth. Third, migrant groups of European origin cannot be examined. Therefore, a comparison with other European migrant groups with a history of labour migration, such as migrants of Italian or Greek origin, cannot be conducted. Finally, this selection makes a comparison to the whole Belgian

population is impossible, especially regarding patterns in divorce and remarriage behaviour.

8.1.2 Data cleaning

However, given that the original data comprised a large selection, additional thorough data cleaning had to be performed. In a first step, the data cleaning focused on couples for whom complete information was available (N = 201,102) (Desmet, Leys, & Ronsijn, 2011; Van der Bracht, Lievens, Van de Putte, & Caestecker, 2013). First, duplicates (N = 1,144) were removed from the dataset. Second, couples for whom the marital status link between partners was missing, were not appropriate for further analysis and were therefore dismissed as well (N = 437). Third, given the focus on partner choices of migrants in Belgium, couples that were already married or were legally cohabiting before one of the spouses migrated to Belgium, were removed (N = 13,610). Finally, two conditions were required for inclusion: (1) at least one partner was a resident in Belgium before the marriage or legal cohabitation, with a minimum period of one year preceding the marriage or legal cohabitation; (2) with a third-country nationality at birth. These requirements, therefore, excluded resident partners with a Belgian nationality at birth (N = 53,417).

A problem arises in the case of transnational marriages: it can take several years before the marriage migrant arrives in Belgium. Of all marriage migrants, 96% had arrived after three years, with the majority arriving after one year. Since information was only available on partners after arrival, at the time of the data extraction (in 2011), complete and accurate information could only be given for marriages and legally registered cohabitations concluded in the period between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009. As a consequence, 99,711 couples, or 49.6% of all couples with complete information were retained.

In a second step, couples for whom crucial information was missing for one or for both partners, were dealt with (N = 67,740). First, the same four criteria applied on complete couples were adopted, which led to a reduction of 59,891 couples. Therefore, only 7,849, or 11.6% of these 'incomplete couples' were retained. Of these couples, a large portion concerned transnational marriages involving a transnational partner who still remained in the country of origin, even after ten years. Explanations for this include that the Belgian migrant moved abroad (N = 2761), the dissolution of the marriage before migration (N = 1,179), a possible second marriage within the timeframe of the extraction (N= 1,012), ex officio removal, decease, and exemption from registration (N = 436), and actual 'incomplete couples' where the partner still resided in the origin country (N = 2,461). Therefore, these 7,849 cases were all qualified for inclusion. In total, 107,560 couples, or 53.5% of the initial dataset, were retained.

Given the focus on partner choices rather than couples, local intra-ethnic couples (with both partners being a Belgian resident) provide two separate, local intra-ethnic, partner choices. This modification results in 126,757 partner choices in total (Van der Bracht, Lievens, Van de Putte, & Caestecker, 2013).

8.1.3 Additional data selections in the empirical studies

Additional selections were made to fit the aim of each empirical study included in this dissertation. Table 8.1 displays the summary of these selections and gives an overview of the included partner choices. This overview solely comprises the data selections used in the explanatory part of these studies.

This summary shows that cohabitations were not always included in the data selection. However, when in- or excluding cohabitations, the results of these papers remained largely unchanged, given the low number of cohabitations in

the dataset. Furthermore, for the fourth and fifth empirical study (Chapters 12 and 13), I employ event history analyses (see 8.3). For these explanatory event history analyses, a person-period file was developed. Because within a person-period file, each person is followed until the event occurs, when the examined timeframe ends, some persons exist as multiple cases. Therefore, I based the data selection of these empirical studies on the original person file. Finally, the fourth empirical study (Chapter 12) examines divorce risks of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. It is the only chapter that includes partnerships instead of partner choices because this study focuses on divorce risks of partnerships. These divorce risks are situated at the couple level rather than the individual level. As a consequence, while transnational and mixed marriages are included for men and women separately, local intra-ethnic marriages are only included once to avoid double-entry of the same marriage, given that both partners are Turkish or Moroccan residents in Belgium.

Table 8.1. Summary of data selection in the empirical studies

Empirical study	Partner-choice patterns	Timeframe	Nationality group	Cohabitation	Total N
Chapter 9	Intra-ethnic partner choices (transnational and local-intra-ethnic) of first partnerships.	01/01/2001- 31/12/2008	All Belgian immigrants originating from third countries	X (2.9%)	67,741
Chapter 10	Intra-ethnic partner choices of first partnerships.	01/01/2001- 31/12/2008	Moroccan Belgians	X (0.5%)	24,712
Chapter 11	All partner choice-patterns (transnational, local intra-ethnic, and mixed) of first marriages.	01/01/2001- 31/12/2008	Moroccan, Turkish, Algerian, and Congolese Belgians	-	52,142
Chapter 12	Divorce after all partner-choice patterns of first marriages.	01/01/2001 - 31/12/2005	Moroccan and Turkish Belgians	-	27,417[a]
Chapter 13	Second partnerships after all divorces included in Chapter 11.	01/01/2001 - 31/12/2008	Moroccan and Turkish Belgians	X (0.9%)	7,475

[a]: Partnerships instead of partner choices were used.

8.2 Variables

8.2.1 Dependent variables

The main focus of the empirical studies concerns the marital status of immigrants in Belgium. Not only do the examined groups differ from study to study, with the exception of the final two studies (See Section 8.1), the dependent variable varies too.

The first three empirical studies focus on partner choices of Belgian immigrants. The first empirical study (Chapter 9) focuses on intra-ethnic partner choices. The independent variable is a dichotomous variable which differentiates between transnational intra-ethnic partner choices and local intra-ethnic partner choices (reference category). The same distinction is made for the second empirical study (Chapter 10) which compares the effects on the choice for a transnational partner to the choice for a local intra-ethnic partner (reference category).

The third empirical study (Chapter 11) includes mixed marriages in addition to a transnational partner choice and a local intra-ethnic partner choice (reference category). Mixed marriages include all different nationalities at birth. Even though there is a wide variety in nationalities of potential partners given this operationalization of mixed marriages, partners with a Belgian nationality at birth were the most common when marrying inter-ethnically (see table 8.2).

Table 8.2 Top 5 nationalities at birth of local partners (intra-ethnic and mixed marriages)

Moroccans	Turks	Congolese	Algerians
Morocco (71.2%)	Turkey (80.4%)	Congo (62.6%)	Belgium (45.7%)
Belgium (17.2%)	Belgium (10.0%)	Belgium (21.5%)	Algeria (19.8%)
France (2.6%)	Morocco (2.1%)	Cameroon (2.0%)	Morocco (15.2%)
Italy (1.9%)	Italy (1.7%)	Angola (1.9%)	Italy (7.1%)
Algeria (1.2%)	France/Yugoslavia/ Netherlands (0.6%)	France (1.7%)	France (4.4%)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

The final two empirical chapters focus on changes in marital status. The fourth empirical study (Chapter 12) discusses divorce rates, which is a dichotomous variable that indicates whether a marriage dissolved in a given year or not (reference category). Finally, the fifth final empirical study (Chapter 13) examines whether one remarried in a given year or not (reference category).

8.2.2 Independent variables

The following section discusses some general points regarding the main independent variables. The operationalization of each independent variable is described in detail in each respective empirical study. Table 8.3 offers a summary of all the independent variables per chapter.

Table 8.3. Summary of the independent variables in each empirical study

	Chapter 9	Chapter 10	Chapter 11	Chapter 12	Chapter 13
Individual-level variables					
Age at marriage	X	X	X	X	
Generation	X	X	X	X	X
Marriage year	X	X	X	X	
Birth cohort		X			
Gender			X		
Marriage duration				X	X
Marriage type				X	X
Divorce duration					X
Age at divorce					X
Divorce year					X
Macro-level variables					
Community size	X	X	X		
Municipality size	X				
Sex ratio	X	X	X		
HDI	X				
Social globalization	X				
District size		X	X		
Diversity level		X	X		
Region			X		

The *age at marriage* is incorporated in Chapters 9 and 10 as a continuous variable indicating the age at marriage, in full years. Even though the operationalization of age as a categorical variable according to each subpopulation (nationality at birth and gender) is more meaningful (see infra), I opted for a metric operationalization for practical reasons in Chapter 9, given the wide spectrum of nationalities at birth. Because Chapter 10 focuses on Moroccan Belgians only, we operationalized age as a continuous variable here as well. Because Chapter 11 compares Moroccan, Turkish, Algerian, and Congolese Belgians, we opted for a categorical operationalization of age in this Chapter (Table 8.4, Chapter 11). We chose a categorical age variable because we are not interested in the absolute age at marriage; after all, the definition of marrying at a young, intermediate, and older age is dependent on the subpopulation (Lievens, 1999). For example, marrying at the age of 26 might be considered an older age for Turkish women, while it is the average age for Moroccan men. Therefore, the age categories have the same meaning in each subpopulation. The cut-off points of each category are based on the quartiles of each subpopulation based on nationality at birth and gender (<0.25, between 0.25 and 0.75, and >75 respectively). The same operationalization of age at marriage as a three-categorical variable is used in Chapter 12, which focuses on Moroccans and Turks only.

Table 8.4 Categories 'Age at marriage'

	Moroccans		Turks		Congolese		Algerians	
	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
Young age	<24	<20	<22	<20	<29	<25	<27	<22
Intermediate age	24-31	20-26	22-27	20-24	29-38	25-33	27-35	22-30
Older age	>31	>26	>27	>24	>38	>33	>35	>30

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

Generation is operationalized as a three-categorical variable in almost every empirical chapter, with the exception of the first one. These categories include (1) first-generation migrants (older than 15 years of age at migration), (2) 1.5-generation migrants (migrated between the ages of 6 and 15 years), and (3) second-generation migrants (migrated before the age of 6 years or born in Belgium with at least one parent with a non-Belgian nationality at birth (reference category)). This three-categorical variable is reduced to a dichotomous variable in Chapter 9 that combines the 1.5 and second generation based on the country of birth, and therefore only distinguishes between migrants born in the country of origin and those born in Belgium. For a more thorough description of the first generation, I refer to Section 5.2, which deals with the recent influx of first-generation migrants. However, given that I only include first marriages, marriage migrants, and thus migrants who migrated because of family reasons, are not included in the selection of the first generation.

Gender is included as a separate variable in Chapter 11 only. Chapters 9 and 10 have separate analyses for men and women, which makes the inclusion of this variable redundant. Furthermore, in Chapters 12 and 13, gender is included in the 'marriage type' variable which combines gender with the first marriage type.

The majority of the contextual variables are derived from the database of Statistics Belgium (Statistics Belgium, n.d.). While these data are freely available to everyone, I requested additional data on each separate nationality group in Belgium. Contextual variables not related to Belgium were retrieved elsewhere. The 'Human Development Index' originates from the Human Development reports on the United Nations website (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.). Information on the 'Social Globalisation' variable is derived from Dreher (2006).

The marriage market in Chapter 9 is confined to municipality boundaries – in most cases, the smallest administrative subdivision in Belgium –, while it is enlarged to the whole district – the administrative level between municipalities and provinces in Belgium – in Chapters 10 and 11. Additional analyses show that when choosing a partner within the local ethnic community, the district level corresponds more accurately to the marriage market of migrants compared to the municipality level. For example, 41.8% of Moroccan men find their partner in the same municipality, while at the district level, this is 80%. Therefore, for Chapters 10 and 11 I choose the district level as the higher unit of analyses. The first empirical study, however, still analyzes structural characteristics at the municipality level because these analyses were conducted prior to the additional analyses.

The *sex ratio* in Chapter 11 is a three-categorical variable, that distinguishes between a very unbalanced, an unbalanced, and a balanced (reference category)

sex ratio for Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese Belgians separately. When there are between 90 to 111 men to 100 women (or vice versa), the sex ratio is considered balanced. When the ratio men to women (or vice versa) ranges from 75-90 to 100, an unbalanced ratio is discerned. Finally, a very unbalanced sex ratio signifies that there are fewer than 75 men to 100 women (or vice versa). In Chapters 9 and 10, however, the sex ratio is operationalized as a metric variable. To assess the impact of the sex ratio, I analyzed its effects for men and women separately. I opted for a metric operationalization for practical reasons in Chapters 9 and 10, given the wide spectrum of nationalities at birth in Chapter 9, and the focus on Moroccan Belgians only in Chapter 10.

Although the sex ratio is a cohort variable (under the age of 40 there are more men than women, while the reversal is true over the age of 40; Statistics Belgium, n.d.), we could not obtain age-specific sex ratios for each nationality at birth in each Belgian municipality, unfortunately. Therefore, we had to rely on general sex ratios instead of age-specific ratios. As a consequence, women in our dataset might have a slight advantage in the local marriage market, given the relatively young age at their first marriage (Table 8.4). However, we still believe that this measure is able to capture the availability of potential partners, given that general sex ratios correlate to more fine grained measures (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1991). Therefore, relatively simple measures can be used, with caution, when examining the effect of the sex ratio.

8.3 Design

To answer the specific research questions, I use population data from the Belgian national register. Quantitative methods are best suited to deal with these data and the research questions. Therefore, the analytical strategies used in the empirical chapters are grounded within the tradition of demographic research. For the explanatory analyses in the empirical chapters, I chose analytical techniques that are, to my knowledge, best fitted to deal with the data structure and the research questions of each empirical chapter. First, the use of multilevel and event history analyses will be discussed. Second, I will review the analytical methods of each empirical study separately, supplemented with a graphical representation of the random part of the first, second, and third empirical study.

8.3.1 Multilevel analysis

For the analyses of the first three empirical chapters (Chapters 9, 10, and 11), I used the statistical software package MLwiN 2.35 to perform multilevel analyses. The statistical models were first fitted using first order Marginal Quasi Likelihood (MQL) estimation procedures which provided starting values for the model parameters. In the second step, Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) procedures were performed to fit the models. Because of the complexity of the models, we enhanced the burn-in length and the monitoring chain from 500 to 5,000 and from 5,000 to 50,000 iterations, respectively.

The first three empirical studies deal with immigrants that are clustered in multiple levels, including origin countries, municipalities, districts, birth cohorts, and marriage years. Single level models would lead to erroneous results because of the problem of autocorrelation given the potential clustering in

90

higher level units. Therefore, these studies employ multilevel regression to appropriately deal with this clustering. By taking into account the often complex data structure, multilevel techniques provide appropriate estimates of standard errors for the fixed-part estimates on the various levels, and give a correct decomposition of the variance (Hox, Moerbeek, & Van de Schoot, 2017). In its most basic form, multilevel models have two levels in which the observational units are nested within aggregated groups. The first three empirical studies use more comprehensive models, however. These will be discussed separately later on.

The decomposition of the variance in different levels can be obtained from the respective null-model. This is a model containing only the intercept. The unit of analysis in the first three empirical chapters, the partner choice, is always situated at the individual level. With each comparison, one level was added to the model and then compared to previous models, to assess the best fitted one. The Deviance Information Criterion (DIC) is a diagnostic tool designed to compare different models (Browne, 2012). Although not entirely free of criticism, it is a useful tool to compare non-nested models, such as the cross-classified design in the second empirical chapter.

8.3.2 Event history analysis

The fourth and fifth study (Chapters 12 and 13) which examine divorce and remarriage, employ a single-level model and were therefore estimated using the software packages IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 and 23.0. However, the limited time frame examined in this dissertation might result in distorted results due to right censoring (Blossfeld, 2001). Because Turkish and Moroccan Belgians established their first marriage between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2008 and possibly divorced and remarried within this period, information on events

occurring after this period is lacking. Moreover, the likelihood of divorce is reduced for marriages established by the end of this period, as well as the likelihood of remarriage for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who divorce by the end of this time frame. Event-history analysis is therefore indispensable for coping with this kind of censoring and for dealing with time-varying covariates (Yamaguchi, 1991). Therefore, the datasets of the fourth and fifth empirical study are converted into a person-period file.

Other types of right censoring, such as attrition or dropouts, and missing values, are absent given the use of population data. Furthermore, there is no danger of encountering left censoring i.e. the absence of a clear start time, because I only focus on divorce and remarriage of marriages (and divorce) that happened within the examined timeframe (Blossfeld, 2001).

8.3.3 First empirical study

The first empirical study (Chapter 9) on transnational marriages in migrant communities in Belgium analyzes 67,741 partner choices of first marriages of migrants in Belgium originating from third countries. This study employs a cross-classified data structure, consisting of four levels (Figure 8.1). Migrants at the individual level are nested in migrant communities in Belgium. This level consists of two cross-classified levels: the Belgian municipalities and the level of the country of origin. In total, migrants are nested in 4331 migrant communities, within 525 Belgian municipalities[6] and 97 countries of origin. Given the cross-classified nature of the data and the binary outcome of the dependent variable (local intra-ethnic partner choice versus the choice for a partner from the country of origin), binary logistic cross-classified multilevel analyses are applied.

Figure 8.1. Graphical representation of the first empirical study
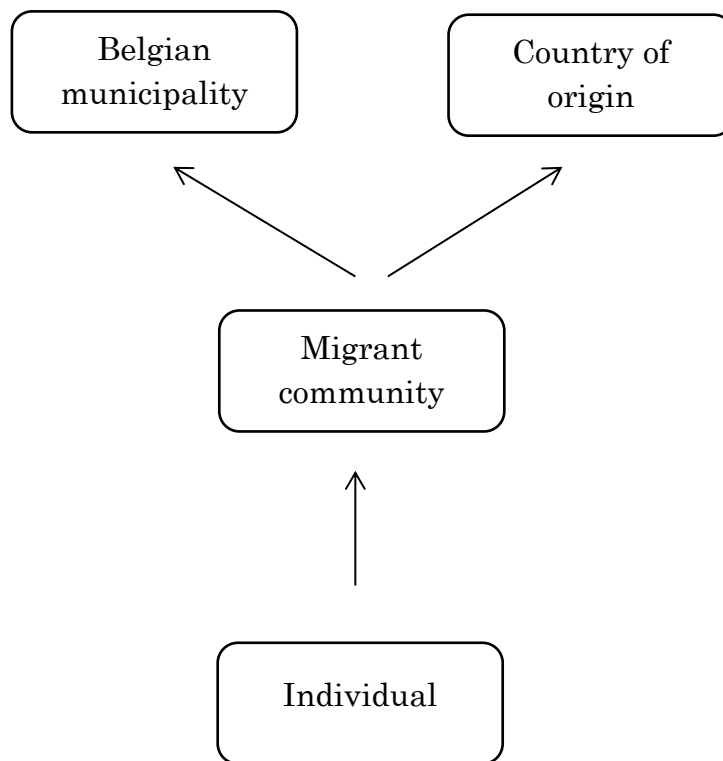
8.3.4 Second empirical study

The second empirical study (Chapter 10) examines contextual evolutions and evolutions through time in the choice for transnational marriages in the Moroccan community. The analyses therefore include age, period, and cohort effects. To deal with the simultaneous analysis of age, period and cohort effects, I use a cross-classified design, in which age is entered at the individual level (Yang & Land, 2006). In the resulting Hierarchical Age Period Cohort (HAPC) model, the period and (birth) cohort each form a separate level. Furthermore, to properly estimate the age and period effects I use informative Bayesian priors on birth cohort that presume no effect (Bell & Jones, 2014, 2015). The estimation of both period and age effects are therefore dependent on the assumption regarding the effect of cohorts. However, sensitivity analyses with different

cohort effects (-.025, -.01, no effect, +.01, +.025) reveal no severe problems with this assumption.

The data design consists of four different levels (Figure 8.2). Partner choices of Moroccan Belgians are situated at the individual level and are nested within the level of the birth cohort, the district level, and the year of the marriage (= period). These levels are cross-classified; the total of 24,712 Moroccan partner choices are thus nested in three cross-classified levels. First, the level of the birth cohorts consists of 19 birth cohorts, each spanning a three-year interval with a range from 1934 until 1992. Second, Moroccan Belgians live in 41 Belgian districts[7]. Third, Moroccan partner choices are nested within eight marriage years.

To perform adequate multilevel analyses, Maas & Hox (2004) recommend a sample size of at least 30 higher unit cases. However, when using Bayesian estimation procedures instead of maximum likelihood algorithms, a lower number of cases (minimum 15) can still give correct estimates (Stegmueller, 2013). Unfortunately, the dataset comprises a timespan of only 8 years, making it impossible to retain the year of marriage as a separate level. Therefore, marriage years are clustered within districts to enlarge the sample size at this level to 267 units. Besides dealing with the insufficient number of cases at the marriage year level, this enables us to simultaneous estimation of longitudinal as well as cross-sectional effects. In other words, both the variation of effects through time within a certain district and the differences between districts irrespective of temporal variations can be modeled (Fairbrother, 2013). The latter can be derived from the resulting net-effect (gross effect minus the longitudinal effect) which is orthogonal to the longitudinal effect.

Binomial logistic analyses are performed to deal with the two-categorical dependent variable i.e. transnational marriages versus local intra-ethnic marriages.

Figure 8.2. Graphical representation of the second empirical study
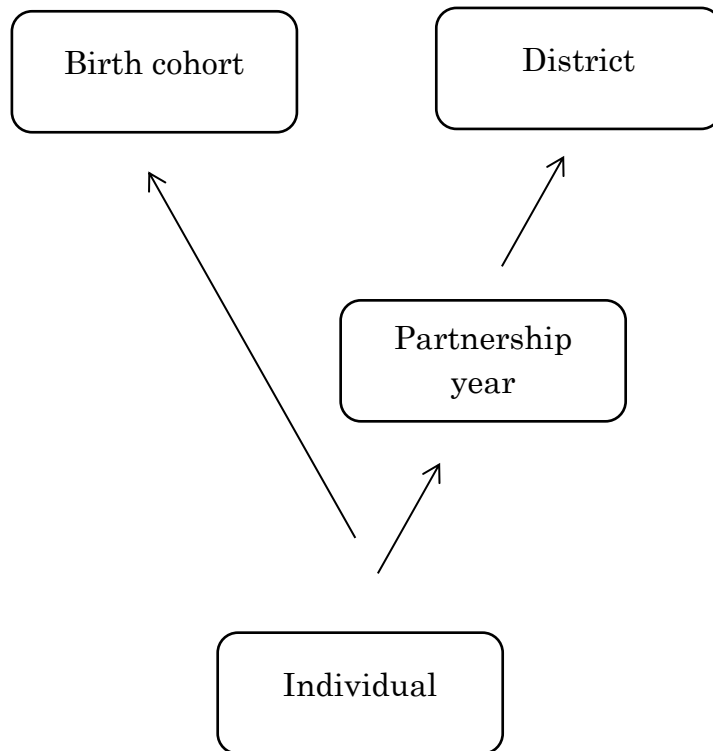
8.3.5 Third empirical study

The third empirical study (Chapter 11) applies multinomial logistic multilevel analyses to examine the effects of variables on the individual as well as the combined level of the marriage year and district on three patterns of partner-choice (Figure 8.3). Individual partner choices are nested in the combined level of marriage years and districts, given the limited timespan (see 8.3.2). Moreover, districts are nested within marriage years to ensure that the structural influences included in the analyses were prevailing at the beginning of the year one got married. However, when the marriage was established is

unknown, information is only available on when the partners got married. Moreover, the focus of this study is not on temporal variations, therefore, the district is not included as a separate level.

The aim of this study is to assess whether differences between the long established migrant groups (Moroccan, Turkish, Algerian, and Congolese Belgians) are altered after controlling for the individual and contextual factors. In total, the analyses included 52,142 partner choices that are nested in 339 district-marriage years.

Figure 8.3. Graphical representation of the third empirical study
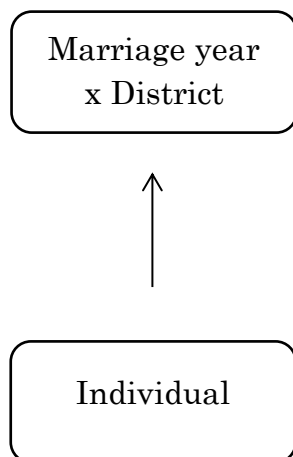
8.3.6 Fourth empirical study

The fourth empirical study (Chapter 12) examines divorce risks of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. A six-year marriage cohort (between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2006) is followed until 01/01/2012, or until the marriage dissolved. This results in 17,786 Moroccan marriages and 9,631 Turkish marriages. Because of the limited time frame, no information on events occurring after 31/12/2011 is available, which reduces the likelihood of divorce for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who married by the end of this period. Therefore, I employ event-history analysis and, as a consequence, convert the dataset into a person-period file. This generates 143,665 Moroccan and 84,996 Turkish person-years.

I use piecewise constant log-rate models with effect coding to compare and interpret the effect of each category of the first marriage type (transnational marriage, local intra-ethnic marriage, mixed marriage) to the mean for the specific group (Turkish or Moroccan). Effect coding is, in this case, preferable to standard dummy coding. The latter compares the odds of each category to the odds of the reference category. The use of effect coding, however, results in a comparison of all categorical variables to the group-specific mean. This results in five marriage type categories for both Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, according to gender ((1) transnational marriage established by men, (2) transnational marriage established by women, (3) mixed marriage established by men, (4) mixed marriage established by women, (5) local intra-ethnic marriage).

Binomial models for Turkish and Moroccan men and women are estimated that compare the odds ratios of being divorced to the odds ratios of not being divorced. These odds ratios are time-varying. Furthermore, the model is built incrementally. First, the baseline of the hazard function is specified. The fourth polynomial time function (marriage duration) fits the data most accurately for

both the Turkish and Moroccan group. Additional analyses revealed no correlation with the different marriage types. After that, the core variables (marriage type) and control variables are incorporated.

8.3.7 Fifth empirical study

The fifth empirical study (Chapter 13) examines second marriages of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. This study specifically focuses on the 'fast remarriers', as the first marriage was formed and ended in divorce between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009, with the possibility of remarriage within this period. The timeframe is more limited compared to the fourth empirical study, because information on partner choices after 31/12/2008 is incomplete and therefore unreliable. During this period, 5,624 dissolved Moroccan marriages and 1,851 dissolved Turkish marriages are followed.

Information on marriages occurring after 31/12/2008 is lacking, which reduces the likelihood of remarriage for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who divorced by the end of this period. Therefore, I employ, similarly to the fourth empirical chapter, event history analysis. The person-period file generates 12,168 Moroccan and 4,231 Turkish person-years.

Again, I use piecewise constant log-rate models with effect coding to analyze the effect of each category of the first marriage type (marriage migrants, transnational marriage, local intra-ethnic, or mixed marriage) to the group-specific mean (Turkish or Moroccan). This results in eight categories for both Turkish and Moroccan Belgians ((1) transnational second marriage established by men, (2) transnational second marriage established by women, (3) mixed second marriage established by men, (4) mixed second marriage established by

women, (5) local intra-ethnic second marriage established by men, (6) local intra-ethnic second marriage established by women).

Binomial models are estimated for Turkish and Moroccan men and women, that compare the log odds ratios of remarriage to the log odds ratios of not remarrying. This variable varies by time. Again, the model is built incrementally by first specifying the baseline of the hazard function, after which the core variables (first marriage type) and control variables are incorporated. The fourth polynomial function (divorce duration) fits the data most accurately.

Part II. Empirical research

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Chapter 9. Transnational marriages in Belgium: Analysis of origin and destination effects

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Working paper

Abstract

The literature on partner choices of migrants has predominantly focused on the destination-side. We examine the impact of individual characteristics, structural opportunities in the immigrant and emigrant community, and mediating channels between both on the odds of choosing a co-ethnic partner from the country of origin (transnational marriage) or preferring a co-ethnic living in the destination country (local co-ethnic marriage). We apply cross-classified multilevel analyses on recent Belgian population data (2001-2008), including the whole spectrum of origin countries outside the European Economic Area. Interestingly, although structural opportunities of the immigrant community influence the prevalence of transnational marriages, results indicate that transnational marriages take place regardless of migration pressure in the origin country and links between communities in Belgium and in the origin country. The composition of the migrant community in Belgium, such as the size and the gender composition, seems to be more important than deprivation in the origin country.

9.1 Introduction

Today, a large proportion of immigration streams to Belgium consist of family reunification (Myria, 2017). Transnational marriages make up a considerable part of these family reunification streams. These transnational marriages are, in the perception of scientists, the public, and policy makers, often perceived as an expression of a lack of integration. As a consequence, stricter immigration policies were installed from the 1970s onwards, which, amongst others, targeted transnational marriages of third-country nationals residing in Belgium (Caestecker, 2011; Reniers, 1999). Entry was only granted to asylum seekers, students, and spouses of immigrants. Initially, the focus of the stricter immigration policies was geared towards the asylum channel, rather than towards marriage migration (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). In Belgium, strict conditions for marriage migration, including decent housing conditions, sufficient income, were only introduced in 2011 (see the Immigration Act of July 8th 2011), which was later than in its neighbouring countries, such as the Netherlands, France, and Germany (Kulu-Glasgow & Leerkes, 2011).

For scholars as well, marriage patterns of migrants have often been considered as a litmus test of integration (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011). Nowadays, however, this view has been strongly criticized and questioned (Lievens, 1999; Song, 2009; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Choosing a partner from the origin country might be a way of empowerment, for example (Lievens, 1997, 1999).

Furthermore, the research field on transnational marriages lacks a global and transnational framework: only a small number of origin countries has been examined, and the transnational market has often been neglected.

Concerning the lack of a global framework, the available body of research has demonstrated that transnational marriages in Western European countries is a

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phenomenon typical of migrant populations with a history of labour migration (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Hooghiemstra, 2003; Lievens, 1999; Reniers, 2001). Because migrant groups with a history of labour migration are the largest groups originating from third countries, they were often the focus of research, which makes a comparison with other groups impossible, however. Research in Belgium, for example, has focused almost exclusively on migrant populations from Turkey and Morocco, the largest migrant groups originating from third countries (see for example Lievens, 1999; Van Kerckem, Van der Bracht, Stevens, & Van de Putte, 2013). Not only are these the two largest migrant groups of Belgian residents originating from third countries, they have been long established as well. Bilateral agreements between the Belgian government and the Turkish and Moroccan government formalized the first large inflow of Turkish and Moroccan labour migrants to Belgium in 1964 (Reniers, 1999). Although this focus on a limited number of origin countries has resulted in quite coherent findings, it is not clear whether, and if so how, these findings are generalizable to migrants from a wider spectrum of origin countries which might neglect the global dimension of this phenomenon.

Besides, and related to this narrow geographical focus, the characteristics of sending countries have, in general, also been neglected, which resulted in the absence of a transnational perspective. Although there have been studies incorporating aspects of the origin countries in intermarriage research (Dribe & Lundh, 2008; Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2010), the literature on transnational marriages has left countries of origin largely untouched. Even though the multidimensional influence on the partner choice of migrants has often been integrated in research, such as the influence of structural aspects of the marriage market (see for example Kalmijn, 1998; Kalter & Schroedter 2010), the focus was too often only on the local marriage market in the country of destination. In the case of migrants, however, we need to look at the local and

global marriage market simultaneously: there have to be stimulating factors in both the destination and origin country and partners willing to engage in such a partnership (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007). Moreover, mediating channels are needed between both (Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014).

With this paper we try to contribute to the research on transnational marriages by examining partner choices among first- and second- generation migrants from a wide range of origin countries living in Belgium. We examine the chances of choosing a transnational partner (a co-ethnic living in the country of origin) as opposed to choosing a local co-ethnic partner (living in Belgium). In general, people prefer a partner who is similar to them (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). One of the most salient aspects is the ethnic background. Therefore, in this study, we try to grasp why a migrant prefers a transnational partner, rather than a local co-ethnic partners who is not only culturally more similar, but more physically close as well. Given the relatively unrestricted movement of individuals within the European Union (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005), we focus on non-European migrants only.

The central proposition holds that transnational marriages are the outcome of (1) individual preferences, (2) the availability of partners on the local marriage market, (3) the availability of partners in the country of origin, and (4) links between both markets.

9.2 Theory and hypotheses

In his review, Kalmijn (1998), identified three sources of influence which impact on partner choices: (1) individual preferences, (2) the influence of the social group to which migrants belong, and (3) the structural opportunities or constraints of the marriage market. The social group to which one belongs might act as an important intermediary to establish and maintain transnational networks that aid in the development of marriages (see infra). In this respect, the social group might stimulate transnational marriages (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). However, the influence of the social group lies outside the scope of this paper.

9.2.1 Individual effects

Initially, women and children joined their husbands or fathers (the initial labour migrants) in Belgium (Timmerman, 2008). As a consequence, there were more unmarried men compared to women. Moreover, a difference in motivations might emerge; women might choose a man from the country of origin because of the freedom and autonomy it offers, while men might choose such a partner to establish their dominance (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lievens, 1999; Timmerman, 2006). A marriage migrant arriving in Belgium is in many cases in a dependent position because of the lack of family ties, the absence of linguistic proficiency and cultural knowledge, financial harydship etc. (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). In addition to this, women often describe men from the local community as too traditional, and complain about their low levels of education (Lievens, 1999; Timmerman, 2006). Men on the other hand, complain about women from the local community because these women would be too liberated and modern. Anyway, from the

available body of research we learn that migrant women living in Western Europe are less likely to choose a partner from their country of origin compared to men (Dupont et al., 2017b; González-Ferrer, 2006; Kalter & Schroedter, 2010; Lievens, 1999). Based on results from previous research, we test the sex difference among migrants originating from a broader range of countries and therefore hypothesize that, in general, *female residents are less likely to engage in transnational marriages than male residents (H1).*

In general, people prefer partners that are similar to them (McPherson et al., 2001) because similarity between partners might reduce marital strain (Kalmijn, 1998). In this respect, however, similar to is multidimensional (Kalmijn, 1998). Although migrants have the same ethnic background as their partner in the case of a local intra-ethnic marriages and transnational marriages, the generation to which one belongs creates clear dissimilarities (Kalter & Schroedter, 2010). Primary socialization is a predominant factor in this respect: whereas first generation migrants are probably culturally more similar to partners from their origin country because they were born and raised there, second generation migrants are more similar to migrants living in Belgium. It is suggested that divorce risks are higher among migration marriages as a consequence of these cultural differences (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). In any case, among labour migration populations, second generation migrants establish fewer marriages with a partner from the country of origin than their first- generation counterparts (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007). Therefore, we hypothesize that: *second-generation migrants are less likely to engage in a transnational marriage compared to first-generation migrants (H2).*

Especially in migrant communities characterized by a strong internal cohesion and a high level of social control, the social group, and parents in particular, influence the partner choice (Descheemaeker et al., 2009; Hooghiemstra, 2003; Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Merz et al., 2009; Timmerman, 2006). Furthermore,

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it is argued that a lower age at the marriage's establishment is associated with a higher influence of the parents on the partner choice of their children (Lodewijckx et al., 1997). Generally, parents stimulate intra-ethnic marriages to preserve the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group (Kalmijn, 1998; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). We can assume that, the influence of parents continues to be higher amongst children who marry at a younger age, as several studies report lower odds of transnational marriages associated with higher age (Kalter & Schroedter, 2010; Lievens, 1999). In addition, given that the time spent in a country is associated with age, a lower age increases the probability of choosing a transnational marriage, because, at least for the first generation, time spent in the destination country will probably be negatively related to the attachment to the origin society and positively related to the attachment to the destination society. Therefore we hypothesize that: *migrants with a lower age have a higher probability of choosing a partner from their country of origin (H3).*

9.2.2 The local marriage market

If someone is searching a co-ethnic partner in the local community, there have to be co-ethnic partners available in order for a marriage to be established. The size of the immigrant community affects people's opportunities to interact with their co-ethnics and hence their possibilities to find local co-ethnic partner (Blau, 1977). A larger the ethnic group implies more available local partners, resulting in a lower likelihood of establishing a transnational marriage. Although this effect has been found repeatedly for inter-ethnic marriages (van Tubergen & Maas, 2007; Wildsmith, Gutmann, & Gratton, 2003), findings for intra-ethnic marriages with a partner from the country of origin have been mixed (González-Ferrer, 2006; Kalter & Schroedter, 2010). Therefore, we analyze the influence of structural opportunities of the local marriage market

and predict that: *the larger the local immigrant community, the more often immigrants find a local co-ethnic partner (H4).*

Another structural factor determining the opportunities to meet a potential co-ethnic partner in the immigrant community is not only the availability of co-ethnics in general, but of different-sex co-ethnics[8] more specifically (Blau, 1977). A balanced sex ratio means that, for intra-ethnic marriages, there is an equal amount of men and women available, thus increasing the opportunities to find a partner locally, whereas a lack of partners from the other sex increases the propensities towards choosing a transnational marriage. Although a positive effect of sex ratio on local marriages has been found for Germany (González-Ferrer, 2006), a more recent study could not confirm these findings (Kalter & Schroedter, 2010). These effects, however, have been tested at the national level, which might obscure effects in local marriage markets (Lichter, LeClere, & McLaughlin, 1991). Therefore, we hypothesize that: *a balanced sex ratio increases the probability of choosing a local co-ethnic partner (H5).*

9.2.3 The marriage market in the country of origin

A marriage with a partner from the country of origin comes at a certain cost for the migrating partner, such as moving to an unknown environment. Therefore, this type of marriage and subsequent migration movement should entail benefits for the migrant (Borjas, 1989). One of the benefits for migrants coming from less thriving countries, is the belief in an improvement of their living conditions (Fassman & Münz, 1992). One of the main reasons for migration to Europe, is a high level of unemployment in the country of origin and the hope for a better future (Schoorl et al., 2000). Even though the official labour migration period was terminated by the government decades ago, Turkish

migrants are still willing to migrate to Belgium because of better future prospects, especially in the labour market (Yalçin et al., 2006).

The human development of a country (HDI), which indicates a general level of standard of living, is one aspect where Belgium scores significantly higher than lots of non-European countries, the former being ranked sixth in the world at the beginning of the period under study (UNDP, 2003). In many cases, the human development in third countries will be lower, making Belgium an attractive destination country (Ravlik, 2014). Therefore, a lower human development of a country might mean a larger amount of available potential partners in that country willing to come to Belgium which might put pressure on migrants living in Belgium to choose such a partner. Therefore, we hypothesize that: *a lower human development in the country of origin increases the probability of choosing a transnational marriage (H6).*

9.2.4 Networks between both marriage markets

Lastly, mediating channels between the ethnic communities in both the country of destination and origin increase the probability of choosing a transnational marriage in several ways. Migration networks originate from a multitude of push and pull factors. These factors might vary from country to country; the most common ones are high levels of unemployment, war, and a low levels of human development in the origin country (Borjas, 1989; Ravlik, 2004; Schoorl et al., 2000). After the initial migration streams came into existence, these networks, or mediating channels, might perpetuate migration streams (Reniers, 1999). Moreover, these networks encourage transnational marriages, by facilitating the establishment of these marriages (Haug, 2008; Lievens, 2000).

Vice versa, transnational marriages fortify these migration networks (Reniers, 1999).

Because migration networks are hard to capture in specific measurable factors, we conceptualize these networks as the extent to which countries are embedded within the global network. This conceptualization consists of two factors. First of all, in order to grasp the benefits of moving to another country, a minimum of information about the conditions in that country is needed (Massey et al., 1993). Second, information flows between both countries in order are needed to inform that partners across the borders are available and interested. Therefore, we examine the influence of global ties of the country of origin and hypothesize that: *migrants coming from countries that have a stronger embedding within the global network, have a higher probability of choosing a partner from the country of origin (H7).*

9.3 Methodology

9.3.1 Data

Our data comprise an extraction from the Belgian national register, which cover marriages and legally registered cohabitations concluded in the period between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2008 of all migrants originating from third countries. Two conditions were required for inclusion: (1) at least one partner was a resident in Belgium, at least one year prior to the marriage, (2) with a third-country nationality at birth. In total, this extraction comprises all registered partner choices of first and second generation migrants from 97 third countries living in Belgium.

We selected intra-ethnic partner choices only i.e. transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages and legally registered cohabitations. The term 'marriage' is

used in this paper as a pars pro toto for all marriages and legally registered cohabitations. Mixed marriages are not included because this paper aims to examine exactly why migrants choose a transnational partner instead of a local co-ethnic. This focus enables us to disentangle the individual-level and structural-level mechanisms that specifically encourage transnational marriages. Other structural factors, such as a lack of transnational networks, might lead to interethnic marriages (Dupont et al., 2017b). The focus on intra-ethnic marriages only is methodologically motivated as well. Multinomial logistic cross-classified multilevel models with a three-categorical dependent variable (transnational, local, interethnic) were too complex to be properly fitted. Therefore, we choose to estimate binomial models only. Finally, more than 70% of all partner choices are intra-ethnic, which makes them the most common partner choice.

Another selection in the data includes a focus on first marriages only to retain a homogenous group that is not biased by previous partner choices.

9.3.2 Variables

Table 9.1 displays the descriptive analyses of all variables, for men and women separately.

Table 9.1. Descriptive statistics[a]

	Men			Women		
		N (%)			N (%)	
	Range			Range		
		Ave. (Std.)			Ave. (Std.)	
Dependent variable						
Intra-ethnic marriage						
Local	0/1	14,121	(37.9%)	0/1	14,233	(46.8%)
Transnational	0/1	23,179	(62.1%)	0/1	16,208	(53.2%)
Individual variables						
Generation						
First generation	0/1	20,648	(55.4%)	0/1	11,631	(38.2%)
Second generation	0/1	16,652	(44.6%)	0/1	18,810	(61.8%)
Age	18-88	29.48	(7.35)	18-63	24.45	(5.69)
Immigrant community						
Community size	0-11,956	65.59	(371.34)	0-11956	80.79	(416.30)
Sex ratio	19.09-379.89	101.23	(49.06)	26.32-523.72	124.33	(75.88)
Municipality size	2,067-472,071	20,471.31	(30,786.69)	2,436-472,071	21,447.97	(31,599.69)
Emigrant community						
HDI	0.27-0.94	0.64	(0.18)	0.28-0.94	0.64	(0.18)
Links between both						
Social globalization	19.23-90.29	47.35	(16.32)	19.23-90.29	47.69	(16.47)

[a] N = 67,741

Source: Belgian national register, DG SEI (2012), UNDP (2003) and Dreher (2006), own calculations.

Dependent variable

Transnational marriage is a dichotomous variable which differentiates between a local intra-ethnic partner choice (0) and choosing a partner from the country of origin (1). In this paper, we conceive an intra-ethnic marriage as a marriage between two partners with the same nationality at birth. A local intra-ethnic marriage is a marriage between two residents, i.e. living in Belgium at least one year prior to the establishment of the marriage. A transnational marriage is a marriage between a resident and a non-resident, the latter arriving in Belgium the same year of or later than the establishment of the marriage.

Individual variables

Age at the establishment of the marriage is a metric variable indicating the age at the marriage's establishment, in full years.

Generation is a dichotomous variable based on the country of birth. Migrants born abroad are considered first-generation migrants, those born in Belgium second-generation migrants.

Immigrant community variables

Community size is a metric variable indicating the absolute number of co-ethnics living in the same municipality. Because the propensity towards finding a local partner is determined by the availability of co-ethnics in absolute numbers and not by the ratio of co-ethnics versus non-co-ethnics, we use absolute numbers. We calculate for each municipality, based on the only available statistics from 2008, the number of inhabitants for each nationality,

based on the current nationality of the inhabitants (DG SEI, 2012). To attenuate the effects of skewness, this variable has been transformed by calculating the natural logarithm and subsequently squaring the community sizes.

Sex ratio is a metric variable measuring the number of group members of the same sex divided by the number of group members of the opposite sex for each nationality. The sex ratio is based on the latest available statistical information, i.e. numbers for 2010 (DG SEI, 2012). Again, origin is based on the current nationality of the inhabitants. Given that we do not dispose of the sex ratio of potential partners, we have to rely on general sex ratios, including both available and already married partners. The sex ratios have been transformed using the natural logarithm to attenuate the effects of skewness.

Municipality size is a metric variable indicating the total number of inhabitants per municipality. These numbers are also calculated for 2008 (DG SEI, 2012). Given that immigrant communities tend to be larger in larger municipalities, we control for the municipality size to assess the net effect of the immigrant community size. Therefore, municipality size is here only considered as control variable. To reduce skewness, municipality sizes have been transformed using the natural logarithm.

Emigrant community variables

HDI (Human Development Index) is a composite index indicating the general human development of countries based on the life expectancy at birth, the adult literacy rate and the natural logarithm of the gross domestic product per capita at purchasing power parity. The index has a range of 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the highest human development. We use the HDI of 2001, at the beginning of

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our period under study (UNDP, 2003). To reduce skewness, we square-transformed this variable.

Networks

The embedding within the global network is reflected in the *Social globalization* indicator. This is a composite index measuring (1) personal contact, for instance telephone traffic and the number of international letters, and (2) information flows, for instance the number of internet users and the trade in newspapers (Dreher, 2006). The index has a range of 0 to 100, with 100 indicating the highest possible social globalization and 0 the lowest. We calculated the average for the whole period under study. We use this variable as a proxy for direct links between communities: although this variable doesn't necessarily indicate links with Belgium, the latter is ranked seventh in the index. Information flows and links from Belgium, being one of the most well-connected countries in the world, penetrate the global network well.

9.3.3 Method

In a first, descriptive, part of our analyses, we examine the general prevalence of transnational marriages. Therefore, we look at the sample of 67,741 intra-ethnic partner choices of the first official marriage in the period 2001-2008. In order to obtain insight into the overall prevalence of the choice for a transnational marriage, we provide the percentages of transnational marriages in relation to all partner choices as well, including interethnic ones. To this end, we use the total sample of 96,541 partner choices of the first official marriage in the period 2001-2008.

In a second, explanatory, part, we examine factors that might be related to the choice for a local intra-ethnic partner versus a transnational partner. We discern four different levels in which migrants are nested, as indicated in Figure 9.1. First, there is the individual level, where residents constitute the unit of analysis. A second level is the migrant community where the resident lives. This level is nested within two cross-classified levels: the third level being the Belgian municipality and the fourth the origin country of residents and thus the country of residence of the transnational partner. In total, the dataset contains 4331 communities within 525 municipalities and 97 countries. For a (1) man with the Moroccan nationality at birth living in Brussels and engaging in a marriage with a partner from Morocco, for instance, this means that he will be nested in (2) the Moroccan community in Brussels and cross-classified in (3) Brussels and (4) Morocco.

In some cases, the limited availability of data compels us to include certain indicators at other levels. Community and municipality size are, naturally, introduced at respectively the community and municipality level. For sex ratio, however, information is only available on a national basis for each nationality: therefore, we are not able to introduce it at the community level and will introduce it at the country of origin-level. The emigrant community variable, HDI, and social globalization vary by country of origin and are thus introduced at that level.

Given the nested structure of our data and the binary outcome variable we apply binary logistic cross-classified multilevel analyses to explain transnational marriages. Models are estimated using the Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) procedures provided by the statistical software package MLwiN. To correctly measure the influence of the sex ratio, separate analyses are performed for men and women. Following this, the sex ratio displays the effect of a shortage or a surplus of potential partners from the other sex, for men and women separately.

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Moreover, separate analyses for men and women are performed because our descriptive analyses (Table 9.1) indicate a higher prevalence of transnational marriages concluded by men.

Since our data cover the period 2001-2008 we add a time specification to account for changing patterns. Tests have indicated that a 4th order polynomial is the best specification for men, whereas for women a quadratic time function fits the data better. The time specification is only included as a control variable in these analyses, to correctly estimate the effects of the independent variables during the period under study.

Table 9.3 gives an overview of the different models. The null-model is a model containing only the intercept, to decompose the variance in different levels. All metric variables, both individual and contextual, have been standardized to enable the comparison of effect sizes.

Concerning origin level variables, there is a slight inaccurateness: given that our selection is based on the nationality at birth, our data contain some 'historical' countries which have now ceased to exist, for instance the USSR or Yugoslavia. Indicators for these countries are no longer available and taking their historical values could obscure current living conditions in the remaining countries. Therefore, we decided to take the value of the historical 'core' countries, for instance Russia as a substitute for the USSR. We assume that this allocation of values creates the least possible bias.

Figure 9.1. Cross-classified design
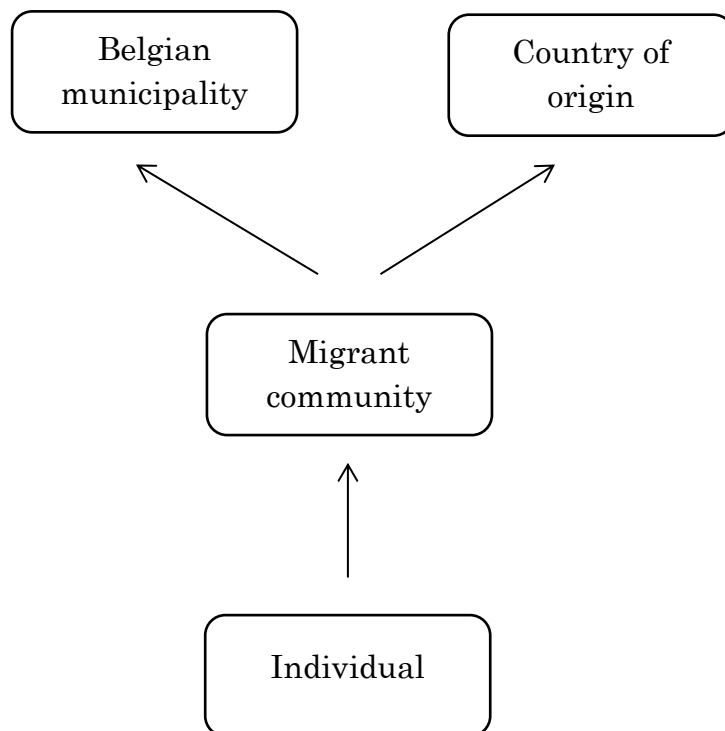
9.4 Results

Table 9.2 displays the top-ten nationalities with the highest prevalence of transnational marriages for men and women separately. For both men and women, we notice a few recurring countries in the top ten, of which Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, Pakistan, and Ghana are a few. Even when we account for all partner choices, thus including mixed marriages, the prevalence of transnational remarriages remains high for the top-ten nationalities. Furthermore, transnational marriages occur in different migrant groups with varying backgrounds in Belgium, and are thus not limited to migrant groups with a history of labour migration only, such as Turkish and Moroccan groups. Within these latter groups, transnational marriages are quite prevalent (Turkish men: 57.1%; Turkish women: 58.0%; Moroccan men: 53.8%; Moroccan women: 51.1%).

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Table 9.2. Top-ten nationalities with the highest prevalence of transnational marriages compared to all intra-ethnic marriages, in %[a]

	Men		Women	
1.	Sudan	95.9 *(59.5)*[b]	Dominican Republic	95.2 *(50.0)*
2.	Bangladesh	94.7 *(72.5)*	Ghana	90.8 *(86.3)*
3.	Dominican Republic	94.4 *(63.0)*	Bangladesh	85.3 *(72.7)*
4.	Pakistan	94.1 *(69.7)*	Israel	81.3 *(51.3)*
5.	Egypt	93.9 *(44.0)*	Pakistan	81.3 *(66.7)*
6.	Ghana	92.8 *(88.0)*	United States	80.2 *(66.8)*
7.	Mauritania	92.3 *(73.9)*	Tunisia	79.4 *(40.7)*
8.	India	91.8 *(67.8)*	Lebanon	77.9 *(49.5)*
9.	Afghanistan	90.3 *(72.9)*	Somalia	74.4 *(58.8)*
10.	Sri Lanka	90.0 *(76.3)*	Syria	69.2 *(49.7)*

[a] N = 67,741

[b] All partner choices, including mixed N=96,541

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

Table 9.3 displays the results of the explanatory analyses for men and women. From the decomposition of variance in the null-models, i.e. containing only the intercept, we learn that the community, municipality and origin levels together account for 26.2% of the variance in partner choices for men and 23.1% for women. This means that, for instance, the odds of choosing a partner from the country of origin for two men living in the same immigrant community are

26.2% similar, whereas individual factors determine their odds for 73.8%. For both sexes, the predominant level is that of the origin country, with 18.7% variance for men and 15.8% for women. This illustrates the importance of studying transnational marriages from a global perspective, as well as the importance of including both aspects of the immigrant community in the country of residence and origin

In our first hypothesis we expected that women would choose a partner from their country of origin less often (H1). Both the descriptive statistics and the results of the different models support this hypothesis: women who prefer a co-ethnic engage less often in transnational marriages than men. If we compare the intercepts of the null model, we notice that the odds ratios for men are twice as high compared to those of women with respectively 3.40 (i.e. $e^{1.225}$) and 1.48 (i.e. $e^{0.393}$)[9], a difference that is, furthermore, significant. Therefore, we can conclude that our first hypothesis is supported by the results. At the same time, however, the fact that both odds ratios are greater than one means that both men and women are more likely to choose a partner from their country of origin than a local partner. Given that our hypothesis holds in our final models means, however, that the variables introduced in our model do not succeed in explaining sex differences in partner choice. The lower prevalence of transnational marriages among women compared to men cannot be explained by, for instance, the unfavourable sex ratios for the former. This means that a shortage of women does not lead to these higher rates of transnational marriages among men. An alternative explanation for the gender difference might be sought in the economic dependency of women (Brines, 1994). This could not be examined directly in this paper, unfortunately. A partner in the country of origin who migrated to Belgium, often deals with a period of economic dependency upon the residing partner due to language and labour market adaptation. Given the

gendered wage gap, this dependency might be easier to bear for men than for women.

Table 9.3. Longitudinal binary logistic cross-classified multilevel analyses of transnational marriages (2001 – 2008)

	Men						Women					
	Model 0			Model 1			Model 0			Model 1		
	Coef.		(SE)	Coef.		(SE)	Coef.		(SE)	Coef.		(SE)
Intercept	1.225	***	(0.123)	1.186	***	(0.160)	0.393	***	(0.109)	0.530	***	(0.150)
Time				0.133	'	(0.079)				-0.020		(0.020)
Time^2				-0.120	*	(0.050)				-0.006	*	(0.003)
Time^3				0.026	*	(0.011)						
Time^4				-0.002	*	(0.001)						
Individual												
2e generation (ref: 1st)				-0.247	***	(0.029)				-0.380	***	(0.034)
Age at marriage[a]				0.276	***	(0.015)				-0.105	***	(0.014)
Immigrant community												
Community size[a,b,c]				-0.238	***	(0.062)				-0.152	**	(0.048)
Municipality size[a,b]				0.137	**	(0.051)				-0.056		(0.044)

Sex ratio[a,b]			0.155 **	(0.054)			0.077	(0.054)
Emigrant community								
HDI[a,c]			0.009	(0.120)			0.148	(0.117)
Links between communities								
Social globalization[a]			-0.063	(0.130)			0.038	(0.117)
Variance								
Individual	3.290		3.290		3.290		3.290	
Community	0.172	(0.028)	0.172	(0.030)	0.186	(0.035)	0.198	(0.036)
Municipality	0.164	(0.039)	0.147	(0.038)	0.123	(0.036)	0.109	(0.036)
Origin	0.832	(0.173)	0.693	(0.153)	0.677	(0.145)	0.675	(0.152)
DIC	45,441.87		44,625.50		39,366.47		38,934.93	

a Standardized variables, b Ln-transformed variables, c Square-transformed variables

' p < .01; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-sided); Men: Nind = 37,300; Ncom = 3,525; Nmun = 493; Nori = 93; Women: Nind = 30,441; Ncom = 2,822; Nmun = 462; Nori = 96.

Source: Belgian national register, DG SEI (2012), UNDP (2003) and Dreher (2006), own calculations.

With our second hypothesis, we expected a lower prevalence of transnational marriages among second-generation migrants (H2). Again, the results support our hypothesis: there is a negative effect of the second generation compared to the first one. Furthermore, second-generation migrants who find a local intra-ethnic partner do this in 78.3% of the cases with another second-generation migrant (results not shown), whereas first-generation migrants prefer first-generation migrants as partners in 76% of the local intra-ethnic partner choices. This illustrates the preference for a partner with the same background, and thus the lower interest in partners from the country of origin among second-generation migrants. Interestingly, the negative effect of generation is greater for women than for men, suggesting that, over and above the lower prevalence among women, among second-generation women, transnational marriages are even less common than among second-generation men. We conclude that our second hypothesis is supported by our results: second-generation migrants choose a transnational partner less often.

Based on our third hypothesis, we expected a negative effect of age at marriage (H3). The results for this hypothesis are mixed, however. We notice a negative effect of age at the marriage among women, meaning that younger women choose transnational marriages more often. For men, on the contrary, the results show a positive effect of age at the marriage. Interestingly, these findings contradict previous studies, showing the opposite direction for labour migration populations: a negative effect among men and a positive effect among women (Lievens, 1999). We conclude that, based on our results, we have to reject our third hypothesis for men and find support for women.

With our fourth hypothesis, we tackled the first of the contextual influences: the immigrant community. We expected a negative effect of the immigrant community size (H4). Our results support this hypothesis: the odds of choosing a transnational partner are lower for migrants living in large communities for

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both men and women. This effect holds when controlling for municipality size, meaning that the absolute size of the immigrant community determines to what extent migrants can find an intra-ethnic partner within the immigrant community. We conclude that we can accept our fourth hypothesis.

Additionally, the immigrant community might influence the choice for a transnational marriage due to an imbalanced sex ratio, as predicted in our fifth hypothesis (H5). From Table 9.3, however, we notice that our results support the hypothesis for men but not for women. The odds of choosing a partner from the country of origin are higher for men in communities where men outnumber women. Apparently, the same mechanism does not apply to women: although there is a positive effect, the effect is not significant (p<0.20). A female surplus within the community does not incite women to a larger extent to find a partner from their country of origin than in communities where there is either a balanced sex ratio or where men outnumber women. Therefore, we can only partially accept our fifth hypothesis.

The sending context, the emigrant community, comes into play with the sixth hypothesis. This hypothesis predicted that transnational marriages would be more frequent for partners living in countries with a low human development (H6). For both men and women, however, the results do not support our hypothesis. The effect of HDI on transnational marriages is not significant. Given that migrants coming from countries with a lower human development are not more inclined to choose a partner from the origin country, we have to reject this hypothesis.

Our seventh and last hypothesis addressed the links between the immigrant and emigrant communities and predicted that a higher level of social globalization resulted in a higher prevalence of transnational marriages (H7). As was the case with the emigrant community effect, the effect of social

globalization is not significant for both sexes. Good information flows from the country of origin do not seem to stimulate the choice for transnational marriages. Therefore, we have to reject our seventh hypothesis as well.

9.5 Conclusion and discussion

With this paper, we addressed individual and contextual effects on partner choices among first- and second-generation immigrants in Belgium. Three main conclusions can be drawn.

First, the geographically broader focus points to the widespread occurrence of transnational marriages, which are not limited to immigrants from former labour migration countries. Moreover, transnational marriages are not a characteristic of long established migrant groups in Belgium only, but are prevalent among recently settled migrant groups as well. In addition to this, they occur within migrant groups with different religious backgrounds, such as a Christian (Ghana and the Dominican Republic), a Jewish (Israel), a Muslim (Sudan, Pakistan), and even a Buddhist (Sri Lanka), and Hindu (India) background. There is, however, a clear generational difference: the second generation marries considerably less transnationally compared to the first generation, implying a shift in marital behaviour. In time, transnational marriages might decrease in popularity, a shift that is already present within Turkish and Moroccan migrant communities in Belgium (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

Second, the local marriage market, and thus the composition of the immigrant community has an impact upon migrants' propensity towards choosing transnational marriages. Migrants living in larger ethnic communities tend to be less prone to choose a partner from the country of origin. Additionally, at

least for men, a shortage of women in the community incites transnational marriages. Even though transnational marriages are still the dominant choice for both men and women, these results suggest a gender discrepancy in the motivations for choosing a transnational partner. While the choice for a transnational marriage might be more strongly driven by the marriage market in the case of men, while women are more likely tied to family relations. This has also been reported with regard to prospective partners in the origin countries (Heering et al., 2004). In addition to this, especially younger women tend to choose a transnational partner (Lodewijckx, Page, & Schoenmaeckers, 1997). In short, the aforementioned points to a stronger parental influence on women, unlike the more market-driven approach taken by men.

Third, given the global occurrence of transnational marriages, taking the national origin into account seems to be a valuable approach. About one quarter of the differences between individuals in partner choices are caused by the combined impact of the community and municipality migrants inhabit and the country they originate from. At the same time, however, we found no evidence of a stimulating effect of a national migration pressure due to human deprivation in the origin country. Moreover, better information flows do not stimulate transnational marriages either. An explanation for this lack of results, might be sought within the nationality of origin. Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are the two largest groups of migrants originating from third countries, and account for about two thirds of our dataset. The first large migration streams of these two groups started in 1964, making them long established. Therefore, the traditional push and pull factors, such as economic deprivation, might nowadays have lost importance for explaining migration of these groups. Furthermore, transnational marriages have already declined for these groups (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Therefore, an

effect of the traditional push and pull factors might still exist for other national origin groups, but these might be obscured within this study.

The lack of evidence for stimulating factors in the origin country does not, however, rule out the possibility of the presence of other factors that might still stimulate transnational marriages. Especially the cultural distance between potential partners from the country of origin and migrants residing in Belgium might play an important role, as well as the strength of family systems. These factors could be measured by examining post-materialistic values or the number of consanguineous marriages. However, often these factors are hard to measure, or they are inaccurate or incomplete. Furthermore, a more fine-grained analysis of the origin country, such as dividing the origin country into rural and urban areas, might deepen our insights. However, the spectrum of origin countries was too large to adequately implement in this paper.

We identify four limitations to our research. First, given the nature of the national register, we only had the most basic socio-demographical official information at our disposal, and were therefore unable to examine the impact of, for instance, socio-economic characteristics. Moreover, given our hypothesized impact of deprivation in the origin country, this might obscure individual-level socio-economic relations. For instance, we do not have information to test whether less well-off co-ethnics living in the origin country are more likely to search for a co-ethnic partner abroad, in the hope for a better future. Further research could contribute by analyzing other socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics as well.

Second, we limited our analyses to intra-ethnic marriages, excluding mixed marriages. A few potential consequences should be mentioned by doing so. Even though mixed marriages have the lowest prevalence in our dataset, their prevalence might greatly vary between nationalities of origin. Amongst smaller

migrant groups, mixed marriages might be the dominant partner choice; a phenomenon present amongst Algerian Belgians (Dupont et al., 2017b). However, this does not undermine our finding that transnational marriages are a global occurrence. Related to this, we have to make a qualifaction about the focus on intra-ethnic marriages when interpreting our results. When we found no stimulating effect of factors within the local marriage market, as was the case for the sex ratio among women for example, a shortage of men within the local marriage market might stimulate them to marry mixed. Nonetheless, this does not change the effects found in our analyses (transnational versus local intra-ethnic).

Third, we were not able to fully grasp the networks connecting immigrant and emigrant communities. Networks between communities are important for providing information about potential partners and operate as channel through which marriages are established. These networks between the communities are, however, hard to measure. Nonetheless, we believe that social globalization is a good indicator of information flows between countries, and therefore measures the availability of information about living conditions in Western Europe and Belgium.

Finally, although there is a possible selection effect of Belgian-born subjects who automatically receive the Belgian nationality at birth if one of the parents has the Belgian nationality, large-scale naturalization of migrants in Belgium only took off during the early nineties. This is before the birth of the population under study, who had to be at least 18 in 2008 to be able to marry or legally cohabit during the period under study. This means we only include migrants born up to 1990.

Chapter 10. Partner migration in the Moroccan community: a focus on time and contextual evolutions

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Published as a book chapter[10] in *Moroccan migration in Belgium: More than 50 years of settlement*, (2017), Leuven University Press, pp. 105-124. Edited by Timmerman, C., Fadil, N., Goddeeris, I., Clycq, N., & Ettourki, K.

10.1 Introduction

Through time, there were several routes migrants of Moroccan origin could use to enter the country, such as labour and partner migration (Reniers, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2014). Previous studies on the history of Moroccan migration to Belgium reported three subsequent, partly overlapping waves that are largely influenced by the prevailing migration policy and legislation at that time (Schoonvaere, 2014; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Marriage migration is situated within the third wave.

Notwithstanding the presence of residents of Moroccan origin before 1960, the bulk of Moroccan migration waves took off from the 1960s onwards. The first wave of labour migration from Morocco to Western Europe was part of a wider project to attract foreign labour, in order to cope with the worker shortage in particular sectors of the economy, such as the textile, metal, and the coal industry (Schoonvaere, 2014). This was formalized through bilateral agreements (Morocco: 17 February1964) between the governments of the respective countries (Reniers, 1999). Both the Belgian government and the

guest workers conceived this as a temporary arrangement; at the end of their contracts, the workers were supposed to return to Morocco.

To cope with the economic strain following the oil crisis in 1973, the Belgian government adopted restrictive migration policies, which resulted in the end of labour migration in 1974. This drastically reduced the amount of labour migrators and led the way to the second wave of migration, family reunification. Because of these restrictive policies that greatly reduced the possibilities to enter Belgium, families shifted from a temporary settlement to a more permanent one as the remaining family arrived in Belgium (Reniers, 1999). While the labour migrants consisted predominantly of men, their wives and children began entering the country in large numbers.

The third wave of partner migration started in the early 1980s and remained one of the few ways to enter Belgium after immigration policies became even stricter (Reniers, 1999). Entry was only granted to asylum seekers, students, and spouses of those Moroccans legally residing in Belgium. Through this new dynamic of family formation immigrants joined their partners in Belgium. This type of migration could only occur because of the strong bonds and resulting networks between Moroccan communities in Belgium and Morocco. These networks have been facilitating and canalizing new migrations (chain migration), mostly in the form of new partnerships. This has resulted in on-going streams of migration and "transplanted" communities despite the strict regulative migration legislation in Belgium (Reniers, 1999). Nowadays partner migration still remains the most important route for residents of Moroccan origin to enter Belgium (Myria, 2015).

Partner migration has recently been considered particularly relevant for migration policies and dominates public debates because marrying a spouse from the country of origin could potentially hinder or even fully inhibit the

integration process. Mixed marriages (marriages with someone with another nationality) on the other hand are seen as manifestations of integration (Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Preferring a partner from the country of origin could express a longing for a more traditional way of life (Lichter, Carmalt & Qian, 2011). However, other scholars question the view of intermarriage as litmus test for integration (Song, 2009; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Choosing a partner from the country of origin should not always be considered as an expression of being more stuck to the homeland, but can also be instigated by modern motives, such as a way of emancipating oneself (Lievens, 1997).

Because of the relevance of partner migration in social policy and public debates, we want to investigate the evolution in partner migration for the whole Moroccan community while simultaneously disentangling classical integration effects, such as generation and age, and contextual influences. We only focus on intra-ethnic marriages to fully examine the factors shaping the choice for partner migration instead of a partner within the local ethnic community. Mixed marriages make up 15% of all marriages of Moroccan migrants in Belgium between 2001 and 2008, but are not taken into account due to their distinct character. Furthermore, the prevalence of mixed marriages has remained stable during this period.

Social scientists researching migration in Belgium often focus on residents of Moroccan and Turkish origin because they are the two largest groups of residents of non-European origin in Belgium and are long established (see Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Reniers, 1999; Timmerman, Vanderwaeren, & Crul, 2003). Furthermore, there are strong similarities between these groups (period of arrival, legal conditions, and cultural characteristics (Reniers, 1999)). However, since there is more literature on Turkish migrants than on Moroccan ones, we will sometimes draw parallels between these two groups to contextualize our assumptions. The most significant difference between these

groups is the presence of weaker ties between sending and receiving Moroccan communities in comparison to the strong ties between Turkish communities (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). This is mainly due to the more individualistic, socio-cultural and innovative character of Moroccan migration, which makes it more fragmented in terms of geographical dispersion, marital status, educational level, religious-political orientation, and socioeconomic status (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997).

This article consists of six chapters. After this introduction, we first list our data and methods. In the fourth section, we discuss the individual level time trends, i.e. period effects, intergenerational changes, and age effects. Afterwards, we analyze contextual effects, which are the community size and the sex ratio. Finally, we summarize our most important findings in the conclusion.

10.2 Data

Our data on residents of Moroccan origin consist of an extraction from the Belgian national register. This extraction focuses on marriages and legally registered cohabitations, conducted between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2008. Two conditions had to be met: at least one partner is (1) a resident in Belgium before the partnership, and (2) has a nationality at birth from a third country, i.e. a country outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland. All registered partner choices among first and second generation migrants originating from 97 third countries and living in Belgium are comprised. We selected Moroccan migrants based on their nationality at birth. Only intra-ethnic partnerships were selected, both marriages and legally registered cohabitations are included. In this paper, we use marriage as a pars pro toto for all marriages and legally registered cohabitations. Furthermore, our focus lies

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on first partner choices to retain a homogenous group that is not biased by previous partner choices. In sum, we counted 24,712 Moroccan partner choices.

However, the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities, including Moroccans, in Belgium from the early 1990s onwards results in a slight inaccurateness regarding the size of the second generation group. When one parent has the Belgian nationality, children born in Belgium automatically receive the Belgian nationality at birth. Although they are technically a part of the second generation group, these naturalized minorities are omitted from it. However, we do not expect this resulting underrepresentation of minorities from the second generation to be a substantial problem, as the changes in the Belgian nationality legislation that enabled minorities of the second generation to apply en masse for Belgian citizenship occurred only in the early 1990s. Because one has to be at least 18 to get married, the very large majority of second generation Moroccans born in the 1980s were still born with the Moroccan nationality and are therefore part of our sample.

Because our dataset is an extraction from the Belgian national register, our dataset includes the complete population of non-EU migrants. However, there are some limitations as well. First, there is no socio-economic information available at the individual level, such as educational attainment, employment status, and income. Furthermore, the Belgian national register also lacks data on unregistered cohabitations. Lastly, the focus on nationality at birth to discern the Moroccan group ignores ethnic differences (for example Berbers and Arabs) within Morocco.

10.3 Method

We analyzed the effects of individual level time trends (period, generation, and age) and contextual effects (community size and sex ratio). The basic descriptive analyses can be found in Table 10.1. The theoretical background, as well as the construction and effects of these variables will be discussed in the following sections.

Table 10.1. Descriptive analyses

	Men			Women		
	Range	N (%) Mean (Std. Dev.)		Range	N (%) Mean (Std. Dev.)	
Individual						
Dependent						
Partner choice						
Partner migration	0/1	6949	(54.5%)	0/1	6138	(51,3%)
Local intra-ethnic	0/1	5807	(45.5%)	0/1	5829	(48,7%)
Time						
Marriage year	1 - 8	4.548	(2.258)	1 - 8	4.643	(2.277)
Generation						
First	0/1	2877	(22.6%)	0/1	1332	(11.1%)
1.5	0/1	1102	(8.6%)	0/1	774	(6.5%)
Second	0/1	8771	(68.8%)	0/1	9856	(82.4%)
Birth cohort	2 - 19	14.821	(1.989)	7 - 20	16.507	(1.661)
Age	17 - 71	28.089	(5.564)	14-55	23.101	(4.553)
Contextual						
Community size	11-54991	26584.912	(19334.614)	11-54991	25223.179	(19299.673)
Sex ratio	58.335-188.889	102.453	(15.935)	57.709-172.350	103.047	(16.300)
Control						
District size	41103-1048491	812148.331	(289152.300)	41103-1048491	799948.494	(294799.136)
Diversity level	0.555-0.988	0.722	(0.162)	0.555-0.986	0.734	(0.164)

Source: Belgian national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calculations.

To deal with the simultaneous analysis of age, period and cohort effects (Yang & Land, 2006) we use a cross-classified design supplemented with a Hierarchical Age Period Cohort model, with four different levels: the individual level, the birth cohort, the district, and the year of the marriage (=period). To properly estimate the age and period effects we use informative Bayesian priors on birth cohort and presume no effect (Bell & Jones, 2014, 2015).

The individual level is the level of the individual partner choices. Furthermore, each birth cohort spans a three-year interval. With a range from 1934 until 1992, this provides us 20 potential birth cohorts of which 19 are used. Moroccan migrants within our dataset live in 41 districts. There are 43 Belgian districts in total, which constitute the administrative level between municipalities and provinces in Belgium. The metric variable marriage year is based on the year when the marriage was formalized into a marriage or a legal cohabitation. It allows us to assess the overall evolution for the whole Moroccan community independently of changes within subgroups, such as generations. We choose the first possible marriage year (2001) as the reference point to which the other marriage years are compared.

Because we only have information on marriages established between 2001 and 2008, we have to cluster these 8 marriage years within districts to enlarge the sample size of marriage years to 267 units (Stegmueller, 2013). This enables us to assess (1) the variation of effects through time within a certain district (longitudinal); and (2) to examine differences between districts, irrespective of temporal variations (cross-sectional) (Fairbrother, 2013). This construction assumes that changes through time are happening within districts. Because of the geographical clustering of Moroccan communities, we assume this construction to be legitimate (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997; Reniers, 1999). The final construction of the resulting cross-classified design of our multilevel model can be found in Figure 10.1.

Figure 10.1. Cross-classified multilevel design
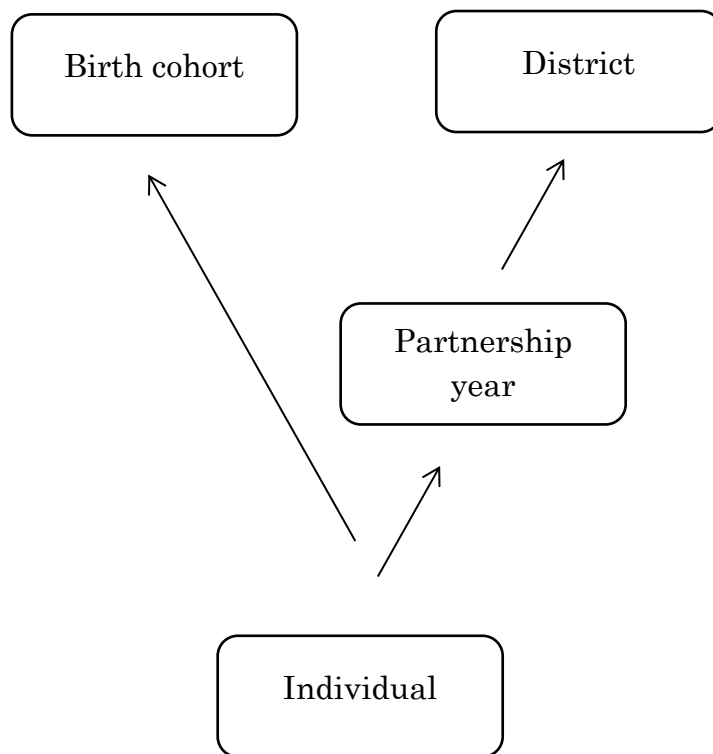
We use binary logistic cross-classified multilevel analyses.[11] Tables 10.2 and 10.3 display the results of these analyses in odds-ratios. In these tables, the choice for partner migration (1) is compared to the choice for a local co-ethnic (0). To interpret the effects of the sex ratios, separate analyses were performed for men and women. Four models were obtained. First, the null-model tested the different levels of our model (individual level, marriage year, birth cohort, and district). Furthermore, the first model includes the individual time variables at the individual level (marriage year, generation, birth cohort, and age at marriage) which makes the birth cohort both a level in our model and a variable at the individual level. The second model adds an interaction effect between marriage year and generation. The third and final model adds the longitudinal as well as the cross-sectional higher level variables and controls for the district size and the diversity level.

The district size reflects the total number of inhabitants of a district. Because larger districts often have larger ethnic communities, this variable controls for this effect. This is the only contextual variable without a longitudinal component, as district sizes are less likely to fluctuate heavily, especially within such a short period of time (2001-2008). The second control variable, the degree of diversity within a district, is conceptualized in terms of nationality and was calculated using the Herfindahl index (Rhoades, 1993). When applied to diversity, this index measures the sum of quadrats of the percentages of all nationalities residing in every district. A higher degree reflects a more homogeneous ethnic composition in a district, which in these data most likely indicates a district that largely consists of ethnic Belgians.

The cross-sectional effect of the community size, the level of diversity, the sex ratio, and the district size were transformed with their natural logarithm to correct for skewness.

We calculated the Intraclass Correlation Coefficients on the basis of the higher level variance found in Tables 10.2 and 10.3, to assess how much of the total variance each level accounts for.[12] Within the male Moroccan group, the higher levels explain 31.39% of the total variance (birth cohorts: 23.94%, districts: 6.30%, and marriage years: 1.15%). Within the female group, this is 21.82% of the total variance (birth cohorts: 11.24%, districts: 5.63%, and marriage years: 4.94%). This highlights the importance of incorporating a multilevel approach to explain partner choices among residents of Moroccan origin in Belgium.

Table 10.2. Results of longitudinal cross-classified multilevel analyses for choosing partner migration (1) vs. a local co-ethnic partner (0) for men

	Null model		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error
Intercept	4.693***	(0.276)	1388.529***	(1.079)	447.197***	(0.713)	248699.346***	(0.657)
Individual								
Time								
Marriage year			0.901***	(0.024)	0.877***	(0.019)	0.878***	(0.020)
Generation								
1.5 Generation			1.511***	(0.074)	1.267*	(0.127)	1.281*	(0.123)
First generation			0.861**	(0.049)	0.518***	(0.092)	0.518***	(0.089)
Birth cohort[a]			1.000	(0.001)	1.000	(0.001)	1.000	(0.001)
Age marriage			0.557***	(0.062)	0.662***	(0.076)	0.663***	(0.020)
Age marriage²			1.011***	(0.001)	1.008***	(0.001)	1.007***	(0.001)
Interaction with								
Marriage year								
1.5 Generation					1.050	(0.032)	1.048	(0.031)
First generation					1.154***	(0.022)	1.153***	(0.021)

Contextual								
District								
Community size							0.825*	(0.076)
Sex ratio							0.351***	(0.165)
Marriage year (PY)								
Community size							1.000	(0.001)
Sex ratio							0.998	(0.002)
Control								
District size							1.037	(0.074)
Diversity (district)							0.802	(0.851)
Diversity (PY)							17.814	(3.517)
Variance								
Birth cohort	1.148	(0.596)	17.108	(9.353)	4.148	(6.245)	0.139	(0.265)
District	0.302	(0.117)	0.328	(0.120)	0.331	(0.126)	0.238	(0.093)
Marriage year	0.055	(0.021)	0.007	(0.006)	0.008	(0.008)	0.004	(0.004)
DIC	16725.380		16495.969		16500.016		16511.005	

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; Final model: $N_{individual}$ = 12,750; $N_{birthcohort}$ = 18; $N_{district}$ = 40; $N_{marriageyear}$ = 255

[a]Informative prior, mean: 1.000, standard deviation: .001

Source: Belgan national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calucations.

Table 10.3. Results of longitudinal cross-classified multilevel analyses for choosing partner migration (1) vs. a local co-ethnic partner (0) for women

	Null model		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error
Intercept	2.018**	(0.234)	15568.423***	(0.699)	10331.988***	(0.653)	318379,708***	(1.856)
Individual								
Time								
Marriage year			0.939***	(0.016)	0.915***	(0.016)	0.904***	(0.020)
Generation								
1.5 Generation			1.970***	(0.084)	1.806***	(0.170)	1.800***	(0.167)
First generation			1.616***	(0.064)	0.782	(0.135)	0.776	(0.131)
Birth cohort[a]			1.000	(0.001)	1.000	(0.001)	1.000	(0.001)
Age marriage			0.516***	(0.053)	0.537***	(0.047)	0.542***	(0.050)
Age marriage^2			1.011***	(0.001)	1.010***	(0.001)	1.010***	(0.001)
Interaction with Marriage year								
1.5 Generation					1.024	(0.038)	1.024	(0.037)
First generation					1.201***	(0.030)	1.202***	(0.029)

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Contextual

District

Community size							1.021	(0.062)
Sex ratio							0.892	(0.352)

Marriage year (PY)

Community size							1.000	(0.001)
Sex ratio							1.000	(0.002)

Control

District size							0.784*	(0.099)
Diversity level (district)							1.519	(0.770)
Diversity level (PY)							1.317	(3.607)

Variance

Birth cohort	0.473	(0.277)	0.053	(0.096)	0.043	(0.068)	0.038	(0.052)
District	0.237	(0.107)	0.240	(0.097)	0.234	(0.094)	0.195	(0.089)
Marriage year	0.208	(0.050)	0.006	(0.006)	0.005	(0.005)	0.005	(0.004)
DIC	15952.409		15599.966		15564.207		15567.538	

$*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001$; Final model: $N_{individual} = 11{,}962$; $N_{birthcohort} = 14$; $N_{district} = 38$; $N_{marriageyear} = 231$

[a]Informative prior, mean: 1.000, standard deviation: .001

Source: Belgian national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calculations.

10.4 Individual level time trends

Generally, people prefer certain characteristics in potential partners and are searching a partner who resembles them (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). This mostly applies to similarities in age, socio-economic status, and the cultural background. Cultural similarities are often associated with a certain ethnic background, which could explain the strong preference for ethnically similar partners. This part discusses several time trends situated on the individual (or micro) level: period effects, intergenerational changes, and age effects that could influence individual preferences.

10.4.1 Period effects

Recent quantitative and qualitative research in Belgium note a declining preference for a partner from the country of origin within the Turkish migrant group (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). The most often cited rationales are the risk perception and problem awareness related to partner migration, a higher acceptance of premarital relationships with local co-ethnics, and a declining parental involvement. Descriptive analyses (not shown) reveal that within the Moroccan group there is a more general decline in partner migration as well, as its prevalence was notably higher in 2001 (around 59%) compared to 2008 (around 45%).

However partner migration was and still is the dominant partner choice, even within the second generation (Timmerman, 2008; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Descriptive analyses (Table 10.1) show that for first partner choices, the prevalence of partner migration is 54.5% for women and 51.3% for men. This dominance can partially be explained by the unpopularity of local partners. Youngsters from the second generation in Belgium often have a bad reputation

within Belgian communities and are considered 'too western' and therefore unsuitable future partners (Timmerman, 2008). Potential mates from the country of origin, in contrast, are perceived as better partners. Most of the youngsters furthermore believe that the advantages of partner migration outweigh the disadvantages, such as dependency of the migrating partner (Teule, Vanderwaeren, & Mbah-Fongkimeh, 2012; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Men might prefer a woman from their country of origin because of her supposedly subordinated position, especially in comparison with the more emancipated women in Belgium (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Lievens, 1997). Women on the other hand might choose a man from their country of origin. This offers freedom and autonomy since she knows the language, customs, and traditions.

We find partial support for this declining preference for partner migration. The odds ratios indicate a negative correlation between the marriage year and the choice for partner migration (Tables 10.2 and 10.3). This finding reflects a pronounced overall period effect: more recently formed couples opt less for partner migration and more for a local partner.

10.4.2 Migrant generation

Generational differences can be understood from the combined perspective of the socialization and the assimilation theory. These two theories state that a longer socialization period in the country of destination is coupled to a more engrained integration (Alba & Nee, 1997; Lievens, 1997). The first generation in our dataset (migrated above the age of 16) consists predominantly of students, people who migrated because of humanitarian reasons, and presumably a few early labour migrants (Myria, 2015). Since we only include first marriages, migrated wedding partners are excluded. Despite the diversity

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within the first generation, they all have been primarily socialized within Morocco, making the socialization and assimilation theory applicable. The 1.5 generation migrated between 6 and 15 years old and the second generation migrated before the age of 6, or was born in Belgium.

Following the socialization and assimilation theory, we expect that further generations will behave less in line with the values in Morocco and more in line with the prevailing values in Belgium (Lievens, 1997). This could impact the partner choice as well as the possibilities and opportunities of finding an eligible partner (Carol et al., 2014). Overall, second generation migrants might be more assimilated because they grew up and went to school in Belgium, and acquired the language. Furthermore, we can assume that the ties between the migrant and the country of origin are growing weaker with the following generations (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). We therefore expect that the second generation has a lower likelihood of choosing partner migration compared to the 1.5 and first generation.

Our analyses, which compare the 1.5 and first generations to the second generation group, reveal an important gender difference. The 1.5 generation as a whole, and women from the first generation opt more for partner migration than those from the second generation, as was expected (Tables 10.2 and 10.3). Men from the first generation, however, are more likely to choose a local partner compared to the second generation. In other words, Moroccans who grew up in Morocco tend to marry a Belgian Moroccan, while the next generation, i.e. Moroccans who were born in Belgium, are keen on marrying a wife migrated from Morocco.

Another conclusion is that this trend is weakening over time for all generations. Our results indeed indicate that the inclusion of the interaction effect eliminates the gender difference and nuances our findings (Tables 10.2 and 10.3). In 2001,

all Moroccan migrants from the 1.5 generation have a higher likelihood of choosing partner migration compared to the second generation while the likelihood is lower for first generation men (women: not significant). However, from 2001 until 2008, the likelihood of partner migration is rising for the whole first generation while the likelihood within the second generation declines.

10.4.3 Age at the establishment of the marriage

Age has been associated with '(…) changes, accumulation of social experiences and/or role- or status changes' (Yang & Land, 2006, p. 76). Age at marriage is sometimes conceptualized as a proxy for the parental influence on the partner choice (Lievens, 1997). Parents often desire a partner with the same ethnic origin, preferably form the country of origin for their children (Lievens, 1997). Therefore, a greater parental influence can accompany a higher likelihood of marrying a partner from the country of origin. However, this influence weakens as children grow older and become more independent (van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014). Other studies in various countries have reported a higher likelihood of mixed marriages, and therefore a lower likelihood of partner migration at a higher marriage age, as well as a declining social support for marriage migration over time (Kalter & Schroedter, 2010).

Additional analyses indicate that a quadratic age function fits the data better compared to a lineair function. The age at the establishment of the marriage ranges from 17 to 71 years old. Therefore, 2% of our cases can be considered as mild outliers (interquartile range = 1.5; over 40 years old) and 1% as strong outliers (interquartile range = 3; over 50 years old) which is to be expected when using population data (Osborne & Overbay, 2004). The omission of these influential data points in additional anales on the individual level, however, did only slightly alter our results, with no significant changes. Therefore, we

believe that the presence of these outliers does not lead to substantial distorations of our results.

Generally, our results show that the likelihood of partner migration is declining with age. Only for Moroccan Belgians older than 47 years, the likelihood of partner migration rises again. However, as we already mentioned, this group comprises only 1 percentage of the whole group. Therefore, we can conclude that for almost all Moroccan migrants, the likelihood of partner migration is declining with age.

10.5 Contextual effects

The partner choice among residents of Moroccan origin might also be affected by structural conditions, such as the community size and the sex ratio in a district. To fully grasp them, we depart from Blau's opportunity theory (1977, 1994), which states that structural conditions at the macro-level within a specific context regulate the relationships between groups and persons within that context. These structures could explain partner choices that seemingly contradict individual interests and preferences (Blau, 1994). The marriage market and its contact opportunities and constraints are shaped by structural conditions (Kalmijn, 1998).

All of our contextual variables are based on data derived from Statistics Belgium (n.d.) and have both a longitudinal (evolution from 2001–2008 within a district) and a cross-sectional (district average) component. We refer to Fairbrother (2013) for the method of calculating both components. We believe that the district is an acceptable representation of the marriage market, since approximately 80% of all marriages are formed with a partner living within the same district.

10.5.1 Community size

Contacts with other ethnic groups decline when the size of the own group increases (Blau, 1994). When a Moroccan community expands in a given district, the opportunities increase to meet a Moroccan partner within that local community (Teule et al., 2012). Logically, when there are more potential partners available, the likelihood of meeting a partner and cohabiting or marrying increases. We expect the community size to be an important and relevant factor, as the Moroccan community is still expanding due to the on-going migration inflow (Schoonvaere, 2014).

We conceptualize the community size as the size of the Moroccan community in a certain district. We investigate whether the likelihood of choosing partner migration is indeed lower within larger communities (cross-sectional), and whether a growing Moroccan community is accompanied by a declining likelihood of partner migration (longitudinal). Our results however show that only for men the likelihood of choosing a local partner is higher when communities are larger (Tables 10.2 and 10.3).

10.5.2 Sex ratio

A shortage of men or women with the same ethnic background in a given district forces people to adapt their partner choices (Blau, 1994; McPherson et al., 2001). Partners have to then be found outside a local ethnic community (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006). Furthermore, the balance of men and women is contingent on the phase of migration and usually goes from an unbalanced to a balanced situation (Castles & Miller, 2003), which is also the case within the Belgian context (Schoonvaere, 2014).

Within our analyses, we conceptualize the sex ratio as the number of Moroccan women per 100 men in a district. We only considered opposite sex marriages because of the low prevalence of same sex marriages (0.02%). Our analyses reveal that only men choose a partner from Morocco when there is a shortage of women (Tables 10.2 and 10.3). Women on the other hand do not prefer a partner from Morocco when men are lacking within their district.

10.6 Conclusion and discussion

This paper investigates the intra-ethnic partner choices in Belgium among residents of Moroccan origin with a focus on time as well as contextual influences. Time variables include marriage year, generation, and the age at marriage. Contextual influences include: the sex ratio and the size of the Moroccan community. We used an extraction of the Belgian national register, of which 24,712 partner choices of residents of Moroccan origin were retained in our final analyses. All migrants in our analyses were nested in 19 birth cohorts, 267 marriage years (nested in districts), and 41 Belgian districts.

Partner migration loses importance for the whole Moroccan group in Belgium. This decrease could be attributed to potential risks and uncertainties that can accompany the choice of partner migration. Risks and uncertainties include important cultural differences (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997), economic dependency, and the limited amount of time the partners get to know each other before the formal establishment (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). This decline remains prominent after controlling for classical assimilation effects and contextual influences even though these also have an effect on the partner choices of Moroccan migrants.

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First, we note some important generational differences. The 1.5 and female first generation prefer partner migration more than the second generation. This is in line with the socialization and assimilation theory that state that a longer socialization period in the country of destination is coupled to a more engrained integration (Alba & Nee, 1997; Lievens, 1997). However, first generation men have a higher likelihood of choosing a local partner compared to the second generation. The explanation for this finding may lie in the diversity within the first generation, consisting predominantly of the early labour migrants, students and people who migrated for humanitarian reasons (Myria, 2015). Our descriptive analyses indicate that the male first generation is twice as big as the female one (approx. 23% vs. 11%). Men may be more likely to migrate because of humanitarian reasons or arrive here as students, which may account for this difference in size.

The inclusion of the interaction effect eliminates the gender difference and nuances these findings. The likelihood within the second generation to choose partner migration declines over time, whereas the likelihood rises within the first generation. Since the second generation is by far the largest group (men: 68%, women: 82%), it is especially this group that accounts for the declining importance of partner migration.

Furthermore, our results show a declining preference for a partner from Morocco when migrants are older. This suggests parental influence on the partner choice, as parents generally prefer a partner with the same ethnic background and from the country of origin (Lievens, 1997). As children grow older, the parental influence is likely to weaken (van Zantvliet et al., 2014).

In addition to these evolutions through time, the place of residence influences the partner choice of men since it can limit the chances of finding a potential partner (Blau, 1994; Kalmijn, 1998). Residing within larger communities

enhances the likelihood of finding a local partner. Moreover, a shortage of local Moroccan women stimulates men to choose a partner from Morocco.

In April 2011, the Belgian government severely tightened the conditions for partner migration (Lievens, Van de Putte, Van der Bracht, & Caestecker, 2013). Since then, it tries to strictly regulate partner migration, influencing the partner choice among all non-European country nationals and Belgians (Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014). Yet, a declining trend was already present before 2011 within the Moroccan migrant group. This decline is happening in addition to generational changes and ageing processes. Therefore, more recent generations who grow older could be the catalysts for change. Even though an important shift between age groups and generations exists, at the same time a more general shift towards a more local partner choice is occurring within the whole Moroccan community in Belgium. This decline remains unaffected after accounting for structural conditions.

Chapter 11. Partner choices in long established migrant communities in Belgium

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Abstract

This paper aims to shed light on the partner choices of Moroccan, Turkish, Congolese, and Algerian migrants in Belgium. Three partner choices are distinguished: marrying a partner from the country of origin (partner migration), marrying a local co-ethnic partner, and establishing a mixed marriage. We focused on the role of migration history and transnational links, culture (religion, language), skin colour, and structural characteristics of the district migrants live in (mainly community size) to gain further insight in the partner choices. Our data comprise an extraction of the Belgian national register (2001-2008) and focus on first marriages among first, 1.5, and second generation migrants of Moroccan, Turkish, Algerian, and Congolese origin (N=52,142). We apply a multinomial logistic multilevel design to simultaneously incorporate individual and contextual effects at the district level. The main conclusion from this paper is that the partner-selection patterns in early 21st century Belgian society still bears the traces of the starting conditions that migrant groups experienced when they first entered the country. While this continuity is important to understand the situation citizens with a migrant origin have to deal with today, it does not make change impossible. In fact, for the Turkish and Moroccan group, research recently showed quite a

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strong decline in transnational marriages and a modest increase in mixed marriages. These are indications that after 50 years of migration a transition towards full inclusion in Belgian society is not beyond reach. The conditions analysed in this paper, which are the strength of transnational networks, the cultural boundaries, and the ethnic community size, may help to understand why this inclusion takes a long period of time.

11.1 Introduction

The partner choice of migrants has often been used in research as a litmus test of assimilation and integration (Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Lesthaeghe, 2000; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). High levels of ethnically mixed marriages are seen as manifestations of assimilation, while high level of inmarriages could indicate a large social and cultural distance between the migrant group and the native population (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009) and could hinder or even fully inhibit the integration process (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lesthaeghe, 2000; Lichter, Carmalt & Qian, 2011; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Transnational marriages (marriages between a migrant and a partner from the country of origin) might signal an even larger distance to the country of residence since it could express a yearning towards a more traditional way of life. Nowadays, however, this view has been strongly criticized and questioned (Lievens, 1997, 1999; Song, 2009; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Choosing a partner from the country of origin should not always be considered as an expression of traditional behaviour, but might be instigated by modern motives as well, as it can, for example, empower women (Lievens, 1997, 1999). In any case, high levels of partner migration indicate a persistent orientation towards the country of origin.

Partner-selection patterns vary between different migrant groups as they are to a large extent dependent upon group specific characteristics of the migration process (e.g. transnational marriages seem to be influenced by the strength of the role of the family in the migration process, Reniers, 1999), the social, cultural and economic differences between migrant groups and the native population (e.g. differences in religion, language, and value orientation, see Kalmijn & Tubergen, 2006; Dribe & Lundh, 2011), and structural opportunities within migrant communities (such as the local ethnic community size, e.g. Kalmijn & Tubergen 2006). To put it stronger, the conditions under which migration patterns are established and the conditions which migrant communities experience in the decades after this starting point might have a strong and lasting influence on the partner selection patterns, even until today.

In this paper we examine how these 'starting conditions' differ for migrant groups in Belgium and how these have a lasting effect on partner selection patterns. Such a focus on meso- and macro-level characteristics requires a comparative framework. Because migration waves started around the same time for Congolese, Algerian, Turkish, and Moroccan migrants, these long established migrant groups in Belgium constitute an interesting case for comparative study. Turkish, Moroccan, and Algerian migration started out as labour migration in the 1960s. Congolese migrants entered the country rather as students as part of the Belgian assistance to the decolonization (Schoonvaere, 2010). We analyze differences between these groups in the prevalence of mixed marriages, local intra-ethnic marriages, and partner migration by applying multinomial logistic multilevel analyses on partner selection data for the period 2001-2008.

11.2 Theoretical background

First we discuss partner-selection patterns in general terms. In section 11.3 we apply these theoretical insights to the four migrant groups under study.

Generally, people prefer a partner who resembles them, a phenomenon called homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). The most important and most often occurring similarities apply to age, socio-economic status, cultural background, and skin colour. For this reason, ethnic groups, related as they are to cultural traits (religion, language, e.g. Dribe & Lundh, 2011) and more visible characteristics such as skin colour (Kalmijn & Tubergen, 2006), may be separated by strong and difficult to overcome boundaries. Since partnerships permeate the private sphere and are very intimate choices, group boundaries are most prominent and visible in this domain (Pagnini & Morgan, 1990 in Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014). These ethnic boundaries do however differ in strength. Alba (2005) distinguishes between bright and blurred boundaries. Bright boundaries are highly visible, while blurred boundaries are more covert and less salient. When group boundaries between different ethnic groups are weak, mixed marriages are expected to be more frequent as ethnicity becomes a less salient feature. When boundaries are strong, intra-ethnic marriages are more likely.

Yet, these boundaries can be overcome. The contact theory, founded by Allport (1954), and further developed and enhanced by Pettigrew (1997, 1998), gives us some understanding of the underlying process. The contact theory is especially salient to the topic of partner choice, as the theory states that especially long-term close relationships, as opposed to initial acquaintanceships, are more open to constructive contact. According to the contact theory, optimal intergroup contact requires five conditions: "The situation must allow equal group status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and authority

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support (…) and it must have 'friendship potential'" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 80). These conditions are potentially problematic for migrant groups in Belgium. Migrants, especially of non-European origin, are often disregarded, belittled, and even discriminated against (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, Verhaeghe, 2013; Vandezande, Phalet, & Swyngedouw 2011; Zeleza, 2002). Equal group status may be the prevailing norm as governments install anti-discriminatory laws. In reality however there still exists a lot of discrimination and even racism impeding intergroup cooperation. As a result, mixed marriages can be expected to be rather rare. However, as not all migrant groups have the same religion, language, and skin colour, we can also expect that group boundaries will differ in brightness. The differences between the groups analysed in this paper will be discussed in section 11.3.2.

This debate on contact and boundaries requires some extension. Contacts and boundaries on the local marriage market are not the only determinants of partner selection. Another crucial factor is the strength of the contacts with the country of origin. For a marriage with a partner from the country of origin to take place, strong bonds are needed with the community in the country of origin because marriage negotiations are usually a rather delicate matter, especially when information on potential spouses is lacking or when it is ambiguous (Reniers, 1999). Furthermore, the establishment of these marriages requires complicated and intense negotiations given the emotional and physical distance between the spouses and their families (Reniers, 1999). These negotiations are facilitated by mediating networks, or bonds between the sending and receiving communities. Because partner migration is strengthened by, and enhances in turn strong bonds between communities in the sending and receiving countries (Reniers, 1999) partner migration will be the strongest among communities with tight networks.

From the very start of a migration process these networks are shaped by the specific characteristics of this process. Contacts with the country of origin are facilitated when the migration process started as a more or less involuntary (state organized) and temporary project (with return migration as the default option for the future), when family members are still present in the country, and when migrants stem from strong (typically rural) communities. These are all factors that may stimulate the growth of a 'transnational social space' (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007): networks between the countries of origin and the countries of destination. When migrants come individually and without the perspective of a quick return, contacts with the country of origin are less easily maintained. The importance of transnational links for the groups studied in this paper will be analysed in section 11.3.3.

Apart from the role of local boundaries and transnational links, structural-demographic influences at the level of the district[13] one lives in also shape contact opportunities. Structural barriers exist that could promote or inhibit the extent to which different groups can meet and get in contact with one another (Pettigrew 1998; Blau, 1977, 1994). Blau's structural opportunity theory explains the regulation of relationships between groups on a macro-level. When meeting opportunities between groups are limited, individuals within that group will predominantly establish intra-group relationships. Even though it is possible that individuals wish to establish mixed marriages, structural influences could make intra-group marriages more likely. The structural opportunity theory might therefore explain choices which seemingly contradict individual interests and preferences (Blau, 1994).

A crucial structural characteristic is the community size. A large ethnic community offers more opportunities to meet co-ethnics. This has already been shown in many cases (e.g. Teule, Vanderwaeren, & Mbah-Fongkimeh, 2012; Kalmijn & Tubergen, 2006). Meeting a co-ethnic in the district in which one

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lives, is simply easier when the ethnic community is larger and thus includes a greater pool of possible candidates (Blau, 1994). Moreover, the size of the ethnic community is likely to strengthen the possibility of performing social control. The latter is, in the case of the Turkish group, interpreted by Van Kerckem et al. (2014) as a force of ethnic community pressure, the "pressure … to conform to those norms, values, and cultural practices that are deemed central to the ethnic group's identity". Therefore, local intra-ethnic marriages will probably be more prevalent within larger ethnic communities, while mixed marriages are less likely. We do not expect a clear pattern for partner migration, as large groups both stimulate partner migration (by stronger levels of social control) and inhibit it (because of the large local pool of intra-ethnic potential partners).

Community size is a crucial structural variable that is closely connected to the migration history of each group, as it is related to the size of the migration stream and the settlement pattern (spatial segregation). But there are more structural characteristics of the societal conditions experienced by migrant groups that may play a role. When *diversity levels*, defined as the extent to which different ethnicities live in a given district, are more pronounced, the likelihood of relations between groups within that district increases (Blau, 1994; Lievens, 1998; McPherson et al., 2001). Apart from its possible relationship with community size[14], a high level of diversity within a district may weaken group boundaries and promote inter-ethnic contacts as it creates a condition in which group boundaries can be expected to be less easily protected. Simply put, a 10% minority group will have more chance to have inter-ethnic contacts in case the other 90% belongs to different groups rather than to one group. For this reason, we expect that diversity promotes mixed marriages and impedes intra-ethnic marriages.

Another factor is the *district size*. Large districts, or cities, are appealing to migrants for several reasons, such as employment and anonymity, and are

therefore often characterized by diversity (Amin & Thrift, 2002; Hoekstra, 2015). Especially in Europe, ghettoization is quasi non-existent (Wacquant, 2008). In cities, migrants are never completely isolated as there is always a certain degree of diversity. Even in the poorer parts of the inner city, there is often a mix of migrants, older residents, and younger household (Buzar et al., 2007). Apart from the community size and the level of diversity within the district, inter-ethnic contacts may be stimulated by the size of the district as larger districts provide more anonymity. Minorities spreaded over a larger district will have less ability to perform social control over their members (cfr Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Simply put, a minority group will probably be more successful in establishing interethnic relationships in large, urbanized districts as group boundaries are typically less easy to maintain in these conditions. Hence we expect that within larger districts, mixed marriages are more prevalent.

A final structural factor is the *sex ratio.* The chance to marry a co-ethnic is related to the number of different-sex co-ethnics within a local community. When there is a shortage of different-sex partners, partner choices have to be adapted (Blau, 1994; McPherson et al., 2001). One has the choice of opting for a partner living in a different district (but contacts with co-ethnics living in different districts might not be easily established), a partner from the country of origin (partner migration), or search a partner with a different ethnicity (mixed marriage). When the number of women versus men is balanced within the local ethnic community, the likelihood of finding a local co-ethnic partner is elevated (González-Ferrer, 2006; Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006).

The importance of structural characteristics at the district level for the groups studied in this paper will be analysed in section 11.3.4.

11.3 Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian and Congolese migrants in Belgium

In the next section, we discuss the specific situation of the Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese migrants in Belgium. First, we give some background information on these groups. After that, specific characteristics of these groups and potential consequences for partner-selection patterns will be discussed. We discuss (1) the migration history and transnational connections, (2) the significance of cultural characteristics (language and religion) and skin colour for social boundaries, and (3) structural factors (community size, diversity level, district size, and sex ratio). To conclude the theoretical framework, we consider individual characteristics (sex, generation, and age) that might influence the partner choice.

11.3.1 Background

The first large inflow of Turkish, Moroccan, and, to a lesser extent, Algerian labour migrants is situated in the 1960s (Lievens, 2000; Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997; Reniers, 1999).[15] This was formalized through bilateral agreements between the Belgian government and the governments of the respective countries (for Morocco and Turkey: in 1964, for Algeria: in 1969) to cope with the shortage of workers in Western European economies (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999). After the formal migration stop in 1974, migration numbers kept on rising, due to family reunification (predominantly in the 1970s) and family formation (started in the 1980s, also known as the wave of partner migration). From then on, the guest worker flow was gradually transformed into a permanent settlement. In 1996, after three decades of migration there were about 140.000 Moroccans and 82.000 Turks present in Belgium (Eggerickx et al., 1999). Until today, family formation is still on-going,

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and constitutes the most important route for residents of non-European origin to enter Western European countries, and more specifically Belgium after immigration policies became even stricter (Caestecker, 2011; Carol et al., 2014; Demo & CGKR, 2013). In 2006, there were about 250.000 Moroccans and 140.000 Turks present in Belgium (by nationality at birth, Schoonvaere 2010).

The Algerian group was much smaller: about 20.000 in 2006 (by nationality at birth, Schoonvaere 2010). The characteristics of those groups differ as well. Because of the strong colonial link between France and Algeria, the latter has been greatly influenced by France politically, economically, culturally, and linguistically (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). This resulted in a large influx of labour migrants, especially in the 1960s (Stora, 1991; Tribalat, 1995). Mixed marriages between Algerian and French residents were more frequent as the social distance between these two groups was, to a certain extent, reduced. Furthermore, Algerian migrants came in contact with European values and the structure and operation of the political systems which also led some migration streams to Belgium.

Congolese migration can be explained by the colonial link between Congo and Belgium. The history of the Congolese colonization began in 1884, when Congo was allocated to Belgium (van Heelsum & Hessels, 2006). Until 1908 it was a sovereign state, a private colony of King Leopold II of Belgium (Viaene, Van Reybrouck, & Ceuppens, 2009). After the Congolese independence in 1960, Congolese migrants began arriving in Belgium when the circumstances in Congo deteriorated (Swyngedouw & Swyngedouw, 2009; Viaene et al., 2009). Congolese migrants entered as students, business men, tourists, and diplomats (Schoonvaere, 2010). During the 1970s and 1980s, Congolese migration streams continued and in 1991 there were about 12.000 Congolese inhabitants in Belgium (Eggerickx et al., 1999). Worsening economic conditions due to political and socio-economic crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),

stimulated migration to more prosperous Western European countries (Losango-Nzinga, 2008; Sumata, 2007). This migration was particularly aimed at Belgium because of the colonial past (Sumata, 2007; Zeleza, 2002). This way, the asylum channel brought the rather delayed arrival of Congolese migrants to Belgium (Caestecker, 2011). As a result, there were about 40.000 Congolese inhabitants in 2006 (nationality at birth, Schoonvaere 2010).

11.3.2 Migration history and partner migration

The Turkish community in Belgium is characterized by strong network ties between the sending and receiving Turkish communities (Lievens, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These ties are inherently connected to the migration history. The greater part of labour migrants who settled in Belgium in the 1960s were already married before migrating (Schoonvaere, 2013). It was only after the migration stop in 1974 that Turkish migration lost its temporary character and changed into a permanent settlement. The remaining families were 'stimulated' to join their partners in Belgium as commuting between Belgium and Turkey was severely limited or even impossible. Furthermore, labour migrants were predominantly recruited in the more rural areas in Turkey (Lievens, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Because these rural areas are characterized by stronger community ties, this enabled a close connection between the communities in Belgium and Turkey (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These communities were, to a certain extent, re-established in the country of destination. Reniers (1999) uses the concept of 'transplanted' communities in this respect.

Network ties between the sending and receiving Moroccan communities are considered to be somewhat weaker compared to the Turkish ones (Lievens, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Partly, Moroccan migration was inspired by

'socio-cultural' motives as well, as Moroccan migrants were pulled by prospects of a better way of life in Western Europe, rather than merely being pushed away from their country of origin (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Therefore, migration was in some cases an individual project (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999). Since these migrants were less inclined to return to Morocco, their migration was more permanent in character. Furthermore, migrants were recruited from bigger cities and capitals of provinces, and originated, therefore, from more fragmented and heterogeneous communities. This heterogeneity concerns the marital status, educational level, religious-political orientation, and socioeconomic status (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Lesthaeghe, Surkyn, & Van Craenem, 2000; Reniers, 1999; Surkyn, 2000). All this may explain the somewhat frailer network ties between communities in Belgium and Morocco (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Yet, it should be stressed that Moroccan migration was stimulated and organized by the governments as well, via bilateral agreements (supra).

Algerian migrants came to Belgium in the context of labour agreements like Moroccan and Turkish migrants. However, Algerian migration was less of a family matter which resulted in the absence of strong networks between Belgium and Algeria (De Bock, 2012). Furthermore, Algerians entered Belgium in much smaller numbers, resulting in smaller communities. While larger communities can slow down partner migration by offering a large pool of local intra-ethnic potential partners, some size was probably needed to set up and maintain strong connections with the country of origin.

Since Congolese migrants entered Belgium in smaller amounts as well, and were typified by a greater variety – they were mostly asylum seekers, students, business men, tourists, or diplomats – these migration streams were also characterized by weaker ties with the country of origin (Caestecker, 2011; Schoonvaere, 2010).

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From this, we derive our first hypothesis: *we expect partner migration to occur most often within the Turkish group, followed by the Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese groups* (hypothesis 1). We expect such a pattern because of differences in the strength of the ties with the country of origin, and therefore expect it to be still observable after controlling for relevant structural (and individual) characteristics.

11.3.3 Boundaries and mixed marriages

Research indicates that religion is a more salient factor in Europe for partner choice than colour or racial differences (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). That particularly Muslim migrants, such as those from Turkish, Moroccan and Algerian origin seem to experience a negative image in Belgium is in line with this claim (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013). This is likely to limit the willingness to establish mixed marriages from both the side of Belgian natives and of migrants. From this, we can expect that Congolese migrants are more likely to be involved in mixed marriages as they predominantly adhere to a Christian religion.

The cultural distance is most likely the largest for the Turkish migrants, as Turkey was less strongly influenced by the dominant political systems and values in Europe due to the absence of a colonial past, leaving the dominance of Islam and the endogamous family system fairly intact (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). Algerians and Moroccans (Reniers, 1999) are more likely to experience less distance to European societies, although it needs to be stressed that particularly the large Moroccan group included many rural, lowly educated guest workers as well whose situation was very similar to the Turkish immigrant group.

Another cultural factor might be the possible barrier separating the ethnic minority from the majority, is the language proficiency. Dutch, French and German are the official languages in Belgium and are the mother tongues of respectively 56, 38, and 0,4% of the Belgian population in 2005 (Eurobarometer, 2006). The language barrier is probably the weakest for the Congolese group, as French is the official language in the Democratic Republic of Congo (CIA World Factbook, 2015). The Algerian and Moroccan groups occupy an intermediate position. French is the lingua franca in Algeria i.e. the common language for people speaking different languages. French is often the language of business, government, and diplomacy in Morocco and serves as the second language (Lesthaeghe, 2000). Unlike the three other nationalities, Turkish immigrants typically do not have any knowledge of any of the three official Belgian languages. We hypothesise that *these cultural factors make mixed marriages more probable for Congolese migrants and less likely for Turkish migrants, while the Algerian and Moroccan group take up an intermediate position* (hypothesis 2a).

Our next hypothesis elaborates on the language argument. If knowledge of the French language weakens boundaries, we should observe an *elevated likelihood of mixed marriages within the French-speaking communities (Brussels and Wallonia) for the French-speaking migrant groups (Congolese, Moroccan, and Algerian groups)* (hypothesis 2b).

Besides cultural factors, we take a more visible factor into account as well: the skin colour. The Congolese group is more dark-skinned compared to the Turkish, Moroccan, and Algerian groups. Therefore, we expect *Congolese migrants to establish fewer mixed marriages compared to Turkish, Moroccan, and Algerian migrants* (hypothesis 3).

11.3.4 Structural characteristics influencing the partner choice

The most crucial difference between the four groups is related to the community size (see Table 11.1a and 11.1.b). The highest average community size is observed for Moroccans, followed by the Turks. The average community size is much lower for the Congolese, and particularly for the Algerian group. Hence we expect that *local intra-ethnic marriages will be stimulated for the Moroccans and, to a lesser extent for the Turks, while for the Congolese and particularly the Algerians, local intra-ethnic marriages will be relatively less prevalent* (hypothesis 4).

Differences in the diversity level and district size are much smaller. The sex ratio is for these four large groups in very few districts 'very unbalanced'. There are some differences regarding the 'unbalanced category', which is higher for the Turks and the Algerians. As the differences between the groups are relatively small, we do not expect many consequences for their partner-selection patterns. Therefore, these variables are included in the analyses as control variables.

11.3.5 Individual characteristics influencing the partner choice

Finally we turn to individual characteristics, which are included as control variables.

Sex

According to Lievens (1999), Turkish and Moroccan men have a somewhat higher likelihood to marry a partner from the country of origin. Yet, both sexes have motivations to choose partner migration, although the rationale behind it

may well be very different. Men might prefer a less emancipated partner from their country of origin compared to women in Belgium (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Lievens, 1999; Reniers & Lievens, 1997). Women on the other hand, might choose a man from their country of origin because of the freedom and autonomy it offers (Hooghiemstra, 2003). After all, women living in Belgium know the language, the customs, and traditions by definition better than their husbands from the country of origin. This might result in a superior position of women (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007).

Overall, studies indicate that men are more likely to establish mixed marriages compared to women (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; van Tubergen & Maas, 2006). One possible explanation refers to the patriarchal traditions, in which women are more constrained in choosing their preferred partner (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). Third parties could be, for example, resilient to Muslim women marrying non-Muslim men since their children take the religion of the father, and are therefore considered as being lost for the family and the Islam (Kulzycki & Lobo, 2002; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009).

Generation

We distinguish different generations on the basis of the length of stay in Belgium. The first generation migrated above the age of 16, and consists predominantly of the early labour migrants, students, people who migrated because of humanitarian reasons, and asylum seekers (Myria, 2015). Migrated partners are not included since we only consider first marriages. The 1.5 generation migrated between 6 and 15 years old, and the second generation migrated before the age of 6, or was born in Belgium.

The socialization and assimilation theories state that a longer socialization period in the country of destination is related to a more engrained integration (Alba & Nee, 1997; Lievens, 1997). Since the second generation has been in Belgium for a longer time compared to the first and 1.5 generation and therefore grew up, went to school and acquired the language in Belgium, this could impact the partner choice as well as the possibilities and opportunities of finding an eligible partner (Carol et al., 2014; González-Ferrer, 2006). Furthermore, we can assume that the ties with the country of origin are growing weaker with the next generations (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). We therefore expect that the 1.5 and first generation have a higher likelihood of choosing partner migration compared to the second generation, and a lower likelihood of choosing a mixed marriage.

Age

The parental influence on the partner choice can be related to the age at marriage. Parental influence weakens as children grow older and become more independent (Lievens, 1997; van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014). Generally, parents desire a partner for their child with the same ethnic origin, preferably form the country of origin (Lievens, 1997). Other studies in various countries have reported a higher likelihood of mixed marriages and therefore a lower likelihood of partner migration at a higher age at marriage (Kalter & Schroedter, 2010; Kulzycki & Lobo, 2002). From this, we expect that partner migration is more likely when marrying at a younger age, while mixed marriages are more prevalent at a higher age.

11.4 Data

Our data comprise an extraction of the Belgian national register, and include all partnerships among first, 1.5, and second generation migrants from third countries, this is a country outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland. The data cover the period between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2008. Two conditions had to be met: (1) at least one partner is a resident in Belgium before the partnership, (2) with a nationality at birth from a third country. We only selected migrants of Turkish, Moroccan, Congolese, and Algerian origin, since they belong to the more established migrant groups in Belgium (N=52,142). We excluded remarriages and cohabitations, focusing on first marriages only.

We identify three limitations in this paper. Broadly, these limitations arise from problems with the data. The first problem is related to the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities in Belgium from the early nineties onwards. Therefore, the second generation could be underrepresented in our dataset. When one parent has the Belgian nationality, children (incl. minorities) born in Belgium, automatically receive the Belgian nationality at birth. In that case they are omitted from the second generation group, although they are technically a part of it. However, we expect that this is not a substantial problem, as the large-scale naturalization programs occurred in the early '90s. Because one has to be at least 18 to get married, we only lose a small amount of this group. A second limitation is the lack of socio-economic information, such as educational attainment, available at the individual level. One last limitation related to the nature of the dataset, is the focus on nationality at birth to discern a migrant group. Ethnic differences within migrant groups are therefore ignored.

11.5 Variables

11.5.1 Dependent variable

Our descriptive analyses can be found in Table 11.1a and Table 11.b.

Partner choice is a three-categorical variable (1 = Partner migration, 2 = Local intra-ethnic marriage, 3 = Mixed marriage). Partner migration and local intra-ethnic marriages are both marriages between people with the same nationality at birth. Mixed marriages include all marriages with someone of a different nationality. This is not limited to partners with a Belgian nationality. The category 'Local intra-ethnic marriage' serves as the reference category.

Table 11.1a. Descriptive analyses for the Turkish and Moroccan groups

	Turkish			Moroccan		
	Range	N (%) / Mean (Std. Dev.)		Range	N (%) / Mean (Std. Dev.)	
Partner Choice						
Partner migration	0/1	8251	(52.3%)	0/1	13067	(43.5%)
Local intra-ethnic	0/1	5728	(36.3%)	0/1	11567	(38.5%)
Mixed	0/1	1802	(11.4%)	0/1	5412	(18.0%)
Individual						
Sex						
Men	0/1	7875	(49.9%)	0/1	16214	(54.0%)
Women	0/1	7903	(50.1%)	0/1	13832	(46.0%)
Generation						
First	0/1	1671	(10.6%)	0/1	6299	(21.0%)
1.5	0/1	1513	(9.6%)	0/1	2080	(6.9%)
Second	0/1	12597	(79.8%)	0/1	21667	(72.1%)
Age						
Younger	0/1	5538	(35.1%)	0/1	8379	(27.9%)
Intermediate	0/1	6783	(43.0%)	0/1	15275	(50.8%)
Older	0/1	3460	(21.9%)	0/1	6392	(21.3%)
Marriage year	1-8	4.46	(2.29)	1-8	4.58	(2.26)
Contextual						
Diversity level	0.55-0.99	0.82	(0.08)	0.55-0.99	0.73	(0.08)
District size	41103-1048491	583577	(220420.34)	41103-1048491	793824	(220420.34)
Sex ratio						
Very unbalanced	0/1	840	(5.3%)	0/1	1661	(5.5%)
Unbalanced	0/1	6581	(41.7%)	0/1	7813	(26.0%)
Balanced	0/1	8360	(53.0%)	0/1	20572	(68,5%)
Community size	0-16415	1019.33	(2244.86)	0-54991	1992.03	(6861.45)
Region						
Flanders	0/1	8155	(51.7%)	0/1	8604	(28.6%)
Wallonia	0/1	3574	(22.6%)	0/1	5005	(16.7%)
Brussels	0/1	4052	(25.7%)	0/1	16437	(54.7%)

Source: Belgian national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calculations.

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Table 11.1b. Descriptive analyses for the Congolese and Algerian groups

	Congolese		Algerian	
	Range	N (%) / Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range	N (%) / Mean (Std. Dev.)
Partner Choice				
Partner migration	0/1	782 (20.9%)	0/1	961 (37.5%)
Local intra-ethnic	0/1	1687 (45.0%)	0/1	312 (12.2%)
Mixed	0/1	1281 (34.2%)	0/1	1292 (50.4%)
Individual				
Sex				
Men	0/1	1833 (48.9%)	0/1	1641 (64.0%)
Women	0/1	1917 (51.1%)	0/1	924 (36.0%)
Generation				
First	0/1	2588 (69.0%)	0/1	1204 (46.9%)
1.5	0/1	596 (15.9%)	0/1	132 (5.1%)
Second	0/1	566 (15.1%)	0/1	1229 (47.9%)
Age				
Younger	0/1	1011 (27.0%)	0/1	684 (26.7%)
Intermediate	0/1	1909 (50.9%)	0/1	1326 (51.7%)
Older	0/1	830 (22.1%)	0/1	555 (21.6%)
Marriage year	1-8	4.92 (2.33)	1-8	4.49 (2.18)
Contextual				
Diversity level	0.55-0.99	0.72 (0.08)	0.55-0.99	0.78 (0.08)
District size	41103-1048491	738035 (220420.34)	41103-1048491	554065 (220420.34)
Sex ratio				
Very unbalanced	0/1	279 (7.4%)	0/1	195 (7.6%)
Unbalanced	0/1	743 (19.8%)	0/1	1350 (52.6%)
Balanced	0/1	2728 (72.7%)	0/1	1020 (39.8%)
Community size	0-8260	352.18 (1199.15)	3-2338	177.77 (434.24)
Region				
Flanders	0/1	388 (10.3%)	0/1	392 (15.3%)
Wallonia	0/1	1173 (31.3%)	0/1	1422 (55.4%)
Brussels	0/1	2189 (58.4%)	0/1	751 (29.3%)

Source: Belgian national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calculations.

11.5.2 Individual level variables

Nationality is a four-categorical variable (1 = Morocco, 2 = Congo, 3 = Turkey, 4 = Algeria) with Moroccan migrants as the reference category. This variable was based on the nationality at birth.

Sex is a dichotomous variable with 'men' as the reference category.

Generation is a three-categorical variable (1 = First generation, 2 = 1.5 Generation, 3 = Second generation) based on the country of birth and the age of migration (see section 10.4.2). The second generation serves as the reference category.

The *age at marriage* is a three-categorical variable (1 = Young age, 2 = Intermediate age, 3 = Older age). This categorization is dependent on the subpopulation. A distinction was made on the basis of the nationality at birth and sex. The cut-off points for each category were based on the quartiles (respectively <0.25, between 0.25 and 0.75 and >0.75). The corresponding ages are depicted in Table 10.2. Marrying at an intermediate age, is the reference category.

Marriage year is a metric variable, based on the year of marriage. Since our dataset is a selection within the Belgian national register, we have information on all marriages from 2001 until 2008. With this variable, we control for changes in partner preferences through time.

Table 11.2. Categories 'Age-at-marriage'

	Moroccans		Turks		Congolese		Algerians	
	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
Young age	<24	<20	<22	<20	<29	<25	<27	<22
Intermediate age	24-31	20-26	22-27	20-24	29-38	25-33	27-35	22-30
Older age	>31	>26	>27	>24	>38	>33	>35	>30

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

11.5.3 District level variables

Community size measures the size of the migrant community in a district.

The *degree of diversity* is calculated using the Herfindahl index (Rhoades, 1993). When applied to diversity, this index measures the sum of quadrats of the percentages of all nationalities residing in every district. A higher value reflects a more homogeneous ethnic composition in a district. In practice, a high index mostly indicates a district that largely consists of ethnic Belgians.

District size measures the total number of inhabitants within a district. Because larger districts often have a higher degree of diversity as well as a larger ethnic community, this variable controls for these effects.

The *sex ratio* is a three-categorical variable (1= Very unbalanced, 2 = Unbalanced, 3 = Balanced). It is based on the number of women divided by the number of men, multiplied by 100. A balanced sex ratio indicates that the ratio women to men, or men to women, ranges from 90-111 to 100. When the ratio is unbalanced there are between 75 and 90 men to 100 women or vice versa. In an

unbalanced situation the number is lower than 75. The balanced sex ratio is the reference category.

The *region* variable divides migrants into those living in the region of Flanders, of Wallonia, and in Brussels. Those residing in Flanders serve as the reference category.

All the contextual variables, with the exception of the region and sex ratio variables, were transformed with their natural logarithm to account for skewness, and were calculated on January 1st of the year the marriage took place.

11.6 Method

We explain the differences between the migrant groups based on descriptive as well as multinomial logistic multilevel analyses. Within the multinomial analyses, marriage migration as well as mixed marriages will be separately compared to local marriages with co-ethnics. We assess whether the differences between the migrant groups found in Model 1 are altered when controlling for contextual and individual factors (Model 2), and dig deeper into the language argument by testing an interaction effect between nationality and region (Model 3).

The inclusion of contextual characteristics requires a multinomial logistic multilevel design to properly include contextual effects, such as the sex ratio, diversity level, group size, and size of the district. The two analytical levels are: the individual level (N=52,142), and the level of the district nested in marriage years (N=339). Preliminary analyses (not shown) reveal that the level of district corresponds more accurately to the marriage market when compared to the level

of the municipality. We therefore take the level of district as the higher level of analyses.[16]

The districts are nested within marriage years to ensure that the structural influences were prevailing at the beginning of the year one got married. However, we do not know when the partnership was established, only when the partners got married. Therefore, we do not have information on the structural influences that were at play when partners met each other.

11.7 Results

11.7.1 Descriptives

Overall distribution of partner choices

Figure 11.1 displays the distribution of partner choices for the four groups. There are profound differences between the groups in the way partner choices are distributed. We expected the highest rate of partner migration for Turkish migrants, followed by respectively Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese migrants (H1). This pattern is visible in Figure 11.1. Partner migration is dominant within the Turkish group. The percentages are still high but less pronounced within the Moroccan and the Algerian group. While previous research showed that within the group of traditional labour migrants there was a significantly higher number of men who choose a partner from their country of origin compared to women (Lievens, 1999), our results show that within these groups, the sex difference has faded, if not vanished. Within the Congolese group, the majority that chooses partner migration are men.

Figure 11.1. Distribution of partner choices (%) according to nationality and sex (%)
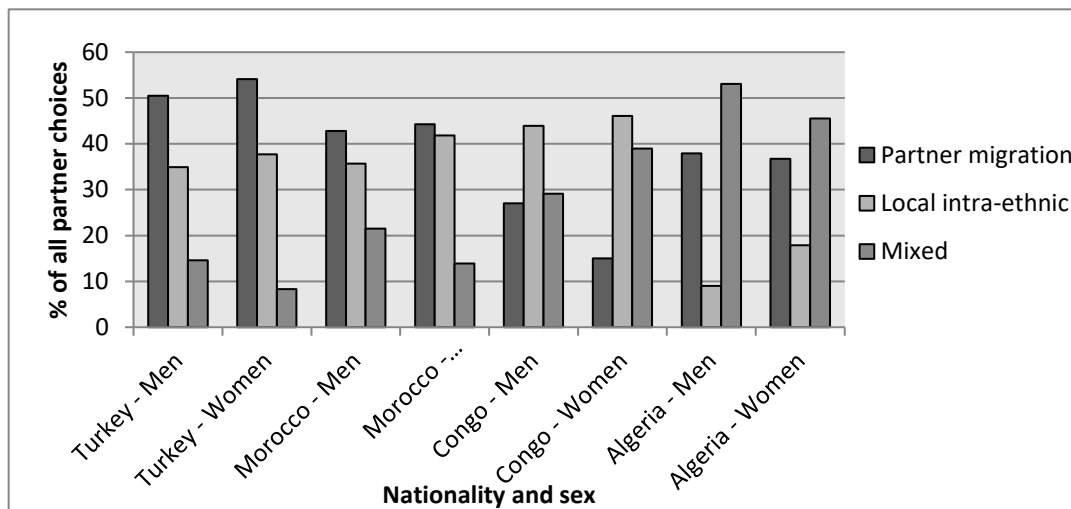
Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

Furthermore, we expected the Congolese group to establish more mixed marriages compared to the other groups (H2a), while our alternative hypothesis suggested the opposite (H3). Figure 11.1 shows that mixed marriages are indeed quite frequent for the Congolese group, although the Algerians show an even higher level of mixed marriages. We look at mixed marriages in some more detail by analysing the nationality at birth of the partner, presented in Table 11.3. About 21.5% of the Congolese who marry locally, marry a Belgian partner, while this percentage is much higher for the Algerians (46%). Mind that also Moroccans who marry locally, have a much lower chance (17%) to marry a Belgian, compared to the Congolese.

Table 11.3. Top 5 nationalities of local partners (intra-ethnic and mixed marriages)

Moroccans	Turks	Congolese	Algerians
Morocco (71.2%)	Turkey (80.4%)	Congo (62.6%)	Belgium (45.7%)
Belgium (17.2%)	Belgium (10.0%)	Belgium (21.5%)	Algeria (19.8%)
France (2.6%)	Morocco (2.1%)	Cameroon (2.0%)	Morocco (15.2%)
Italy (1.9%)	Italy (1.7%)	Angola (1.9%)	Italy (7.1%)
Algeria (1.2%)	France/Yugoslavia/ Netherlands (0.6%)	France (1.7%)	France (4.4%)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

Finally, the number of local intra-ethnic marriages is the lowest for the Algerian group, which is in line with their low community size.

Distribution according to region

Next, we compare the partner-selection patterns by region (Figures 11.2 to 11.5). For the Moroccan group, we notice an elevation of mixed marriages in Brussels and particularly in Wallonia. In Brussels, where most Moroccan migrants in our dataset reside, local marriages with co-ethnic are the most prevalent. Partner migration has the highest frequency in Flanders. The Turkish group displays the highest frequency of partner migration in Wallonia. Local-intra ethnic partner choices are most prevalent in the region where the number of Turkish residents is the highest, i.e. in Flanders. Mixed marriages are slightly elevated within Wallonia and Brussels but are still very low. For

the Congolese group, mixed marriages are lower within Brussels compared to Flanders and Wallonia. This could be explained by the larger Congolese community residing in Brussels, making local marriages with co-ethnics more plausible. The Algerian group has the highest frequency of mixed marriages altogether, but these are not higher within the French-speaking regions.

Figures 11.2 – 11.5. Distribution of partner choices for Moroccan, Turkish, Congolese, and Algerian migrants, according to region (%)
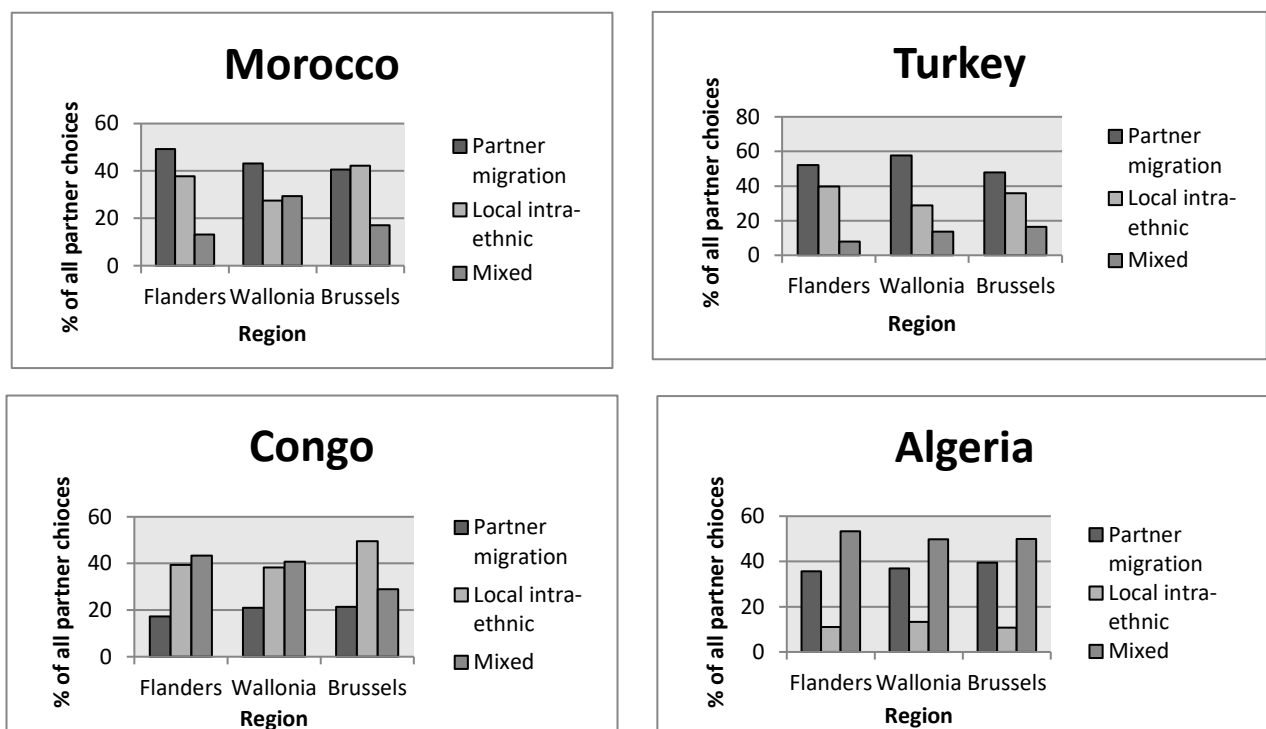
Source Figures 11.2-11.5: Belgian national register, own calculations.

11.7.2 Multilevel

Table 11.4 displays the logodds ratios of the multilevel analyses of partner choices for all migrants. Since the dependent variable is a three-categorical one, the analyses consist of (1) the choice of marriage migration compared to the choice of a local intra-ethnic partner, (2) the choice of a mixed marriage compared to a local intra-ethnic partner. The intercepts indicate an overall higher likelihood partner migration and a lower likelihood of mixed marriages compared to local-intra-ethnic marriages.

Table 11.4. Logodds ratios of multilevel analyses of partner choices of all migrants, reference: local intra-ethnic partner choice

	M1				M2				M3			
	1=Partner migration		1=Mixed		1=Partner migration		1=Mixed		1=Partner migration		1=Mixed	
	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error	Coef.	Std. Error
Intercept	0.328***	0.031	-0.346***	0.038	0.846	0.555	-2.911***	0.462	1.113	0.599	-2.864**	0.523
Individual												
Nationality (ref: Morocco)												
Congo	-0.879***	0.041	0.279***	0.037	-1.283***	0.053	-0.728***	0.050	-1.678***	0.150	-0.633***	0.127
Turkey	0.218***	0.022	-0.330***	0.028	0.071**	0.025	-0.690***	0.032	-0.020	0.036	-0.680***	0.053
Algeria	1.205***	0.044	2.259***	0.044	0.407***	0.058	0.642***	0.059	0.119	0.133	0.496***	0.132
Women (ref: Men)					-0.138***	0.019	-0.478***	0.024	-0.138***	0.019	-0.479***	0.024
Generation (ref: Second)												
First					0.181***	0.025	0.591***	0.028	0.181***	0.025	0.590***	0.028
1.5					0.504***	0.034	0.313***	0.044	0.501***	0.034	0.305***	0.044
Age (ref: Intermediate)												
Younger					0.500***	0.021	-0.056	0.029	0.504***	0.021	-0.054	0.029
Older					0.457***	0.024	0.704***	0.028	0.457***	0.024	0.704***	0.028
Marriage year					-0.089***	0.010	-0.057***	0.006	-0.088***	0.010	-0.057***	0.006
Contextual												

Diversity level					0.257	0.292	-0.597***	0.181	0.317	0.295	-0.528**	0.188
District size					0.065	0.050	0.483***	0.044	0.045	0.056	0.476***	0.052
Sex ratio (ref: balanced)												
Unbalanced					-0.064*	0.031	-0.046	0.031	-0.103**	0.033	-0.062	0.033
Very unbalanced					-0.042	0.052	-0.235***	0.054	-0.069	0.053	-0.239***	0.055
Community size					-0.153***	0.018	-0.518***	0.019	-0.142***	0.022	-0.509***	0.024
Region (ref: Flanders)												
Wallonia					0.199***	0.059	0.694***	0.040	0.131*	0.066	0.745***	0.051
Brussels					-0.004	0.120	0.578***	0.076	-0.089	0.121	0.551***	0.079
Interaction												
Congo												
Wallonia									0.318	0.163	-0.164	0.135
Brussels									0.547***	0.152	-0.058	0.125
Turkey												
Wallonia									0.169**	0.058	-0.217**	0.079
Brussels									0.119*	0.057	0.137	0.077
Algeria												
Wallonia									0.221	0.139	0.171	0.136
Brussels									0.620***	0.142	0.118	0.139
Variance												
Marriage year x district	0.136	0.018	0.136	0.018	0.081	0.012	0.081	0.012	0.080	0.012	0.080	0.012

Source: Belgian national register and DG SEI (n.d.), own calculations.

Individual and structural variables

Before we turn to the differences between the migrant groups, we first examine the structural and individual control variables (Model 2, Table 11.4). Partner migration is related to the community size. The larger the community size, the lower the chance to marry transnationally. This suggests the effect of a large pool of potential local marriage partners. Diversity and district size are not related to partner migration. More significant effects are present for mixed marriages. Living in larger ethnic communities makes mixed marriages less likely, which is possibly also the effect of the large presence of local co-ethnic partners. Living in a diverse and larger district indeed promotes mixed marriages. This supports the idea that in these conditions, group boundaries are less easily maintained.[17]

Looking at the individual variables, we observe that men are more likely to choose partner migration and mixed marriages compared to women. The results also show that both partner migration and mixed marriages are more prevalent among the first and 1.5 generation. For partner migration, this was expected, however the results on mixed marriages are surprising. This could suggest that second generation migrants strongly prefer local intra-ethnic marriages over mixed marriages and partner migration compared to the first and 1.5 generation. It might also indicate a firm detachment of the first and 1.5 generation from the local ethnic communities in Belgium. Additional analyses (not shown) reveal that on average, migrants from the first generation marry five years after arrival in Belgium, which is hardly enough time to connect to the local ethnic community. Furthermore, this first generation does not consist of the more traditional family reuniters, but comprises students, asylum seekers, and people who migrated because of humanitarian reasons (Caestecker & Rea, 2009; Myria, 2015).

Finally, the results indicate that people who marry at a younger age, are more likely to choose partner migration, as we expected. However, migrants marrying at a higher age are more likely to marry a partner from their country of origin as well. Moreover, they prefer mixed marriages above local intra-ethnic ones.

Partner migration

The results in Model 1 reveal that the Turks and the Algerians have higher partner migration levels compared to the Moroccans. The high odds ratio for Algerians is related to the decision to use the local intra-ethnic partner choice as the reference category, as this is a category with a very low prevalence amongst Algerians (see Figure 11.1). When local and mixed marriages are used as reference categories, the likelihood of partner migration is significantly lower for the Algerians (results not shown). Furthermore, the Congolese migrants show a significantly lower level than the Moroccans.

Adding the contextual and individual variables in Model 2 changes the results somewhat. First, we see that the difference between Turkish and Moroccan migrants concerning the prevalence of partner migration vs. local marriages has been reduced. More specifically, this happens after we control for community size. For Algerians, the difference with Moroccan migrants in the prevalence of partner migration vs. local marriages declines strongly. Again, the inclusion of community size is the main culprit of these changes. The relatively low community size of both Turkish and Algerian migrants (vis-à-vis the Moroccans) stimulates partner migration. After controlling for this (and the other control variables) Turkish migrants still show a higher level of partner migration, which sindicates stronger transnational links, while Algerian migrants show (much) lower levels of partner migration[18], showing their weaker transnational links compared to Moroccan migrants. The difference between Congolese and

Moroccan migrants in the prevalence of partner migration versus a local intra-ethnic marriage has been enlarged as well. These results confirm hypothesis 1.

Mixed marriages

The descriptive results showed the highest percentages of mixed marriages for Algerians, followed by the Congolese, the Moroccans and the Turks (see also Model 1). Model 2 changes this picture. The difference between Algerian migrants and Moroccan migrants in the prevalence of mixed versus local marriages declines drastically after the inclusion of control variables, particularly community size. This shows that, in accordance with hypothesis 4, their small community size pushed Algerians to enter into a mixed marriage as well, besides pushing them to transnational marriages. But even after the inclusion of control variables, Algerians have a higher likelihood of entering in a mixed marriage compared to a local intra-ethnic marriage, compared to Moroccans. We observe that the difference between the Turkish and the Moroccan group becomes larger after controlling for individual and structural variables. Again, this happens after we control for the community size, which is in line with hypothesis 4. Moroccans are less likely to have a mixed marriage because of their large local ethnic marriage market. Finally, mixed marriages were more prevalent among Congolese migrants compared to Moroccan ones in the descriptive analysis. However, we observe the opposite in Model 2. Inclusion of the control variables (again mainly community size) shows that the likelihood to enter into a mixed marriage is lower for the Congolese.

For mixed marriages, we conclude that Algerians have the highest likelihood of entering into a mixed marriage than into a local intra-ethnic marriage, while Turkish and particularly Congolese migrants have the lowest likelihood. The Moroccans take up an intermediate position. This suggest the importance of

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language and pre-migration affinity to the European culture. But the results are not completely in line with the idea that culture plays a dominant role in shaping partner-selection preferences, as the French-speaking and Christian Congolese have the lowest levels of mixed marriages after controlling for contextual and individual variables. The results for the Congolese group are more in line with hypothesis 3 that stressed the importance of skin colour, although the low level of mixed marriages for the Turkish group stresses that skin colour is not the only important boundary marker.

Next, we dig deeper into the language argument (H2b: we expect an elevated likelihood of mixed marriages within the French-speaking communities for the French-speaking migrant groups). Our preliminary descriptive analyses only confirmed this hypothesis for the Moroccan group. The multilevel analyses (Model 3) show that for all groups, the likelihood of mixed marriages versus local intra-ethnic marriages is higher in Wallonia and Brussels compared to Flanders. While structural characteristics, such as the low community size for Algerian and Congolese migrants in Flanders, promoted a higher level of mixed marriages (Figure 11.2), controlling for these characteristics alters the pattern quite dramatically. From Model 3, it is clear that Algerian and Congolese migrants have a lower chance to enter into a mixed marriage in Flanders as well. However, given the fact that mixed marriages are more prevalent for the non-French-speaking Turks in the French-speaking areas of Brussels and Wallonia as well, hypothesis 3 cannot be confirmed. Intermarriage is more likely in Brussels and Wallonia in general, not only for French-speaking migrants groups.

11.8 Conclusion and discussion

This paper aims to shed light on the partner choices of Moroccan, Turkish, Congolese, and Algerian migrants in Belgium. Three partner choices are distinguished: marrying a partner from the country of origin (partner migration), marrying a local co-ethnic partner, and establishing a mixed marriage. We focused on the role of migration history and transnational links, culture (religion, language), skin colour, and structural characteristics of the district migrants live in (mainly community size) to further deepen our insight in the partner choices. We applied multinomial logistic multilevel analyses on an extraction of the Belgian national register including 52,142 first marriages of first, 1.5, and second generation migrants of Moroccan, Turkish, Congolese, and Algerian origin.

The Turkish group is characterised, from the very start of their migration stream, by strong bonds with the country of origin. It is a large group with quite large communities in Belgium. Immigrating Turks are typically not familiar with French or Dutch. The cultural distance with Belgium is large from the onset, being a Muslim country without a colonial past. Consequently, even decades after the start of the migration streams, this group has very high levels of partner migration and very low levels of mixed marriages.

The Moroccan group resembles the Turkish group to a large extent. The large Moroccan group has strong links with the country of origin as well, but there is much more variety: their migration can be typified as less family-driven and more strongly motivated by socio-cultural motives. There is a closer connection with the European culture, which is partly due to the use of French in Morocco. Their partner-selection pattern is less outspoken as well: there is less partner migration and there are more mixed marriages, although particularly the latter is inhibited by the large communities in which Belgian Moroccans typically live.

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The Algerian group demonstrates the importance of structural characteristics. It is a small group, with small community sizes. This strongly puts a brake on local intra-ethnic marriages. Instead, the Algerians turn to mixed marriages. That they show high levels intermarriage after controlling for structural characteristics does however signify that this group is also culturally quite close to (some) Belgian inhabitants. Their French colonial past and their knowledge of French are potential explanations for this pattern. In any case, the results for the Algerian group show that high levels of intermarriage for migrants from a Muslim country can be observed as well.

Because of the strong historical colonial ties between Belgium and Congo (Schoonvaere, 2010), Congolese migration was directed at Belgium (Sumata, 2007; Zeleza, 2002). These migration streams have been crystallized around study migration (Caestecker & Rea, 2009) which is a more voluntary and individual project. The Congolese group has weaker connections to the country of origin, especially in comparison with the Turkish group. Hence, partner migration is less popular. Even though the Congolese group is characterised by relatively small community sizes, local ethnic marriages are the most popular partner choice. Mixed marriages are quite prevalent as well. However, controlling for contextual and individual marriages alters this pictures and shows that mixed marriages are in fact not very popular. This is in line with the hypothesis that stresses the importance of skin colour. In this respect, the difference with the observations made by Kalmijn & Tubergen (2006) for the Surinamese and the Antillean group in the Netherlands, is noticeable. Their conclusion is that in the Netherlands, culture (i.e. religion and language) seems to be more important compared to race and colour. However, before rushing to conclusions, it is important to state that, of course, other factors may be at play. It is not unlikely that the cultural distance between the Congolese and the Belgians is much larger than the cultural distance between the Surinamese and

Antillean groups, and the Dutch. For example, the Dutch presence in these countries goes back to the 17th century, while the Belgian presence in Congo only goes back to the 19th century.

The main conclusion from this paper is that the partner-selection patterns in early 21st century Belgian society still bears the traces of the starting conditions that migrant groups experienced when they first entered the country. While this continuity is important to understand the situation that citizens with a migrant origin have to deal with today, it does not make change impossible. In fact, for the Turkish and Moroccan group, research recently showed quite a strong decline in transnational marriages and a modest increase in mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al. 2013). These are indications that after 50 years of migration, a transition towards full inclusion in Belgian society is not beyond reach. The conditions analysed in this paper, which are the strength of transnational networks, the cultural boundaries and the ethnic community size, may help to understand why this inclusion takes a long period of time.

Chapter 12. Divorce within Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium

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Abstract

This paper focuses on divorce patterns amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, with a specific focus on the effect of partner-choice patterns. Divorce patterns of marriages established between 2001 and either 2003 (descriptive part), or 2005 (event history analyses) are analyzed and compared to marriages established between 1988 and 1990. We distinguish three marriage types: transnational marriages (i.e. marrying a partner from Morocco or Turkey), local intra-ethnic marriages (marrying another Moroccan of Turkish Belgian), and mixed marriages (i.e. marrying someone with a Belgian or other Western European citizenship). To research divorce rates, we analyzed population data from the Belgian national register, using piecewise constant log-rate event-history analyses with effect coding on all marriages established between 2001 and 2005 ($N_{Turkish}$ = 9,631, $N_{Moroccan}$ = 17,786). First, the results reveal that in the past 15 years, divorce rates have doubled within Turkish and Moroccan migrant groups. Second, divorce rates are much higher among the Moroccan group. Third, there are clear differences between marriage types. Local intra-ethnic marriages have the lowest divorce levels, mixed marriages the highest, and transnational marriages take up a middle position.

12.1 Introduction

The past decades Belgium has experienced a transition towards a mass divorce society which made divorce an inextricable part of contemporary society (González & Viitanen, 2009; Statistics Belgium, n.d.). Divorce rates started to rise in the seventies and kept on increasing until now (Eurostat, n.d.a). This divorce trend is part of the second demographic transition that started in the late sixties in many countries in Western and Northern Europe. This transition included interrelated changes, such as declining fertility rates and the weakening of the family as an institution, as evidenced by increased divorce and non-marital cohabitation rates and declining nuptiality rates (Corijn, 2012; Lesthaeghe & Van de Kaa, 1986). Moreover, this transition assumes ideational and cultural change (Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1986). Not only do economic factors condition individual life decisions, these decisions are steered by the emergence of self-fulfillment, personal freedom of choice, personal development and lifestyle, and emancipation as well (van de Kaa, 1996).

These different transitions might have different explanations, however. For example, the rise in divorce might be explained by the emergence of the dual provider model, and therefore the increasing labour force participation of women and their growing economic independence (Kalmijn & Poortman, 2006; Neels, 2006; Sandström, 2012). It seems that the increasing levels of female education and participation in the labour market put women in the socio-economically able position to divorce. Moreover, the increased importance of individualization eroded the importance of marriage (Cherlin, 1992; Sandström, 2012).

Causes of rising divorce rates have been found at the micro-level as well. Related to the growing emancipatory attitudes, problems in the realm of work and household labour have become increasingly important motives for a divorce (De

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Graaf & Kalmijn, 2006). For example, women often refer to the division of labour in the home and their former husbands' working too much as motives for a divorce (De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2006). Moreover, evidence was found for economic (independence) hypotheses, which argue that divorce chances are increased when women have paid work (Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Poortman, 2004; Poortman & Kalmijn, 2002), and cultural hypotheses, which state that the likelihood of divorce is increased if women adhere to emancipatory norms, irrespective of their own work situation (Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Poortman, 2004). However, some studies found only weak support for the economic hypotheses, stating that women's employment does not destabilize happy marriages but only increases the risk of disruption in unhappy marriages (Sayer & Bianchi, 2000; Schoen, Astone, Kim, Rothert, & Standish, 2002).

Although people often have good reasons for divorcing, the disadvantages are well documented (Amato, 2000). They include financial hardship, decreased standard of living, less wealth (Zagorsky, 2005), health problems (Joung et al., 1997), and mental health issues (Öngider, 2011). These negative consequences might be even more pertinent to the situation of migrants. Their situation might be exacerbated by their generally more strained socio-economic circumstances relative to non-migrants, as well as reputation damage and perhaps even social isolation after divorce (Corluy & Verbist, 2010; Welslau & Deven, 2003). Especially in the case of transnational marriages (i.e. Turkish or Moroccan Belgians marrying a partner from the country of origin), the migrating partner might be at greater risk of complete dependence (both economic and social) upon their partners during the marriage, given that their own families continue to live in the country of origin (Geets, 2006; Timmerman, 2006).

This paper provides insight into divorce amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians – the two largest migrant groups of Belgian residents originating from third countries (i.e. countries outside Europe) (Lievens, 1998, 1999; Reniers,

1999). They have been long established in Belgium, which enables us to study their marriage and divorce patterns over time. Turkish or Moroccan Belgians wishing a divorce should face no legal obstacles. When two partners got married in Turkey or Morocco, they can divorce in Belgium if one of the three following requirements is satisfied (Koelet et al., 2009a): (1) they both have to live in Belgium or (2) they both have to have the Belgian nationality. If neither conditions are satisfied, it is sufficient that (3) only one partner lives in Belgium in addition to one of the following conditions: the last habitual residence of the spouses was in Belgium, the spouses file for divorce together, the spouse who lives in Belgium, is the defendant, the spouse who lives in Belgium is the petitioner and he or she lives in Belgium for at least twelve months. The 'nationality of the marriage', i.e. the place where the marriage took place, is not important for the authority of a Belgian judge; the habitual residence is crucial. In practice, this means that everyone who lives in Belgium for at least twelve months (even if it is illegal) can petition for divorce. However, Turkish and Moroccan migrants still have the choice to divorce in their country of origin, irrespective of the place of marriage. In many cases, Moroccan and Turkish Belgians are advised to divorce in Belgium, to avoid legal problems (Koelet et al., 2009a).

Notwithstanding the weaker economic position, divorce is far from absent amongst Moroccan and Turkish Belgians. A study on divorce rates of marriages established between 1988 and 1991 of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians showed that divorce is prevalent amongst these groups as well and is related to the partner choice of the marriage (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). About 7% of all Turkish Belgians and 14% of all Moroccan Belgians was divorced by 31/12/1995 (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). For the general population, divorce rates were about 14% (Corijn, 2012).

It has become increasingly evident, however, that these transitions may vary depending on the context and different sections of the population (Neels, 2006; Sobotka, 2008; Sobotka, Zeman, Lesthaeghe, Frejka, & Neels, 2012). Related to marital behaviour, it has been shown that higher educated persons marry later and are the least likely to divorce (Aughinbaugh, Robles, & Sun, 2013; Isen & Stevenson, 2010). As a consequence, these transitions might happen differently amongst migrant groups given that, relative to non-migrants, people of migrant background are more likely to live in strained, or even impoverished socio-economic circumstances, and that the activity and employment rates of migrants tend to be lower than those of non-migrants (VDAB Studiedienst, 2012).

Evidence for this transition amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, however, can already be found in a fertility decline and higher levels of cohabitation (Coleman, 1994; Corijn, 2012; Lesthaeghe, 1997; Schoenmaeckers, Lodewijckx, & Gadeyne, 1999). Especially amongst Moroccan men of the second generation, higher levels of cohabitation as well as a stronger tendency to remain single are prevalent (Coleman, 1994; Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b; Hartung et al., 2011; Lesthaeghe, 1997; Schoenmaeckers, Lodewijckx, & Gadeyne, 1999). Hence, this group is in theory most prone to divorce, but in practice, they might not marry at all.

The past decade however, it is possible that divorce trends have changed. Within Moroccan and Turkish migrant communities, divorce levels might follow those present in the country of origin. Divorce rates in Turkey are low but are increasing since the late eighties and particularly in the 21st century (Eurostat, n.d.b; Kavas & Gündüz-Hoşgör, 2010). For example, the crude divorce rate in the mid-nineties in Turkey was only 0.5, while this increased to 1.6 in 2010.[19] In Morocco, divorce rates were not that low mostly because of the relative ease at which men could divorce their spouses before 2004 (Koelet et al., 2009a). After

the legislation changed in 2004, divorce rates in Morocco dropped. Furthermore, socialization and integration processes amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians (Alba & Nee, 1997) might make them more susceptible to transitions related to the second demographic transition, such as higher levels of individualization, informalization of marriage, and female emancipation in Belgium. Moreover, changed household economics in migrant household might change the divorce propensity (Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Poortman, 2004; Poortman & Kalmijn, 2002)

Divorce patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are related to their partner-choice patterns as well. In general, heterogamous marriages experience a lower stability compared to homogenous marriages (Eeckhaut et al, 2011; Kalmijn, de Graaf, & Janssen, 2005; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Milewski & Kulu, 2014). In many cases, these marriages lack social support and partners experience tension because of cultural differences (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). The lower divorce risks of mixed marriages established by Moroccan Belgians compared to Turkish Belgians, were explained by a stronger orientation toward the receiving country and a less pronounced transnationalism of the Moroccan group which led to stronger cultural differences with the country of origin, and lesser social support for transnational marriages. Cultural differences can be present in transnational marriages as well, which might result in higher divorce rates compared to local-intra ethnic marriages (Timmerman, Lodewijckx, & Wets, 2009; Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

Recent changes in the marriage pattern might impact divorce trends of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. Between 1988 and 1991 (and before that), transnational marriages were the dominant partner choice for both Moroccan and Turkish Belgians (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). Recent research shows that the dominance of transnational marriages is declining in favour of local intra-ethnic marriages and, to a lesser extent, mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017; Van

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Kerckem et al., 2013). This evolution may point to a more 'careful' approach to marriage partner selection, especially with regard to transnational marriages. Marriages might therefore be established better considered. Furthermore, examining the partner choices of recent marriage cohorts can deepen our insight in the usefulness of explanations regarding social support and cultural difference.

Despite the relevance of examining divorce patterns of migrants, and especially of marriage migrants, studies on divorce patterns have mainly focused on ethnic, religious or racial intermarriage versus intramarriage (see for example Andersson, Obućina, & Scott, 2015; Bratter & King, 2008; Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Janssen, 2005; Milewski & Kulu, 2014; Smith, Maas & van Tubergen, 2012; Zhang & Van Hook, 2009). While these studies widely documented that heterogamous marriages are more likely to end in divorce compared to homogeneous marriages, this focus neglects cultural differences present in transnational marriages, which are ethnic homogenous marriages as well (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). Overall, research on transnational divorce is very limited (Sportel, 2016). The few studies that focused on transnational divorce, were qualitative in nature and neglected other types of marriages (see Liversage, 2012, 2013). Additionally, while Schultz-Nielsen and Bonke (2016) acknowledged the importance of including transnational marriages within the homogamy-heterogamy dichotomy, they operationalized this by only differentiating between first- and second-generation couples. The only study that, to our knowledge, includes all partner-choice patterns, is the one performed by Eeckhaut et al. (2011). However, given the recent evolutions in partner-choice patterns (i.e. rise in mixed marriages and declining levels of transnational marriages (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al., 2013)), an inquiry in the evolutions in divorce is appropriate. While these trends might indicate a stronger orientation towards the receiving country, the higher levels

of divorce risks of mixed marriages previously documented by Eeckhaut et al. (2011), might affect the increasing number of mixed marriages.

In this paper, we examine the divorce patterns of male and female Turkish and Moroccan Belgians of the first, 1.5, and second generation by using population data. Our research has two dimensions. First, we describe divorce rates of marriages established between 2001 and 2003, and compare these to divorce rates of marriages established between 1988 and 1990 (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). The second dimension relates to our expectation that divorce rates are dependent upon the marriage type. Therefore, event-history analyses are applied to analyze the divorce rates of marriages established between 2001 and 2005 which were followed until 2011, to examine the difference in divorce risks of the different marriage types.

12.2 Turkish and Moroccan Belgians in a mass divorce society

There is some empirical support for the claim that divorce is on the rise. Corijn and Lodewijckx (2009b) show high divorce rates for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians married after 1994. In neighbouring countries, fairly high divorce rates are reported for recent marital cohorts as well, especially for mixed marriages (e.g. van Huis & Steenhof (2004) for the Netherlands, and Milewski & Kulu (2014) for Germany). There are several reasons to expect an increase in divorce rates in recent marriage cohorts in Belgium as well. First, divorce trends in the country of origin are discussed. Second, we describe divorce trends in Belgium. Finally, and related to divorce trends in Belgium, integration and socialization effects will be discussed.

First, Dutch studies show that the divorce propensity in the wife's origin country relates to the divorce risk of a couple (Smith, Maas, & van Tubergen, 2012). In

Turkey divorce rates are rather low, but on the rise– characterized by a rise of the crude divorce rate from 0.5 in the mid-nineties to 1.6 in 2010 (Eurostat, n.d.b).[20] For Morocco, divorce rates are hard to find but the numbers that are available point to much higher divorce rates in Morocco compared to Turkey (Koelet et al., 2009a). Particularly for men it was quite easy to separate unilaterally from their wives. Because of these factors, it is plausible that an increase in divorce might be stimulated by the rather high (Morocco) or increasing (Turkey) divorce rate in the countries of origin.

Second, an increase in divorce rates in the general Belgian population which relates to the second demographic transition has been observed over the course of merely a few decades (Eurostat, n.d.a). According to Sandström (2012), there were two broad forces driving the decrease of marital stability. The first is the rise of the dual provider model which resulted in decreased economic interdependence between family members. This is strongly related to the rise of female education and participation in the labour market. It seems that only when women were socio-economically able, divorce became a real possibility for them (Kalmijn & Poortman, 2006). The second factor is the increased importance of individualization (Sandström, 2012). Individualization refers to the increased power of individuals to make choices in their own interests, sometimes against the will of the broader family, the community and religious institutions. Individualization might result in a decline in the importance of marriage as an institution, leading to higher divorce and lower marriage rates (Cherlin, 1992). Belgian legislation developed in line with these evolutions. The divorce legislation changed in 1994 resulting in shorter procedures and weaker conditions (Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b).

The aforementioned trends in Belgium might impact Turkish and Moroccan Belgians as well. Here we draw from integration and socialization theories. According to these two theories, a longer socialization period in the destination

country is accompanied by a more engrained integration (Alba & Nee, 1997; Lievens, 1997). This might result in a stronger influence of individualization and female emancipation processes in Belgium on Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, compared to Turkish and Moroccans living in the origin country. Based on qualitative research, Koelet et al. (2009, p. 180) observe that Moroccan and Turkish spouses stress the importance of their own autonomy and happiness in the decision to divorce. While family and partners continue to be important actors in this decision, this does suggest an increased individualization.

The rise of individualization is visible in the partner-selection process as well. Van Kerckem et al. (2013) observe for Turkish Belgians a higher acceptance of premarital relationships with intra-ethnic partners from the local community in Belgium. Moreover, the same study identified a declining parental involvement. While in the 1980s parental interference was large, nowadays, parents are in many cases merely matchmakers.

In addition, some observations signal increasing female emancipation amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgian women. A key issue is the fact that girls from Turkish and Moroccan descent outperform boys in terms of educational achievement (Timmerman, 2006). This does not necessarily guarantee favourable conditions after education, but it does empower these women to some extent. According to Timmerman (2006), the poor school and labour market achievement of Turkish boys negatively affects their status as it makes it difficult to fulfil their traditional role as economic provider. Additionally, qualitative research by Koelet et al. (2009a) suggests that there is a rising awareness and contestation amongst Turkish and Moroccan women of gender-power imbalances. This results, for example, in an increasing critical attitude towards men's lack of responsibility and initiative in running household affairs. The increase in emancipatory attitudes as wel as ecomic independence of

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women, might be important motives for divorce (De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2006; Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Poortman, 2004; Poortman & Kalmijn, 2002), especially in unhappy marriages (Sayer & Bianchi, 2000; Schoen et al., 2002). *As a result, hypothesis 1 states that divorce rates of marriages established by Turkish and Moroccan Belgians rise over time (H1).*

12.3 Divorce and differences between Turkish and Moroccan migrant communities

Although divorce rates may increase for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, the divorce risks might be different for both groups. This difference was already apparent in lower fertility levels amongst Moroccan women compared to Turkish women in Belgium (Schoenmaeckers, Lodewijckx, & Gadeyne, 1999). The distinct nature of Turkish and Moroccan migration and different levels of individualization and female emancipation in the country of origin, might account for this.

Bilateral agreements between the governments of the respective countries in 1964 formalized the first large inflow of Turkish and Moroccan labour migrants to Belgium (Lievens, 2000; Reniers, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). The greater part of Turkish men who settled in Belgium were already married before they migrated (Schoonvaere, 2013). Consequently, Turkish migration fitted within the strategy of the family as a conservative form of migration permitting the household to keep on living in its community of origin (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). After the stop on labour recruitment however, commuting between Belgium and Turkey was no longer possible and the remaining family members moved to Belgium as well.

Within Moroccan communities, the impact of more individualistic, emancipatory, and socio-culturally motives was stronger from the onset of migration, making Moroccan men less inclined to return to Morocco (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Furthermore, the integration of Moroccan Belgians was facilitated due to their linguistic proficiency, as French is their second language (Lesthaeghe, 2000).

In addition to the strong emphasis on the family in the case of Turkish Belgians, studies point to different active recruitment strategies in Turkey and Morocco. Labour migrants from Turkey predominantly originate from rural areas that are characterized by stronger community ties (Lievens, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These strong ties and networks resulted in transplanted communities in the country of destination (Surkyn & Reniers, 1997; Reniers, 1999). In Morocco, these processes were present to a lesser extent given that recruitment was more strongly oriented on bigger cities and capitals of provinces. Consequently, the Moroccan communities are more fragmented; this heterogeneity concerns the marital status, educational level, religious-political orientation, and socioeconomic status at arrival (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Lesthaeghe, Surkyn, & Van Craenem, 2000; Reniers, 1999).

The different recruitment strategies combined with a weaker orientation on the family resulted in weaker social control, a more individualistic orientation, and frailer ties with the country of origin within Moroccan communities (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Lesthaeghe et al., 2000; Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). This is reflected in partner preferences as well. Although marrying transnationally is the dominant partner choice for both Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, transnational marriages are slightly less prevalent amongst Moroccan Belgians while mixed marriages are more prevalent (Dupont et al., 2017b). This, combined with higher divorce levels in Morocco (Koelet et al., 2009a), might increase the influence of individualization and female emancipation processes

on Moroccan Belgians, and might explain the higher chance to divorce for Moroccan Belgians in the past decades (Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b; Eeckhaut et al., 2011). *Therefore, we hypothesize that divorce rates amongst Moroccan Belgians are higher compared to Turkish Belgians (H2).*

12.4 Marriage type and divorce

Divorce rates might differ between different marriage types. These include transnational marriages (i.e. marrying a partner from Morocco or Turkey), local intra-ethnic marriages (marrying another Moroccan of Turkish Belgian), and mixed marriages (i.e. marrying someone with a Belgian or other Western European citizenship). Especially cultural differences (heterogamy) and social support (often supplemented with social control) are crucial (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). First, we will substantiate the claim of the importance of cultural differences and social support. Second, we will apply the concepts of cultural differences and social support to the different marriage types.

12.4.1 Cultural differences and social support

In general, people prefer a partner who is similar to them, a phenomenon called homophily (McPherson et al., 2011). Important similarities include age, socio-economic status, and the cultural background. Ethnic homogenous marriages tend to be more stable compared to heterogamous marriages, resulting in lower divorce rates (Janssen, 2002; Kalmijn, de Graaf, & Janssen, 2005; McPherson et al., 2011). However, in this paper we argue that within transnational marriages-, which are ethnically homogenous marriages, cultural differences are likely to exist as well.

The role of third parties, such as friends and family, can affect migrants' partner choice by their social support (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011; Kalmijn, 1998). This influence is especially pronounced in migrant communities characterized by a strong internal cohesion and a high level of social control. In these communities, marriage and divorce are in many cases strongly collectivized, – both families are involved, not only the spouses (Merz et al., 2009; Timmerman, 2006). Evidence for higher levels of parental involvement amongst Turkish and Moroccan immigrants was found in the Netherlands (van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014), Germany (Straßburger, 2003), France (Milewski & Hamel, 2010), and in Belgium (Descheemaeker et al., 2009). This role can vary from merely giving advice, to playing a matchmaker, to even completely control the choice of partner (Kalmijn, 1998).

12.4.2 Cultural differences, social support, and marriage types

In many cases, parents, or the ethnic community in general, stimulate intra-ethnic marriages to preserve the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group (Kalmijn, 1998; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). Local intra-ethnic marriages are therefore strongly supported by the family and the broader community. In general, the level of cultural similarity is the highest for these marriages, given that both partners share the country of origin and are socialized in the destination country. Because of these factors, it is not surprising that this type of marriage showed the lowest divorce rates in the nineties (Eeckhaut et al., 2011).

Cultural differences between the partner coming from the country of origin and the partner residing in Belgium, such as differences in norms and expectations concerning gender roles, might put strain on transnational marriages (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman et al., 2009; Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

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These marriages are more precarious although they are strongly supported by the family and the local ethnic community (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman, Lodewijckx, & Wets, 2009; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Apart from cultural differences, many more (related) problems may emerge. A first issue concerns the uncertainty about the motives of the migrated spouse because an individual can never be certain whether the partner marries for 'true love' or because of other, often less romantic, motives (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman, 2008). In addition, accurate knowledge about the situation in the destination country and Western European countries in general, is in many cases lacking, which might result in a distorted idealized image within the country of origin. Because of these reasons, Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might develop a careful attitude towards transnational marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). This implies that individuals involved in a transnational marriage that does not fit their standard of marital life, may find support to divorce more easily.

Finally, mixed marriages are characterized by both cultural differences and a lack of social support. Cultural differences between partners are likely to put barriers between them (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; van Huis & Steenhof, 2004) and increase tensions (Dribe & Lundh, 2012). Religion is an important source of cultural differences. Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are Muslim, while native Belgians are mostly Christian, although religious adherence is not very strong for native Belgians (Lesthaeghe & Lopez-Gay, 2013). Besides religion, different views on family life might be important sources of tension (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). In addition to cultural differences, the support from family and social networks is lower in mixed unions (Dribe & Lundh, 2012; Eeckhaut et al., 2011). This negative attitude is rooted in processes of ethnic conformity pressure and feelings of not being 'real Belgians' (Saroglou & Mathijsen, 2007), and is in many cases related to the language barrier between the parents of the spouses. In addition, migrants in Belgium, and especially Muslim individuals, suffer from

a negative image (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013) which might make native Belgians more reluctant to establish mixed marriages as well. *Therefore, we predict that mixed marriages have higher divorce rates compared to local intra-ethnic marriages, while transnational marriages take up a middle position (H3).*

12.5 Divorce and gender

As previously stated, marriage and divorce are strongly collectivized in Turkish and Moroccan communities. Especially women might be constrained in their partner choice, mainly because of patriarchal traditions that stress the importance of virginity and honor of women (Hooghiemstra, 2003). Moreover, divorce might lead to reputation damage (Welslau & Deven, 2003), making women less inclined to divorce compared to men. Additionally, divorce rates of men and women might differ according to their partner choice as well.

Women might prefer a man from the country of origin because of the freedom and autonomy it offers while men might prefer such a partner to establish their dominance (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lievens, 1999). As discussed previously, there are observations signaling increasing female emancipation (Timmerman, 2006) and a growing awareness and contestation of gender-power imbalances amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgian women (Koelet et al., 2009). Timmerman (2006) stated clearly that "girls see in Islam opportunities to challenge the male dominance in their communities where men invoke Islam rather to preserve the traditional male supremacy" (p.131).

However, a partner arriving in Belgium within the context of a marriage is in many cases in a dependent position because of the lack of family ties, the absence of linguistic proficiency and cultural knowledge, financial hardship etc.

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(Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Especially when the migrating partner is male, and the newly formed family had to move in with the in-laws, the lack of economic autonomy is considered a disgrace because it contradicts the patrilocal tradition that the newly formed family moves in with the family of the husband.

The problems within transnational marriages are less likely to result in divorce when the marriage migrant is female. For persons living in Belgium in 2004, Corijn (2009) finds that matches involving a Moroccan or Turkish female marriage migrant have lower divorce chances than when the migrant is male. Based on the finding of Koelet et al. (2009) that female marriage migrants often experience strong abuse, Corijn (2009) relates this lowered chance to divorce to the limited possibilities to escape from severe marriage problems. *As a consequence, hypothesis 4a states that divorce rates of transnational marriages established by Turkish or Moroccan Belgian men with a female marriage migrant from Turkey or Morocco are lower compared to transnational marriages established by Turkish or Moroccan Belgian women with a male marriage migrant (H4a).*

Studies indicate that migrant men are more likely to establish mixed marriages compared to women (Dupont et al., 2017b; Hooghiemstra, 2001; van Tubergen & Maas, 2006). A possible explanation refers to the socioeconomic resources of men and women. As men's resources remain more important and prestigious, marrying a native woman might be a form of status exchange (Kalmijn, 1998). A second possible explanation is related to patriarchal traditions that constrain women in their partner choice (Hooghiemstra, 2001). Resilience exists against Muslim women marrying non-Muslim men because the religion of the father passes on to the children. These children are, for this reason, considered as being lost for the family and Islam (Kulzycki & Lobo, 2002).

Given the opposition to female mixed marriages, these marriages might be established more well-considered. Furthermore, according to the 'gender difference hypothesis' (Dribe & Lundh, 2012) the effect of heterogamy on divorce might be strongest for immigrant men. In their study in Sweden, Dribe and Lundh (2012) claim that "since many immigrant groups differ from Swedish norms when it comes to female employment, division of housework and gender roles, mixed marriages can be expected to have different implications for men and women". The traditional gender roles of migrant men, and their lack of socio-economic resources (Kalmijn & Poortman, 2006; Koelet, 2009; Pels, 2000) are difficult to reconcile with the native woman's attitudes, and hence create tension and disagreement (Dribe & Lunch, 2012). The value dissimilarity between a native man and an immigrant woman is less strong, however, and therefore less destabilizing. Previous research for the Netherlands (Smith et al., 2012) and Germany (Milewski & Kulu, 2014) has shown that Turkish and Moroccan men who marry native partners have a much higher chance to divorce compared to Turkish and Morrocan women who marry natives. *Therefore, we hypothesize that divorce rates of mixed marriages are lower for migrant women compared to men (H4b).*

12.6 Data and method

12.6.1 Data

Our data comprise an extraction of the Belgian national register, containing all partnerships (i.e. marriages and legally registered cohabitations) of migrants originating from third countries formed between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2008. Two conditions were required for inclusion: (1) at least one partner was a resident in Belgium before the partnership, (2) with a third-country nationality

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at birth. Because we do not solely focus on current divorce rates, but compare them to divorce rates of marriages established between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990 as well, we tried to resemble the data from the analyses in Eeckhaut et al. (2011) as accurately as possible. For both the descriptive and event-history analyses, Eeckhaut et al. (2011) selected a three-year marriage cohort (first marriages between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990 of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, which was followed until 31/12/1995 or until the marriage dissolved. The maximum duration of marriages established in 1988 was eight years, while for those established in 1990, the maximum duration was only six years. For our descriptive analyses, we selected a three-year marriage cohort (first married between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003, excluding legal cohabitations) as well of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, which was followed until 31/12/2008. The maximum duration of marriages established in 2001 was eight years, and for marriages established in 2003 only six years.

For our event-history analyses, we selected all marriages of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians taking place between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2005, which were followed until 31/12/2011 or until the marriage, dissolved. We made this choice because we will only compare the relative divorce rates of the marriage types, instead of focusing on the comparison through time.

We only take opposite sex marriages into account because of the low prevalence of same sex marriages (2% and 1% for Moroccan and Turkish Belgians, respectively). Legal cohabitations were excluded as well, since they only occur in 1% of all partnerships in the dataset.

12.6.2 Variables

To maximize the comparability to data used in Eeckhaut et al. (2011), we operationalized our variables as similarly as possible. The only exception is the level of education, which is missing from our dataset.

Divorce status is a time-varying dichotomous variable (0 = Not divorced, 1 = Divorced) indicating whether a marriage dissolved in a given year or not. When a marriage dissolved in a given year, the divorce status will be '1' only for that year. Previous years are designated as 'Not divorced'.

Marriage duration reflects the length of time from the marriage until divorce or censoring: marriage still intact in 2011. The minimum duration of the marriage is zero years (married and divorced in the same year), and the maximum duration is ten years (married in 2001 and divorced in 2011).

Marriage type is categorical variable consisting of five categories that combines gender (man or woman) with the three possible marriage types. Divorce rates are situated at the couple level rather than the individual level. As a consequence, local intra-ethnic marriages are included only once to avoid double-entry of the same marriage, given that both partners are Turkish or Moroccan residents in Belgium, while transnational and mixed marriages are included separately for men and women. Therefore, the following five categories are distinguished: a Moroccan or Turkish Belgian marrying a partner from the country of origin ('Transnational marriage'), a local intra-ethnic partner ('Local') or marrying someone with a Belgian or other Western-European citizenship ('Mixed'). We used effect coding to compare the effect of each category to the mean for the specific group (Turkish or Moroccan).

Marriage year is a metric variable, based on the year of marriage. With this variable, we control changes through time in partner preferences.

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Generation is a categorical variable consisting of three categories (1 = First generation, 2 = 1.5 Generation, 3 = Second generation) based on the country of birth and the age of migration. The first generation consists of migrants who were older than 15 years of age at migration. Respondents who migrated between the ages of 6 and 15 years are designated as 1.5-generation migrants. Finally, respondents who migrated before the age of six years or who were born in Belgium are classified as second-generation migrants. This variable is based on the generation of both the 'resident' migrant and his/her partner. In the case of transnational marriages and mixed marriages, the generation of the resident migrant is taken. For local intra-ethnic marriages, we include the highest migrant generation.

The age at marriage is a categorical variable consisting of three categories (1 = Young age, 2 = Intermediate age, 3 = Older age). The cut-off points for each category are based on the quartiles of each subpopulation (based on nationality at birth and gender) (<0.25, between 0.25 and 0.75 and >0.75, respectively) (Table 12.1). We chose a categorical age variable because we are not interested in the absolute age at marriage. The definition of marrying at a young, intermediate, or older age is dependent upon the subpopulation based on the nationality at birth and gender (Lievens, 1999). The age categories therefore have the same meaning in each of the subpopulations. Similarly to the migrant generation variable, we include the age at marriage of the resident in the case of transnational marriages and mixed marriages. For local intra-ethnic marriages, the youngest age category was used.

Table 12.1. Categories 'Age at marriage'

	Moroccan		Turkish	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Young age	<24	<20	<22	<20
Intermediate age	24-31	20-26	22-27	20-24
Older age	>31	>26	>27	>24

N Moroccan = 10,434; N Turkish = 5,819

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

12.6.3 Method

Our descriptive analyses are based on the original person file that contains couple data on marriages. Therefore, partnerships instead of partner choices are included. As a consequence, transnational and mixed marriages are included separately for men and women, while local intra-ethnic marriages are included only once to avoid double-entry of the same marriage, given that both partners are Turkish or Moroccan residents in Belgium. This file consists of 17,786 cases for Moroccan Belgians and 9,631 cases for Turkish Belgians. We converted the person file into a person-period file for our event-history analyses (Yamaguchi, 1991). The person-period file generates 143,665 and 84,996 person-years, respectively.

In our event-history analyses we used piecewise constant log-rate models with effect coding to interpret the effect of the variable 'Marriage type', which compares the effect of each category to the mean for the specific group (Turkish or Moroccan). The model is built incrementally. First, we specified the baseline of the hazard function. The fourth-order polynomial of the time function fitted

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the data most accurately (figures not shown) and is not correlated to the marriage types (results not shown). This means that the risk of divorce as a function of marital duration is similar across marriage types. After that, we added the core variables (marriage types) and control variables (generation, age, and marriage year). The analyses are based on data from the Belgian national register, which constitute population data. In this case, significance testing (i.e. testing the probability of drawing a sample by chance from a population that meets the assumptions of the null hypothesis) is not needed, as the population data are not random samples.

12.7 Results

12.7.1 Divorce rates

Table 12.2. Percentage of divorces by 31/12/2008 for marriages established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003

	Turkish	Moroccan
Not divorced (%)	86.7 (*92.3*)[a]	76.1 (*84.8*)
Divorced (%)	13.3 (*7.2*)	23.9 (*14.6*)

N Turkish = 5,819; N Moroccan = 10,434

[a]Italic: Percentage of divorces in 31/12/1995 for marriages established between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990, derived from Eeckhaut et al. (2011)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

We hypothesize that divorce rates of marriages of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians rise over time (H1). Table 12.2 shows that within Turkish and

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Moroccan groups 7.2% and 14.6% respectively of marriages established between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990 ended in divorce by 31/12/1995 (Eeckhaut et al., 2011). These percentages have almost doubled; 13.3% and 23.9% of all marriages established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003 were dissolved by 31/12/2008. We also predict higher divorce risks within the Moroccan group (H2). The higher divorce risk of the Moroccan group observed by the end of 1995 is still visible in 2008 and is even almost two times higher compared to Turkish Belgians.

Table 12.3. Percentage of marriage types according to nationality and gender[a] (established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003)

	Turkish	Moroccan
Transnational - Men	29.1 *(43.3)*[b]	26.9 *(26.6)*
Transnational - Women	31.6 *(43.6)*	22.1 *(48.2)*
Mixed – Men	4.6 *(3.1)*	10.6 *(7.9)*
Mixed – Women	2.4 *(–)*	4.4 *(3.7)*
Local intra-ethnic	32.3 *(9.9)*	36.1 *(13.6)*

N Turkish = 5,819; N Moroccan = 10,434

[a]The gender refers to the gender of the Turkish or Moroccan Belgian resident

[b]Italic: Percentages of marriage types from 01/01/1988 until 31/12/1990, derived from Eeckhaut et al. (2011)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

Table 12.3 displays the prevalence of marriage types (transnational, local-intra ethnic, and mixed) established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003 of Moroccan and Turkish men and women. Transnational marriages are the most common marriages amongst both nationalities, followed by local intra-ethnic and mixed marriages. Comparing these numbers to the prevalence of marriage types

established between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990 (Eeckhaut et al., 2011) reveals that the percentage of transnational marriages has declined from about 43% to 30% for Turkish Belgians and from about 48% to 22% for Moroccan women. For Moroccan men, the already low prevalence of transnational marriages (around 27%) remained stable. While the prevalence of mixed marriages rose (from about 3.5% for both Turkish men and Moroccan women to 4.4%; and from about 8% for Moroccan men to 11%), local intra-ethnic marriages became much more popular. About 32% of all marriages of Turkish Belgians are local intra-ethnic marriages, compared to only 10% in the late nineties. For Moroccan Belgians, these numbers are similar: the prevalence of local intra-ethnic marriages rose from about 14% to 36%.

Furthermore, divorce rates have risen and in many cases even doubled for almost every marriage type (Table 12.4). The only exception are the stable divorce rates of mixed marriages established by Turkish men. This suggests that there is a general force underlying the rise of divorce that cannot be reduced to particular aspects of the partner choice pattern.

The results on the differences between divorce rates of each marriage type will only be briefly discussed here, but will be explored more in depth in our event-history models to confirm or reject hypotheses 3 and 4. Our prediction stating that mixed marriages display the highest divorce rates, followed by transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages (H3), can be partially confirmed. Generally, the lowest divorce rates arise from marriages to local intra-ethnic partners (Turkish Belgians: 9.9%, Moroccan Belgians: 19.0%) while transnational marriages display higher divorce rates (Turkish men: 15.2%, Turkish women: 14.2%, Moroccan men: 22.9%, Moroccan women: 24.8%).

The situation is less clear-cut for mixed marriages. Turkish and Moroccan men within a mixed marriage are more likely to divorce compared to the other groups

(19.2% and 40.3%, respectively). However, the hypothesis does not hold for Turkish and Moroccan women within mixed marriages (13.4% and 25.8%, respectively).

Hypothesis 4 predicts lower divorce rates of transnational marriages established by men compared to women (H4a) and lower divorce rates of mixed marriages established by women compared to men (H4b). For both groups, there is only a small gender difference in divorce rates of transnational marriages, which does not confirm hypothesis 4a. The gender difference is stronger for divorce rates of mixed marriages. Mixed marriages established by men display the highest divorce rates. Divorce rates are particularly high for Moroccan men; about 40% of all mixed marriages result in divorce which confirms our hypothesis.

Table 12.4. Percentage divorces according to nationality, gender[a] and marriage type for marriages established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2003 by 31/12/2008

	Turkish	Moroccan
Transnational - Men	15.2 *(7.0)*[b]	22.9 *(11.9)*
Transnational - Women	14.2 *(7.5)*	24.8 *(17.2)*
Mixed – Men	19.2 *(19.8)*	40.3 *(11.1)*
Mixed – Women	13.4 *(-)*	25.8 *(16.0)*
Local intra-ethnic	9.9 *(3.6)*	19.0 *(9.1)*

N Turkish = 5,819; N Moroccan = 10,434

[a]The gender refers to the gender of the Turkish or Moroccan Belgian resident

[b]Italic: Percentage of divorces in 1995 for marriages established between between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990, derived from Eeckhaut et al. (2011)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

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12.7.2 Results event-history models

In this section, we relate the likelihood of divorce to each marriage type. Table 12.5 displays the relative divorce rates presented as odds ratios. These rates compare the effect of each marriage type to the mean for the specific group (Turkish or Moroccan). For example, mixed marriages established by Turkish men have a 1.74 times higher divorce risk than the average divorce risk of Turkish Belgians. However, we want to compare the divorce risks of each marriage type. Therefore, based on the relative divorce rates of all marriages, we calculated pairwise comparisons between each marriage type.

In our third hypothesis, we predict that mixed marriages display the highest divorce rates, followed by transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages. Within the Turkish group, local intra-ethnic marriages have the lowest divorce rates. The difference between divorce rates of transnational marriages and local intra-ethnic marriages is rather small. Transnational marriages of both men and women only have a 1.2 times higher likelihood of divorce compared to local intra-ethnic marriages. Mixed marriages of Turkish men on the other hand have a 2 times higher likelihood of divorce compared to transnational marriages, and a 2.3 times higher likelihood compared to local-intra ethnic marriages. This confirms the third hypothesis for men. Mixed marriages of Turkish women only have a 1.2 times higher likelihood of divorce compared to local intra-ethnic marriages, and a 1.04 times higher likelihood compared to transnational marriages. Therefore, the third hypothesis can be confirmed for Turkish women as well, even though the difference in divorce risks between the marriage types is much smaller compared to Turkish men.

Within the Moroccan group, local intra-ethnic marriages have the lowest likelihood of divorce as well. Transnational marriages established by Moroccan men and women have approximately a 1.3 higher likelihood of divorce compared

to local marriages. Mixed marriages of Moroccan men have a 2.2 higher likelihood compared to local marriages and a 1.6 higher likelihood compared to transnational marriages. This confirms our third hypothesis for Moroccan men. Mixed marriages have a 1.4 times higher likelihood of divorce compared to local intra-ethnic marriages and only a 1.1 higher likelihood compared to transnational marriages which confirms the third hypothesis for Moroccan women as well.

Furthermore, we predict that the divorce rates of transnational marriages (H4a) and mixed marriages established by women (H4b) are lower compared to the divorce rates of transnational marriage and mixed marriages established by men. Divorce rates of transnational marriages established by Turkish men only have a slightly elevated divorce risk compared to those established by women (1.01), which does not confirm the gender hypothesis for transnational marriages (H4a) amongst Turkish Belgians. Furthermore, mixed marriages of Turkish women have much lower divorce rates compared to men; those of men are 1.9 times higher, which is a confirmation of our gender difference hypothesis for mixed marriages (H4b) amongst Turkish Belgians.

The divorce risks of transnational marriages established by Moroccan men are only 1.04 times higher compared to women. Therefore, the gender hypothesis cannot be confirmed for transnational marriages (H4a). However, the divorce risks of mixed marriages are 1.6 times higher for Moroccan men compared to Moroccan women, which clearly confirms the gender hypothesis for mixed marriages (H4b).

Essentially, the same conclusions can be drawn for the Moroccan group as for the Turkish group: mixed marriages display the highest divorce rates, followed by transnational and local intra-ethnic marriages (H3), and the gender

difference hypothesis is confirmed for mixed marriages (H4b) while the difference is negligible for transnational marriages (H4a).

Table 12.5. Relative divorce rates (Exp. B) according to marriage type, nationality and gender[a] for marriages established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2005, followed until 31/12/2011[b]

	Turkish	Moroccan
Transnational - Men	0.89 *(0.92)*[c]	0.96 *(1.03)*
Transnational - Women	0.90 *(0.92)*	0.92 *(1.42)*
Mixed – Men	1.74 *(2.5)*	1.57 *(0.81)*
Mixed – Women	0.94 *(-)*	1.01 *(1.19)*
Local intra-ethnic	0.76 *(0.47)*	0.72 *(0.71)*

N Turkish = 84,996; N Moroccan = 143,665

[a]The gender refers to the gender of the Turkish or Moroccan Belgian resident

[b]We controlled for marriage year, migrant generation, and age at marriage

[c]Italic: Relative divorce rates for marriages established between 01/01/1988 and 31/12/1990 followed until 31/121995, derived from Eeckhaut et al. (2011)

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

12.8 Conclusion and discussion

In this paper, we investigate the prevalence of divorce amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, with a specific focus on the effect of partner-choice patterns. A few conclusions can be drawn.

First, in the past 15 years, divorce rates have doubled within Turkish and Moroccan migrant groups for all marriage types. In our interpretation, this might have several causes. First, these changes may be related to the second

demographic transition, such as the increased importance of individualization that eroded the importance of marriage as an institution, and a rising female emancipation (Cherlin, 1992; Kalmijn & Poortman, 2006; Sandström, 2012). Second, changed household economics might increase the likelihood to divorce as well (Kalmijn, De Graaf, & Poortman, 2004; Poortman & Kalmijn, 2002). Finally, higher divorce rates in the country of origin might stimulate higher divorce rates of migrants (Kavas & Gündüz-Hoşgör, 2010; Koelet et al., 2009a). However, given the limitations related to our dataset, we cannot identify the exact causes of the rise in divorce rates.

Second, divorce rates are much higher among the Moroccan group, which might have several causes. High divorce rates in Morocco (Koelet, 2009a), the weaker orientation on the family and the lower levels of social control and support within the Moroccan group (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997) might stimulate divorce. In addition to this, the Moroccan group might be influenced more heavily by changes related to the second demographic transition, or the increasing labour force participation of women might be more pronounced among this group.

Third, there are clear differences between marriage types. Local intra-ethnic marriages have the lowest divorce levels, mixed marriages the highest, and transnational marriages take up a middle position. In line with Eeckhaut et al. (2011) and van Huis and Steenhof (2004), this might be explained by cultural dissimilarity within the couple (for mixed and transnational marriages) and a lack of social support (for mixed marriages). Local intra-ethnic marriages are the most stable, because these often enjoy parental support (Eeckhaut et al., 2011), and because of the cultural similarities between partners (McPherson et al., 2001).

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Fourth, the previous finding needs some qualification. For mixed marriages, there is a clear effect of gender. Turkish and Moroccan men in mixed marriages have much higher divorce rates compared to Turkish and Moroccan women. This is a confirmation of the 'gender difference hypothesis' which states that the effect of heterogamy on divorce might be stronger for immigrant men because of value dissimilarity (Dribe & Lundh, 2012). However, the gender difference in the divorce risks of transnational marriages (especially for the Moroccan group) that was present in the study of Eeckhaut et al. (2011) has not been replicated in this study. Apparently, the reputation damage following divorce that might influence women in particular (Welslau & Deven, 2003), is not strong enough to account for a gender difference in the divorce risks of transnational marriages.

From a more general perspective, the findings of this paper contribute to the idea that there might be a (slow) transition amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. Even though we cannot pinpoint the exact causes of this transition, this paper demonstrates that changes in marital behaviour are present. In recent decades, there was a decrease in transnational marriages and an increase in mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). These changes in the marriage pattern are accompanied by a decline of spatial segregation and some upward social mobility (Verhaeghe, Van der Bracht, & Van de Putte, 2012) which suggest that the barriers between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians on the one hand and native Belgians on the other hand are weakening. These findings show that also among migrant groups characterized by strong (i.e. collectivistic) family systems processes of individualization and emancipation might be potentially strong. This does not mean that these transitions will be identically replicated amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and it does of course not exclude the presence of different trajectories. Especially amongst Moroccan men of the second generation, a pronounced rise in mixed marriages as well as higher levels of unmarried cohabitation and a

stronger tendency to remain single is present (Hartung et al., 2011; Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b). Moroccan men from the second generation might therefore be pioneers of this trend. Yet, as divorce figures for mixed marriages amongst Moroccan men are (very) high, it remains an open question whether other groups will follow their example given the instability of these marriages.

The finding that differences in divorce rates between almost all marriage types have been reduced or remained stable, with the exception of mixed marriages established by Moroccan men adds more insight to this discussion. The reduced gap might be explained by several factors. For the convergence in divorce rates between intra-local and transnational marriages, a first factor may be that transnational marriages are established more carefully, considering the documented difficulties within these marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). This might result in a slower and more deliberate or cautious marriage formation process. Yet, given that divorce risks of all marriage types have increased, it is hard to explain this evolution only in terms of a more careful approach towards marriage. If anything, one can conclude that transnational marriages do not longer differ that much with intra-ethnic local marriages in this regard. Secondly, higher divorce rates of local intra-ethnic marriages compared to 15 years ago might account for the convergence of divorce rates.

Concerning the convergence of divorce rates of mixed marriages and the other types, a possible explanation may be that mixed marriages receive increasing social support within the involved populations, as reflected by the rise of these marriages (Dupont et al., 2017b). Nevertheless, it is clear that mixed marriages continue to have higher divorce rates. Even though social support for these marriages might be increasing, there is still a relative lack of social support compared to the other marriage types. Apparently, the lack of social support and cultural differences continue to play an important role in the prediction of the stability and vulnerability of marriages of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians.
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Moreover, this convergence is not visible for every group. For Moroccan men, the gap between the divorce risks of mixed marriages and the other marriage types has enlarged, because the divorce risks of those mixed marriages rose significantly over the course of 15 years. Eeckhaut et al. (2011) attributed the low divorce risks of mixed marriages established by Moroccan men very optimistically to a stronger orientation towards the receiving country and a less pronounced transnationalism within this group, which led to stronger cultural differences to the country of origin. Even though mixed marriages established by Moroccan men rose over time, signaling an integration and individualization process, it accompanied a striking rise in divorce risks of these marriages as well, which might hamper integration.

Finally, this paper is subject to several limitations. The first is related to the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities in Belgium beginning in the early 1990s. As a result, second-generation migrants might be under-represented in our dataset. Since 1984, Belgian nationality has automatically been granted at birth to children born in Belgium to at least one parent with Belgian nationality. Although these individuals are not included in the second-generation group, they could be regarded as belonging to it. In our estimation, however, this is not a substantial problem, as the large-scale naturalization programs occurred only in the early 1990s. Given that the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years, automatic naturalization eliminates only a small number of individuals from this group.

Second, while our dataset includes the complete population of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who married and divorced between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2008, which allows us to bypass the problems of representativeness, attrition etc., some censoring is inevitable. Concerning the marriages included in the event history analyses (established between 01/01/2001 and 31/12/2005, followed until 31/12/2011), we cannot evaluate what happened to 71.2% of

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marriages established by Moroccan Belgians, and 83.7% of marriages established by Turkish Belgians after 31/12/2011. We have to assume that these censored cases are not a selective subgroup and that the censoring occurred independently of the risk of getting divorced. Within life course research, "Because the end of the observation window (…) is normally determined independently from the substantive process under study, this type of right censoring is unproblematic" (Blossfeld, 2001, p.41).

Third, our dataset lacks some crucial information. There is no information on the ethnic background of migrants. Given that it only includes the nationality at birth, country of birth, and current nationality, ethnic differences within nationalities are obscured. Furthermore, there is no information on socio-economic variables as well as the presence of children. The educational level of individual migrants and their work situation are for this reason unknown. Given that women's employment might destabilize marriages, this is a major limitation of this study. Moreover, ideational variables are lacking. Therefore, changes in divorce rates might be caused by changes related to the second demographic transition, such as an increasing individualization and emancipation, by changes related to household economics, or by changes in the country of origin. Therefore, further research might compare changes between the migrant population in the country of origin and the country of residence to disentangle the net effect of migration, and might incorporate clear measures to measure changes related to the second demographic transition.

In addition, the divorce process remains largely out of sight. Although we can examine divorce rates within different groups in absolute terms and sketch the evolution of those rates in function of the marriage duration in function of time, we cannot know from this research whether the motives underlying divorce have changed over time. We have no knowledge on who initiated the divorce as well. If Moroccan and Turkish Belgians are truly undergoing an

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individualization combined with an emancipation process, we should note a rising number of divorces initiated by women. Furthermore, while the original data provided information on marriages and legally registered cohabitations, we only focused on marriages. Unregistered cohabitations and single migrants were excluded from the original data. If we assume that Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are influenced by a process of individualization, we should observe a rise in legally registered cohabitations, unregistered cohabitations and single households. Within the timeframe of this paper, legally registered cohabitations were established only sporadically, but were rising, nonetheless.

Chapter 13. Love at second sight: remarriages in Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium

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Abstract

This paper provides insight into remarriages amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. Although the issue of remarriage is of particular relevance, given the rising divorce rates that have been observed amongst these groups in recent decades, it remains largely understudied. We examine remarriage rates and patterns of partner choice in second marriages, taking into account partner-choice patterns in first marriages. We analyzed data from the Belgian national register, using piecewise constant log-rate event-history analyses with effect coding on all first marriages that ended in divorce between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009. In the second phase of the analysis, which focuses on partner choice in the second marriage, we selected only those respondents who had remarried. Our results indicate that the recent transition in marital behaviour (e.g. lower levels of transnational marriage and higher levels of mixed marriages) has not (yet) been replicated in second marriages. Transnational remarriage is by far the most preferred partner choice, especially amongst former marriage migrants. Especially for them, the access to the local marriage market seems to be restricted, steering them towards the transnational marriage market.

13.1 Introduction

In this paper, we examine the remarriage patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, with a specific focus on partner choice. These two groups were selected because they have been long established and are the two largest migrant groups of Belgian residents originating from third countries (i.e. countries outside Europe) (Directorate-general Statistics Belgium, n.d.).

During recent years, Turkish and Moroccan Belgians have undergone a transition in their marital behaviour. For a long time, transnational marriage was the dominant marriage type amongst these groups (Lievens, 1999). However, during the past 15 years, the prevalence of transnational marriages has decreased (Dupont et al., 2017; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). This transition is accompanied by higher divorce risks and a higher prevalence of mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017a; Dupont et al., 2017b). These trends signal a transition towards individualization and a stronger orientation towards the host country (Alba & Nee, 1997; Cherlin, 1992 ; Sandström, 2012).

This transition might extrapolate to remarriage as well, resulting in a low prevalence of second marriages, as we already observe amongst native Belgians (Corijn, 2012; Corijn & Van Peer, 2013). However, an important distinct element in the dynamics of partner choice in remarriage is that a new partner might protect, conscious or not, against the negative repercussions accompanying divorce such as financial hardship, decreased standard of living, less wealth (Ross, 1995; Zagorsky, 2005), health problems (Joung et al., 1997), and mental health issues (Öngider, 2011; Ghaffarzadeh & Nazari, 2012). Although the negative consequences are applicable to any divorcing person, they might be even more pertinent to the situations of people of migrant background, given their generally more strained socio-economic positions relative to non-migrants (Corluy & Verbist, 2010). Especially when socially isolated, the combination of

a weaker socio-economic position and reputation damage (Welslau & Deven, 2003) are likely to exacerbate the situation. The partner choice of first marriages might indicate the embedding in the local ethnic community. Marriage migrants for example, might lack a local social network because of their recent arrival in Belgium. From 1994 until 2006, the Belgian law enabled marriage migrants to obtain a residence permit after a period of prior marriage of a maximum of 15 months with a partner with a Belgian nationality, or a partner who is a legal Belgian resident (Caestecker, 2005), making remarriage likely for this group as well. This raises the question as to whether the process of individualization is applicable to Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, and to vulnerable subgroups that are less embedded in the local ethnic community in particular.

Furthermore, another important aspect of migrant remarriages includes a possible change in partner choice when remarrying because of learning mechanisms (Choi & Tienda, 2017). The experience of a failed marriage might influence the partner-choice preference when remarrying. Given the decline in the prevalence of transnational marriages and the rise in mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017b; Van Kerckem et al., 2013) as well as higher divorce rates amongst transnational and mixed marriages compared to local intra-ethnic marriages (Dupont et al., 2017a; Eeckhaut et al., 2011), a change is certainly plausible. In addition, the local marriage market might be constrained for divorced migrants, given the possibility of stigmatization and reputation damage after divorce (Welslau & Deven, 2003; Hooghiemstra, 2003).

Despite the relevance of this topic, studies on remarriage in Western Europe in general, and particularly amongst migrant groups, are not abundantly available (De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2003). The few studies that examine remarriages, focus primarily on the link between remarriage and religiosity. These studies indicate that religion influences people's entry into marriage, their exit, and their remarriage (Heaton & Goodman, 1985; Vaaler, Ellison, & Powers, 2009; Xu &

Bartkowski, 2017). Religious people are more likely to remarry and at a faster pace because they might have a stronger family orientation (Heaton & Goodman, 1985; Xu & Bartkowski, 2017). This is true for Muslims in particular, especially in comparison with Christian or not religious people (Brown & Porter, 2013; Xu & Bartkowski, 2017).

Furthermore, a few studies in the Netherlands and in Belgium on remarriage reveal a high prevalence of remarriage amongst Turkish and Moroccan migrants (Bijwaard & van Doeselaar, 2014; Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009a; Koelet et al., 2009). In 2004, around 65% of divorced Moroccan and Turkish men, and around 55% of divorced Moroccan and Turkish women in Belgium remarried after the dissolution of their first marriage (Koelet et al., 2009). However, an important limitation of these studies is that they did not take the partner choice of the first marriage into account. Moreover, these studies neglected the partner choice in the second marriage.

The few studies that examine partner choices and remarriage behaviour amongst migrant groups, focus primarily on intermarriage in first and subsequent marriages or on the dichotomy between ethnic homogenous and ethnic heterogamous marriages (see for example Choi & Tienda, 2017; Dean & Gurak, 1978; Fu, 2010; Obućina, 2016). While yielding interesting results concerning remarriage behaviour, this focus neglects cultural differences present in transnational marriages[21], which are ethnic homogenous marriages as well (Eeckhaut et al., 2011).

We start by examining differential remarriage rates by the partner choice in the first marriage. More specifically, we examine the effect of partner choice in the first marriage on the remarriage rate using event-history analysis. In the second, descriptive, part of this paper we focus on partner selection in the second

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marriage according to partner selection in the first marriage. In both parts we distinguish between ethnic groups and sexes.

13.2 Differences in remarriage between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians

Differences in marital behaviour between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are largely influenced by their migration history. Bilateral agreements between the Belgian government and the Turkish and Moroccan government formalized the first large inflow of Turkish and Moroccan labour migrants to Belgium in 1964 (Reniers, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2013, 2014; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). The greater part of Turkish labour migrants was already married before they migrated. Moreover, Turkish migrants are more likely to follow the norms and values of their ethnic community, especially those regarding marriage, gender roles, traditional customs and religious practice (Crul & Doomernik, 2003). Consequently, these migrants are more family-oriented compared to Moroccan labour migrants. The motives of Moroccan labour migrants were more individualistic, emancipatory, and socio-cultural in nature (Reniers, 1999; Schoonvaere, 2013) and are therefore more likely to accompany non-traditional values about family life (Choi & Tienda, 2017).

Not surprisingly, divorce rates are higher amongst Moroccan Belgians than amongst Turkish Belgians (Dupont et al., 2017a). 13.3% of Turkish marriages and 23.9% of Moroccan marriages established between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2004 were dissolved by 1 January 2009 (Dupont et al., 2017a). The non-traditional values about family life result in a lower likelihood to remarry, a higher share of singles, and a higher share of cohabitating partners after divorce amongst Moroccan Belgians. Especially amongst Moroccan men of the second generation higher levels of cohabitation as well as a stronger tendency to remain single are prevalent (Coleman, 1994; Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b; Hartung et

al., 2011). Conversely, traditional values about family life, which are present to a greater extent amongst Turkish Belgians, might encourage the establishment of second marriages, as research on religion and remarriage already demonstrates (Heaton & Goodman, 1985; Xu & Bartkowski, 2017).

Hypothesis 1: The prevalence of remarriage is lower amongst Moroccan Belgians than amongst Turkish Belgians.

Labour migrants from Turkey predominantly originated from rural areas, which are typically characterized by stronger community ties (Lievens, 2000; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). In Morocco, recruitment was oriented mainly on bigger cities and capitals of provinces (Reniers, 1999). The different recruitment strategies combined with a weaker orientation on the family resulted in weaker social control and frailer ties with the country of origin in Moroccan communities (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997).

The existence of strong ties between the sending and receiving communities encourages transnational marriages (Reniers 1999). Such strong ties between communities are especially prevalent among Turkish groups and, to a lesser extent, among Moroccan groups. As a result, transnational marriage is slightly more common amongst Turkish Belgians than it is amongst Moroccan Belgians (Dupont et al., 2017b; Lievens, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). Therefore, Turkish Belgians might be more inclined to use these transnational networks after divorce. Moroccan Belgians on the other hand, have a higher likelihood of establishing mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017b). This is not surprising, given the usage of French in Morocco[22] and their individualistic orientation (Reniers, 1999; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997). These differences in preferences might persist in second marriages as well.

Hypothesis 2a: The prevalence of transnational remarriage is higher amongst Turkish Belgians compared to Moroccan Belgians.

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Hypothesis 2b: The prevalence of mixed remarriage is higher amongst Moroccan Belgians compared to Turkish Belgians.

13.3 Differences in remarriage according to the partner choice in the first marriage

We distinguish four specific groups relating to partner choice in the first marriage: an individual can be (1) a former marriage migrant (i.e. a partner from Turkey or Morocco who arrived in Belgium within the context of the first marriage) or a migrant[23] whose first marriage was (2) transnational (i.e. marrying a partner from Turkey or Morocco), (3) local intra-ethnic (i.e. marrying another Moroccan or Turkish Belgian) or (4) mixed (i.e. marrying a partner of Belgian or other Western European origin).

In many cases, remarriage can be a strategy (whether conscious or unconscious) for remedying some of the negative consequences of divorce. For example, after divorce, people often experience mental health problems (Öngider, 2011; Ghaffarzadeh & Nazari, 2012), have more physical health problems (Joung et al., 1997), experience greater social isolation (Peters & Liefbroer, 1997), have a lower standard of living, and are less wealthy (Ross, 1995; Zagorsky, 2005). Some of these negative consequences could be alleviated by protective factors, including individual and structural resources, as well as finding a new partner (Amato, 2000; Wang & Amato, 2000). Studies have indicated that having a new partner is especially beneficial for addressing the negative consequences of divorce and improving the overall standard of living (Amato, 2000; Cartwright, 2010; Ross, 1995; Wang & Amato, 2000).

Although all of these consequences are relevant to all divorced people, the economic consequences might be particularly pertinent to the situations of

ethnic minority individuals. Relative to non-migrants, people of migrant background are more likely to live in strained, or even impoverished socio-economic circumstances (Corluy & Verbist, 2010). In addition, the activity and employment rates of migrants tend to be lower than those of non-migrants (VDAB Studiedienst, 2012). The main causes of these disparities are lower levels of education, language deficiencies, and institutional factors (e.g. unacknowledged credentials and discrimination on the labour market). Vulnerable groups might therefore engage more in second marriages.

Marriage migrants (especially women) are at greater risk of dependence (both economic and social) upon their partners and in-laws during the marriage, given that their own families are still living in the country of origin and the lack of a local social network (Geets, 2006; Surkyn & Reniers, 1997; Timmerman, 2006). After divorce, this lack of social support from friends and family places them in danger of isolation and makes it more difficult for them to cope with the negative consequences of divorce compared to other Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. As a consequence, they might rely more heavily on their already established transnational networks (see infra).

Hypothesis 3: Compared to the other groups, former marriage migrants are more likely to remarry after divorce.

13.4 Partner choice in remarriage

We distinguish three patterns of partner choice in remarriage: transnational marriage, local intra-ethnic marriage, and mixed marriage.

13.4.1 Partner choice in the first marriage

Kalmijn (1998) identifies three sources of influence that might affect partner choice. The first source are individual preferences. In general, people prefer a partner who is similar to themselves, a phenomenon called homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Important similarities include age, socio-economic status, cultural background, and skin colour. Skin colour (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006) and the cultural background – which includes language, religion (Dribe & Lundh, 2011) – are particularly important features. Ethnically similar partners are therefore usually preferred. However, in the case of transnational marriages, which are ethnically homogenous marriages, cultural differences exist as well. Local intra-ethnic marriages are therefore marriages with on average the most similar partners.

The second source of influence are third parties, such as friends and family (Kalmijn, 1998). This influence is especially pronounced in migrant communities characterized by a strong internal cohesion and a high level of social control (Merz et al., 2009; Timmerman, 2006). In these communities, marriage and divorce are in many cases strongly collectivized – both families are involved, not only the spouses. Parents, or the ethnic community in general, stimulate intra-ethnic marriages to preserve the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group (Kalmijn, 1998; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018), sometimes from the country of origin (Lievens, 1999), depending on the strength of networks between the communities in the countries of residence and origin.

Finally, the third source Kalmijn (1998) distinguishes, are the structural opportunities or constraints of the marriage market. In this respect, the size of the ethnic community as well as the ratio of men to women are important parameters (Blau, 1977) which might steer migrants towards the marriage market in the origin country.

For a long time, transnational marriage was the dominant marriage type amongst first marriages of Turkish and Moroccan migrants, followed by local intra-ethnic and mixed marriages due to a strong influence of third parties (e.g. parental control) and strong transnational bonds (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Lievens, 1999). However, according to recent studies, the popularity of transnational marriages amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians is declining in favour of local intra-ethnic marriages and, to a lesser extent, mixed marriages (Dupont et al., 2017b; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Given the risks and problems associated with transnational marriages, these marriages might nowadays be established better considered. These risks include uncertainty about the motive of the marriage migrant (Timmerman, 2008), inherent cultural differences between the partners due to their different upbringing (e.g. different gender norms) (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Van Kerckem et al., 2013) and dependence on the part of the migrating partner (Timmerman, 2006). This is coupled to a reduced parental control, given the higher age when remarrying.

Furthermore, while the rise in mixed marriages might signal weaker boundaries between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians on the one hand and native Belgians on the other hand, mixed marriages are still the least preferred and least stable marriage type on average because of cultural differences (Dupont et al., 2017a; Eeckhaut et al., 2011; van Huis & Steenhof, 2004), a negative image, prejudice, and even discrimination (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013) that can result from the general perception of migrants (particularly if they are Muslim). Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are often seen as less

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attractive and less preferred partners (Goldscheider & Waite, 1986). Especially in Europe, religion is an important factor for choosing a partner (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). Mixed marriages are generally not supported by parents or by the broader local ethnic community as well (Eeckhaut et al., 2011).

13.4.2 Partner choice mechanisms in the second marriage

The partner-choice patterns in second marriages might differ from partner-choice patterns in first marriages. These differences are related to changed preferences because of learning mechanisms and marriage market constraints (Choi & Tienda, 2017). However, for some groups, we expect the influence of learning mechanisms to have a lower impact.

Preferences

Third party influence weakens as children grow older and become more independent (Fu, 2010; van Zantvliet, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2014). Therefore, personal preferences might be more outspoken when remarrying since second marriages usually take place at an older age.

Personal preferences might change after divorce. A first marriage is in this respect

> a school in which students learn about the kinds of persons with whom they could maintain a stable marriage. Armed with a diploma in the form of a divorce, these graduates go on to apply their new knowledge in a second marriage – a marriage which is more homogenous and in which greater value-sharing leads to less conflict (Dean & Gurak, 1978, p. 561)

This is observed amongst the higher divorce risks of transnational and mixed marriages, which are both characterized by cultural differences (see supra) (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Dupont et al., 2017a; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). For Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, local intra-ethnic marriages might therefore be seen as more appealing when remarrying. However, the inverse might apply as well. After a local intra-ethnic first marriage, the local ethnic marriage market might seem less appealing when remarrying. In short, it seems plausible that preferences change when remarrying, because of learning mechanisms. However, we do not expect these learning mechanisms to apply to every first marriage choice equally.

Migrants whose first marriage was mixed, might be a select group that is more heavily influenced by processes of modernization, individualization and emancipation (Alba & Nee, 1997; Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006). This could minimize the distance from potential partners of Belgian or other Western European citizenship relative to other migrants, while increasing the distance from intra-ethnic individuals leading to feelings of detachment from their local ethnic communities. Furthermore, these processes might make them less inclined to alter their partner choice when remarrying. Evidence for this was found in a study by Obućina (2016): migrants whose first marriage was with a native are more likely to remarry a native as well.

Constraints

Third parties might (deliberately or not) restrict the access to the local marriage market because of the strong emphasis on family and the accompanying disapproving attitude towards divorce (e.g. because of the importance of virginity and honour in the Turkish culture; Hooghiemstra, 2003), which might lead to stigmatization and reputation damage (Welslau & Deven, 2003;

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Hooghiemstra, 2003). Therefore, restrictions in the local ethnic marriage market might steer the search for potential partners elsewhere. The transnational market seems to be the most probable alternative market in this respect as Turkish and Moroccan Belgians could perceive transnational remarriage as a second-chance marriage (Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

Especially for former marriage migrants, the access to the local marriage market might be restricted. They are more often less embedded within the local ethnic community compared to other Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, which makes finding a new partner in the local ethnic community a lot more difficult. Because of their recent arrival in Belgium, their transnational ties i.e. ties with relatives and friends who are still living in the country of origin, are likely to be strong. They might therefore be more inclined to remarry and to search for partners in their countries of origin.

Even though Turkish and Moroccan Belgians whose first marriage was mixed might prefer mixed remarriage (see supra), their access to such marriages might be restricted as well. Generally, a negative image, prejudice and even discrimination exist (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013) that can result from the general perception of migrants (particularly if they are Muslim). Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are often seen as less attractive and less preferred partners (Goldscheider & Waite, 1986) which might be even more the case for divorced Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. A substantial part of this group might be steered towards the transnational market as well. However, we expect this to be less the case compared to the other first marriage types, given that they might feel detached from their local ethnic communities in general, and other co-ethnics in particular.

Hypothesis 4: Transnational remarriage is the most common partner choice for all first marriage types, followed by local intra-ethnic remarriage and mixed remarriage.

Hypothesis 5a: Transnational remarriage is more common amongst former marriage migrants.

Hypothesis 5b: Mixed remarriage is more common amongst migrants whose first marriage was mixed.

13.5 Data

Our data comprise an extraction from the Belgian national register, focusing on the partnerships of migrants from the first, 1.5 and second generations originating from third countries (i.e. outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland). The data cover marriages concluded in the period between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009. Two conditions were required for inclusion: (1) at least one partner was a resident in Belgium before the partnership, (2) with a third-country nationality at birth. We selected Belgian residents of Turkish and Moroccan origin, based on nationality at birth. The data refer to both marriages and legally registered cohabitations. The dataset does not contain information on unregistered cohabitation and persons not included in the Belgian national register, such as refugees and asylum seekers. We use the term 'marriage' as a pars pro toto for all marriages and legally registered cohabitations. Even though cohabiting is an important alternative to marriage following divorce (see e.g. De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2003), there were too few cases to conduct reliable analyses on cohabitation as an alternative.[24] For this reason, cohabitation is not included as a separate variable, although cohabitations are included as cases in this dataset. If a marriage occurred within

the same year as a cohabitation, we consider only the marriage. We also excluded marriages that were dissolved by widowhood.

The descriptive analyses (Tables 13.1 and 13.2) are based on first marriages that were formed and dissolved between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2007, and were followed until 1 January 2009 (Moroccan N = 2464; Turkish N = 857). Furthermore, the explanatory analyses (Table 13.3) are based on first marriages that were formed and dissolved between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009, with the possibility of remarriage within this period (Moroccan N = 5624; Turkish N = 1851). The final part of our analyses contains bivariate analyses on all remarriages in the dataset between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009 (Table 13.4), which were preceded by first marriages that were formed and dissolved between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2007 (Moroccan N = 1561; Turkish N = 448).

13.6 Variables

The likelihood of remarriage is a dichotomous variable (0 = Not remarried, 1 = Remarried) indicating whether an individual did or did not remarry in a given year. This variable varies by time. If a person remarried in a given year, the likelihood of remarriage is '1' only for that year. Previous years are designated as 'Not remarried'.

Divorce duration reflects the length of time from the divorce until remarriage or censorship: respondents who were still divorced in 2009 'disappear' (i.e. are censored) from the dataset. The minimum duration of the divorced period is zero years (divorced and remarried in the same year), and the maximum duration is seven years (divorced in 2001 and remarried in 2008).

Type of the first marriage is an eight-category variable that combines gender (man or woman) with the four possible partner choices: a former marriage migrant marrying a Moroccan or Turkish Belgian ('Former marriage migrant') or a Moroccan or Turkish Belgian marrying a partner from the country of origin ('Transnational marriage'), a local intra-ethnic partner ('Local') or a partner of Belgian or other Western European citizenship ('Mixed'). The first three categories refer to marriages between people of the same nationality at birth. Mixed marriages include all marriages to partners of Belgian or other Western European citizenship.

Generation is a three-category variable (1 = First generation, 2 = 1.5 Generation, 3 = Second generation) based on country of birth and age at migration. The first generation consists of migrants who were older than 15 years of age at migration. Respondents who migrated between the ages of 6 and 15 years are designated as 1.5-generation migrants. Finally, respondents who migrated before the age of six years or who were born in Belgium are classified as second-generation migrants.

Age at divorce is a metric variable controlling for the differential likelihood of divorce due to age-based differences in opportunities to meet.

The duration of the first marriage is a control variable as well, defined as the length of time between the first marriage and the subsequent divorce.

Divorce year is a metric variable controlling for the year in which the first marriage was dissolved.

Descriptive analyses of our variables are presented in Table 13.1. We omitted the Generation variable from the multivariate analyses due to multicollinearity, as all former marriage migrants are classified as first-generation by definition.

Table 13.1. Descriptive statistics

	Moroccan				Turkish			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Range	N (%) Mean (S.D)	Range	N (%) Mean (S.D)	Range	N (%) Mean (S.D)	Range	N (%) Mean (S.D)
First marriage type								
Former marriage migrant	0/1	357 (25.9)	0/1	394 (36.4)	0/1	155 (33.7)	0/1	156 (39.3)
Transnational	0/1	422 (30.6)	0/1	357 (33.0)	0/1	177 (38.5)	0/1	162 (40.8)
Local intra-ethnic	0/1	265 (19.2)	0/1	247 (22.8)	0/1	77 (16.7)	0/1	68 (17.1)
Mixed	0/1	337 (24.4)	0/1	85 (7.8)	0/1	51 (11.1)	0/1	11 (2.8)
Generation								
First	0/1	777 (56.3)	0/1	512 (47.3)	0/1	206 (44.8)	0/1	171 (43.1)
1.5	0/1	56 (4.1)	0/1	30 (2.8)	0/1	33 (7.2)	0/1	17 (4.3)
Second	0/1	548 (39.7)	0/1	541 (50.0)	0/1	221 (48.0)	0/1	209 (52.6)
Age at divorce	19-60	29.9 (4.8)	18-46	27.2 (5.0)	18-44	26.7 (4.7)	18-47	25.5 (5.0)
Duration of prior marriage	0-5	3.0 (1.1)	0-5	3.1 (1.1)	0-5	2.8 (1.2)	0-5	2.8 (1.1)

N Moroccan men = 1,381; N Moroccan women = 1,083; N Turkish men = 460; N Turkish women = 397

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

13.7 Method

We start with descriptive analyses focusing on the crude remarriage rates of Turkish and Moroccan men and women. To answer our first research question (concerning remarriage rates according to type of first marriage and the difference between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians), we perform event-history analyses on all first marriages ending in divorce between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009, which were followed until 1 January 2009. For these analyses, we convert the dataset to a person-period file (Yamaguchi, 1991). Because our time frame is limited, it provides no information on events occurring after 31 December 2008, thus reducing the likelihood of remarriage for respondents who divorced by the end of this period. Event-history analysis is therefore indispensable for coping with this kind of censoring (Yamaguchi, 1991). Our person-period file generates 12,168 Moroccan and 4231 Turkish person-years. We use piecewise constant log-rate models with effect coding to compare and interpret the effect of the variable 'First marriage type'. We use effect coding to compare and interpret the effect of each category of 'First marriage type' to the mean for the specific group (Turkish or Moroccan). The fourth polynomial time function (divorce duration) fits our data most accurately for both the Turkish and Moroccan groups. About 90% of the respondents were remarried after two years, with a peak after one year.

We subsequently use descriptive bivariate analysis to investigate the second research question (concerning the link between the first and the second marriage type).

The analyses are based on data from the Belgian national register, which constitute population data. In this case, significance testing (i.e. testing the probability of drawing a sample by chance from a population that meets the

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assumptions of the null hypothesis) is not needed, as the population data are not random samples.

13.8 Results

13.8.1 Remarriage of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians (descriptive)

The percentage of remarriages occurring between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009 amongst migrants who both established their first marriage and got divorced between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2007 are presented in Table 13.2. Our first hypothesis predicts that the prevalence of remarriage is lower amongst Moroccan Belgians compared to Turkish Belgians (H1). Our results show a small difference between the Moroccan and Turkish group, with remarriages being slightly less prevalent amongst the latter. This is the opposite of what we predicted; remarriage is not more prevalent amongst Turkish Belgians, on the contrary, Moroccan Belgians tend to remarry more often within the timeframe of this study.

Furthermore, our second hypotheses predict differences in partner choice preferences when remarrying between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. First, we hypothesize that the prevalence of transnational remarriage is higher amongst Turkish Belgians compared to Moroccan Belgians (H2a). Our results clearly confirm this: transnational remarriage is much more popular amongst Turkish Belgians (Men = 74.7%, Women = 77.9%) compared to Moroccan Belgians (Men = 70.8%, Women = 61.2%). Second, we predict that the prevalence of mixed remarriage is higher amongst Moroccan Belgians compared to Turkish Belgians (H2b). Again, our results support this hypothesis: mixed remarriage is much more prevalent amongst Moroccan Belgians (Men = 6.4%, Women = 5.1%) compared to Turkish Belgians (Men = 3.6%, Women = 1%).

Table 13.2. Percentage of remarriages for first marriages (married and divorced between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2007, possibly remarried between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009) according to gender and nationality at birth

	Moroccan		Turkish	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
% Remarried	44.0%	43.2%	39.3%	39.8%
Total N	1381	1083	460	397

N Moroccan men = 1,381; N Moroccan women = 1,083; N Turkish men = 460;

N Turkish women = 397

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

13.8.2 The likelihood of remarriage according to first marriage type (event-history)

In this section, we further elaborate on the likelihood of remarriage, according to first marriage type. The results of the event-history analysis can be found in Table 13.3.

In the third hypothesis we predict that former marriage migrants have the highest remarriage rates, as compared to the other three marriage types. When compared to the group mean, all marriage migrants, with the exception of Moroccan men, have the highest likelihood of remarriage within the time frame addressed in this study (B Mor. Women = 0.323, B Tur. Men = 0.207, B Tur. Women = 0.136), which confirms the hypothesis for Moroccan women and Turkish men and women. Male Moroccan former marriage migrants have slightly lower remarriage rates (B = 0.156) compared to Moroccan men whose

first marriages are local intra-ethnic (B = 0.170), which does not confirm hypothesis 3 for Moroccan men.

Another interesting observation that should receive some attention are the remarkably low remarriage rates amongst respondents whose first marriages are transnational (B Mor. Men = −0.588, B Mor. Women = −0.130, B Tur. Men = −0.506, B Tur. Women = −0.238).

Table 13.3. Relative remarriage rate (B) for first marriages (married, divorced, and possibly remarried between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009) according to first marriage type, gender[a] and nationality at birth[b]

	Moroccan	Turkish
Former marriage migrant - Men	0.156	0.207
Former marriage migrant - Women	0.323	0.136
Transnational - Men	-0.588	-0.506
Transnational - Women	-0.130	-0.238
Local intra-ethnic – Men	0.170	0.176
Local intra-ethnic – Women	-0.126	-0.148
Mixed – Men	-0.014	0.175
Mixed – Women	-0.180	/

N Moroccan men = 6,830; N Moroccan women = 5,338; N Turkish men = 2,287; N Turkish women = 1,944

[a]The gender refers to the gender of the Turkish or Moroccan Belgian resident

[b]We controlled for divorce year, age at divorce, and duration of first marriage

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

13.8.3 Partner choice in second marriage according to partner choice in first marriage (bivariate)

In this section, we focus on partner choice in the second marriage according to type of first marriage. The prevalence of each pattern of partner choice in the second marriage is displayed in Table 13.4, by first marriage type. For example, 80.1% of remarriages of male Moroccan former marriage migrants are transnational, 15.7% are local intra-ethnic, and 4.2% are mixed. When interpreting the results, we omit those for Turkish Belgians whose second marriages are mixed, which are unreliable given the extremely small number of cases (N = 11).

The fourth hypothesis predicts that, for all first marriage types, transnational remarriage is the most common partner choice in the second marriage, followed by local intra-ethnic remarriage and mixed remarriage. Even though our results show an overall strong preference for transnational remarriage (Moroccan men = 70.8%, Moroccan women = 61.2%, Turkish men = 76.1%, Turkish women = 77.9%) amongst almost all first marriage types (even amongst mixed marriages), there are a few exceptions amongst Moroccan women. Moroccan women whose first marriage was transnational and whose first marriage was local intra-ethnic prefer local intra-ethnic remarriage (48.2% and 50.7%, respectively) to transnational remarriage (45.1% and 41.8%, respectively). The fourth hypothesis can therefore be confirmed for all first marriage types, with the exception of Moroccan women whose first marriage was transnational and local intra-ethnic.

Furthermore, even though we expect transnational remarriage to be the preferred partner choice when remarrying, we expect differences in remarriage preferences according to the first marriage type. First, we predict that transnational remarriage is more common amongst former marriage migrants

(H5a). Transnational remarriage is clearly the most prevalent marriage type amongst male (80.1%) and female (81.2%) Moroccan and female Turkish (85.9%) former marriage migrants, which confirms the hypothesis for these subgroups. Even though the prevalence of transnational remarriage is high as well amongst male Turkish former marriage migrants (78.9%), transnational remarriage is more common after a mixed marriage (87.8%).

Second, we expect mixed remarriage to be more common amongst Moroccan Belgians whose first marriage is mixed (H5b). We do not focus on Turkish Belgians given the low number of mixed remarriage (N = 11). This hypothesis can only be confirmed for Moroccan women: mixed remarriage is more prevalent amongst Moroccan women whose first marriage is mixed (16.4%). However, for Moroccan men, mixed remarriage is much more popular when the first marriage is transnational (13.4%), while mixed remarriage is less prevalent amongst those whose first marriage is mixed (5.2%).

Table 13.4. Second marriage types, according to first marriage type, gender[a] and nationality at birth (N (%) (married and divorced between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2007, remarried between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009)

		Second marriage type					
		Moroccan			Turkish		
		Transnational	Local intra-ethnic	Mixed	Transnational	Local intra-ethnic	Mixed
First marriage type	Former marriage migrant – Men	209 (80.1)	41 (15.7)	11 (4.2)	75 (78.9)	16 (16.8)	4 (4.2)
	Former marriage migrant - Women	250 (81.2)	55 (17.9)	3 (1.0)	79 (85.9)	13 (14.1)	0 (0.0)
	Transnational – Men	99 (57.6)	50 (29.1)	23 (13.4)	44 (64.7)	22 (32.4)	2 (2.9)
	Transnational - Women	87 (45.1)	93 (48.2)	13 (6.7)	51 (75.0)	17 (25.0)	0 (0.0)
	Local intra-ethnic – Men	115 (60.5)	66 (34.7)	9 (4.7)	31 (68.9)	14 (31.1)	0 (0.0)
	Local intra-ethnic - Women	56 (41.8)	68 (50.7)	10 (7.5)	22 (61.1)	12 (33.3)	2 (5.6)
	Mixed – Men	194 (78.2)	41 (16.5)	13 (5.2)	36 (87.8)	2 (4.9)	3 (7.3)
	Mixed - Women	29 (52.7)	17 (30.9)	9 (16.4)	3 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Overall	1039 (66.6)	431 (27.6)	91 (5.8)	341 (76.1)	96 (21.4)	11 (2.5)

N Moroccan men = 871; N Moroccan women = 690; N Turkish men = 249; N Turkish women = 199

[a]The gender refers to the gender of the Turkish or Moroccan Belgian resident

Source: Belgian national register, own calculations.

13.9 Conclusion and discussion

The recent transition in marital behaviour towards individualization and integration amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians (i.e. a decreasing prevalence of transnational marriages, increased levels of mixed marriages, and higher divorce rates, see for example Dupont et al., 2017; Dupont et al., 2017a; Van Kerckem et al., 2013) has not (yet) been replicated in second marriages. Several aspects of the remarriage behaviour of recent Turkish and Moroccan marriage cohorts relate to this.

First, the recent increase in divorce rates (Dupont et al., 2017a) has been accompanied by high remarriage rates, thus indicating the perseverance of the importance of marriage as an institution instead of its erosion. Of all Moroccan and Turkish Belgians (both male and female) who divorced between 2001 and 2006, around 40% remarried between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009. Although more than one in three remarried within this short period (these were the 'fast remarriers'), even higher numbers are to be expected when 'slow remarriers' are also included. Koelet et al. (2009) show that in 2004, around 65% of divorced Moroccan and Turkish men, and around 55% of divorced Moroccan and Turkish women in Belgium were remarried.

Second, our results reveal an overall preference for transnational remarriages. The contrast is particularly apparent in comparison to partner-choice patterns of first marriages. While 52% of Turkish and 44% of Moroccan first marriages are transnational (see Dupont et al., 2017b), the popularity of transnational remarriage is almost 25% higher. The strong emphasis on family and the associated disapproval of divorce might result in reputation damage within the local ethnic marriage market (Welslau & Deven, 2003; Hooghiemstra, 2003) and lead the search for partners elsewhere. Given the strong preference of parents for intra-ethnic marriage and the strength of transnational ties, choosing a

partner from the country of origin would be a logical option (Reniers, 1999; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). Therefore, the transnational marriage market seems considerably less constrained than the local ethnic marriage market.

Third, the constraints of the local ethnic marriage market are even tighter for first-generation migrants in general, and former marriage migrants in particular. Marriage migrants have a greater tendency to remarry compared to Turkish and Moroccan Belgian residents. The risk of socio-economic decline and social isolation associated with divorce (Corluy & Verbist, 2010; Welslau & Deven, 2003) is particularly relevant for former marriage migrants, as they have only recently moved to a new country, leaving friends and family behind (especially within the time frame of this study). The local intra-ethnic marriage market might be more constrained for them while their transnational networks to their former communities might be more solid compared to the other groups. This is reflected in their partner choice for remarriage as well; especially former marriage migrants prefer transnational marriages. More generally, we found this pattern for all first-generation migrant. First-generation migrants are more likely to remarry (+7% higher relative to second-generation Turkish Belgians and +14% higher relative to second-generation Moroccan Belgians) and to choose transnational partners for their second marriage (+20% higher and +8% higher, respectively).

In addition to this, the higher prevalence of transnational remarriage amongst the first generation might explain the unexpected higher remarriage rates amongst Moroccan Belgians. Our dataset includes a higher share of divorced first-generation Moroccan Belgians compared to Turkish Belgians (respectively 52% and 44%). Combined with the higher tendency to remarry amongst the Moroccan first generation, this could substantially raise remarriage rates amongst Moroccan Belgians. When only focusing on the 1.5 and second

generation, remarriage rates of Moroccan Belgians become slightly lower compared to Turkish Belgians (respectively 34.9% and 35.2%).

Fourth, transnational remarriage is particularly common amongst men whose first marriages were to partners of Belgian or other Western European origin. This finding is surprising in light of our expectation that such individuals would be at a greater distance from their ethnic communities in Belgium and would be a select group more prone to divorce and intermarriage (Choi & Tienda, 2017; Obućina, 2016). As discussed previously in this paper, the rates for mixed remarriages were average, indicating that transnational remarriage is preferred to not remarrying at all. This finding suggests an awareness of the risks associated with mixed marriages, such as a lack of social support and cultural differences (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; van Huis & Steenhof, 2004), as reflected in the higher divorce risks of such marriages (Dupont et al., 2017a).

Even though remarriage is common amongst Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, with a clear preference for transnational remarriage, this does not rule out the presence of a (future) transition which might be stronger amongst the second generation. Second-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are less likely to remarry (−10.8% lower for Turkish Belgians, −13.1% lower for Moroccan Belgians) and show a higher preference for local intra-ethnic remarriage (+16% higher for Turkish Belgians, +24% higher for Moroccan Belgians) compared to the first generation. Furthermore, higher levels of cohabitation and a stronger tendency to remain single are prevalent among the second generation (Corijn & Lodewijckx, 2009b; Hartung et al., 2011). Therefore, remarriage in general, and transnational remarriage in particular might be more common amongst those groups for who the local ethnic marriage market seems to be more constrained.

This paper is subject to several limitations, most of which are due to the specificity of the data. First, this paper focuses on people who married for the

first time, divorced and possibly remarried between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009. This distinct group might not be representative of all migrants in the Moroccan and Turkish community in Belgium who will eventually remarry. Nevertheless, they might be important precursors. The relatively short time frame addressed in this study might also ignore the presence of mixed remarriages that could be established only after a longer period. The length of time between a divorce and the establishment of a mixed remarriage is usually longer than in the case of transnational remarriages. For all remarriages occurring between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009, the average time between the divorce and the remarriage was approximately 2.3 years for transnational remarriages and 3.7 years for mixed remarriages. Due to the lack of data on delayed remarriages, the number of transnational remarriages is probably exaggerated in our analyses.

The second limitation is related to the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities in Belgium beginning in the early 1990s. As a result, second-generation migrants might be under-represented in our dataset. Since 1984, Belgian nationality has automatically been granted at birth to children born in Belgium to at least one parent with Belgian nationality. Although these individuals are not included in the second-generation group, they could be regarded as belonging to it. In our estimation, however, this is not a substantial problem, as the large-scale naturalization programs occurred only in the early 1990s. Given that the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years, automatic naturalization eliminates only a small number of individuals from this group.

Third, since our dataset includes the complete population of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who married, divorced and possibly remarried between 1 January 2001 and 1 January 2009, we bypass problems of representativeness, attrition etc. However, some censoring is inevitable. We have to assume that these censored cases are not a selective sub-group and that the censoring

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occurred independently of the risk of getting divorced. Within life course research, 'the end of the observation window (...) is normally determined independently from the substantive process under study, this type of right censoring is unproblematic' (Blossfeld & Rohwer, 2002, p. 41). We still assume the relevance of our limited observation window, given that marriages become increasingly stable over time (Kulu, 2014).

A fourth limitation of our analysis relates to the lack of socio-economic variables and the lack of information about children. Socio-economic status could have an impact on the preference for and possibility of meeting potential future partners. Furthermore, children could play an important role in the decision to remarry or not (Pasteels & Mortelmans, 2015). Finally, we lack information on whether respondents had met their new partners before or after the divorce, or whether the new partner was the cause of the divorce. Based on De Graaf and Kalmijn (2003), we identified one condition that suggests the presence of such a situation: divorce and remarriage occurring within the same year. We therefore excluded these cases from our analyses.

Part III. Conclusion

Chapter 14. Conclusion

The final chapter of this dissertation starts with a reflection on transnational marriages and integration processes. After that, the main findings are presented in the form of a short answer to each research question based on the results of the empirical chapters and an elaboration of, and a discussion on these questions. The general conclusion and main take-away points are offered after that. This is followed by the implications of these findings for more recently settled migrant groups, and for other Western European countries. Finally, the limitations and suggestions for further research are considered.

14.1 Transnational marriages and integration

Given the on-going influx of first-generation migrants (Lievens, 1999, 2000; Reniers 1999), the concern exists that transnational marriages i.e. marriages with a partner from the country of origin, would slowdown the integration process (Heyse et al., 2007). Moreover, the choice for a partner from the country of origin might be seen as an obstacle to the integration process because the migrant might be less bound to the receiving society but rather connects to the country of origin, or it might even be regarded as a sign of failed integration (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Lichter, Carmalt, & Qian, 2011). In contrast to transnational marriages, intermarriage is often considered an expression of successful integration by both policymakers and scholars (see for example Alba & Golden, 1986; Coleman, 1994; Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Gordon, 1964; Kulu & González-Ferrer, 2014; Waters & Jiménez, 2005).

The meaning of integration is not always clear, however. Scholars often use 'integration' to refer to immigrants' structural incorporation into the core institutions of the receiving society over generations, such as in education and employment, and it might include participation in informal social relations in local communities as well (Alba, Reitz, & Simon, 2012; Schneider & Crul, 2010). In this respect, some degree of cultural integrity is maintained, while at the same time immigrants participate as an integral part of society. In contrast to this, assimilation signifies the adaptation of one's cultural identity to that of the receiving society (Berry, 1997). Regarding the dimensions of integration, the most often used distinction is made between structural integration – the rights, participation, and status within the core institutions of the receiving society, such as employment and education – and social-cultural integration (Dagevos & Schellingerhout, 2003; Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; Snel, Engbersen, & Leerkes, 2006; Vermeulen & Penninx, 1994). The latter can be further divided into cultural integration or acculturation – cognitive, behavioural, and attitudinal conformity to the dominant norms of receiving societies –, interactive or social integration – social intercourse, friendship, marriage, and membership of organizations –, and identificational integration – feelings of belonging (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015; King & Skeldon, 2010).

Even though these dimensions are strongly related rather than mutually exclusive (Odé, 2002; Snel, Engbersen, & Leerkes, 2006), I reflected on the social component of integration, and more specifically on partner-choice patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians. I argued that perceiving the choice for a transnational marriage as an indicator of failed integration might be problematic given that transnational marriages are the logical outcome of a migration process and are part of broader group processes (Williams, 2013). These marriages take place within a transnational space; a space that makes each subsequent migration substantially easier and that facilitates

transnational marriages through transnational bonds (Haug, 2008). Given the existence of a transnational space, the partner choice of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might be oriented on (1) co-ethnics in the receiving society (local intra-ethnic marriage), (2) people with another ethnicity in the receiving society in general and the ethnic majority in particular (mixed marriage), and (3) non-immigrants in the origin society (transnational marriage).

Through successive generations and over time, the orientation of immigrant groups might shift as the strength of group boundaries between immigrants (and their descendants) and the ethnic majority, and between immigrants (and their descendants) and non-immigrants in the origin society changes. In this respect, partner-choice patterns of immigrants can be perceived as a clear indicator of the strength of group boundaries.

Even though this orientation might be influenced by a myriad of factors, I perceived this orientation in this dissertation as the product of three sources of influence: (1) integration processes, perceived as exposure to the receiving society, (2) characteristics of the receiving society, and (3) networks between migrant communities in sending and receiving societies. Furthermore, I added a life course perspective which included a focus on divorce and second marriages.

To examine these influences as well as the life course perspective, I used data from the Belgian national register and selected first marriages concluded between 01/01/2001 and 01/01/2009 of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, given the frequent occurrence of transnational marriages within these groups, they are large enough to examine structural influences, and they are long established to examine evolutions in marital behaviour.

14.2 Main findings

14.2.1 Integration and transnational marriages

Concerning the social component of integration, integration relates to associations between the ethnic minority and majority, and thus indicates the strength of boundaries between them (Van Craen, Vancluysen, & Ackaert, 2007). Over generations, therefore, group boundaries between the ethnic minority and majority might weaken which likely results in more frequent associations (Alba & Nee, 2003). This likely happens at a different pace, depending on the specificities of the ethnic minority group, such as cultural and social characteristics. In this dissertation, I include the transnational space in which associations and relations can be established. Therefore, the degree of integration might play a role in the choice for transnational marriages as well since the distance to non-migrants in the country of residence might enlarge.

Research questions and their answers

1. Does the prevalence of transnational marriages evolve in accordance with integration processes?

> ➤ *1a. Is there a generational shift discernible? (chapters 9, 10, 11)*

In short: yes. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 find clear generational differences. More often, second-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians choose a local intra-ethnic partner rather than a transnational partner compared to first-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians.

> ➤ *1b. does the prevalence evolve through time for all generations (chapter 10)*

Chapter 9 clearly describes a downward trend in the prevalence of transnational marriages for Moroccan Belgians. This same trend was already described for Turkish Belgians in Van Kerckem et al. (2013). Furthermore, this decline remains prominent after controlling for age differences, generational changes, changes through time, and contextual influences.

Elaboration and discussion

During the time frame addressed in this dissertation, the prevalence of transnational marriages is declining, while local intra-ethnic marriages have surpassed the prevalence of transnational marriages by 2002 for Moroccan women, by 2008 for Turkish men and women, and by 2006 for Moroccan men. This shift might be caused by several factors. Cultural differences between the partner coming from the country of origin and the partner residing in Belgium, such as differences in norms and expectations concerning gender roles, might put strain on transnational marriages (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman et al., 2009; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Apart from cultural differences, many more (related) problems may emerge. A first issue concerns the uncertainty about the motives of the migrated spouse because an individual can never be certain whether the partner marries for 'true love' or because of other, often less romantic, motives (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Timmerman, 2008). In addition, accurate knowledge about the situation in the destination country and Western European countries in general, is in many cases lacking, which might result in a distorted idealized image within the country of origin (Timmerman, 2008).

Because of these reasons, Turkish and Moroccan Belgians might develop a careful attitude towards transnational marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

In addition to this, second-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are even more likely to prefer local intra-ethnic marriages to transnational ones and can therefore be considered as the catalyst for the aforementioned changes. Second-generation migrants in general originating from third countries, and Turkish and Moroccan Belgians more specifically, prefer local (and mixed) marriages to a greater extent compared to first-generation migrants and this likelihood is even rising. This suggests that over generations, a process of integration, or at least weaker boundaries are present between the ethnic majority, and the second generation (Alba & Nee, 2003) and that they are stronger between the second generation and co-ethnics in their origin country.

First-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians are more likely to marry transnationally compared to the second generation. This is not surprising, given that the first generation is probably more culturally similar to partners from the origin country because they were born and raised there (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007). Therefore, boundaries between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and co-ethnic in their country of origin are weaker for the first generation, while boundaries between the first generation and the local community are stronger.

Besides generational differences in the strength of boundaries between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and co-ethnics in their country of origin, another explanation might clarify these findings. Having experienced the risks and problems related to transnational marriages, parents might be less keen to encourage their children to marry transnationally. Studies on Turkish Belgians support this reasoning: parents' stimulation is less geared towards the transnational market in recent years (Van Kerckem et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018).

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Furthermore, we briefly touch upon boundaries between the ethnic minority and majority. Even though they are the least prevalent partner choice for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, they are rising, not only over the course of 15 years (comparison with first marriages concluded between 01/01/1988 and 01/01/1991 in Eeckhaut et al., 2011), but within our time frame as well (from 2001 until 2008: Turkish men: 15.7 to 23.8%, Turkish women: 7.4% to 12.3%, Moroccan men: 22.1% to 26.7%, Moroccan women: stable on 18%). The prevalence of mixed marriages rose to a greater extent for the second generation compared to the first generation. Therefore, stronger boundaries are present between the first generation on the one hand, and the ethnic majority and the local community on the other hand, while the boundaries between the first generation and their co-ethnic in the country of origin are weaker (and vice versa for the second generation).

In short: mixed marriages are on the increase, transnational marriages on the decline, and the second generation takes the lead. While, of course, this is far from a textbook case of assimilation, given that both groups are already present in Belgium for half a century, it does show a clear shift in group boundaries.

14.2.2 The receiving society

Often, public debates on integration tend to perceive integration as a matter of personal choice of migrants, while neglecting how (socio-cultural) integration might be restricted by contextual constraints impeding structural integration (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015). Therefore, the degree of integration is affected by the local context as well (Lesthaeghe, 2000). Marrying transnationally is not only the outcome of the individual migrant's aspirations and attitudes, but is also the product of the social context one lives in (Itzigsohn & Giorguly-Saucedo,

2005; Surkyn, 2000). As Kalmijn (1998) points out: "marriage patterns result from both preference and opportunity. (…) endogamy does not necessarily point to a personally felt social distance toward a certain outgroup" (p. 397).

Research questions and their answers

2. How do structural conditions influence the choice for a transnational marriage?

> *2a. Does the marriage market in the country of residence influence the choice for transnational marriages? (chapters 9, 10, 11)*

In short: yes. This has been repeatedly observed within the empirical studies. Living within a larger ethnic community – the number of co-ethnic living in the same (in most cases) district – in Belgium has almost always been associated with lower levels of transnational marriage.

The influence of the sex ratio within the ethnic community received mixed support, however. Especially for men, a shortage of women within the local ethnic community generally encourages transnational marriages. This, however, does not seem to apply to women: a shortage of men within the local community does not encourage marrying transnationally to a greater extent compared to a situation when there is not a shortage.

> *2b. Do changes in structural conditions of the marriage market in the country of residence influence the prevalence of transnational marriages? (chapter 10)*

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We found no evidence for this research question. For example, a growing local ethnic community did not lead to a declining likelihood of transnational marriages. However, given the limited timeframe (2001-2008), we can assume that structural changes are inherently slow, which could explain the absence of longitudinal effects.

Elaboration and discussion

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 reveal the importance of structural factors in explaining partner-choice patterns. An unbalanced amount of women to men, as well as smaller communities stimulate transnational marriages. Therefore, even though boundaries between (especially second-generation) Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and co-ethnics in their country of origin might become stronger, marriage market constraints might still encourage Turkish and Moroccan Belgians to look for partners in the transnational marriage market. Therefore, constraints of the marriage market might not only stimulate interethnic marriages instead of endogamy (Kalmijn, 1998), but might result in a transnational orientation as well.

However, we found an important gender difference: men are more driven by the marriage market in their partner choice compared to women. Smaller local ethnic communities, as well as a shortage of women, are both great stimulators for men to leave the local marriage market, and directing the search for a partner towards the transnational marriage market. We did not find, however, such a strong influence of the local marriage market for women. Therefore, partner choice of women might be less driven by constraints of the local marriage market, but are rather subject to familial influence. This has also been reported with regard to prospective partners in the origin countries: men have

a greater intention to improve their own circumstances, while women are more tied to family relations (Heering et al., 2004). Furthermore, women are generally younger when marrying transnationally, which is typically associated with a greater parental influence (Lodewijckx, Page, & Schoenmaeckers, 1997). As a consequence, partner-choice patterns of women might be affected to a greater extent by their parents, than by (constraints of) the marriage market.

14.2.3 Group differences

The process of integration does not only take place at the individual level, but at the collective level of the immigrant group as well; the group might become an accepted part of civil society, or it might isolate itself (Penninx, 2005, 2007). Group-related characteristics, such as religion, and historically rooted conditions of immigrant groups might influence the partner-choice patterns as well, over and above current structural conditions. Historically rooted conditions, in this dissertation, refer to the strength of immigration networks that came into being by push and pull factors (Schoorl et al., 2000). Given that strong networks are likely to perpetuate the initial migration streams (Reniers, 1999), they are likely to encourage transnational marriages (Haug, 2008; Lievens, 2000). Therefore, partner-choice patterns might still bear the traces of these initial conditions.

3. Do historically rooted conditions of immigrant groups, in the form of strong networks between the origin and receiving societies, influence this choice? (chapter 11)

For migrant groups with a culture of migration in the country of origin and strong networks between origin and receiving societies – Turkish and Moroccan

Belgians –, levels of transnational marriages are high, compared to Algerian and Congolese migrant groups, for whom these networks are less firmly established.

Elaboration and discussion

Chapter 11 examined the partner-choice patterns of Turkish, Moroccan, Algerian, and Congolese Belgians. By applying a comparative framework, we tried to shed light on the importance of the early-established networks. These groups arrived in Belgium around the same time, in the 1960s, but under different circumstances, however. Turkish, Moroccan, and Algerian migration started out as labour migration in the 1960s. However, Algerian migration was less of a family matter, which resulted in the absence of strong networks (De Bock, 2012). Congolese migrants were typified by greater variety; they came as asylum seekers, students, businessmen, tourists, or diplomats, as part of the Belgian assistance to the decolonization, which resulted in weaker ties with the country of origin (Caestecker, 2011; Schoonvaere, 2010).

Especially for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, high levels of transnational marriages are observed. After the formal immigration stop in 1974, family reunification led to a strong system of migration (Reniers, 1999). In both Turkey and Morocco, a culture of migration was present which led to a high number of immigrants willing to migrate (Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerk, 2014). This culture was perpetuated by strong migration networks between origin and sending societies, and in turn operated as a feedback mechanism, which makes these migration networks self-perpetuating (de Haas, 2010). Moroccan immigration to Belgium was, however, typically less family-driven compared to

Turkish immigration, which might explain the slightly lower levels of transnational marriages.

However, given the decline in transnational marriages within Turkish and Moroccan communities, these networks might lose their self-perpetuating character – a trend called diminutive causation (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013; Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerck, 2014). Diminutive causation consists of a three-process (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013). First, macro-level factors, including a lack of labour market opportunities, migration policies, and social reception such as discrimination, changes the opinions and beliefs of settled migrants. Second, migration-undermining feedback takes place: these changed opinions and beliefs of settled migrations are reported to prospective migrants, which reduced their migration aspirations. Third, this negative feedback results in a changed migration culture by affecting the motivation to migrate of aspiring migrants (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013). Given the reported feelings of ethnocentrism and discrimination of ethnic minorities (Alanya, Swyngedouw, Vandezande, & Phalet, 2015) combined with the the risks and problems associated with transnational marriages (see Section 14.2.1), negative feedback mechanisms are likely to exist, which leads to fewer immigrants willing to migrate, and more specifically willing to marry a co-ethnic that already migrated.

In the absence of strong migration networks, as is the case for Algerian and Congolese Belgians (De Bock, 2012; Caestecker, 2011), structural conditions in the country of residence might play a more salient role in partner-choice patterns of these groups. Algerian immigrants in Belgium live in much smaller and dispersed communities compared to Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, which makes finding a partner within the local ethnic marriage market less likely. However, instead of turning to the transnational marriage market, high levels of interethnic marriage are observed for Algerian Belgians. Apparently, the

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French colonial past and knowledge of French might weaken barriers between Algerians and native Belgians.

Even though the Congolese immigrant groups are quite small as well, they are more strongly clustered compared to Algerian communities. This might explain the popularity of local intra-ethnic marriages amongst Congolese Belgians. Given the higher prevalence of mixed marriages for Algerian Belgians, the darker skin colour of Congolese Belgians might put up a much stronger barrier compared to religion, which is the reverse of what researchers found in Western European countries (see for example Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006), but is consistent with findings in the United States, where racial boundaries are stronger compared to language and cultural boundaries (Kalmijn, 1993).

We can conclude that networks play a pivotal role in the encouragement of transnational marriages. Even when structural conditions within local ethnic communities in Belgium might encourage transnational marriages, these marriages must be facilitated by strong migration networks.

14.2.4 A life course perspective

The trends in partner-choices patterns that we distinguished above, might, however, be counteracted by divorce patterns. These divorce patterns are, therefore, important in understanding the firmness and stability of group boundaries. In second marriages, migrants might adapt their partner choices after divorce given their new circumstances. Divorce patterns and the partner choice when remarrying, might indicate constraints of the marriage market and learning mechanisms after divorce (Choi & Tienda, 2017).

3. What is the stability of the different partner-choice patterns?

> *3a. Do divorce rates differ between the different partner-choice patterns? (chapter 12)*

Chapter 12 describes clear differences in divorce rates between the different partner-choice patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, albeit these differences have diminished over time. Local intra-ethnic marriages have the lowest divorce levels, interethnic the highest, and transnational marriages take up a middle position.

> *3b. Do these divorce rates evolve through time? (chapter 12)*

Yes, over the course of 15 years, divorce rates have doubled within Turkish and Moroccan migrant groups for all marriage types.

4. Do partner-selection patterns of the second marriage differ from patterns of the first marriage?

> *4a. Does the prevalence of entering into a second marriage depend on partner-choice patterns of the first marriage? (chapter 13)*

Yes they do. Marriage migrants from Turkey and Morocco – whose first marriage was transnational with a Turkish or Belgian resident – have a greater tendency to remarry compared to Turkish and Moroccan Belgian residents.

> ➤ *4b. Do partner-selection patterns in the second marriage differ according to (the stability of) partner-selection patterns in the first marriage? (chapter 13)*

Overall, transnational marriages are the most preferred partner choice when remarrying irrespective of partner-choice patterns of the first marriage. However, they are especially prevalent amongst marriage migrants.

Elaboration and discussion

A focus on first marriages only, would show a strong decline in transnational marriages, accelerated by a greater preference of the second generation for local intra-ethnic marriages. Moreover, transnational marriages are stimulated by strong immigration networks and structural constraints of the local ethnic community in Belgium. However, examining divorce and remarriage patterns clearly show the limits of these findings concerning first marriages.

First, Chapter 12 uncovered a trend towards rising divorce rates, given the doubling in divorce rates over the course of 15 years. The weaker orientation on the family, lower levels of social control, and less support within Moroccan communities in Belgium (compared to Turkish communities) (Lesthaeghe, 2000; Reniers, 1999) are not only translated in lower levels of transnational marriages compared to Turkish communities, but, apparently, in higher divorce risks as well. These higher divorce risks might be stimulated by the already high divorce rates in Morocco (Koelet, 2009a) and the much higher prevalence and divorce risks of mixed established by Moroccan Belgians.

Furthermore, Chapter 13 on second marriages demonstrates that marriage remains important despite the high levels of divorce within Turkish and Moroccan communities. Especially transnational remarriages are preferred,

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irrespective of the partner-choice of the first marriage. Even though feelings of ethnocentrism and discrimination, as well as problems and risks associated with transnational marriages such as cultural differences (Eeckhaut et al., 2011; Dupont et al., 2017a; Van Kerckem et al., 2013), resulted in more negative attitudes towards migration in general, and transnational marriages more specifically (Van Pottelberge et al., 2018), these kinds of marriages are still preferred when remarrying.

Especially first-generation migrants turn towards their country of origin when remarrying, which can be explained by the weaker boundaries between them and their co-ethnics in the country of origin. Even though the level of transnational marriages might be higher for second marriages of second-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, compared to the level of transnational marriages for first marriages, these levels are not as high when compared to the first generation. Therefore, even though the local intra-ethnic marriage market might be harder to access for divorced migrants, this is even harder for first-generation migrants compared to second-generation migrants.

When we take a quick look at mixed remarriage, we can conclude the following. Although the rise in mixed marriages might indicate that boundaries are weakening between the ethnic majority on the one hand, and Turkish and Moroccan Belgians on the other hand, the much higher divorce risks of these marriages compared to other marriage types results in a clear orientation towards the transnational market when remarrying.

We can conclude that the divorce status might also act as a boundary within the local marriage market. A boundary, which, despite of declining levels of transnational first marriages, steers migrants towards the marriage market in the country of origin. The local marriage market seems to be more welcoming to

some migrants – especially concerning generation and divorce status – compared to others.

14.3 Key take-away points

In short, the key take-away points of the answers on the research questions of this dissertation are as follows:

1. The prevalence of transnational marriages is declining for both Moroccan and Turkish Belgians, particularly within the second generation.
2. The local marriage market in Belgium influences the likelihood of choosing a transnational partner. Especially smaller ethnic communities push Turkish and Moroccan Belgians to the transnational marriage market.
3. Strong migration networks at the onset of migration facilitate transnational marriages and have a persistent effect over time.
4. Although divorce rates have doubled over the course of 15 years, remarriage rates are relatively high especially for marriage migrants.
5. Transnational marriages are the dominant partner choice in second marriages, especially amongst the first generation. Therefore, the transition from a transnational to a local orientation is not linear.

14.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Although the empirical studies in this dissertation led to some interesting conclusions, they unavoidably have a number of limitations. The specific shortcomings of each empirical chapter are discussed within that chapter. In what follows, I will discuss the general, most prominent limitations of this dissertation, with suggestions for future research.

An important benefit of using the Belgian national register, which contains population data, is that it includes the complete population of migrants originating from third countries. This enables us to bypass some potential problems of representativeness, attrition etc. However, while these data are rich in size and give us ample information on place of birth, nationality at birth, current nationality, age, sex, type of partnership, as well as changes in marital status up to 2011, it lacks information on a few important variables. For example, there is no information on the socio-economic background. The educational level of individual migrants is for this reason unknown. Socio-economic status could have an impact on the preference for and possibility of meeting potential future partners. For example, Lievens (1999) demonstrated that transnational marriages were much more prevalent among Turkish women who were highly educated compared to the lower educated ones, while the opposite was found for Turkish men. Furthermore, exchange hypotheses argue that members of ethnic minority groups have a higher chance of interethnic marriage when their socio-economic status is higher (Davis, 1941; Merton, 1941; Dribe & Lundh, 2008; Furtado, 2012; Meng & Gregory, 2005). Furthermore, the socio-economic status of marriage migrants is unknown, which might provide insight into their migration motives. Finally, those with sufficient economic resources may have a higher propensity to postpone or to not remarry at all (Meggiolaro & Ongaro, 2015).

Furthermore, the data lack information on the ethnic background of migrants. Given that it only includes the nationality at birth, country of birth, and current nationality, ethnic and religious differences within nationalities are obscured. For example, even though Berbers and Arabs in Morocco have the same nationality at birth, they are two ethnic groups and might therefore differ substantially in many respects. Related to this, while we argue that religion might act as a strong boundary, we are unable to capture the individual migrant's religious affiliation and the level of religiosity.

In addition to this, while we have information when the marriage or cohabitation was established, information on when respondents met their partner is lacking. As a consequence, when examining remarriage, we do not know whether respondents had met their new partners before or after the divorce, or whether a new partner was the cause of the divorce. We also lack information on the presence of children, which might affect partner choices, as well as the decision to divorce or remarry. Especially for remarriage, this might be important, since children could act as a barrier to repartnering, especially for women, who are often the primary caregivers (Pasteels & Mortelmans, 2015). Not only are individuals with children often less attractive in the marriage market, these parents themselves might be less interested in remarrying because the need for mother- or fatherhood has already been satisfied, and because of fear of conflicts with their children when remarrying (Meggiolaro & Ongaro, 2015).

Our extraction from the Belgian national register includes legally registered partnerships only. Therefore, it does not contain information on unregistered cohabitations and asylum seekers. Unregistered cohabitations might be an important alternative, especially after divorce. However, given the low prevalence of legally registered cohabitations within our timeframe, we assume that unregistered cohabitations happen sporadically as well. Especially in the

case of transnational marriages, the condition of establishing a legal partnership, whether it be a marriage or a legal cohabitation, is primordial for entering Belgium (Milewski & Hamel, 2010).

Another limitation is related to the automatic naturalization of ethnic minorities in Belgium beginning in the early 1990s. As a result, second-generation migrants born after 1984 might be under-represented in our dataset. Since 1984, Belgian nationality has automatically been granted at birth to children born in Belgium to at least one parent with Belgian nationality. Although these individuals are not included in our second-generation group, they could be regarded as belonging to it. In our estimation, however, this is not a large group, as the large-scale naturalization programs occurred only in the early 1990s. Given that the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years, automatic naturalization eliminates only a small number of individuals from this group.

Because we use data from the Belgian national register, migrants are only included according to the formal reasons why their residence permits were obtained. However, the legal reason for issuing a residence permit does not necessarily reflect the real reason for migration. Given the recent restrictions on family reunification, other immigration channels, such as applying for immigration because of humanitarian reasons, might to a greater extent than before, obscure – at least for those immigrants coming from war torn countries or countries with a record of not respecting human rights – a continuing influx of marriage migrants.

Within the same vein, lower levels of transnational first marriages do not equal lower levels of intention to establish those marriages. However, following diminutive causation theories, negative feedback might result in a changed migration culture in the origin country (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren,

2013); a process that might be present within ethnic communities in the receiving society as well.

Related to this, our data only provide information on the actual partner-choice behaviour of immigrants, which does not necessarily reflect the intentions of immigrants. In the case of transnational marriage, the legal reason for issuing a residence permit does not necessarily reflect the real reason for migration (Timmerman et al., 2015). Furthermore, this is apparent as well in research on cohabitation; de Valk and Liefbroer (2007a) found that, while a considerable proportion of young Turkish and Moroccan Belgians favoured a period of unmarried cohabitation before marriage, this is rarely translated in actual behaviour. The most important explanation might be that parents, or third parties more generally, might restrict actual formation practices. Therefore, questionnaires might provide insight into the intentions of immigrants in Belgium.

Moreover, we do not have any information on the relation status of immigrants in their country of origin. Therefore, marriage migrants might already be divorced before migration to Belgium.

Given that the decline in transnational marriages might be partly explained by changed attitudes towards transnational marriages and problems associated with them (Van Kerckem et al, 2013; Van Pottelberge et al, 2018), it might be useful to implement qualitative research when examining why the orientation shifts rather firmly towards the transnational marriage market when remarrying. Research indicated that Moroccan and Turkish spouses stress their own autonomy and happiness in their decision to divorce (Koelet et al., 2009a). Therefore, the question is, whether the same applies for (the partner choice in) second marriages.

These data limitations are all related to the nature of the Belgian national register. Therefore, future research using qualitative and attitudinal research, instead of official statistics, might provide more insight into the motives of immigration, and give us more details on the immigrants themselves.

Furthermore, integration can be considered as a two-way process that is dynamic and mutual: assimilation (or integration) requires some level of change and acceptance by the mainstream (Nee & Alba, 2012; Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003). However, the reception side – partner choice-patterns of the ethnic majority – has not been examined directly. We do not know whether a rise in mixed marriages can be attributed to changes in the ethnic minority, ethnic majority, or both. Moreover, integration can only be successfully pursued when the society is open and inclusive (Berry, 1991).

Moreover, given the limited time span, only 'fast divorcers' and 'fast remarriers' are included. Given the low age at the first marriage, remarriage ages within the sample of this dissertation are still low. Therefore, around the same share of men and women remarry within our selected time span. When including a larger time span, marriage age might result in an important source of inequality. Men generally prefer younger women, while women are more drawn towards age homogamy (Dunn et al., 2010). Therefore, it is more challenging for older women to find a suitable partner (Kolk, 2015).

Related to our timespan, the period to be eligible for a permanent residence permit was increased from 15 months to three years, which was governed by the new Residence Act that took effect on 01/06/2007. For marriages established between 2001 and 2007 – the investigated timeframe in this dissertation runs from 01/01/2001 until 01/01/2009 –, therefore, a divorce after 15 months has therefore no influence on the immigration status of marriage migrants, which makes them in turn eligible for the establishment of a transnational marriage

after divorce (Caestecker & D'hondt, 2005). However, partners establishing their first marriage after 01/06/2007 (until 01/01/2009) might be more reluctant to divorce. But because our time frame is limited, first marriages established at the end of this period are less likely to divorce and remarry anyway, which is why we used event-history analyses to cope with this kind of censoring (Yamaguchi, 1991). Furthermore, additional analyses revealed that the divorce peak happens after three years of marriage, for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians alike. Therefore, the distortion of the results will most likely only be minimal.

14.5 Implications

14.5.1 Transnational marriages and integration

I started this dissertation by referring to the concern that might be present among the public and policy makers that transnational marriages would slowdown the integration process and that the choice for these marriages is a sign of failed integration (Hooghiemstra, 2001; Heyse et al., 2007; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Lichter, Carmalt, & Qian, 2011). This contrasts with intermarriage, which is often considered as an expression of successful integration by both policymakers and scholars (see for example, Dribe & Lundh, 2011; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). In this dissertation, I tried to offer a new perspective on transnational marriages that does not solely focus on partner-choice patterns as merely an indicator of integration.

In this dissertation, partner-choice patterns of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians were perceived as the orientation of these groups towards the local or transnational marriage market and as a reflection of the strength of group boundaries, not only between Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and the ethnic majority, but between them and non-immigrants in the origin society as well. I

distinguished three sources of influence on this orientation: (1) integration processes, perceived as the exposure to the receiving society (2) characteristics of the receiving society, and (3) of networks between migrant communities in sending and receiving societies of migrant groups.

When only considering first marriages, the orientation of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians shifted from a transnational one to a local one. This transition has likely been the outcome of a multitude of influence, of which a few can be identified. First, previous research reported changed attitudes of parents and their offspring (Van Kecked et al., 2013; Van Pottelberge et al., 2018). These changed attitudes are likely related to the experienced risks and problems associated with transnational marriages, which is reflected in their high divorce rates. Second, changed opinions on transnational marriages might operate as a negative feedback mechanism affecting immigration tendencies of prospective migrants (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013; Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerck, 2014). Third, a growing second-generation group prefers a local co-ethnic partner, a partner that is more similar to them with respect to socialization processes and the cultural background (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007). Boundaries are, therefore, much weaker for the second generation compared to the first generation. However, for some groups, the marriage market in the origin country might still be a more feasible option.

This dissertation, however, shows that, given the presence strong transnational networks between the origin and residence society, embedded in a strong system of migration, the marriage market in the origin country remains an important option for some groups. Especially nowadays, given the easy travel, mass media, and fast communications, frequent contacts with the origin community are easily maintainable which might result in a preserved allegiance to the community of origin and therefore an extended marriage market that expands to the country of origin (Lesthaeghe, 2000).

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Especially first-generation Turkish and Moroccan Belgians and marriage migrants are oriented towards the marriage market in their country of origin when (re)marrying, which is probably the most logical option for them, given that their transnational networks to the former communities might be more solid and recent.

Furthermore, what this dissertation shows is that, besides personal preferences, the orientation towards the marriage market in the origin country is often an answer to challenges in the local marriage market. For example, structural constraints in the marriage market in the country of residence, such as a shortage of potential partners in smaller ethnic communities, might stimulate transnational marriages. Moreover, boundaries within the local intra-ethnic marriage market appear to be much stronger for divorced migrants, which likely results from the strong emphasis on family and associated disapproval of divorce, stigmatization and reputation damage (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Welslau & Deven, 2003), necessitating divorcees to seek a partner in their country of origin. Therefore, the transition from an orientation towards the marriage market in the country of origin, to an orientation towards the marriage market in the country of residence, is not linear.

Moreover, I would like to briefly discuss the relationship between the level of education and partner-choice patterns. Even though it has been repeatedly shown that higher educated migrants have a higher likelihood of intermarriage compared to lower educated migrants (see for example, Dribe & Lundh, 2008; González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huscheck, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2012), this might not be true for everyone. For example, research on Turkish Belgians suggests that transnational marriages are much more prevalent among higher educated women compared to lower educated women (Lievens, 1999; Yilmaz et al., 2019). These women prefer like-minded partners with similar socio-economic status, and someone whom their family will approve of

(Yilmaz et al., 2019). As a consequence, intermarriage is often discouraged, because these marriages might threaten the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group (Kalmijn, 1998). Moreover, a limited pool of partners with similar educational level and socio-economic status within the local marriage market, makes transnational marriages more probably for highly educated Turkish women, even though they are aware of the risks and problems associated with these marriages. It therefore appears that, for highly educated women, that the marriage market in the origin is more appealing compared to the local marriage market.

Finally, conceptualizing intermarriage as indicating successful integration, ignores the presence of discrimination and ethnocentrism. Especially migrants of non-European origin are often disregarded, belittled, and even discriminated against, even though equal group status may be the prevailing norm (Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, & Verhaeghe, 2013). Even towards 'old' migrant groups, ethnocentric attitudes are still present (Coffé, Billiet, & Cambre, 2002; Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009). On an institutional level, strong social divisions between the ethnic majority and minorities in Belgium exist, not only concerning education, but regarding the socio-economic status and occupation as well (Corluy & Verbist, 2010; Phalet & Gijsberts, 2007; Phalet & Heath, 2011). Moreover, institutional discrimination occurs frequently as well, for example in the rental housing market (Van der Bracht, Coenen, & Van de Putte, 2015). The influence of ethnic prejudice was strongly present in, and influenced the daily lives of these migrants (Alanya, Swyngedouw, Vandezande, & Phalet, 2015; Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018). As a consequence, interethnic marriage has the lowest prevalence for Turkish and Moroccan Belgians.

In conclusion, this dissertation contests the conception of partner-choice patterns as merely an indicator of integration, given that the marriage market in the origin country might be the more logical option for some groups. While it
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can be expected that the prevalence of transnational marriages will decline over subsequent generations, I identified some groups that deviate from this pattern. Therefore, caution must be exercised when conceptualizing these patterns as indicating the level of integration. At best, it reflects the social component of integration. Ignoring this fact, would lead to an (over)simplification and incomplete understanding of why transnational marriages might be preferred.

14.5.2 Implications for recently settled migration groups

Chapter 9 revealed that transnational marriages are prevalent amongst all types of immigrants with varying background: besides their prevalence amongst long established migrant groups, they are prevalent amongst recently settled migrant groups as well, and they occur within migrant groups with different religious backgrounds. Even though the available body of research has demonstrated that transnational marriages in Western European countries is a phenomenon typical of migrant populations with a history of labour migration (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007; Hooghiemstra, 2003; Lievens, 1999; Reniers, 2001), we, therefore, have no reason to expect that transnational marriages, with varying degrees would not occur within recently settled migrant groups as well.

However, a distinction has to be made between factors stimulating the first migration streams, and those that lead to the perpetuation of them. Opportunity differentials on the political, economic, social, and cultural level, such as unemployment and war, have led the first migration streams to another country (Borjas, 1989; Ravlik, 2004; Schoorl et al., 2000). However, while it might be true that less well-off countries might provide a larger pool of potential marriage candidates, strong migration systems have to be established to stimulate transnational marriages (de Haas, 2010). Therefore, the factors that play a

crucial role in the initiation of migration possibly differ from the factors that lead to the perpetuation of migration (de Haas, 2010).

The establishment of strong migration networks are needed, and they become self-perpetuating by simultaneously increasing the aspirations and capabilities to migrate and reducing the risks and costs of prospective migrants (Faist, 1997; de Haas, 2010; Haug, 2008; Wegge, 2009). Contacts with the country of origin are facilitated when the migration process started as a more or less involuntary (state organized) and temporary project (with return migration as the default option for the future), when family members are still present in the country, and when migrants stem from strong (typically rural) communities. These are all factors that may stimulate the growth of a 'transnational social space' in the form of networks between the origin and destination country (Beck-Gernsheim, 2007). Therefore, transnational marriages and strong networks between ethnic communities in the country of origin and residence are intrinsically connected and transnational marriages can be considered as the logical outcome of migration.

It seems that, once a strong migration system has been established, migration streams in general, and transnational marriages more specifically, are easily continued e.g. Turkish and Moroccan migration. Nevertheless, even over time, its effectiveness diminishes e.g. diminutive causation; a process in which the second generation plays an important part (Engbersen, Snel, & van Meeteren, 2013; Timmerman, Hemmerechts, & De Clerk, 2014).

To illustrate this for more recently migrant groups: in 2015, a large influx of asylum seekers entered Belgium (Myria, 2017). In 2016, almost 9,000 immigrants originated from Syria, which puts Syria in the top five of immigration countries. One third of first residence permits to Syrian immigrants were granted based on family reasons, which is almost twice as

much as in 2015, and almost five times as much as in 2014. Therefore, for these recently settled groups of which asylum seekers constitute a significant part, family reunification in general, and, over time, transnational marriages, might become increasingly important in the future provided that strong migration networks are established. Recent numbers on the immigration streams of refugees – streams that are rapidly growing – show that they rely on family reunification as well (Myria, 2017).

However, the questions remains to what extent the severe restrictions on family reunification, and especially the income requirement of 120% of the living wage (Corbus, n.d.), may counter these processes for more recent migration streams. In the case of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians, transnational marriages were already declining before 2011 – when tight restrictions on family reunification were installed, such as an income requirement of 120%. Therefore, for joining recent immigrants, potential partners from deprived countries might be discouraged to migrate, while potential partners from prosperous countries will be less affected by these conditions. Consequently, more recently settled migrants characterized by strong migration networks might be oriented towards the local marriage market in the country of residence to a greater degree.

14.5.3. Implications for other Western European countries

In the previous section, we argued that transnational marriages might also be relevant for more recently settled migrant groups. Especially when a strong migration system has been formed, transnational marriages are easily facilitated (de Haas, 2010). The findings of this dissertation might not only be relevant for recently settled migrant groups, but for migrant groups in other countries as well.

To date, a large proportion of immigration streams to Western Europe still consist of family reunification streams. For all 28 European countries in 2008, 27.7% of all first residence permits were granted based on family reasons. For Belgium and its neighbouring countries, these numbers were even higher: 44% for Belgium, 43.4% for Germany, 45.3% for France, and 38.5% for the Netherlands (Eurostat, 2019).

In her review of research from several European countries, Beck-Gernsheim (2007) states that: "Again and again these studies reveal a similar trend, to be found over a number of years, in different countries, and for different migrant groups. In large numbers, migrants marry a partner from their family's country of origin" (p.275). For example, this has been found for Germany (Straßburger, 2005), the Netherlands (Bijl, Zorlu, van Rijn, Jennissen, & Blom, 2005), the United Kingdom (Shaw, 2003), and France (Milewski & Hamel, 2010).

Even though transnational marriages are quite prevalent, context plays an important role: Even though second-generation Turks still preferred a partner from their country of origin (in Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria), this prevalence might vary according to the context (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2012). For example, in Germany the majority of the second generation chose another co-ethnic from their own second generation, which might be explained by the large number of Turkish migrants in Germany.

To date, however, the preference of second-generation migrants in European countries might have already shifted to a preference for other second-generations migrants, as already illustrated in this dissertation. Recent studies demonstrated a decline in the preference for transnational marriages for Turkish migrants in the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden as well (Carol, Ersanilli, & Wagner, 2014; Loozen, de Valk, & Wobma, 2012).

Compared to its neighbouring countries, Belgium was one of the last countries to adopt strict requirements for family reunification in 2011 (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2012; Kulu-Glasgow & Leerkes, 2011). In the Netherlands, for example, where an income requirement of 120% was already implemented in 2004 (Kulu-Glasgow & Leerkes, 2011). Even though the prevalence of transnational marriages was already declining before 2004, it substantially decreased after the new legislation (Sterckx, Dagevos, Huijnk, & van Lisdonk, 2014). In the future, therefore, the decline in transnational marriages in Belgium might become more pronounced for those groups that experience more difficulties to meet the necessary requirements for family reunification.

We can conclude that, even though the context plays an important role, transnational marriages are a global phenomenon and occur amongst a wide variety of migrant groups. Based on trends in other countries, we can expect that the focus will shift from the transnational market towards the local marriage market in other countries as well, and that this evolution is not a linear one, given the high prevalence of transnational marriage in second marriages.

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Appendices

A Overview of my contribution to each of the empirical studies

<u>Chapter 9.</u> Van der Bracht, K., Dupont, E., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. Transnational marriages in Belgium: Analysis of origin and destination effects.Working paper

The actual development of this study, the analyses and the writing up of the first drafts of this paper were done by the first author. After that, I adapted the manuscript in cooperation with the third, fourth, and fifth co-author.

<u>Chapter 10.</u> Dupont, E., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. (2017). Partner migration in the Moroccan community. A focus on time and contextual evolutions. In *Moroccan migration in Belgium: More than 50 years of settlement,* eds. Timmerman, C., N. Fadil, I. Goddeeris, N. Clycq, & Ettourki, K., 105-124. Leuven University Press.

The specific focus of this article was developed through discussions between me and my co-authors. The development of this study, the analyses as well as the writing up of the article were done by myself. The other three authors provided their feedback on theoretical framework, analysis and structure of the manuscript and I adapted the manuscript accordingly.

<u>Chapter 11.</u> Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. (2017). Partner choices in long established migrant communities in Belgium. *Historical Life Course Studies* 4, 20-40.

The specific focus of this article was developed through discussions between me and my co-authors. The development of this study, the analyses as well as the writing up of the article were done by myself. The other four authors provided their feedback on theoretical framework, analysis and structure of the manuscript and I adapted the manuscript accordingly.

<u>Chapter 12.</u> Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. Divorce within Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium. Conditionally accepted in *European Journal of Population*
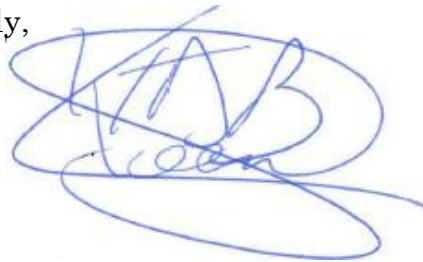
The specific focus of this article was developed through discussions between me and my co-authors. The development of this study, the analyses as well as the writing up of the article were done by myself. The other three authors provided their feedback on theoretical framework, analysis and structure of the manuscript and I adapted the manuscript accordingly.

<u>Chapter 13.</u> Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F. (2019). Love at second sight: remarriages in Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium. *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies*

The specific focus of this article was developed through discussions between me and my co-authors. The development of this study, the analyses as well as the writing up of the article were done by myself. The other three authors provided their feedback on theoretical framework, analysis and structure of the manuscript and I adapted the manuscript accordingly.
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B Permission document for the first empirical study (Chapter 9)

To whom it may concern:

As the first author, I hereby declare that I give Emilien Dupont permission to include the article 'Transnational marriages in Belgium: Analysis of origin and destination effects' by Van der Bracht, K., Dupont, E., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., & Caestecker, F as a chapter in her PhD dissertation.

Yours sincerely,

Koen Van der Bracht

Notes

[1] We use the term 'Turkish and Moroccan Belgians' to refer to all individuals of Turkish and Moroccan origin living in Belgium (either born or immigrated), while not necessarily having the Belgian nationality.

[2] For more information, see: Law of December 13 approving the bilateral agreements concerning the employment in Belgium of foreign employees.

[3] The former Yugoslavia now consists of the following countries: Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro.

[4] 120% Of the full-time minimum wage for persons aged 23 and above.

[5] Belgium consists of three regions: The Flemish Region, the Walloon Region, and the Brussels Capital Region.

[6] In 2001, Belgium consisted of 589 municipalities.

[7] In 2001, there were 43 Belgian districts in total which constitute the administrative level between municipalities and provinces in Belgium.

[8] Although we do not want to exhibit heteronormativity, we only examine different-sex partnerships given the very low numbers of same-sex partnerships (0.5% overall in our dataset).

[9] Given that we control for time this difference only applies to time zero, in this case 2001.

[10] Because this paper was published as a book chapter, its format differs from the other empirical chapters.

[11] Our models are estimated by applying Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) estimation procedures using MLwiN 2.24 and were first fitted using MQL1 estimation procedures before applying MCMC procedures.

[12] The variance at the individual level was fixed at $\pi^2/3$ because of the nature of logistic models.

[13] Within our analyses, we consider districts and not cities (for methodological reasons, see further). There are 43 Belgian districts in total which constitute the administrative level between municipalities and provinces in Belgium.

[14] One may expect that a high community size is associated with a lower diversity level.

[15] Turkish and Moroccan migrant groups have been extensively studied in Belgium. Belgian literature is much more scarce on Algerian and Congolese migrants (Schoonvaere, 2010; Swyngedouw & Swyngedouw, 2009).

[16] We assume that changes take place as a national trend within Belgium. However, because of the limited number of years (8) (Stegmueller, 2013) we cannot test the assumption that districts are nested within the marriage years and not the other way around. This will influence the interpretation of our results. Therefore, we have to speculate the nesting of districts within marriage years.

[17] The results for sex ratio are not straightforward to interpret. This may be related to the fact that the district is not necessarily the best geographic demarcation of a marriage market or that the underlying data are inappropriate (number of men and women of a given 'current nationality' irrespective of marital status is used as a measure).

[18] See the remark on the reference category stated higher.

[19] Kavas and Gündüz-Hoşgör (2010) suggest that methodological reason may cause the increase, however.

[20] Kavas and Gündüz-Hoşgör (2010) suggest that methodological reason may cause the increase, however.

[21] In this case a Turkish or Moroccan Belgian marrying a partner from Turkey or Morocco.

[22] French is one of the official languages in Belgium.

[23] These migrants encompass all Turkish and Moroccan Belgians of the first, 1.5, and second generation, who were already Belgian residents during their first marriage.

[24] Less than 1% of Turkish and Moroccan Belgians who remarried, were cohabitating during the first and second partnership.