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**WHO DO IMMIGRANTS MARRY?  
PARTNER'S CHOICE AMONG SINGLE IMMIGRANTS IN GERMANY**

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## 1. Introduction

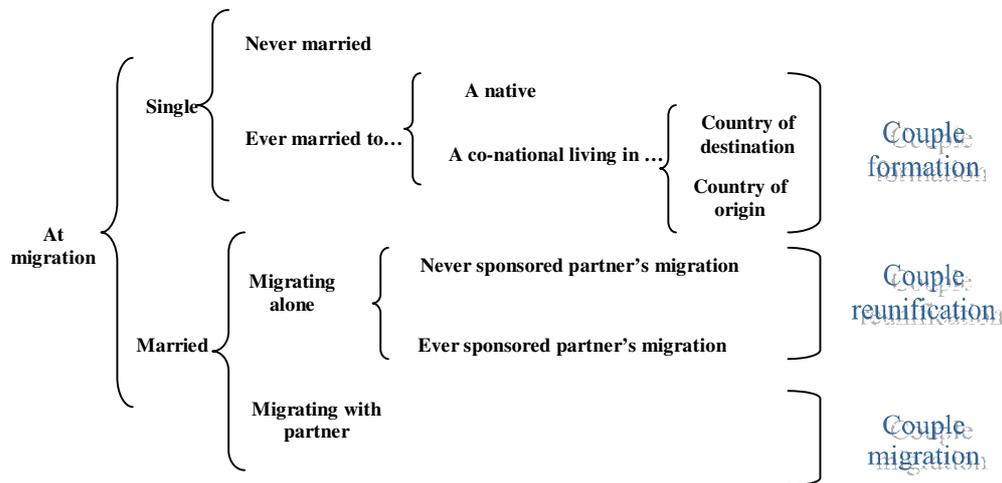
Even though migration research has largely demonstrated the importance of the household context in explaining individuals' migration decisions, there are still few empirical studies that examine the link between the family, the migration process and immigrants' outcomes in the receiving societies. Such a void in the literature appears particularly serious considering that much of contemporary international migration is family based. The family component predominated in nearly all OECD countries in 1998, including Western European countries that are much more reluctant to define themselves as "immigration countries" and that regulate family-linked migration from a restrictive approach (SOPEMI, 2000: 22).

After the recruitment of foreign workers was stopped in the mid-seventies, European receiving states were compelled by international law to admit new foreign entries due to family reunification. This type of migration was expected to end quickly, when recruited workers who decided to stay at their destination brought the relatives they had left behind at the moment of migration. However, adult foreign inflows have not died out yet but, rather, continue. One of the main sources of this ongoing inflow of adult migration to Western Europe is the large number of immigrants' children who import their marriage partners from their countries of origin, instead of marrying other co-nationals already living in the country of immigration. According to estimates from Dutch Central Register for non-Dutch nationals, of 81,600 total entries in 1998, 18,000 corresponded to family formation (versus only 14,000 to family reunion). In Denmark, 86% of first generation immigrants from the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Pakistan, and 75% of middle and second generations had an imported partner in 1998, according to survey data (Celikaksoy, 2002: 28 ff.). In Belgium, more than 70% of Turks and more than 50% of Moroccans imported a partner from their country of origin, according to 1991 Census figures (Lievens, 1999: 723).

Despite its numerical importance, conventional portrayals of postwar migration lack a thorough analysis of family-linked forms of migration. Postwar migration within Europe is typically described as a two-stage process with a first wave of single workers (mainly males) followed by a second one made of (mainly) wives and children who joined their relatives after the halt on recruitment (Castles & Miller, 1993). Spouses and children are all grouped

together as tied-movers and no distinction is made between genuine “family reunification” and family-forming migration (Coleman, 1994: 161; Kofman, 1999: 275).

**Figure 1.** *Typology of family-linked migration*



The goal of this paper is to examine the process of family formation among immigrants in Germany. In particular, I analyze the factors underlying the partner’s choices made by single immigrants in Germany. Three different types of partner are considered: a German, a co-national immigrant and an “imported partner” and, by mean of a multinomial logistic model, I compare the effect of individual and contextual variables on the probability of marrying one type of partner or another<sup>1</sup>. The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 summarizes the existing literature on mixed-marrying behavior and the practice of importing spouses among immigrants. Section 3 describes briefly postwar migration to Germany with a special emphasis on the family dimension. Section 4 presents the dataset and describes the sample. Section 5 presents and discusses the results. Section 6 extends the analysis of the importation of spouses and Section 7 concludes.

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<sup>1</sup> Although theoretically there is a fourth choice –to marry a non co-national immigrant- I will not consider this option here since its overall numerical relevance in reality is negligible.

## **2. Mixed marriages and the Importation of Spouses: individual and contextual factors**

A large array of empirical works has studied immigrants' marriage decisions in the US, most of them focusing on intermarriage behavior (Lieberson & Waters, 1985, 1988; Alba & Golden, 1986; Pagnini & Morgan, 1990; Lee & Yamanaka, 1990; Kalmijn, 1993; Alba, 2000; Rosenfeld, 2002; Kulczycki & Lobo, 2002). Intermarriage rates are found to be higher for children of immigrants compared to their parents, which is interpreted as supporting the assimilationist general prediction that the longer immigrants reside in the receiving society the more similar they will become to natives (Gordon, 1964). There are fewer empirical works concerned with mix-marrying patterns among immigrants within Europe, but they often confirm the findings obtained for the US (Kane & Stephen, 1988; Page, 1995; Lievens, 1998; Klein, 2001; Botelho, 2002; Muttarak, 2003).

Generation is assumed to measure the impact that partial or total socialization within the host culture may have on the development of personal values that shape preferences and prejudices about the type of marriage partner, among others. Second generation immigrants have been born in the immigration country, which often implies the acquisition of the destination country's nationality. Besides, they are likely to have weaker links with their parents' country of birth, its language and customs. All these factors are expected to make the children of immigrants closer to the host society and, consequently, to widen contacts with the native population and to loosen the cultural barriers against mix-marrying behavior. Most empirical works have confirmed a higher propensity for mix-marrying among the second generation (Lievens, 1998; Muttarak, 2003). However, differences between the middle generation (children of immigrants who were born abroad but migrated at young ages) and the second generation are not so clear-cut (Lievens, 1998: 144, 147, for example).

On the other hand, educational attainment represents probably the most important mechanism of social advancement in modern societies. By attaining a college degree, immigrants definitely enhance their chances of abandoning traditional ethnic niches and entering jobs within the primary sector, where the majority of natives work (Granato & Kalter, 2000). This applies especially in countries like Germany where the strong link between the vocational training system and the labor market produces strong job

segmentation (Müller et al., 1998; Blossfeld & Mayer, 1988). In addition, identification with the group of origin is believed to be weakened by higher education. Owing to the emphasis on individual achievement and universalistic principles in higher education, the college-educated may be less likely to identify themselves with their social and cultural roots (Hwang et al., 1995, cited in Kalmijn, 1998: 401).

However, the evidence concerning the effect of education on intermarriage varies with gender and ethnic origin. Recent works on Asian-American intermarriage point out that Asians who out-marry tend to be negatively selected with respect to socio-economic status (Hwang et al., 1995, 1997). Something similar is also suggested by Mutarak for Black-Caribbeans in the UK (Mutarak, 2003: 33). Yet the little evidence for mixed marriages between foreigners and natives in Germany concludes that bi-national couples are related to the more educated groups of society (Klein, 2001: 340).

Apart from the preferences of the individuals for certain characteristics in a spouse, the influence of the social group of which they are members, and potential constraints imposed by the structure of the marriage market where they are searching for a spouse are also powerful factors shaping individuals' partner choices (Kalmijn, 1998). The structure of opportunities within the marriage market has been the focus of the so-called "structural approach" (Blau, 1977, 1994). Blau and his followers examine whether and how the demographic composition of the population, the number and geographical distribution of groups and the overlapping between individual characteristics (i.e. ethnicity) and functional settings where opportunities for inter-group contacts take place, affect marriage patterns.

According to the opportunity theory, the probability of marrying a native (versus marrying another immigrant) and the size of the co-nationals' immigrant community in the destination country are expected to be inversely related because opportunity for within-group interactions will increase with the group's size. There is also the possibility, though, that larger groups imply not only more (statistical) chances of endogamous contact but also increasing social control.

Similarly, sex imbalances within a group are also expected to act as a powerful factor in promoting exogamous marriage for the majority sex. In effect, sex ratio has been found to strongly affect marriage decisions (South & Lloyd, 1992; Angrist, 2001). Although sex ratio at birth is known to be practically balanced, a variety of life events that affect men and women differently provoke numerical imbalances between the sexes. Migration is probably the paradigmatic example among these events. Immigrant communities, especially in the first stages of the migration process, are characterized by high sex-ratios (more men than women) as a consequence of male-dominated flows. Over time, as flows consolidate and immigrant communities settle down, sex ratios usually decrease and immigrant populations move towards a sex-balanced distribution. The relation is far from being perfect, though. The speed at which this move towards sex-equilibrium takes place depends on several factors such as differential gender patterns in return migration. Therefore, even though group size and sex imbalances may be highly correlated in certain phases of the migration process, they still capture distinct constraints on the marriage choices and must be included separately. Previous studies on intermarriage behavior that include structural community factors have confirmed the importance of sex imbalances and, above all, group size in explaining different propensities to out-marriage across ethnic group. However, the inclusion of community-level control indicators does not challenge the direction of the effects predicted by the assimilationist approach (Hwang et al., 1997: 769), although sometimes inter-group differences are modified when groups' sizes are accounted for (Klein, 2001: 339).

In contrast to the relative large evidence concerning intermarrying behavior among immigrants, there are few studies analyzing the phenomenon of spouses' importation (Lievens, 1999; Hooghiemstra, 2001; Celikaksoy, 2003, 2004; Strassburguer, 2004). Furthermore, this issue has been totally neglected out of the European context where the importation of marriage partners may be functioning as a means to circumvent restrictive admission policies and to consolidate migration networks. Besides, the practice of importing spouses is also distrusted by the receiving states as it may slow down the integration process of the immigrant communities, since "imported partners" imply the ongoing arrival of first generation adult immigrants, who are deemed the most difficult to assimilate<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> This sort of fears underlie the recent legal reforms in the Netherlands (1998) and Denmark (2002) that have tightened the rules concerning admission and the issuing of residence permits to spouses and fiancés. The

Why do many descendants of immigrants decide to import a marriage partner from the country of origin instead of marrying another immigrant co-national already at the destination? This is the basic question to be answered before passing legal reforms aimed at curbing this practice. In principle, it would seem more reasonable for children of immigrants who have spent most of their lives in the immigration countries to marry other co-nationals immigrants who have similar experiences and are much more likely to meet at school, at work or in the neighborhood where the young immigrant lives.

Sex imbalances that still remain within many immigrant communities in Europe can help to explain the importation of partners by young immigrant men. In a relationship of 7:10 (women/men) in the 25 to 30 age group, it is apparent that almost every third Turkish man is forced to find a marriage partner from Turkey, if he wants to marry a Turkish woman (Nauck 2002: 320, cited in Genstring et al., 2003). However, a high sex ratio cannot explain why far more than a third of Turkish men, and certainly not why Turkish women, despite an over abundance of Turkish men from their generation, obtain their partners from Turkey (Genstring et al., 2003: 7).

The strength of tradition (i.e. lack of assimilation) and the survival of substantial migratory pressure in some sending countries are also suggested as forces driving the wish for importing partners. Generally, traditional values and the wish for “unspoiled” wives appear as the main reason for men to import their partners. On the contrary, the importation of husbands by young immigrant women has provoked a more lively discussion. Although tradition and family pressures are also mentioned as causes of partners’ importation among women, Lievens (1999) found that second generation more educated Turkish women in Belgium were more likely to bring their husbands from the country of origin than middle generation Turkish women, and interpreted this result as an indication that “women may

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new Danish Aliens Act (1 March 2002) suppressed the statutory right to reunification with a spouse. Basically, no reunification of spouses will be granted if one of the spouses is younger than 24. The generally more lenient access to reunification with refugee spouses will be abolished in all cases where the marriage was only entered into after the flight to Denmark. In such cases, reunification with a spouse can be refused pursuant to the same rules as those that apply to reunification with a Danish spouse. Besides, both spouses will have to be lawfully resident in Denmark, which means that persons with unlawful or procedural residence in Denmark – such as asylum-seekers – cannot get married in Denmark.

marry an imported partner in order to satisfy modern goals” (717)<sup>3</sup>. His reasoning is the following: for women importing a partner might be a form of freeing herself of the influence of her in-laws and her own parents at the same time because it is not usually accepted for a (Muslim) man to live with his in-laws. In addition, by bringing her husband from the origin country, the importer may also assure herself an extra-power within the couple since she is the one who already knows the destination country. However, Lievens lacked the information on actual living arrangements made by immigrants after marrying necessary for testing such an explanation.

Evidence obtained for other Turkish and non-Turkish (Pakistani, Moroccans and former Yugoslavs) immigrant groups in other European countries like the Netherlands and Denmark does not shed much light on the link between integration and the choice of marrying an imported partner. In general, second generation immigrants (those born at destination or who immigrated younger than 6) are found less likely to import their partners compared to the middle generation (Celikaksoy, 2004: 17; Lievens, 1999: 734, 737). Yet some exceptions exist. On the other hand, the differences between first and middle generations have not been carefully examined yet. Secondly, Celikaksoy denies that education has a significant effect on immigrant women’s propensity to import their partners (2004: 17-18) and Hooghiemstra found that more educated Turkish women were less prone to import. However, for Moroccan women, no effect was reported (2001). Finally, Celikaksoy argues that Lievens’ reasoning for women would hold only if women who import do get more educated husbands, which is not the case (Celikaksoy et al., 2003).

Only one thing becomes clear so far: actors and incentives involved in the decision to import a spouse are many and complex. For the (potential) imported partner and his/her family, the marriage would entail the possibility of legal migration for one member of the family, a possibility of future remittances and further links in the migration chain that will facilitate other relatives’ migration in the future. A marriage of this type will provide the (potential) importer himself with the possibility for an extra-power within the couple because he/she is the one who already knows the country. The benefits that the importer’s parents

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<sup>3</sup> Moroccan women, the other group analyzed by Lievens, did not behave differently to men, though.

expect may consist of potential labor for the family business, ties with well-reputed families at origin or just fulfilling a sense of loyalty to their own origins. Moreover, importing a spouse may become even more attractive if the (potential) imported partner belongs to one's own family at origin (i.e. consanguineous marriages). In such cases, the search costs and uncertainty attached to the choice of partner become notably lower and, in addition, the capital that importers have at their disposal –the permission to allow the legal entry to the immigration country for the marriage partner- will remain within the family.

### **3. The German immigration experience. A brief review, with a special focus on marriages**

Germany constitutes the paramount example of the recruitment experience undertaken by the European industrial democracies since the mid-fifties. The German Federal Labor Office (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit –BFA) set up recruitment offices in Italy (1955), Greece (1960), Spain (1960), Turkey (1961) and Yugoslavia (1968). Employers requiring foreign workers had to apply to the BFA and pay a fee. The BFA then selected suitable workers, tested their work skills, gave them medical check-ups and screened criminal and political records (Castles, 1985: 518). In 1960 there were 329,000 foreign workers in Germany, 1 million in 1964 and 2.6 million in 1973. By this date, one in eight workers in Germany was a foreigner (Martin, 1998: 10) and a large fraction of the foreign workers had already obtained a permanent residence and work permit, which entitled them to family reunification and prevented from their expulsion in case of unemployment (Herbert, 1990).

In the face of increasing permanent settlement, pressed by the electoral calendar and the imminent economic recession, the German government began to modify its position on the advantages of recruitment in the early seventies. It first raised the employer-paid recruitment fee from 300 DM to 1000 DM, to discourage employers from requesting new migrants. However, this measure proved to be largely insufficient in protecting native labor from the recession. A wave of wildcat strikes in the summer of 1973, which involved many migrant workers, made the situation even more disquieting. Finally, the oil embargo in 1973

provided the government with the definitive excuse to justify its decision to bring recruitment to a total halt in November 1974 (Werner, 2000).

The ban on recruitment had an immediate effect on labor inflows, as was intended. In contrast, it had a more subdued effect on labor out-migration and dependant entries that had been increasing since the early seventies (Booth, 1992: 119-124). Theoretically, entries due to family reunification would end shortly, when recruited workers who decided to stay in Germany had brought their close relatives from their countries of origin. However, by the time the halt was declared push factors in original recruitment countries like Morocco, Turkey or Yugoslavia had not yet died out, and attempts to circumvent the new immigration controls flourished. Family reunification provisions offered a legal entry-door only to the spouse and minor children of legal residents in Germany. The remaining foreign people willing to enter Germany legally after 1974 had to turn either to asylum or to marriage migration (i.e. to marry a co-national legally established in Germany).

Asylum was widely used by Turkish immigrants until 1981, when a reform was passed to impose work waiting periods for foreigners admitted for entrance on the basis of asylum. Turks accounted for over half of the 110,000 asylum applicants in 1980. After the constitutional amendment, though, Turks were required to obtain entry visas before traveling to Germany and asylum applicants were prohibited from working for five years after their arrival. The number of asylum applicants dropped to less than 20,000 in 1983 (Martin, 1998: 20).

On the other hand, marriage migration still remains one of the major channels of new Turkish immigration to Germany. Unfortunately, German official statistics do not allow an adequate measurement of marriages involving imported spouses since they only record the marriages of those who enter into marriage at German registry offices or in the presence of consulate officials abroad. Marriages between two foreign people that take place in the home country of the individuals or at their consulate in Germany do not figure in the counting (Klein, 2001: 329). As a result, the transnational dimension involved in a large proportion of immigrants' marriages is totally absent from official registers (Strassburger, 2000, 2001). The extent to which this flaw in official figures affects marriages between two foreigners who

both reside in Germany, and marriages between a German and a foreign citizen, remains unknown. According to Strassburger (2001), only 3.2% of the total number of weddings that involved at least one Turkish partner was celebrated in German registry offices in 1996. This author also reported that in 1996 German Consulates in Turkey issued 17,662 visas to Turkish citizens in Turkey for joining their non-German spouse in Germany. This figure amounted to approximately 61% of total weddings involving at least one Turkish citizen residing in Germany in 1996<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, any analysis of foreigners' partner's choices in Germany has to rely on either survey data or in-depth interviews. Klein utilized the 1988 Familiensurvey for examining intermarriage patterns among the foreign population in Germany (Klein, 2001). Strassburger, on the contrary, has examined the phenomenon of imported spouses among the Turkish population in Germany through 14 in-depth interviews of nine women and five men who had been born in Germany or arrived younger than 13. The results of these two studies will be commented on in more detail in the following sections along with my own results. Similarly to Klein (2001), I use survey data to examine the partner's choices among the immigrant population residing in Germany. Yet I do not restrict the analysis to mixed marriages but include also marriages between two co-national immigrants and marriages where one of the partners is an imported spouse.

#### **4. Dataset and sample description**

The empirical analysis in this paper uses data contained in the German Socio Economic Panel (GSOEP). GSOEP is an outstanding dataset that collects longitudinal information on individuals and households living in Germany since 1984. One of its most

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<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately we do not know how many of these marriages are of proper second-generation immigrants (children born in Germany to immigrant parents). Taking into account the date of marriage (1996), it is likely that most of the marriages reported in these figures belonged to the middle-generation (children born to immigrant parents and that migrated to Germany younger than 16). Furthermore, naturalized foreigners in these statistics are counted as German citizens, as the classification criterion is nationality instead of (parents') country of birth. Thus the usefulness of official statistics on marriages is even smaller for studying the marrying patterns of the immigrants' descendants.

valuable characteristics for the study of immigration is that it over-sampled households with a foreign head from Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain and Greece (Sample B in GSOEP terminology)<sup>5</sup>. Apart from its panel structure, GSOEP includes extensive retrospective information (prior to 1984) in biographical files that allow us to reconstruct the marriage, birth and work histories of every individual ever surveyed since the age of 16. I will use this retrospective information to reconstruct the process of family formation of immigrants who married during their stay in Germany.

Despite its merits, a few caveats are in order. First, the GSOEP only includes information on immigrants that stayed in Germany at least until 1984. Secondly, general panel attrition and considerable return migration (boosted by economic recession and the governmental program to promote re-migration in 1983/84), have narrowed further the original foreign sample. Although I tried to enlarge the original Sample B, by adding every Turkish, the former Yugoslav, Italian, Greek and Spanish individual surveyed in the other Samples A, D, E and F, such a procedure only provides a limited updating of the original Sample B (91% of the final sample were surveyed in Sample B)<sup>6</sup>.

After excluding people who married before migration (45% of foreign-born men and 65% of women) and people who never married, the final sample size is 1,097 individuals<sup>7</sup>. As Table 1 shows, the sample contains more males than females due to the typically sex biased composition of labor migration, but also due to the larger proportion of immigrant women who had married before migrating, especially within the adult first generation (81% of total immigrant women who arrived in Germany older than 15, versus only 44% of their male

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<sup>5</sup> These five nationalities were the largest foreign communities in Germany at the time of GSOEP inception (1984). Although the Spanish population in Germany has declined substantially due to return migration, Turks, Ex-Yugoslavs, Italians and Greeks are still the largest foreign groups in Germany (28%, 10.1%, 8.4% and 4.9% respectively in 2000). Note that these figures report “foreigners” instead of immigrants or foreign-born people.

<sup>6</sup> For more on GSOEP structure and content see Hasiken-DeNew, J.P & Frick, J.R (2003), Desktop Companion to the SOEP Study.

<sup>7</sup> The exclusion of never-married people is not a serious problem for foreign-born immigrants, since 96% of them married at some point. On the contrary, 83% of children of immigrants born in Germany are still single due to their young age. Overall results are not biased by this fact because children of immigrants born in Germany are only 8% of the final working sample. However, for the same reason, conclusions with respect to the “second generation” must be made with caution.

counterparts). The sample includes first (older than 16 at migration), middle (between 6 and 16 at migration) and second generation immigrants (younger than 6 or born in Germany)<sup>8</sup>. Second generation represents only 17% of the total sample, 43% are middle generation and the remaining 40% were adult upon arrival. In the case of the female subsample, only 30% are first generation.

Individuals in the sample have spent, on average, 9.6 years in Germany before getting married. Given the particular composition of the sample with respect to generations, this variable will be added as an alternative measure of assimilation.

**Table 1.** *Sample Descriptives*

Variable	Mean	S. D.	Min	Max
Sex (1=female)	0.39	0.49	0	1
Second Generation	0.17	0.38	0	1
Age at migration	14.6	8.3	0	42
Years in Germany before Marriage	9.3	7.4	1	34
Age at marriage	23.9	5	15	54
Years of Education	9.6	1.9	7	18
Sex ratio	0.45	0.19	0	0.92
Group size	737	440	3	1,484
Date of marriage	1982	9.5	1957	2001
Turkey	39%			
N	1,097			

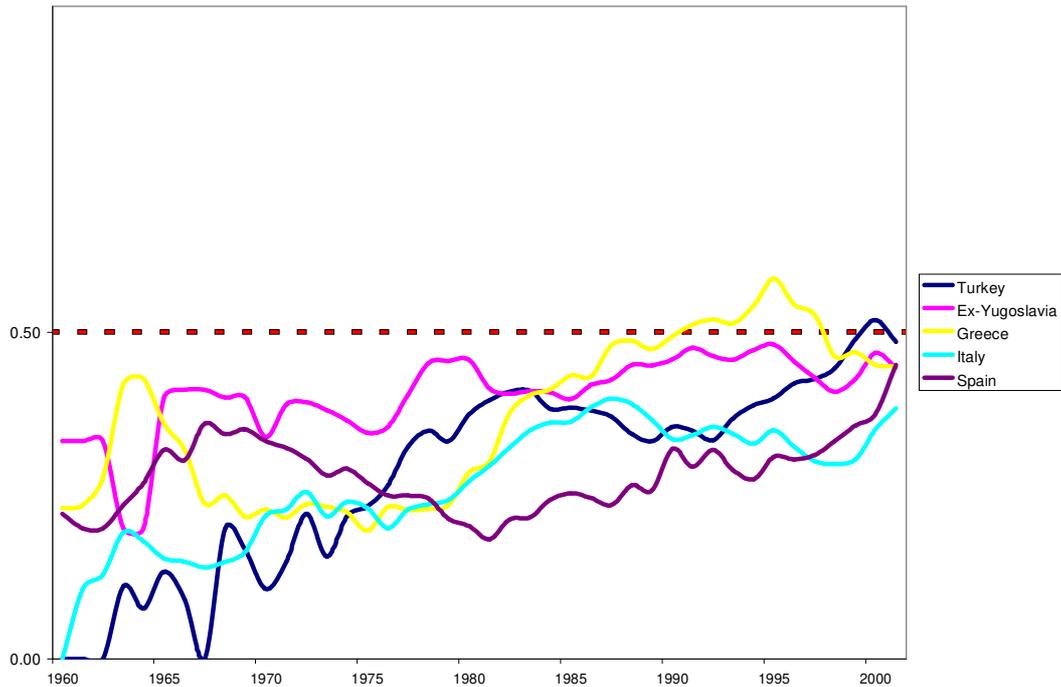
Years of education measures the total years of education completed the year before marriage for all those immigrants who got married in 1984 or later (46% of the total sample). For the remaining 54% of the sample that married earlier than 1984, education at the time of marriage was not available and education in 1984 (or year of immigration) had to be used

<sup>8</sup> For individuals born in Germany to immigrant parents, GSOEP includes no information on ethnic origin. Their mother's country of origin has been utilized to fill this gap: children born to Turkish women are defined as Turkish as well. This information was constructed by linking each individual born in Germany to his/her mother, if she was included in GSOEP birth biographical files (BIOBIRTH).

instead. This should not be a major problem since, according to GSOEP job retrospective information, immigrants who had married before 1984 rarely enrolled in education or undertook any sort of training after marriage. The average educational level in our sample is rather low (9.6 over a minimum of 7 years of education), in accordance with the non-qualified profile of immigrant labor from the sixties and seventies, and the well known educational gap between native and immigrant youth (Kalter & Granato, 2001; Riphahn, 2002). In fact, the average educational level of the second generation is only 0.5 years higher than that of the first generation in the sample. However, as I noted before, data for second generation individuals must be treated with caution.

With respect to their country of origin, 39% are Turkish, 25% Italians, 12% the former Yugoslavians, 12% Spaniards and 12% Greeks. Finally, there are two group-specific variables, sex ratio and group size. Group size refers to the size of each individual's national group in Germany the year before his/her marriage. Sex ratio measures the number of single men (women) older than 15 over the number of single women (men) older than 15 for each individual's nationality and year before her (his) marriage. Such indicators had to be constructed from GSOEP information due to the absence of complete official register figures for the whole period under study here. Figure 2 shows the sex imbalance within each of the five main immigrant groups in Germany, between 1960 and 2000. The dotted red line represents total equilibrium and lines above this line indicate more single women than men. With the exception of the Greeks in the early nineties, males surpassed females during the entire period.

**Figure 2.** Sex Ratio by nationality, 1960-2000 (GSOEP, 2002)



The dependent variable, defined as “type of partner”, is coded 0 if the partner chosen by the single immigrant is a native German, 1 if the partner is another co-national immigrant living in Germany at the time of marriage, and 2 if the partner is someone imported from the immigrant’s country of origin. Native Germans have been identified by combining the information about place of birth and nationality before marriage. A person who has been born in Germany but still keeps a foreign nationality at the year of marriage would not be considered as “native” in order to truly explore the bi-cultural dimension of mixed marriages. Imported partners have been defined as those immigrants who married before migration to a person who had lived in Germany at least 2 years before marriage<sup>9</sup>. Finally, the residual category –immigrant partner- is made up of people who migrated single and married another co-national immigrant in Germany.

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<sup>9</sup> An imported partner has been usually defined in the literature as a person who migrates in the four years around the marriage date (i.e. one or two years before or after the marriage took place). See Lievens (1999), Celikaksoy (2004). Other authors have considered the country where each partner lived or the country where the marriage itself took place (Esveldt and Schoorl, 1998; Strassburger, 1999).

Table 2 reveals that the dominant strategy in couple formation, especially for immigrant women, is to marry a co-national immigrant already in Germany at the marriage date (71% of foreign women and 47% of foreign men). Immigrant women marry German partners less than men (9.6% versus 16%), and they also import fewer partners from their countries of origin than their male counterparts (19% versus 37%).

**Table 2.** *Type of partner chosen by people of immigrant origin ever-married in Germany*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Native Partner</b>	13.5% (148)	16.0% (107)	9.6% (41)
<b>Immigrant Partner</b>	56.5% (620)	47.2% (316)	71.2% (304)
<b>Imported Partner</b>	30% (329)	36.9% (247)	19.2% (82)
<b>N</b>	1,097	670	427

Table 4 shows that importation of partners is more frequent among Turks than for any other group. In contrast, marriages between former Yugoslavians and Germans are the most common mixed-marriage type. Greeks are the ones who most frequently marry another co-national immigrant, followed by Spaniards and Italians. Whether these differences between men and women and national groups are due to differences in the marriage market each faced at the time of their marriage or to the existence of gender differentiated patterns of partner choice, is what the next multivariate statistical analysis intends to find out.

I use a multinomial logit model to estimate the effect that the described covariates have on the probability of choosing one type of partner or another. Marrying a co-national immigrant living in Germany is chosen as the reference category. Thus the coefficients

should be read as the effect of each explanatory variable on the probability of marrying a native (or an imported partner) versus marrying a co-national immigrant.

**Table 3.** *Type of partner by country of origin*

	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Former Yugoslavia</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Native</b>	4.87 (21)	24.8 (31)	12.69 (17)	19.86 (55)	18.46 (24)	13.49 (148)
<b>Immigrant</b>	50.58 (218)	48 (60)	66.42 (89)	61.73 (171)	63.08 (82)	56.52 (620)
<b>Imported</b>	44.55 (192)	27.2 (34)	20.9 (28)	18.41 (51)	18.46 (24)	29.99 (329)
<b>Total</b>	431	125	134	277	130	1,097

## 5. Results and Discussion

Table 4 reports the coefficients for different model specifications. Models 1 and 2 examine the effect of the individual characteristics traditionally considered by the assimilationist approach on the probability of choosing a native partner (upper part of the table) or importing a partner from the origin country (bottom part) versus marrying an immigrant already residing in Germany.

The results obtained in Model 1 support the main prediction of the assimilationist approach concerning intermarriage behavior. Second generation immigrants are more likely to marry a German partner than their middle and first generation counterparts. Propensity to mix-marry also increases with immigrants' education. In contrast, neither generation nor education has a significant effect on the probability of importing a partner (see bottom panel of the table).

The fact that the probability of importing partners does not decrease for the second generation is a little odd. Second generation immigrants have spent their whole life in Germany, have attended German schools and, therefore, speak and write German. All these

circumstances would make these immigrants less prone to import. There is the possibility this unexpected result derives from the particularities of the second generation individuals included in my sample (only those who had married at a young age)<sup>10</sup>. On the other hand, the fact that non-second generation is made up not only of parents of the second generation but also of middle generation immigrants may distort behavioral differences between the two groups. Members of the middle generation have also attended German school and, depending on their age at migration, are likely to resemble children born in Germany to immigrant parents more than their own parents. Effectively, when the second generation is excluded from the sample, middle generation immigrants appear more likely to import than their parents. Conversely, when first generation immigrants are not included in the comparison, second generation immigrants appear less prone to import than their middle counterparts (results available upon request).

Model 2 confirms that “years spent in Germany before marriage” is a better variable to proxy different levels of integration between first, middle and second generations. First of all, the longer the time spent in Germany before getting married increases the chances of marrying a native partner. Secondly, differences in the propensity to mix-marry between second generation and others disappear when pre-marriage length of residence is controlled for. This indicates that the higher propensity to mix-marry previously found for the second-generation reflects the longer time they have been residing in Germany compared to most middle and first generations. However, being a second generation immigrant makes no difference with respect to the chances of mix-marrying of two individuals who have lived in Germany the same number of years before marriage.

In the case of importation, the introduction of “years spent in Germany before marriage” makes the effect of generation negative and significant. This is in line with the assimilationist approach that predicts a declining propensity to import partners from the country of origin for individuals who were born in the immigration country or who have spent most of their lives there. However, more years in Germany increases the chances of importing, which is not easy to explain.

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<sup>10</sup> If those who import their partner tend to marry at a younger age than the rest, the second generation sub-sample in my analysis would over-represent importers.

**Table 4.** Multinomial logit coefficients for type of partner (co-national immigrant = ref. )

		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<b>Native</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Generation</b>	1.17**	-0.17	-0.18	-0.41	-0.26	-0.25
		(0.23)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.36)
	<b>Years in Germany bef.</b>		0.10**	0.11**	0.13**	0.09**	0.09**
	<b>Marriage</b>		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
	<b>Sex</b>	-1.08**	-1.05**	0.38	-0.10	0.26	0.29
		(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(1.17)
	<b>Education</b>	0.23**	0.18**	0.20**	0.16**	0.17**	0.16**
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
	<b>Sex*Eduyrs</b>						0.00005
							(0.11)
	<b>Ex-Yug</b>	2.03**	2.14**	2.28**	0.37	0.002	0.01
		(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.35)	(0.50)	(0.52)	(0.52)
	<b>Greek</b>	0.79**	0.68*	0.64*	-1.56**	-2.31**	-2.30**
		(0.37)	(0.38)	(0.38)	(0.57)	(0.62)	(0.62)
	<b>Italian</b>	1.40**	1.33**	1.20**	-0.62	-1.11**	-1.11**
		(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.36)	(0.45)	(0.48)	(0.48)
	<b>Spanish</b>	1.39**	1.43**	1.51**	-0.79	-1.47**	-1.47**
		(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.36)	(0.56)	(0.62)	(0.62)
	<b>Sex Ratio</b>			-4.76**	-3.70**	-4.08**	-4.75**
				(1.05)	(1.03)	(1.09)	(1.08)
	<b>Group Size</b>				-0.003**	-0.004**	-0.004**
					(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
<b>1974-1980</b>					0.93**	0.94**	
					(0.42)	(0.42)	
<b>1981-1990</b>					1.90**	1.91**	
					(0.43)	(0.44)	
<b>1991-2002</b>					1.22**	1.24**	
					(0.50)	(0.45)	
<b>Constant</b>	-4.67**	-4.95**	-3.64**	-0.73	-0.07	-0.03	
	(0.54)	(0.56)	(0.62)	(0.82)	(0.84)	(0.91)	
<b>Imported</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Generation</b>	-0.25	-0.64**	-0.69**	-0.79**	-0.94**	-0.93**
		(0.21)	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.30)
	<b>Years in Germany bef.</b>		0.03**	0.04*	0.05**	0.09**	0.09**
	<b>Marriage</b>		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
	<b>Sex</b>	-1.12**	-1.12**	-0.47	0.37	0.39	-2.09**
		(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.33)	(0.92)
	<b>Education</b>	-0.06	-0.08*	-0.07	-0.08*	-0.07*	-0.16**
		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
	<b>Sex*Eduyrs</b>						0.26**
							(0.09)
	<b>Ex-Yug</b>	-0.36	-0.33	-0.23	-0.97**	-0.38	-0.35
		(0.24)	(0.25)	(0.24)	(0.36)	(0.39)	(0.39)
	<b>Greek</b>	-1.06**	-1.06**	-1.10**	-1.99**	-1.30**	-1.29**
		(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.40)	(0.44)	(0.45)
	<b>Italian</b>	-1.22**	-1.22**	-1.43**	-2.15**	-1.60**	-1.64**
		(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.38)	(0.37)	(0.37)
	<b>Spanish</b>	-1.16**	-1.12**	-1.05**	-1.97**	-1.40**	-1.41**
		(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.42)	(0.44)	(0.45)
	<b>Sex Ratio</b>			-4.86**	-4.49**	-4.32**	-4.32**
				(0.84)	(0.86)	(0.90)	(0.91)
	<b>Group Size</b>				-0.001**	0.0004	0.0004
					(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
<b>1974-1980</b>					-1.45**	-1.43**	
					(0.28)	(0.28)	
<b>1981-1990</b>					-1.51**	-1.47**	
					(0.32)	(0.32)	
<b>1991-2002</b>					-1.82**	-1.79**	
					(0.38)	(0.38)	
<b>Constant</b>	0.96**	0.87**	2.27**	3.41**	2.56**	3.38**	
	(0.41)	(0.42)	(0.49)	(0.64)	(0.37)	(0.74)	
<b>Log Likelihood</b>	-923	-907	-884	-871	-837	-833	
<b>Pseudo R2</b>	0.1179	0.1331	0.1552	0.1673	0.1994	0.2037	
<b>N</b>	1097	1097	1097	1097	1097	1097	

\* Significant at 0.10, \*\* Significant at 0.05. Standard errors in parentheses

Differences between national groups suggested in Table 3 are reproduced here again. Turks (the reference group) are the least likely to marry a German citizen but the most likely to import a partner from their home country. Surprisingly, the probability of importing a partner for former Yugoslavs does not differ from that of the Turks, despite fact that former Yugoslavs are the most likely to mix-marry. Spaniards, Italians and Greeks are all less likely than Turks to import and more likely to mix-marry.

Finally, women are clearly less likely than men to display deviating marriage behavior, whether marrying a native or marrying an imported partner (see negative significant coefficient for “sex” in Models 1 and 2). For immigrant single women, a co-national immigrant in Germany is the most likely partner, in accordance with previous findings in the intermarriage literature that indicate a lower inclination to out-marry among women (see Klein, 2001: 330, for a German example). The negative effect of gender on the importing probability would also provide preliminary support to the hypothesis that the practice of importing spouses is mainly a male strategy to get wives unspoiled by modern Western values. However, both nationality and gender differences are expected to be greatly influenced by sex imbalances and numerical constraints within each immigrant group and, therefore, no conclusion should be drawn until sex ratio and group size are accounted for.

Models 3 and 4 confirm the importance of controlling for numerical constraints in the marriage market. First of all, the inclusion of “sex ratio” makes the negative effect of gender vanish. In contrast, differences across nationality remain unchanged (see Model 3). This indicates that the greater propensity of men to import and to marry German women is largely due to the shortage of co-national women to marry in Germany. However, the higher probability of importing for Turks and of mix-marrying for the former Yugoslavian is not due to sex imbalances within their respective marriage markets.

The propensity to mix-marry also declines as the number of co-nationals in Germany increases. Furthermore, controlling for size differences across national groups becomes crucial for obtaining a more accurate understanding of the differential propensity to mix-marry between immigrants of different origins (compare Model 3 and 4). Now, Greeks instead of Turks appear as the least likely to marry a German, and the remaining differences

between Turks and other nationalities disappear (all coefficients turn negative but do not reach the significance level). It can be concluded, then, that the higher propensity to marry outside their own national group initially observed for Yugoslavs, Italians, Spaniards and Greeks was largely due to the smaller size of these four communities in Germany, which imply that partial marriage markets are less efficient, compared to Turks. When the size of the own national group residing in Germany is accounted for, Turks become as likely to mix-marry as other immigrants, and they are even more likely to marry a German than Greeks. It is remarkable that the described changes, after controlling for each group's size, point exactly in the same direction found by Klein with different data (2001: 339).

The effect of numerical constraints in the marriage market on the propensity to import partners from origin also deserves some comment. Although sex ratio is often cited as a powerful cause underlying the practice of importing, its actual effect is rarely measured<sup>11</sup>. Despite the fact that importing a partner is not equal to out-marrying because since importers marry people within their own ethnic group, the effect of sex imbalances and group size on importing behavior is quite similar to what I have described for mix-marrying. Both variables are negative and significant, which indicates that the larger the national group residing in Germany and the more balanced the sex distribution within it, the less likely immigrants are to bring their partners from abroad. Gender differences in their propensity to import also disappear after the sex distribution is controlled for. However, nationality effects neither disappear nor reverse but become enhanced (see Model 4, bottom part of the Table).

Model 5 added a set of dummy variables that indicate the time at which marriage took place (1974-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2001, and earlier than 1974 as the reference category). This is a rough way of "measuring" potential changes in the patterns of partner's choices over time. However, I preferred to include some sort of control taking into account the long period of time under analysis (40 years) rather than omitting it. While mix-marrying appears to be increasingly important, the practice of importing partners shows a rather declining pattern. In addition, it seems interesting to highlight that immigrants who married after the halt on

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<sup>11</sup> Celikaksoy (2004) explicitly discusses the potential role of sex ratio on marriage migration but does not test its effect directly. She only includes sex as covariate and interprets its effect as reflecting the effect of sex ratio imbalances as well as other gender specific factors not otherwise accounted for.

recruitment were no more inclined to import their partners than those who had married earlier (see negative coefficients for all time periods in Model 5). Thus the extended argument that importation of spouses is a strategy developed by immigrants to circumvent the increasing restrictions imposed on new adult entrances since the halt on recruitment in 1974 seems unwarranted according to these results. Furthermore, the results hold when comparing only first and middle generations, and middle and second generations (available upon request).

In order to better understand the reasons driving the importation of spouses among immigrants residing in West Germany, I tried to replicate Lievens' results elaborated above (see Section 2). The interaction term between gender and education added in Model 6 intends to capture a potential differential effect of education on the propensity to import a partner depending on the importer's gender. Effectively, Model 6 shows the interaction term is positive and significant at 95% for importing behavior (see bottom part of the table). Furthermore, its inclusion makes the negative effect of gender significant and increases substantially the negative effect of education for men. This indicates that: 1) women are effectively less prone to import than men (a result also found by Celikaksoy, 2004); 2) immigrant males are less prone to import their wives the more educated they are; 3) the opposite holds for women: the more educated an immigrant woman is, the more likely she is to import a husband from the country of origin instead of marrying a co-national immigrant already residing in Germany. Such differences between sexes are not due to sex imbalances within the reference populations, which are controlled for; in addition, the differential effect of education remains even comparing only first and middle, and middle and second generations (available upon request).

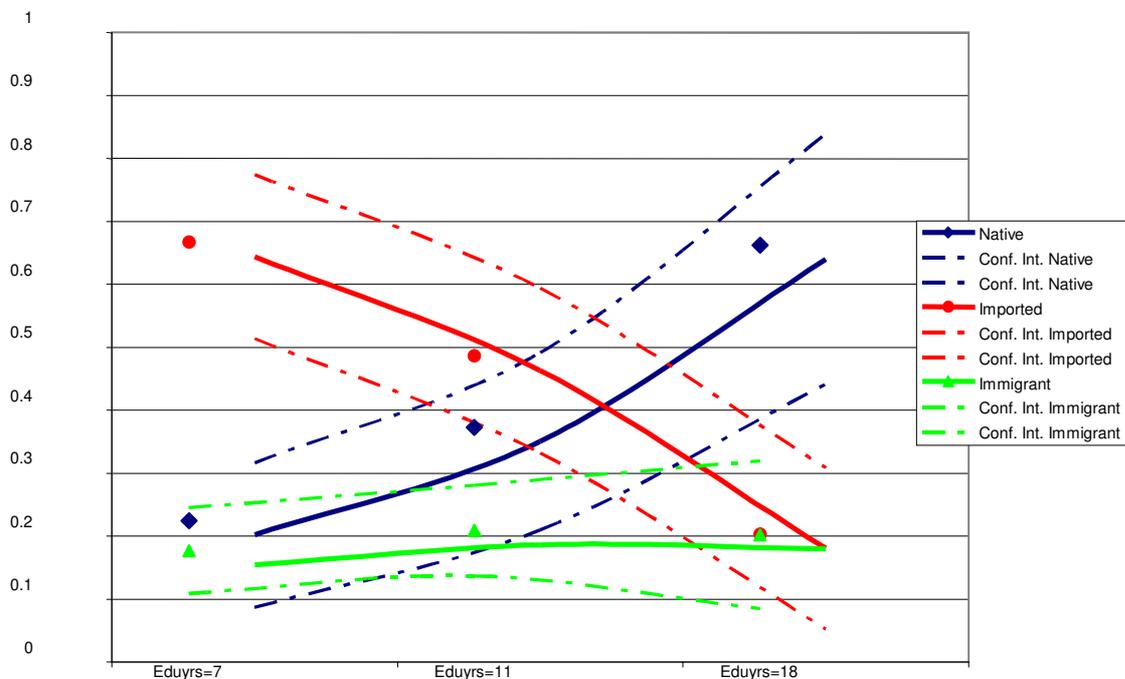
Figures 3 and 4 plot the predicted probabilities of marrying each type of partner (solid lines) for a Turkish immigrant man and woman who married in the nineties (covariates were fixed at their mean values)<sup>12</sup>. Although confidence intervals (dotted lines) are sometimes excessively wide and overlap at intermediated levels of education, these simulations allow us to illustrate the differential effect of education on the partner's choices of immigrant men and

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<sup>12</sup> Simulations were calculated using Stata software for regression with categorical dependent variables. Continuous covariates were fixed at their mean values, while the time period was fixed at the nineties. For details on simulation software see Long & Freese (2001).

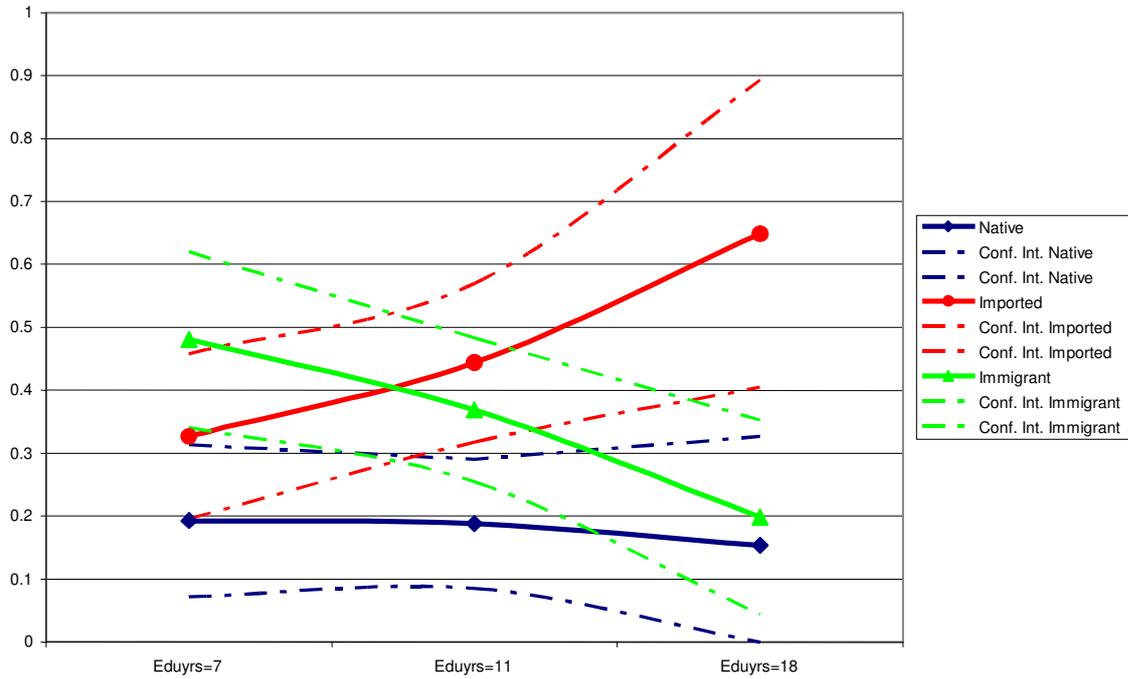
women. Differences are quite evident. If the man has a low educational level (less than 10 years of education), his most likely choice is to import a wife from Turkey (65%). On the contrary, if he has a high level of education, marrying a German woman becomes the most likely option (65%), while marrying another immigrant and importing a partner from Turkey are equally likely for him (less than 20% each).

**Figure 3. Effect of Education on Partner Type for first/middle generation Turkish male in 90's**



In Figure 4 the pattern is practically reversed. In this case, the least likely option is always to marry a German man (about 20%), regardless of the woman's educational level. When the woman is highly educated, importing a marriage partner from Turkey becomes the most likely choice for her. On the contrary, if she is less educated, marrying a Turkish immigrant in Germany is the most likely option (about 50%), followed by the choice of importing a partner (30%) and, the least likely again, of marrying a German man (20%).

Figure 4. Effect of Education on Partner Type for first generation Turkish females in the 90's



The interpretation given by Lievens to similar results for the case of Turkish women in Belgium is that by importing their husbands, immigrant women increase their chances of forming their own new household, independently of their in-laws -who stayed at origin- and of their own relatives living in the immigration country, because it is not commonly accepted for a man to live with his in-laws. In addition, by importing, women may also gain some leverage within the couple as they are the ones who know the country, its language, etc.

## 6. Importation of spouses and family influences. Looking for further explanations

The involvement of parents, and other relatives, in their children's marriage decisions has been common until very recently in developed societies. In many developing countries, some of which are sources of contemporary migration to Europe such as Turkey, Pakistan or Morocco, etc., marriage is still often considered a household rather than an individual decision, and endogamy within the family group remains a widely extended practice. The

practice of importing spouses is often viewed as the clearest example that traditional values concerning the marriage and the family that dominate in cultures of origin have far from disappeared among immigrant communities in immigration countries. Figures recently reported by the Integration Survey in Germany, for example, revealed that 19% of married Turkish women and 16% of married Turkish men were kindred, and that a considerable number of people deemed as “important” the arrangement of marriages and the mediation of the family members and networks of friends in their partner’s choice (Haug, 2002: 419). Moreover, several authors have argued that consanguineous marriages are even more frequent among immigrants in the host countries than in the source country itself (Reiners, 1998).

In the face of these figures, the relation between the practice of importing spouses and the centrality of the family networks for immigrant populations seems undeniable. However, we are still far from knowing the implications of such a connection, that is, for the integration dimension. After Lievens (1999) formulated his hypothesis about the possibility that immigrant women use a “traditional” way of marrying such as importing for achieving “modern” goals like freeing themselves from further family influences, the debate about the phenomenon of spouses’ importation has moved a little from the concern about border-control shirking through marriage migration towards the integration dimension.

Lievens, however, never tested this hypothesis about second generation female importers being more likely to found a new independent household than their non-importer counterparts. Celikaksoy (2004) examined whether Pakistani and Turkish female importers in Denmark fitted with Lievens’ argument and rejected his hypothesis, arguing that second generation immigrant women who have lived away from their parents before getting married (a clear sign of “modernity”) are less likely to import, and they do not marry more educated men (supposedly more “tolerant” with women’s “modernity”) than women who marry co-nationals living in the immigration country. Celikaksoy’s results expand our knowledge about people importing their partners. However, they are not an adequate test of Lieven’s hypothesis. The fact that women who have lived away from their parents before marriage are less likely to import does not exclude the possibility that out of the pool of second generation

women who stayed at their parental home until marriage, the more educated decided to import as a non-conflictive strategy to avoid family interferences in their future married lives.

Using GSOEP information on the relation between every surveyed individual and the head of the household, I have identified couples who lived with other relatives immediately after marriage, and couples that did not. According to the extended argument about the strong traditional content in importing behavior and the presence of strong family ties among people who import, the expectation is that couples made up of importer/imported partners are more likely to live in extended households than the rest. By restricting the sample to Turkish immigrants, I will try to test Lievens' hypothesis. However, the small sample size means interpreting the results with caution.

Table 5 reports the estimated effects of having an imported partner and other covariates on the probability of living with other relatives -apart from the spouse- after marriage for different sub-samples. The information for the dependent variable was missing for 64 couples and the total sample size was reduced from 1,097 to 1,033 cases. In addition, information on the relation to the head of the household was collected only since 1984, which implies certain measurement error for couples that married earlier than the inception of the GSOEP because household arrangements may have changed between marriage and 1984<sup>13</sup>. This is the reason why results for the total sample (Column 1) and for the sub-sample of immigrants who married after 1982 (column 2) are compared. Column 3 restricts the sample to the Turkish population and Column 4 to Turkish women.

According to the results obtained for the couples that married after 1982, for which the information is more precise (see above), the prediction that importing partners lower the chances of living independently from other relatives after marriage appears to be strongly supported. Even after controlling for country of origin, age at migration, age at marriage, education, having worked before marriage and gender, the effect of having an imported

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<sup>13</sup> It is difficult to anticipate the direction of such error because newly married couples might be more likely to live with some other relatives at the beginning of their joint lives if they cannot afford their own housing. But it is also possible for couples who lived independently since marriage to incorporate new members like grandparents as they get older and more vulnerable.

spouse substantially lowers the probability that the couple lives on its own after marriage. What is more important, the association between importing a partner and living in extended families after marriage holds across models, regardless of the sub-sample on which we focus.

**Table 5.** *Coefficients estimates of logistic regression of living in extended household after marriage*

	<i>All</i>	<i>Married after 1982</i>	<i>Non-Turkish Married after 1982</i>	<i>Turkish Married after 1982</i>	<i>Turkish Men Married after 1982</i>	<i>Turkish Women Married after 1982</i>	<i>Educated Turkish Women Married after 1982</i>
<b>Turkish</b>	2.03** (0.33)	1.73** (0.42)	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>Ex-Yugoslav</b>	0.80* (0.43)	1.25** (0.54)	1.11** (0.53)	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>Greek</b>	1.25** (0.42)	1.47** (0.55)	1.28** (0.52)	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>Second Generation</b>	0.24 (0.22)	-0.47** (0.23)	-0.28 (0.45)	-0.56* (0.29)	-0.001 (0.41)	-1.08** (0.45)	-2.28** (1.10)
<b>Age at Marriage</b>	-0.24** (0.03)	-0.25** (0.05)	-0.31** (0.08)	-0.21** (0.06)	-0.30** (0.08)	-0.14 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.14)
<b>Education</b>	-0.03 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.18 (0.11)	-0.16* (0.09)	-0.12 (0.12)	-0.31** (0.15)	-----
<b>Work before marriage</b>	0.24 (0.21)	0.51* (0.27)	-0.04 (0.50)	0.63** (0.51)	0.92** (0.44)	0.50 (0.46)	-1.90** (0.97)
<b>Sex</b>	-0.38* (0.17)	-0.42** (0.21)	-0.74 (0.48)	-0.41 (0.25)	-----	-----	-----
<b>Imported Partner</b>	1.03** (0.22)	1.86** (0.27)	2.53** (0.51)	1.68** (0.32)	1.80** (0.38)	1.54** (0.50)	1.05 (0.83)
<b>Constant</b>	2.04** (0.85)	3.53** (1.10)	2.93 (1.84)	5.62** (1.32)	5.80** (1.65)	5.32** (1.86)	1.49 (3.24)
Log likelihood	-396	-244	-77	-162	-91	-68	- 19
Pseudo R2	0.2607	0.3074	0.2856	0.1760	0.2146	0.1555	0.2627
N	1,033	549	263	286	169	117	40

\*\* Significant at 95%; \* Significant at 90%.

Importing a partner increases the chances of living in extended families not only for Turks, who are the most prone to import, but also for the other immigrant groups (see Model 3; note that the reference category now is Italians and Spaniards together). Moreover, the positive effect seems to be even larger for the non-Turkish population (compare the

“imported partner” coefficient in Models 3 and 4). Therefore, it can be said that there is a clear and strong relationship between importing a partner and living in extended households, and this holds regardless of national particularities.

The larger propensity of the Turkish population to live in extended households must be treated with caution. Extended households among immigrant populations are more likely the more established and permanent over time is the immigrant flow. Migration is known to be largely operated through networks, especially family networks. Turkish migration to Germany is the only one (compared to the four other groups in the sample) with a substantial number of entries over a time span long enough to allow immigrants a proper choice between extended versus nuclear living arrangements. In fact, if one controls by “group size” the effects of nationality are reversed and Turks appear the least likely to live in extended families. However, I decided not to include this covariate as it might be too rough a measure of network density (results available upon request).

The expected lower propensity of second generation immigrants to live in extended households –from an assimilation stand point- only arises when the sample is restricted to people who married after 1982, which eliminates most first generation single immigrants who migrated single from the comparison group. Moreover, it seems that the change in post-marriage living arrangements between the middle (migrated younger than 16 and older than 5) and the second generation (migrated 5 or younger, or were born in Germany) have occurred only for Turkish women but not for either non-Turkish women (see Model 3) or Turkish men (Model 5). Gender differences within the Turkish group are not limited to the intensity of the intergenerational change in living arrangements after marriage, though. Comparing results in column 5 (Turkish men) and column 6 (Turkish women), we can see that education makes no difference in males’ probability of living with other adult relatives apart from their wife, whereas it significantly reduces women’s probability of sharing their household with someone else apart from their husband. In addition, having worked before marrying increases the probability of extended households for Turkish men, but it does not do so for women.

However, the impact of having imported the partner systematically increases the probability of living with other relatives after marriage. For second generation women with more than 9 years of education –the group for which Lievens’ argues that importing might be a traditional way of getting modern goals- the effect of importing is not significant (but still maintains its positive sign; see Model 7). If the sample is restricted to women with more than 10 years of education (only 16 cases in the sample), the effect of importing turns negative and closer to significance. These results, however, are based on too few cases (40 and 16, respectively) and, thus, larger samples are needed to definitively confirm (or reject) Lievens’ hypothesis.

## **Conclusions**

The empirical analysis carried out in this paper confirms the importance of both individual characteristics and structural factors in individual decision-making concerning the choice of partner for people of foreign origin. Marrying a German and importing a partner from the country of origin appear as clearly differentiated alternatives to the most common choice of marrying another immigrant. The results obtained generally confirm previous findings in the literature on intermarriage behavior: longer residence in the immigration country and education enhance the odds of marrying a native for both immigrant men and women. However, the analysis does not support the widespread idea that women are less prone to inter-marrying than men. In fact, the differential propensity to mix-marry between men and women disappears when sex imbalances in the reference marriageable population are controlled for. Moreover, accounting for the structure of the respective ethnic marriage market of each individual drastically modifies the differences between national groups. Therefore, Blau’s thesis that “[. . .] population structure [. . .] exerts independent effects on social relations by circumscribing the opportunities and limiting the choices” (1994: 28) fits perfectly the explanation of immigrants’ intermarriage behavior: the different propensities to marry a German partner across nationalities are largely dependent on the characteristics of the marriage market. In fact, after controlling for sex ratio imbalances, group size differences and the time of marriage, the initial higher inclination of Italians, Greeks and Spaniards to

marry Germans is completely reversed, whereas the marriage behavior of Turks and former Yugoslavs becomes indistinguishable.

The choice between marrying a co-national immigrant already in Germany and importing a partner from the home country is more complex. Although sex ratio also plays its role in explaining the importation of spouses, some gender differences remain. The differential impact of education depending on the immigrant's gender is one of the most interesting findings in the paper. While the immigrant men who import seem to be the least educated, the opposite is true for immigrant women. The explanation for this result is far from clear and although Lievens' hypothesis cannot be rejected, additional analyses are required to confirm it. On the other hand, it is important to highlight that second generation immigrants are less likely to import than those of the middle and first generations, and that importation of spouses showed a declining trend over time. Moreover, the idea that marriage migration intensified after the halt on recruitment as a means to circumvent restrictive measures at the border cannot be supported according to the results.

Finally, the practice of importing spouses from the country of origin is seen to exist not only for Turks but also for other immigrant groups, and for all of them importing is associated with extended household arrangements after marriage. Thus the centrality of family networks in explaining the phenomenon of importation of partners is undeniable and its effect on the behavioral patterns of immigrants in other life spheres in the immigration country such as living arrangements are clear.

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