PAA Annual Meeting 2012

The Turkish second generation in Europe: family life trajectories and independence in the transition to adulthood

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September 2011

DRAFT: Please do not cite or quote

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Abstract

In this paper we study the timing and sequencing of major events in the transition to adulthood of second generation Turks and majority group young adults in Europe. First, this study adds to the literature by questioning what paths (order of events) are predominant by applying sequence analyses. We study the timing of four major events namely leaving the parental home, unmarried cohabitation, marriage, and having a first child and link them to transitions in the public domain (education and work). Second, we study the diversity in trajectories both between the Turkish second generation and majority group young adults as well as between the different European countries. Finally, we analyse the factors explaining different paths into adulthood among the studied groups in the different countries. Our analyses are based on survey data from "The integration of the second generation" (TIES, 2007) for France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

Key words: second generation, Europe, transition to adulthood, sequence analysis

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Background

The transition to adulthood is a key period in the individual life course (Goldscheider 1996; Settersten et al., 2005). Despite the growing literature on this phase in life the existing literature mainly covers the majority or native populations in European societies (Corijn & Klijzing, 2001; Liefbroer & Dykstra, 2000; Widmer & Ritschard, 2009). Much less is known for the children of immigrants despite the fact that young adults of migrant origin are a growing share of the young adult population in many European countries. In addition, studies on the transition to adulthood often exclusively take one transition into account (Huschek et al., 2010; Zorlu & Mulder, 2010). This is unfortunate as different events in the transition to adulthood are not separate experiences but are linked to one another The main goal of our study is to get a more integral picture of the transition to adulthood of the Turkish second generation in Europe by applying sequence analyses.

The literature indicates that the life courses of young adults in western Europe have changed substantially over the last decades (Liefbroer & Goldscheider, 2006). Transitions are postponed, are no longer experienced in a standard order and are supposed to be subject to individual choice. In addition, the transition to adulthood seems to be prolonged and covers several phases. How and to what extent this is also the case among the children of immigrants is not clear yet. Life courses of young persons are shaped by both the host society and their parents as is found for the majority group. Those of migrant origin are however in a special position as their parents come from societies in which the timing and order of events in the transition to adulthood is often different from that of the country of residence. The extent to which children of immigrants adapt to the patterns of the country of residence or maintain different paths into adulthood is the core question of this paper.

This study adds to our knowledge in three ways. First, it covers a range of (family life) events in the transition to adulthood. By studying the timing and ordering of each of the events in this transition we can get a more comprehensive insight in this phase of life. This allows us to understand the evolvement of individual lives and the factors of importance. Second, we include young adults of the Turkish second generation and the majority group in five European countries. This allows for a double comparative perspective in which we can

contrast young adults of different origin living at one location but also make cross-national comparisons for the Turkish second generation. The latter is important to start evaluating whether the Turkish second generation experience the transition to adulthood similar in each of the countries or whether the context of the country of residence is of crucial importance for the life courses of the second generation. So the question is whether we find more similarities between the Turkish second generation irrespective of country of residence or that by and large the Turkish second generation differs in their behaviour between European countries as is found for the majority group young adults in previous studies. We therewith also question whether children of immigrants follow the more traditional paths into adulthood, predominant in their parent's country of origin (at least at the time of migration) or adapt to patterns common in the host society. The growing size of the second generation makes it necessary to get more insight in the timing and sequencing of events as this can have important impacts on the life chances (also later in life) of these young adults. By applying sequence analyses resulting in typology building of typical paths into adulthood we can start to understand the critical moments in young adults' lives. Finally, by trying to explain these different paths we get at the key factors for each of the routes taken by young adults of different origins. The unique new survey data (from the TIES project) were not available for the second generation in a European comparative perspective before.

Data and analyses

For this paper we make use of the data from "The Integration of the European Second Generation" (TIES) survey; a European comparative survey on young adults of the second generation from Turkey, Morocco and former Yugoslavia and their majority group peers[i]. The survey was carried out in 15 cities in eight European countries. For our work we have to restrict ourselves to those five countries where Turkish young adults were sampled and where full details on the different transitions were collected in the survey; although an identical questionnaire was used in all cities some small changes were made resulting in the fact that the data we have are not suited for our type of analyses.. In each if these countries two large cities (with the exception of Sweden) were surveyed in which many second generation Turks are living. This implies we will focus on five countries namely France (Paris/Strasbourg), Germany (Berlin/Frankfurt), the Netherlands (Amsterdam/Rotterdam), Sweden (Stockholm) and Switzerland (Zurich/Basel).

Respondents were defined as second generation if they were born in the country of residence and at least one of their parents was born in Turkey or Morocco. Those who were

born from two native born parents are defined to belong to the majority group. The sample was randomly drawn from the population registers in the case of the Netherlands and Sweden. For France, Germany, and Switzerland surname-recognition techniques using phone books were used. This method had to be applied as in France only information on the country of birth of a person and not on that of the parents is available, whereas in the German speaking countries strict data protection laws prevent access to population register data., using the administrative data from these registers on (parental) origin, place of birth and age of the respondent. In total 1,000 Turkish second generation respondents as well as 1,200 majority group young adults are included in our analyses.

Measures

In this paper we include different transitions in both the family and public domain. Each respondent was asked retrospectively at what age he/she first left the parental house, for the first time started cohabiting with a partner, got married to a partner for the first time and had a first child as well as finished education and entered the labour market. Each of these transitions was measured in exact full years, implying we know the age (in years) when a transition was experienced but we are unsure about the order when two events were taking place at the same age. Although these are not detailed event history data, the available information allows for reconstructing sequences of events that were neither available for the second generation nor in a European comparative perspective before. The information on the separate transitions is used to construct family life trajectories. In this paper we thus look at timing of the events, the quantum of experienced events and the sequencing (order) of these events. In addition, to the information on family life transitions, we analyse the data on starting independent living by focusing on three events: finishing education, entering the labour market and leaving the parental home. All transitions experienced between the ages of 15 and 25 years of age.

Methods

The analyses covered four separate steps. First, characteristics of the trajectories into adulthood are described. Descriptive event history techniques were used to give an overview of the ages at which transitions are experienced by the young adults in our sample. In the next step, sequence analyses are carried out on the family life events and a separate analyses on reaching independence via education and work. For each year the position a young adults takes is determined and we construct a yearly sequence representation of the mentioned life

course events. The sequence of states of each individual is denoted as si=*{*si1, . . . , siT *}* and the length of the sequence is the same for each individual. The coding of states was done by determining whether the person had left the parental house, entered a cohabiting union, got married or had a child at time *t* (see also Piccarreta & Billari, 2007).

Third, optimal matching was applied to calculate the differences between individual trajectories. This technique for the analysis of sequence data takes into account the ordering and timing of the sequences. It uses iterative minimisation procedures for finding distances between pairs of sequences in a sample. The distance between two sequences can be defined as the number of operations one must perform to match the sequences. The resulting dissimilarity coefficient was used for further analyses (Brzinsky-Fay, 2007; Brzinsky-Fay, Kohler & Luniak, 2006). The dissimilarity coefficients are used to group the different trajectories. And in the final step these clusters of trajectories are analysed by using multinominal logistic regression to study the effects of different individual characteristics on the likelihood of taking the specific path into adulthood.

The characteristics of the sample and the used variables can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the sample and explanatory variables by origin group and sex

		Men		**Women**	
		Second generation Turks	**Natives**	**Second generation Turks**	**Natives**
Parents' education	*Primary education or below*	54.4	1.7	59.2	2.2
	Secondary education	36.9	58.3	36.0	56.9
	Tertiary education	8.7	40.0	4.9	40.9
Raised with religious education		81.5	54.7	83.4	53.6
Mother was working when respondent was 15		61.0	41.7	60.0	37.7
Country	CH	18.6	22.7	15.2	19.7
	DE	*28.6*	22.2	*30.3*	26.7
	FR	14.8	14.2	20.9	16.1
	NL	*21.4*	26.3	*20.0*	24.4
	SE	16.6	14.7	13.6	13.1
Sample size		*392*	600	*455*	*600*

Preliminary findings

Below we provide some first insights into the descriptive findings from the analyses on the full sample without age selection. When looking at the median ages at which the different transitions are experienced we find that overall experience transitions at younger ages than natives with two exceptions: leaving the parental home and start of cohabiting union (Table 2). Transitions are clearly earlier taking place for the majority group young adults. It indicates that among the Turkish group marriage directly from the parental home remains importance. At the same time we also find that the Turkish second generation leaves the education system at younger ages than is the case for the native group which is in line with previous studies. These findings overall hold for men and women though the differences in patterns for the Turkish second generation women and their native peers are clearer than they are for men. With respect to labour market entry our results show that as a result of the early exit out of the educational system, the Turkish second generation men also start a job earlier than is the case for the native men. For second generation Turkish women the earlier end of education is not reflected in an earlier entrance on into the first job.

Table 2 median ages for transitions and percentage experienced transition at age 25, by origin and sex

	Men		**Women**	
	Second generation Turks	**Natives**	**Second generation Turks**	**Natives**
Median age at leaving parental home	23	21	22	20
Proportion left parental home at age 25	0.75	0.91	0.83	0.93
Median age at Cohabitation	28	27	28	26
Proportion ever cohabited at age 25	*0.19*	*0.37*	*0.18*	*0.47*
Median age at Marriage	26	30	24	29
Proportion ever married at age 25	*0.44*	*0.06*	*0.57*	*0.12*
Median age at first child	27	30	26	29
Proportion ever had children at age 25	*0.25*	*0.04*	*0.45*	*0.08*
Median age at finishing education	20	24	20	23
Proportion finished education at age 25	*0.73*	*0.61*	*0.75*	*0.67*
Median age at first job	20	22	24	23
Proportion ever had a job at age 25	*0.74*	*0.75*	*0.55*	*0.69*

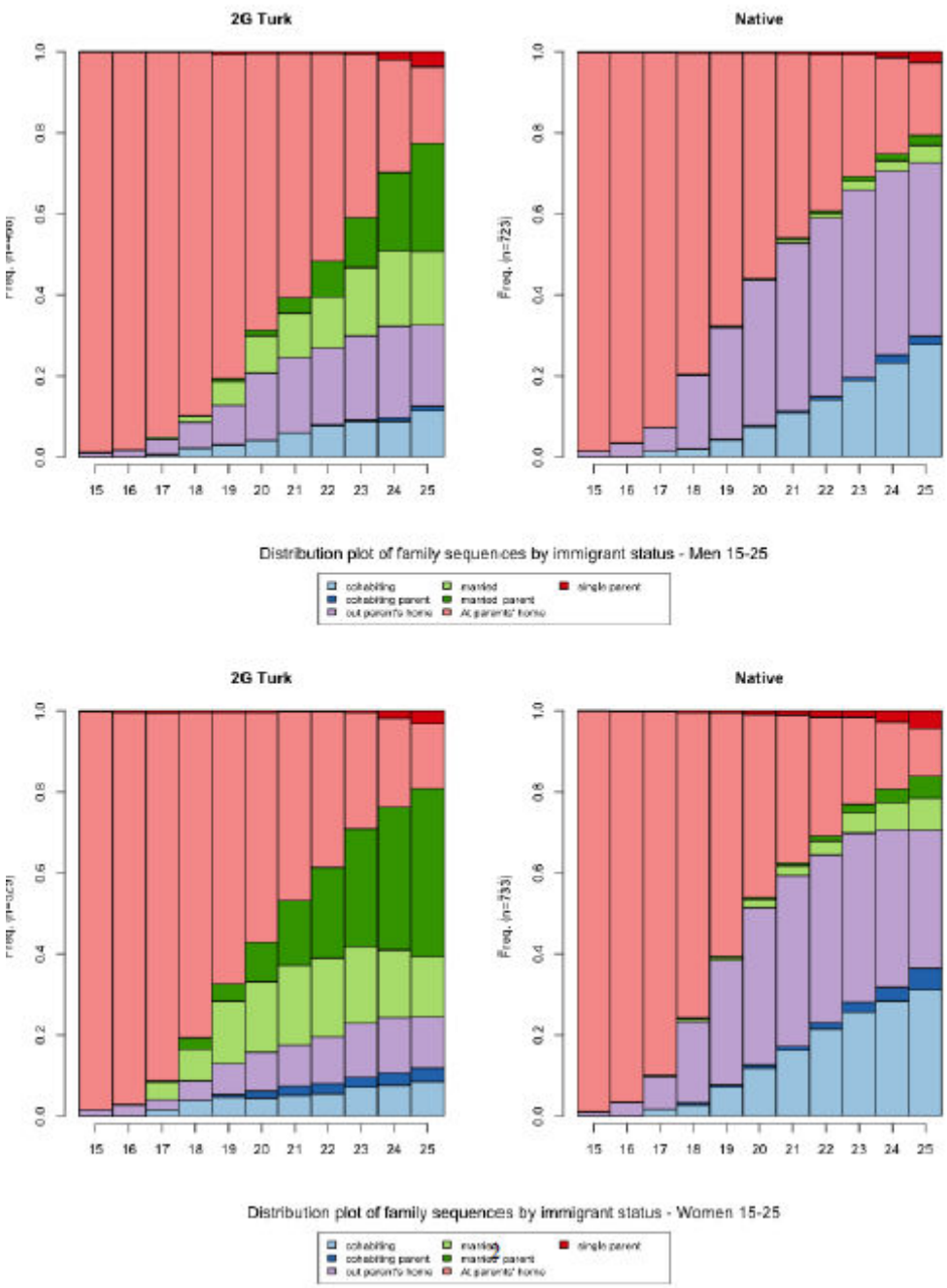

Figure 1 Sequence distribution plots of family trajectories by origin and gender

The distribution plots of the sequences in the family domain (covering all five study countries) indicate that although cohabitation is occurring among the second generation (light blue) it is not as widespread as it is among the natives. The same holds for living independently (purple) which is very common among young adults of native origins in particular after age 19. Unmarried cohabitation and independent living capture the life courses of by far the majority of young adults of native origin (both men and women). Although some of the Turkish second generation are living on their own without having experienced any

other transition this is not as widespread though more common for men than women. In particular the life courses of Turkish second generation women are already by age 22 much more characterised by marriage and childbearing. At the same time Turkish second generation men seem to stay in the parental home longer and postpone transitions almost to the same extend as native men. When clustering the individual trajectories in meaningful paths into adulthood in the family domain we find four predominant clusters whereas five clusters can be determined with regard to gaining independence (Tables 3a-b).

In order to further test our hypothesis on effects of countries of residence we also provide this information for each of the five countries separately (Table 4) for the family life clusters. In the last part we finally assess the relevance of a few core individual characteristics on the followed paths to adulthood (Table 5). Since we assume differences in the transition to adulthood we include dummy variables for the country of origin to see whether different reception/welfare state contexts are of different importance for the trajectories of the Turkish second generation.

Table 3a Clusters of family life transitions by origin and sex

	Men		**Women**	
	Second generation Turks	**Natives**	**Second generation Turks**	**Natives**
Delayed family transition	*37.50*	*32.67*	*27.69*	*26.56*
Transition to independent living	*20.66*	*44.17*	*11.65*	*38.59*
Transition to cohabitation	*9.18*	*21.50*	*8.13*	*30.63*
Traditional family formation	*32.65*	*1.67*	*52.53*	*4.22*
Total	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*
N	392	600	455	640

Table 3b Clusters of gaining independent living by origin and sex

	Men		**Women**	
	Second generation Turks	**Natives**	**Second generation Turks**	**Natives**
Delayed Independence	*17.52*	*20.11*	*15.19*	*18.96*
Gradual Transition	*14.80*	*21.46*	*11.90*	*17.53*
Inactive at young age	*17.22*	*10.34*	*36.46*	*17.17*
Traditional	*39.27*	*21.26*	*25.57*	*18.78*
Long education and independence	*11.18*	*26.82*	*10.89*	*27.55*
Total	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*
N	392	600	455	640

Men										
	Switzerland		Germany		France		Netherlands		Sweden	
	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives
Delayed family transition	*39.73*	*41.18*	*42.86*	*41.35*	*36.21*	*36.47*	*29.76*	*24.68*	*36.92*	*17.05*
Transition to independent living	*24.66*	*39.71*	*18.75*	*42.11*	*15.52*	*34.12*	*20.24*	*51.90*	*24.62*	*50.00*
Transition to cohabitation	*8.22*	*16.91*	*8.93*	*13.53*	*12.07*	*27.06*	*5.95*	*22.78*	*12.31*	*32.95*
Traditional family formation	*27.40*	*2.21*	*29.46*	*3.01*	*36.21*	*2.35*	*44.05*	*0.63*	*26.15*	*0.00*
Total	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*
N	73	136	112	133	58	85	84	158	65	88
Women										
	Switzerland		Germany		France		Netherlands		Sweden	
	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives	Second generation Turks	Natives
Delayed family transition	*33.33*	*30.95*	*37.68*	*37.43*	*23.16*	*33.01*	*17.58*	*16.67*	*20.97*	*8.33*
Transition to independent living	*18.84*	*36.51*	*13.04*	*42.11*	*7.37*	*24.27*	*8.79*	*41.67*	*11.29*	*46.43*
Transition to cohabitation	*8.70*	*27.78*	*2.90*	*13.45*	*4.21*	*35.92*	*13.19*	*41.03*	*17.74*	*44.05*
Traditional family formation	*39.13*	*4.76*	*46.38*	*7.02*	*65.26*	*6.80*	*60.44*	*0.64*	*50.00*	*1.19*
Total	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*
N	69	126	138	171	95	103	91	156	62	84

Table 4 Clusters of family life transitions by origin and sex and country of residence

Tabel 5 Regression coefficients of the multinominal regression (traditional family formation reference category

	Delayed family transition			**Transition to Independent living**			**Transition to cohabitation**		
	Mod 1	Mod 2	Mod 3	Mod 1	Mod 2	Mod 3	Mod 1	Mod 2	Mod 3
Female	-0.924***	-1.153***	-1.102***	-0.918***	-1.042***	-0.988**	-0.451***	-0.553	-0.501
(ref: Male)	(0.147)	(0.386)	(0.387)	(0.157)	(0.382)	(0.385)	(0.172)	(0.390)	(0.394)
Second Generation Turks	-2.315***	-2.517***	-3.983***	-3.222***	-3.287***	-5.165***	-3.283***	-3.274***	-4.826***
(ref: Natives)	(0.222)	(0.364)	(0.808)	(0.231)	(0.371)	(0.816)	(0.250)	(0.399)	(0.838)
Parents' education= High or medium	0.155	0.162	0.221	0.573***	0.572***	0.661***	0.448**	0.445**	0.549**
(ref: primary education or below)	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.177)	(0.190)	(0.190)	(0.196)	(0.213)	(0.213)	(0.218)
Raised with religious education	-0.654***	-0.654***	-0.632***	-0.459**	-0.459**	-0.365*	-0.951***	-0.951***	-0.903***
(ref: raised not religious)	(0.194)	(0.193)	(0.195)	(0.201)	(0.201)	(0.205)	(0.210)	(0.210)	(0.214)
Mother was working when respondent was 15	-0.460***	-0.460***	-0.472***	-0.343**	-0.342**	-0.329**	-0.371**	-0.370**	-0.374**
(ref: Mother not working)	(0.155)	(0.155)	(0.156)	(0.165)	(0.165)	(0.167)	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.182)
SE	-0.0107	-0.00865	-0.694	0.218	0.220	-0.165	0.302	0.305	-0.124
(ref: NL)	(0.277)	(0.277)	(1.254)	(0.271)	(0.271)	(1.237)	(0.285)	(0.285)	(1.240)
CH	0.694***	0.689***	-0.862	0.00453	0.00136	-1.778**	-0.119	-0.124	-1.759**
(ref: NL)	(0.243)	(0.243)	(0.803)	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.797)	(0.270)	(0.270)	(0.803)
DE	0.852***	0.848***	-1.255	0.0804	0.0747	-2.146***	-0.601**	-0.608**	-2.836***
(ref: NL)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.770)	(0.223)	(0.223)	(0.763)	(0.257)	(0.257)	(0.776)
FR	0.114	0.110	-1.327*	-0.848***	-0.850***	-2.431***	-0.405	-0.407	-1.859**
(ref: NL)	(0.235)	(0.234)	(0.806)	(0.253)	(0.253)	(0.801)	(0.260)	(0.261)	(0.802)
Female * Second Generation Turks		0.357	0.299		0.0448	-0.0244		-0.0747	-0.125
		(0.422)	(0.423)		(0.438)	(0.441)		(0.472)	(0.476)
CH * Second Generation Turks			1.539*			2.492***			1.760*
			(0.858)			(0.872)			(0.918)
SE * Second Generation Turks			0.898			0.477			0.457
			(1.289)			(1.286)			(1.299)
DE * Second Generation Turks			2.263***			2.822***			2.801***

			(0.813)			(0.829)			(0.879)
FR * Second Generation Turks			1.481*			2.160**			1.455
			(0.855)			(0.885)			(0.912)
Constant	3.818***	4.189***	5.504***	4.109***	4.330***	5.639***	3.388***	3.573***	4.856***
	(0.406)	(0.735)	(0.996)	(0.422)	(0.734)	(0.994)	(0.453)	(0.754)	(1.010)
Observations	2044	2044	2044	2044	2044	2044	2044	2044	2044

Standard errors in parentheses

="* p<0.10 ** p<0.05 *** p<0.01"

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[i] The TIES survey was carried out by survey bureaus under supervision of the nine national TIES partner institutes: Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) of the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands, the Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research (ISPO), University of Leuven in Belgium; the National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) in France; the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM) of the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland; the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations (CEIFO) of the University of Stockholm in Sweden; the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies