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Life courses of immigrants and their descendants

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Introduction



1.1 Introduction and research questions

The transition to adulthood is a crucial period in the life course of each individual. Within this relatively short period of time, people have to contemplate and make a series of important decisions that have enduring effects on their further lives (Arnett, 2014; Barban, 2013; Liefbroer, 2009; Seltzer & Bianchi, 2013). It is therefore not surprising that much empirical research has focused on examining young people's transitions to adulthood in different spheres of life, such as education, employment, and family formation, as well as the interdependencies between them (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011; Elzinga & Liefbroer, 2007; Goldscheider et al., 2014; Huinink, 2013; McMunn et al., 2015; Settersten et al., 2005; Widmer & Ritschard, 2009). In spite of this extensive research, however, we still have little knowledge on how young adults with an immigration background in Europe transit into adulthood. More precisely, while many studies have addressed the position of immigrants in the public domains of education and the labor market, the ways in which their family life course unfolds in young adulthood remains largely unexplored (see for exceptions, e.g., de Valk, 2006; Hanneman & Kulu, 2015; Huschek et al., 2010, 2011; Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Zorlu & Mulder, 2011). Filling this gap in the literature is important for two main reasons.

First, theoretically, there is good reason to expect profound differences across ethnic origin groups in family pathways in young adulthood. Previous research has highlighted the emergence of new life-course patterns over the last decades in Western Europe, particularly so in the family domain (Brückner & Mayer, 2004; Widmer & Ritschard, 2009). Starting in the 1960s, there is a clear trend towards postponement and decline of marriage and childbearing, along with an increase in alternative family forms, such as living alone before first union formation, unmarried cohabitation, and out-of-wedlock parenthood (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Goldscheider et al., 2014; Mills & Blossfeld, 2005; Settersten et al., 2005). Many immigrants, particularly those with a non-Western background, grew up in societies with more traditional norms and values regarding family-life transitions and arrangements (Nauck, 2002; Nauck & Klaus, 2008; Koc, 2007). This raises the question whether immigrants' family behavior is consistent with these cultural norms in the country of origin, or resembles that of the majority population in the country of destination. In addition, regardless of origin and destination countries differences, it has been argued that international migration itself is a stressful life event that may alter family-life behavior (Frank & Wildsmith, 2005; González-Ferrer et al., 2014; Milewski, 2007). Furthermore,

children of immigrants who were born in the country of settlement of their parent(s), are exposed to two cultural value systems during their upbringing, viz. the culture of their parents and the culture of the society in which they grow up (Luna et al., 2008). This so-called 'second generation'¹ may perceive the traditional values and practices of their parents as highly restrictive, potentially increasing the frequency and intensity of parent-child conflicts (Giguère et al., 2010; Lou et al., 2011). It is as of yet unclear how young adults from immigrant families deal with these unique challenges throughout the family life course.

The second reason why research on family transitions in young adulthood of ethnic minority youth should be of concern, is that migration has become an increasingly important phenomenon for many European societies (Castles et al., 2014). This is perhaps best reflected in recent discussions of e.g. the potential burden of intra-EU migration on social welfare benefits or Europe's handling of the refugee crisis. Nevertheless, also more historical migration flows impact Europe's current population composition and dynamics. Over the past decade, a large share of the children born to immigrants who migrated to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s have come to the age of making the transition to adulthood and have started to form families. Indeed, a substantial and growing part of the young adult population in various European countries has an immigrant background: In 2014, for example, about 25% of the German population between the ages of 15 and 35 was either of the first or second generation (Federal Statistical Office of Germany, 2015), so was 35% of the Swedish population (Statistics Sweden, 2015), and 27% of the Dutch population (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). These percentages are even higher in urbanized areas where immigrant families tend to concentrate (Zorlu & Mulder, 2010). Thus, immigrants and their descendants increasingly shape the population structure and growth of many European societies, making them a highly relevant group that needs to be reckoned with. In this regard, research on transitions to adulthood of different ethnic minority groups is considered to be important for both society and (demographic) research.

The main objective of this dissertation is therefore to investigate how immigrants and their descendants make the transition to adulthood and what factors influence transitions in particular in the family domain. Specifically, this study seeks answers to the following two general research questions: (1) *What patterns in the transition to adulthood,*

¹ For convenience, throughout this dissertation the terms "children of immigrants", "descendants of immigrants", and "second generation" are used interchangeably except where noted otherwise.

particularly those in the family domain, prevail among immigrants, children of immigrants, and the native population? (2) To what extent can differences between and within ethnic groups be explained by the role of family, peers, and the migration process?

Empirically, this study focuses exclusively on the Netherlands. Apart from the fact that the current Dutch young adult population is highly diverse in terms of ethnicity and cultural background, an important reason for focusing on the Netherlands is the availability of high-quality population register data that are well suited for the purpose of this study. The use of these administrative data allows us to make a number of important theoretical and methodological contributions to the literature. First of all, whereas previous research on family behavior of immigrant children has mainly studied union formation (e.g., Hanneman & Kulu, 2015; Huschek et al., 2010, 2011; Milewski & Hamel, 2010), this dissertation covers several markers of the transition to adulthood, including leaving the parental home, returning to the parental home, partnership formation, and the transition to parenthood.

Second, this dissertation contributes to the literature methodologically. Not only are multiple events in the transition to adulthood covered, an important addition is that these events are examined simultaneously. More specifically, in two empirical chapters of this dissertation (Chapters 2 and 5), sequence analysis² (SA) is applied. This technique allows one to study complete life-course trajectories as a unit of analysis and, thus, describing the process of transition to adulthood as a whole (see Abbott & Hrycak, 1990; Abbott & Tsay, 2000). Previous research, by contrast, has primarily relied on event history analysis and has focused on a single event as the outcome to be investigated (e.g., Huschek et al., 2010, Zorlu & Mulder, 2011). The latter approach provides a more limited understanding of how young people transit into adulthood, as the connection with other life-course events remains largely unknown. Yet, at the same time, event-oriented approaches can address the timing of a specific event and how it is affected by explanatory variables much more accurately. Therefore, both complementary approaches are used throughout this dissertation in order to provide a most complete picture of ethnic differences in transitions into adulthood.

² One of the impediments frequently encountered when conducting SA is a lack of appropriate data, particularly because various SA techniques tend to be blind to issues of left- and right-censoring. Billari (2001a:452) argues that "the ideal source for sequence data is a population register".

Finally, a contribution of this thesis is its focus on and comparison of various ethnic minority groups. Family patterns of a rapidly growing, yet understudied, first-generation immigrant population (Polish immigrants), as well as the second generation of more established groups of immigrants (Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans) in the Netherlands are examined in this dissertation. Moreover, in Chapters 2 and 4, the second generation is further separated out into those with one foreign-born parent and those with two foreign-born parents. Such comparisons have been largely absent in previous studies, primarily due to problems of small sample sizes (e.g., de Valk & Billari, 2007; de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007a, 2007b; Huschek et al., 2010, 2011; Milewski & Hamel, 2010). The administrative data used throughout this study cover the entire registered population of the Netherlands and are therefore particularly suited to focus on rather understudied migrant populations, as well as to use more fine-grained measures of ethnic origin.

All in all, this dissertation gives a comprehensive insight into transitions to adulthood among various ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands, by using novel methods in migration research and high-quality empirical data. The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. In the next section (1.2), an overview is provided of the composition and migration history of the migrant populations in the Netherlands, specifically focusing on the five ethnic minority groups under study: Poles, Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans. Section 1.3 summarizes family patterns in the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands, as well as in the origin countries of the aforementioned five immigrant groups. Section 1.4 discusses theoretical considerations on ethnic group differences in family behavior. Finally, an outline of this dissertation is provided in section 1.5, focusing on the data used and the overall aim of each of the empirical chapters in this dissertation.

1.2 Migrant populations in the Netherlands —————

As a consequence of various migration waves to the Netherlands since World War II, the composition of the Dutch population has increasingly become ethnically diverse. Immigrants and their descendants currently account for more than a fifth of the population in the Netherlands of nearly 17 million inhabitants (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). In most general terms, postwar migration flows to the Netherlands can be roughly grouped into four categories: (1) labor migration (*guest workers*), (2) postcolonial migration, (3) asylum migration, and (4) intra-European migration. This dissertation focuses on the second

generation of 'guest workers' and postcolonial migrants, as well as on first-generation immigrants from within the EU. Asylum seekers and their children are not included in this dissertation because, in spite of a marked increase in asylum migration in the 1990s, asylum seekers still constitute a relatively small proportion of the total Dutch population and include a wide variety of backgrounds (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). The presence of the most recent refugee groups in Europe is too recent to properly evaluate in terms of family patterns and behavior in the transition to adulthood.

The presence of 396,555 residents with a Turkish and 380,755 residents with a Moroccan background in the Netherlands nowadays, largely reverts back to the recruitment of labor migrants in the mid-1960s and early 1970s (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Typically, low or uneducated men were recruited from rural areas in Turkey (central Anatolia) and Morocco (Rif region) in order to fill unskilled occupations in the Netherlands (Vermeulen & Penninx, 2000). Despite large cultural differences and difficulties with Dutch language acquisition, social integration policies were never really developed, at least partly due to the assumption that these so-called 'guest workers' would stay only temporarily in the Netherlands (van Mol & de Valk, 2016). Rather than returning to the country of origin, however, many decided to permanently settle in the Netherlands and were joined by their families who initially stayed behind in the origin countries. Many of their children were born in the Netherlands, resulting in a sizable second generation: More than half of the current Turkish and Moroccan population in the Netherlands is of the second generation (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). The large majority of the Turkish (78%) and Moroccan (82%) second generation is born to two foreign-born parents, reflecting the rather low levels of out-partnering with the native Dutch among the first generation (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2006; Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Even though the socioeconomic position of the second generation is improving, both first and second generation Turks and Moroccans tend to have relatively low levels of education, employment, and earnings (Hartgers & Besjes, 2014; Heath et al., 2008; Odé & Veenman, 2003).

Surinamese and Antillean migration to the Netherlands has a long history and is closely related to Dutch colonial past (van Mol & de Valk, 2016). Traditionally, these migration flows were uncontrolled and consisted mainly of students. In the 1970s, when Surinam's declaration of independence was announced, Surinamese immigration to the Netherlands increased sharply, mainly out of fear that the Dutch borders would be closed afterwards. Indeed, strict immigration controls were introduced by the Dutch government in 1980, after which Surinamese immigration declined (Vermeulen & Penninx, 2000). The

Netherlands Antilles, by contrast, have consistently resisted a transfer of sovereignty. Hence, the islands are still part of the Netherlands Kingdom and their habitants hold full Dutch citizenship³. Migration from the Antilles to the Netherlands was for a long time mostly of temporary nature, but due to a decline in the Antillean economy in the 1990s, migration increased and return rates decreased substantially (Oostindie, 2011). As of 1 January 2015, 348,662 individuals with a Surinamese background and 148,926 individuals with an Antillean background were living in the Netherlands, of whom almost half is of the second generation (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). In contrast to Turks and Moroccans, many Surinamese and Antillean immigrants were familiar with Dutch society and the language already prior to migration, due to their colonial history (Oostindie, 2011). Moreover, as opposed to the largely Muslim populations in Turkey and Morocco, Surinamese and particularly Antillean populations are primarily Christian (van Tubergen, 2003). The rate of ethnic mixed couples is relatively high among Surinamese and Antillean immigrants: around 38 percent of the Surinamese and 56 percent of the Antillean second generation has one native Dutch parent (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). The Surinamese and Antillean populations in the Netherlands are relatively heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic status, but in general their position is less favorable than that of the native Dutch and somewhat better than that of Turks and Moroccans (Hartgers & Besjes, 2014; Odé & Veenman, 2003).

More recently, the eastern expansions of the EU in 2004 and 2007 have sharply increased migration flows within Europe. Ever since Poland joined the EU in 2004, Polish migrants by far make up the largest group of foreign nationals settling in the Netherlands. In contrast to the migration flows described above, Polish migration to the Netherlands is to a large extent temporary and circular of nature (Nicolaas, 2011; van Mol & de Valk, 2016). Nevertheless, the numbers entering the Netherlands are considerably larger than the number of departures (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Consequently, there has been a large increase in the number of Polish migrants living in the Netherlands. Whereas the registered population with a Polish background in the Netherlands counted 35,542 individuals in January 2004 (just prior to the EU expansion), this number has increased up

³ In 2010, the six Caribbean islands within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, formerly known as the Netherlands Antilles, were subdivided into three self-governing countries (Aruba since 1986, Curaçao, and St Maarten), while the three other islands (Bonaire, St Eustatius, and Saba) became special municipalities within the country of the Netherlands. All six islands, however, remained part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and therefore their citizens are Dutch citizens (Oostindie, 2011).

to 137,794 individuals as of January 2015 (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). It is estimated that the actual number of people of Polish origin in the Netherlands is much higher and lies somewhere between 160 and 180 thousand (van der Heijden et al., 2013). This difference results from the fact that immigrants who intend to stay in the Netherlands for less than four months are not obliged to register themselves. Due to the free movement of people within the EU, short-term non-registered migration of Polish migrants has become very common, particularly in the spring and summer months (Dagevos, 2011; Korf, 2009). Contrary to the four classic immigrant populations in the Netherlands, the vast majority (78%) of the registered Polish population in the Netherlands is a first-generation migrant (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Traditionally, rates of Dutch-intermarriage were relatively high, especially among Polish women (Dagevos, 2011). Hence, some 60 percent of the Polish second generation has one parent that was born in the Netherlands (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). As regards religion, three out of four Polish immigrants in the Netherlands adhere to Christian values, which is comparable to the Antillean population (Dagevos, 2011; van Tubergen, 2003). The employment rate of Polish migrants is comparable with that of the native Dutch population, meaning that Poles are in paid work considerably more often than many non-Western migrant groups, particularly Turks and Moroccans. Nevertheless, Polish migrants mainly occupy temporary positions at the lower end of the labor market and are susceptible to unemployment (Dagevos, 2011). Finally, most Polish migrants have a low proficiency in Dutch, which likely owes to their only recent presence in the country (Dagevos, 2011; Schothorst, 2009).

1.3 Transitions to adulthood in comparative perspective –

1.3.1 The Netherlands and Northern-Western Europe

During the first half of the past century, the life courses of young adults in Western Europe and the United States have increasingly become more similar to one another, which is referred to as *standardization* of the life course (Liefbroer & Dykstra, 2000). According to Shanahan (2000), a key aspect of this standardization process is ‘compression’, which means as much as a narrowing of the age range in which young adults experience several life-course transitions. In other words, standardization of the life course is characterized by reduced variation in the timing of life-course transitions. Moreover, standardization also implies that the sequencing of life events becomes more homogeneous. In particular

in the 1950s and early 1960s, the transition to adulthood in Western societies typically developed along a more-or-less fixed family pattern, consisting of leaving the parental home to marry, followed by childbirth before age 30. In the Netherlands, 56 percent of women and 43 percent of men born in the 1930s followed this traditional family trajectory (Liefbroer & de Jong Gierveld, 1995). This pathway has been referred to as the *standard biography* in the literature (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

From the 1960s onwards, there has been a substantial decline in the prevalence of the standard biography, as new demographic behaviors have emerged and become common in many Western societies, including the Netherlands. These changes in the life course are often subsumed under the term *Second Demographic Transition* (SDT) (Lesthaeghe, 2010; Lesthaeghe & van de Kaa, 1986). Nowadays, most young adults in the Netherlands cohabit with their partner before entering into marriage (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Hiekel et al., 2014). Consequently, there has been a significant rise in the average age of first marriage: for women, this has increased from age 23 to age 30 over the past three decades (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Although the number of out-of-wedlock births has increased substantially over successive birth cohorts, most young adults in the Netherlands still get married before their first child was born (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010). Babies born out of wedlock accounted for 44 percent of all births in the Netherlands in 2014 (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). Similar to marriage, entry into parenthood has also been postponed over the past decades: whereas more than 30 percent of women born in the Netherlands in the 1950s had a child before age 25, this percentage is much lower for women born in the 1960s and 1970s, with respectively 17 and 14 percent (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). The declining number of mothers by age 25 does not only reflect a rise in the mean age of first childbearing, but also an increase in childlessness.

Often, the concept of 'postmaterialism' is used to explain the above outlined SDT developments. Inglehart (1977, 1997) argued that many Western European societies have, due to increasing economic development, witnessed a shift in people's value orientations from materialistic to postmaterialistic values, which emphasize individualism, self-expression and self-development (see also Maslow, 1954). Accordingly, this change in cultural values from the 1960s onwards has gone hand in hand with a decline in the influence of family tradition and parental authority. As a consequence, individuals no longer transit into adulthood by following a fixed sequence of family events – the standard biography – but instead have the autonomy to construct their own life courses, referred to as a *choice biography* (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Some have argued

that these developments have resulted in a more complex and heterogeneous transition to adulthood, with great diversity in the timing, sequencing, and quantum of life course transitions (Brückner & Mayer, 2005; Fussel & Furstenberg, 2005; Settersten et al., 2005). It is important to point out that the concept of diversity includes two aspects that can be distinguished: diversity *within* an individual life course and diversity *between* individual life courses (Aisenbrey & Fasang, 2010). Although the two concepts are related, a weakening of normative standards would particularly imply an increase of the latter, which is referred to as *destandardization* of the life course.

The claim that life-course trajectories of young adults have become less similar to one another over the past decades has, however, received inconsistent empirical support (Elchardus & Smits, 2006; Elzinga & Liefbroer, 2007; Nico, 2014; Widmer & Ritschard, 2009; Widmer & Gauthier, 2013). Billari and Liefbroer (2010) argue that the standard biography has been replaced by a new dominant pattern in Western Europe, which they characterize as late, protracted, and complex. Another point of criticism on notions of destandardization of the life course concerns the finding that family patterns vary greatly by gender, ethnicity, and social class nowadays (Liefbroer & Dykstra, 2000; McLanahan, 2004; Settersten & Bay, 2010). This may reflect standardized life-course patterns among population subgroups, rather than dissolution of normative expectations and complete autonomy in life-course decision-making. In conclusion, previous research has consistently shown profound demographic changes in Western societies since the 1960s, but the extent to which these developments have actually increased diversity between young adults remains a topic of controversy in the literature.

1.3.2 Poland and Central-Eastern Europe

Whereas the SDT started in the mid-1960s in Northern and Western Europe, Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries have long maintained their traditional patterns of demographic behavior (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 2002; Lesthaeghe, 2010). It seemed that CEE countries were “immune” to the spread of the SDT, at least partly due to the strong cultural and political divides within Europe. After the collapse of the Communist regimes in 1989, however, demographic patterns in CEE have altered considerably for at least two reasons. First, the end of the Communist era also meant the end of guaranteed life-long employment and access to social services provided by the state, leading to an economic crisis (Lesthaeghe, 2010). Second, it has been argued that the transition from Communism to Capitalism has resulted in new value orientations

emphasizing postmaterialistic values, such as personal autonomy and self-expression (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 2002; Sobokta, 2008). The latter claim is strengthened by the finding that there was no return to earlier demographic patterns after the recovery of the CEE economies in the late 1990s.

Thus, from the early 1990s onwards, the transition to adulthood in Poland has followed similar trends as earlier observed in Northern and Western Europe. The mean age at first marriage in Poland increased from 22.4 in 1990 to 25.8 in 2011 for women (UNECE Statistical Database, 2015). In addition, there is a marked decrease in the overall number of marriages contracted in Poland, accompanied by an increase in the number of divorces over the last two decades (Kotowska et al., 2008). The transition to parenthood has also been postponed in Poland: the mean age of women at birth of the first child increased from 23.3 in 1989 to 26.9 in 2011 (Kotowska et al., 2008; UNECE Statistical Database, 2015). These developments have led to a trend of long-term fertility decline in Poland, where the total fertility rate (TFR) dropped from 2.07 in 1989 to 1.27 children in 2007 (Mishtal, 2009). This makes Poland, and CEE in general, the region with one of the lowest birth rates in the world. As regards cohabitation, empirical research indicates that non-marital unions are still relatively uncommon as compared to Northern and Western European countries (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Kotowska et al., 2008). Matysiak (2009) showed, however, that new unions in Poland increasingly start with unmarried cohabitation. In other words, non-marital unions in Poland are generally of short duration and mainly function as a prelude to marriage (Hiekel & Castro-Martín, 2014), implying that overall levels of unmarried cohabitation are relatively low. Despite increases in childbearing outside of marriage in Poland since 1990, still almost four out of five children were born to married couples in 2013 (CSO, 2014).

All in all, the fact that the onset of the SDT in Northern and Western Europe precedes that in CEE by some twenty years is clearly reflected in the extent to which the SDT has developed in these regions. Although family patterns in Poland have changed substantially over the last two decades, the magnitude of these changes is still relatively moderate by Northern and Western European standards (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Kotowska et al., 2008; Lesthaeghe, 2010). Billari and Liefbroer (2010) argue that, whereas demographic changes related to the SDT have reached a plateau in Northern and Western Europe, the SDT is still progressing in other parts of Europe, including CEE. Hence, one may expect a further convergence of demographic behavior between European countries in the not too distant future.

1.3.3 Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, and the Netherlands Antilles

Although family-life patterns in non-Western countries have also been prone to change over the past decades, young adults living in Turkey and Morocco still follow more traditional family pathways. In these societies, marriage is by far the dominant relationship form and practically all births occur within marriage (D'Addato, 2006; Nauck, 2002; Nauck & Klaus, 2008). Moreover, marriage and parenthood are experienced at relatively young ages in Turkish and Moroccan society. According to the most recent data from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) conducted in Turkey (2008) and Morocco (2003/04), the median age at first marriage for women aged 25-29 was 22.1 and 23.9 in Turkey and Morocco respectively. For the same birth cohort, the median age of women at first childbearing was 23.9 for Turkey (unknown for Morocco). The fact that entry into marriage precedes first childbearing by just over a year and a half on average highlights that the two events are strongly connected to each other. Koc (2007) suggests that the standard biography is still the dominant family trajectory among women in Turkey. Women typically move into the husband's parental home after marriage; the couple usually sets up a separate household when the first child is born (Bolt, 2002; Koc, 2007). As regards the number of children, Turkey and Morocco have experienced a strong decline in birth rates over the past decades. More specifically, whereas in the early 1970s the TFR was about 5 and 7 children per woman in Turkey and Morocco respectively, the current fertility in both countries is close to the replacement level of 2.1 (United Nations, 2013). It is important to note that the TFR, as well as median ages at first marriage and childbearing, strongly vary by urban or rural residence. Young adults living in urban areas are on average older when entering marriage and parenthood and tend to have fewer children (MDHS, 2003/04; TDHS, 2008). Finally, Turkey and Morocco are more patriarchal oriented than the Netherlands (Kagitçibasi, 1996). Typically, women face stronger normative prescriptions than men in these societies, as females are perceived as potential threats to family honor (Bowen & Early, 1993; Lievens, 2000; Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001).

In contrast to Turkey and Morocco, marriage is not a central feature of family life in the Caribbean area. This is, for example, reflected in relatively high shares of never-married men and women by age 50, which was about 40 percent in Surinam in 2004 and 35 percent on the Netherlands Antilles in 2001 (United Nations, 2013). Childbearing starts at relatively young ages in Surinam and the Antilles. For instance, in Surinam, the average age of women at first birth was 24.2 years old in 1995 (United Nations, 2004). Surinam and the Antilles have also experienced a large reduction in birth rates over

the past decades: the TFR has in both societies declined from around six children per woman in the 1950s, to around the replacement level nowadays (United Nations, 2013). The transition to adulthood in Surinam and the Antilles is characterized by a rather high incidence of unmarried cohabitation and parenthood (Shaw, 2003). In Surinam, out-of-wedlock births accounted for more than 70 percent of all babies born in 2007 (United Nations, 2013). It is important to note that the extra-marital births can be attributed to both cohabiting couples as well as to single mothers (Distelbrink, 2000; Shaw, 2003). Many households in Surinam and the Antilles have a matrifocal structure, meaning that women are often the head of the household and live without a partner because the roles of fathers and husbands tend to be rather marginal (Sharpe, 1997; Shaw, 2003). Thus, a large share of Surinamese and Antillean mothers raises their children without having a steady partner relationship; instead they often receive support from their mother or extended family members (Distelbrink, 2000).

1.4 Theoretical considerations and empirical evidence —

The life course approach is a dynamic framework that is intended to examine the lives of individuals over time. Various theories on ethnic differences in family behavior can be integrated within this framework, making it highly useful for this dissertation (Wingens et al., 2011). Five core principles characterize the life course approach: (1) linked lives, (2) human agency, (3) life-span development, (4) timing of lives, and (5) socio-historical and geographical location (see Elder & Johnson, 2002; Giele & Elder, 1998). *Linked lives* refers to the fact that our lives are not lived in isolation, but influence and are influenced by a network of social relationships, e.g., parents, spouses, siblings, peers, and so on. *Human agency* acknowledges that people, to a certain extent, construct their own life course based on personal preferences and autonomous decisions (note the link with previous discussed notions of destandardization of the life course). The principle of *life-span development* refers to the fact that the life course is a cumulative process, in which earlier life course events have a strong impact on events that occur later in life. The principle timing of lives is closely related to the previous, as it focuses on how the timing of life course events affects subsequent life course transitions. Finally, *socio-historical and geographical location* emphasizes that individual lives are shaped by the historical period and the geographical location in which people live (see section 1.3, for instance).

1.4.1 Family patterns among the first generation

We proceed by discussing how each of the principles of the life course approach relate to the family dynamics and patterns of first-generation immigrants. In accordance with our research questions, we focus specifically on the role of family, peers, and the migration process itself. The principles of *linked lives* and *human agency* highlight the role of the social ties (family, peers) of the immigrant (Wingens et al., 2011). Although immigrants often maintain emotional ties with their family and friends in the country of origin (Parreñas, 2005; Rooyackers et al., 2015), it has been argued that immigrants become less socially embedded within these social networks due to their physical absence (Booth et al., 1991; Frank & Wildsmith, 2005). Consequently, immigrants may be less bound to social norms and values dictating their behavior. In other words, immigrants are thought to have higher levels of individual agency in life-course decision-making than nonmigrants in the country of origin (Frank & Wildsmith, 2005). In line with this reasoning, previous research has indicated that lower levels of social control contribute significantly to higher odds of partnership dissolution of Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants in the United States (Frank & Wildsmith, 2005; Landale & Ogena, 1995). Although to our knowledge no empirical evidence is available, a similar line of reasoning can be pursued in relation to other aspects of family behavior, such as type of union (cohabitation vs. marriage), family size, and the timing and sequencing of life course transitions.

Nevertheless, family and co-ethnic networks in the country of destination may also exert levels of social control on and influence family behavior of immigrants. For example, previous research shows that immigrants living in a neighborhood with low concentrations of co-ethnic residents are more likely to enter into a mixed union than those who live in more ethnically concentrated areas (Feng et al., 2013; Muttarak & Heath, 2010). The association between ethnic neighborhood concentration and the propensity of forming a mixed-ethnic union has been related to the chance of meeting potential partners. In addition, living in an ethnic enclave enforces identity of the in-group and discourages exogamous relationships (Feng et al., 2013). Immigrants who have a non-coethnic partner are found to be less likely to return to the country of origin (Bijwaard & Wang, 2013; Zhao, 2002). The literature is inconsistent about the role of family members who accompanied or followed the immigrant to the destination country. On the one hand, it has been argued that the experience of migration strengthens these family ties, because they provide an important source of orientation and support in the new society (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Pyke, 2003). On the other hand, previous research suggests that migration may disrupt

family ties, leading to high union instability and conflicted parent-child relations (Frank & Wildsmith, 2005; Giguère et al., 2010; Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001).

Considering the principles *life-span development* and *timing of lives*, it can be argued that the migration process itself also has a strong impact on family behavior of immigrants (Wingens et al., 2011). Previous research has focused on how immigration influences fertility levels (e.g., Adsera & Ferrer, 2014; Milewski, 2007, 2010; Parrado, 2011; Waller et al., 2014) and union stability of immigrants (e.g., Caarls & Mazzucato, 2015; Frank & Wildsmith, 2005; González-Ferrer et al., 2014; Hanneman & Kulu, 2015). The underlying assumption of the so-called 'disruption hypothesis' is that migration itself, as well as the period before and after the move, are stressful for an individual. Moreover, many spouses immigrate at different points in time, implying that international migration frequently involves physical separation of husband and wife for a certain period of time (Caarls & Mazzucato, 2015; Frank & Wildsmith, 2005). In line with this, previous research has shown that post-migration fertility levels are generally low (Carter, 2000; Lindstrom & Giorguli Saucedo, 2002; Persson & Hoem, 2014) and that migration increases the risk of partnership dissolution (Boyle et al., 2008; Caarls & Mazzucato, 2015; Frank & Wildsmith, 2005; González-Ferrer et al., 2014). At the same time, it has been argued that immigration may also elevate fertility levels due to the fact that migration and union formation are often closely related to each other. Accordingly, childbearing may shortly follow the immigration move, particularly so in the case of marriage-related migration (Milewski, 2007, Mussino & Strozza, 2012). Indeed, several studies have shown elevated first-birth levels for immigrants during the first few years after immigration (Andersson 2004; Lindstrom, 2003; Lübke, 2015; Milewski, 2007).

Finally, following the principle of *socio-historical and geographical location*, we also need to consider the fact that international migration involves moving from one country to another. This means that immigrants are exposed to values and practices of two distinct geographical locations throughout the family life course, i.e. the country of origin and the country of destination. Two competing hypotheses are commonly proposed to explain the role of the country of origin versus that of the country of destination. The socialization hypothesis relies on the assumption that people's basic values are shaped by preferences and behavior dominant during childhood and remain rather stable throughout adulthood (Inglehart, 1997, Rokeach, 1968). Given that most immigrants arrive in the destination country as adults, particularly the country of origin is thought to be relevant for cultural values and preferences regarding family life. Consistent with this theoretical reasoning,

various empirical studies have found that immigrants' family life behavior largely reflects the dominant patterns of the country of origin in terms of fertility (Adsera & Ferrer, 2014; Andersson & Scott, 2007; Garssen & Nicolaas, 2008; Klesment, 2010; Milewski, 2010) and partnership transitions (Andersson et al., 2015; Furtado et al., 2013; González-Ferrer et al., 2014; Hanneman & Kulu, 2015; Pailhé, 2015). Mussino and van Raalte (2013) investigated the timing of childbearing among the same origin groups in two different destination countries, namely Russia and Italy. Their analysis showed strong similarities in fertility behavior among immigrant groups who migrated to Russia and Italy, highlighting the importance of the country-of-origin context for the family life course.

The adaptation and/or assimilation hypothesis, by contrast, assumes that the destination country is relevant for immigrants' family behavior, rather than the origin country. Accordingly, immigrants adjust their preferences and behavior according to the new geographical context. Indeed, there is empirical research suggesting that immigrants resemble the majority population after several years of stay in terms of fertility behavior (Kulu, 2006; Mayer & Riphahn, 2000; Milewski, 2007; Parrado, 2011) and partnership dissolution (Frank & Wildsmith, 2005). Generally, two reasons are put forward to explain this convergence. First, based on classical assimilation theory (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon, 1964), it has been argued that immigrants gradually take over the norms and values prevalent in the destination country, including those governing partnership formation and fertility. Second, based on neoclassical economic models (Becker, 1981), immigrants are expected to adjust their family life behavior in response to economic opportunities and constraints available in the destination country (Milewski, 2007; Mulder, 2006). Regarding fertility behavior, for instance, immigrants originating from high-fertility countries may have relatively few children in a society with higher opportunity costs of each additional child.

1.4.2 Family patterns among the second generation

An important difference between the first and second generation is that the second generation has not itself immigrated. As such, we do not need to be concerned with how family pathways of second-generation young adults are disrupted by the international migration move; neither do we need to consider the role of country of birth versus country of destination. Nevertheless, indirectly, second-generation youth are exposed to the migration experience and the culture of origin via their parents. Hence, the notion of *linked lives* is particularly important for understanding family patterns of the second generation.

According to socialization theory, cultural values and preferences are transmitted to children by various agents. Previous research showed that parents play a key role in the socialization of their children (Grusec et al., 2000; Liefbroer & Elzinga, 2012). There are several ways through which parents influence their children's family behavior. First, there is direct transmission of norms and values; children act according to expectations and attitudes of their parents (Glass et al., 1986). Second, children observe and imitate the behavior of their parents, referred to as social learning (Bandura, 1977). Finally, parents and children may follow similar demographic family behavior because they are exposed to comparable socioeconomic circumstances throughout the life course, referred to as social status inheritance (Glass et al., 1986; Kalmijn et al., 2006).

Given that the parents of the second generation may have maintained the cultural values of the country of origin, the second generation likely grows up at least partially under these influences. This is corroborated by empirical evidence which shows cultural persistence of the family behavior of the parents' country of origin among the second generation (de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007a, Fleischmann & Phalet, 2011). For instance, Turkish and Moroccan youth are found to more often prefer marriage over unmarried cohabitation than native Dutch youth (de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007b). In line with this, Zorlu and Mulder (2011) observed that Turkish and Moroccan second-generation young adults more often leave the parental home for direct marriage than the native Dutch. Furthermore, it is important to note that the second generation includes individuals with two foreign-born parents, as well as those with one foreign-born parent. Often, there is no distinction made between the two subgroups in previous research, most likely due to small sample sizes (e.g., Huschek et al., 2010, 2011). Yet, the process of value transmission in mixed-couple families may be very different than in families with two immigrant parents. Not only will the native parent be more oriented to the culture of the society in which the child grows up, the migrant parent is likely also more oriented towards the destination country with regard to education, second language proficiency, and cultural values. Indeed, previous research has shown that the second generation with one foreign-born parent is more similar to the native population than the second generation with both parents born abroad in a variety of outcomes, including family behavior (Ramakrishnan, 2004; Rumbaut, 2004; Zorlu & Mulder, 2011).

Apart from parents, young adults are also exposed to alternative sources of socialization, such as peers. It has been suggested that support and influence of peer relations increase during adolescence, while parental influence weakens during this period

(Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). The influence of parents and peers generally operates through different mechanisms; whereas age-peers mainly function as a point of reference to mirror one's own behavior (social learning), the influence of parents is primarily a result of direct transmission of norms and values (Biddle et al., 1980; de Valk & Billari, 2007). Nevertheless, it has been argued that value transmission may also occur among close friends due to the emotional investment in and closeness of these relationships (Kohler, 1997). The peer network of second-generation young adults is usually a combination of individuals with whom they share the same ethnic origin and individuals with other ethnic origins (Huschek et al., 2011). Particularly the latter may provide alternative cultural values and contrasting ways of thinking, which may in turn influence behavior in the family domain. Indeed, previous research on Turkish second-generation young adults in the Netherlands indicates that those with more friends outside their own ethnic group are more similar to the native Dutch population in terms of four aspects of partnership formation: timing of the first union, timing of first marriage, type of union (marriage vs. cohabitation), and the ethnic origin of the partner (Huschek et al., 2011). Moreover, also more distant acquaintances – measured through the proportion native students at one's secondary school – were found to be important, though only with regard to the timing of the first union (Huschek et al., 2011). Other research suggests that parental involvement in the partner choice of Turkish and Moroccan adolescents is weaker when they have a large proportion of native Dutch friends (van Zantvliet et al., 2014).

To sum up, second-generation young adults are simultaneously socialized into two different cultural systems, with the norms and values of their parents on the one hand and those of the society in which they grow up on the other. This 'bicultural socialization' highlights how the second generation is affected by the migration process, albeit in an indirect manner (Luna et al., 2008). It has been argued that the position of the second generation between two distinct cultures can create great strains in immigrant families, particularly between immigrant parents and their second-generation children (Giguère et al., 2010; Lou et al., 2012; Merz et al., 2009). As previous research suggests that the quality of the parent-child relationship is crucial for the transmission of norms and values (Sartor & Younnis, 2002), one would expect that value transmission is more problematic in immigrant families. In contrast to this idea, previous research has shown that intergenerational transmission of norms and values is very similar among immigrant and non-immigrant families in the Netherlands (de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007a, 2007b). This is not to say that the bicultural position of the second generation does not play a role in

their family life behavior, however. Indeed, Zorlu & Mulder (2011) argue that at least part of the explanation for the significantly younger ages at leaving the parental home to live alone independently among Turkish and Moroccan young adults in the Netherlands may lie in the awkward position of migrant youth between two cultures.

1.5 This study

1.5.1 Data

The analyses in this dissertation are based on both survey and administrative data. Three out of four empirical chapters are based on unique individual-level administrative data from the Netherlands: the System of Social statistical Datasets (SSD), made available by Statistics Netherlands (Bakker et al., 2014). The core of the SSD consists of the municipal population registers (BRP, formerly known as GBA) that contain vital registration statistics of every legal inhabitant of the Netherlands, including amongst others gender, date of birth, country of birth, marital status, and place of residence. Several other official administrative registers, such as social security and tax administration, have been linked to the BRP register at the individual level. The SSD therefore provides both demographic and socioeconomic information on each registered individual in the Netherlands.

As mentioned before, the virtues of administrative data are many. Two specific advantages are particularly favorable for the purposes of this study. First, in this study people are followed over time, which requires longitudinal data. In this regard, population registers provide high quality data, as there are no problems of recall bias or panel attrition. Second, research on immigrants and their descendants is often impeded by small and non-representative samples. Using register data that cover the entire population of the Netherlands, we avoid these important methodological problems. However, it is important to also bear in mind the limitations of administrative data. The first caveat relates to the rather limited number of variables available in administrative data. Population registers provide no information on several factors that may serve as mediators between ethnic background and family behavior, for example religiosity, parent-child relations, language proficiency, and peer networks. In addition, administrative data contain no information on non-residential partners. Nevertheless, a substantial part (40%) of the young adult population in the Netherlands is currently in an LAT relationship (Statistics Netherlands, 2015b). The second caveat relates to underreporting of address information. Although

it is mandatory to report changes in address within five days' time, not everyone complies to this legal obligation which may cause measurement error in the household composition of individuals. Finally, it is important to note that immigrants who intend to stay in the Netherlands for less than 90 days are not obliged to register themselves in the BRP, meaning that immigrants who come to the Netherlands only for a short period (predominantly labor migrants) are underrepresented in the data. Although these data can clearly bring us further in answering the main research questions of this dissertation, the mentioned drawbacks of the data have to be kept in mind.

In addition to population register data, in one empirical chapter data from the TIES⁴ (The Integration of the European Second Generation) project were analyzed. TIES is a cross-national European survey on young adults (18-35 years old) of the Turkish, Moroccan, and ex-Yugoslavian second generation, as well as a native comparison group, living in one of 15 cities in eight participating countries. The survey includes many retrospective questions regarding the young adults' educational, employment, and family histories, as well their relationships with parents and peers. The Turkish second generation has participated in the survey in all countries except Spain; the Moroccan second generation has been surveyed in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Spain; and the ex-Yugoslavian second generation has been interviewed in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Between 2006-2008, around 500 persons per ethnic group were interviewed in each country. We analyzed the data collected in the Netherlands, where respondents were sampled from Amsterdam and Rotterdam because these are the main urban concentration areas of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation. In the survey year 2007, around 22 percent of the Turkish and 31 percent of the Moroccan second generation in the Netherlands lived in one of these two cities (Statistics Netherlands, 2015a). The municipal population registers as discussed above served as sampling frames (see for details Groenewold, 2008). The overall response rate was 30% for the Turkish, 25% for the Moroccan, and 37% for the Dutch group, which reflects the rather low levels of participation in survey research in the Netherlands, especially in large cities. Huschek and colleagues (2011) indicated that in all ethnic groups the non-response was slightly higher among men and lower educated people.

⁴ More information on this dataset can be found at <http://www.tiesproject.eu>

1.5.2 Outline of the dissertation

The empirical part of this dissertation consists of four chapters (Chapters 2 to 5). Each empirical chapter is written in the style of a journal article, meaning that each chapter has its own introduction, theoretical background, data, results, and discussion section. This format has the advantage that the chapters can be read independently of the others, allowing the reader to focus on his/her specific topics of interest. At the same time, however, although each of these chapters considers a different aspect the transition to adulthood, there is occasional overlapping and repetition throughout the chapters. The outline of this dissertation is as follows.

Chapter 2 addresses family life course trajectories in young adulthood of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, and Antillean second-generation and native Dutch women. As outlined in section 1.3, family pathways in the transition to adulthood greatly differ between the Netherlands and the origin countries of the parents of these second generation groups. This chapter aims to gain insights into the extent to which the family behavior of the second generation is consistent with the cultural norms of their parents' countries of origin. In contrast to previous studies, the second generation is further distinguished into those with two foreign-born parents and those with one foreign-born parent. We use data from the Dutch population registers to carry out sequence analysis. An entire birth cohort of women is followed for a period of 15 years, from age 16 in 1999 up until age 30 in 2013. In addition to the type of family trajectories, we also address the amount of diversity in family trajectories between individuals, both age-specific and over the entire trajectory.

Chapter 3 adopts an event-oriented approach, focusing specifically on the transition of leaving the parental home among Turkish and Moroccan second-generation and native Dutch young adults. Using data from the TIES survey, we apply discrete-time event history models with competing risks to address the timing of leaving home, as well as four main reasons for doing so, namely (1) to start living with a partner, (2) to gain independence, (3) for school / work, and (4) other reasons. The analysis consists of several parts. First, we study ethnic group differences in leaving the parental home. As a second step, we investigate if and to what extent ethnic differences can be explained by the frequency of parent-child conflicts. In particular, previous research has suggested that Turkish and Moroccan youth leave home earlier and more often to gain independence than the native Dutch, possibly due to family conflict (Zorlu & Mulder, 2011). The TIES survey provides a unique opportunity to empirically test this conjecture. Finally, we investigate the role of the

ethnic composition of the peer group (both close friends and more distant acquaintances) for home-leaving choices of Turkish and Moroccan second-generation young adults.

In *Chapter 4*, we address the process of returning to the parental home, rather than the departure from it. Previous research indicates that returning to the parental home has become an increasingly important phenomenon in the transition to adulthood (Stone et al., 2014; Wobma & de Graaf, 2010). Yet, empirical research that focuses on this so-called ‘boomerang’ behavior of young adults has remained rather limited in general, and even more limited for children from immigrant families. The relatively few studies on ethnic variation in returning home have, to our knowledge, only been carried out in the United States (Britton, 2013; Lei & South, 2015) and Canada (Gee et al., 2003; Mitchell et al., 2004). As such, this chapter presents the first European empirical analyses on ethnic differences in returning home, focusing on the Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, and Antillean second generation and a native Dutch comparison group. Data come from the Dutch population registers; the analyses are conducted using discrete-time hazard models. We address several issues. First, we focus on whether second-generation young adults are more likely to return home because of cultural values regarding parent-child coresidence, or less likely to return due to the specific position of the second generation between two cultures. Second, we investigate to what extent the relationship between ethnicity and returning home is mediated by previous and concurrent life course transitions, such as age at leaving home, school-to-work transitions, and partnership dissolution. Third and lastly, we address to what extent the impact of partnership dissolution on returning home varies across origin groups.

Chapter 5 focuses on the family life courses and their link with return migration of young adult Polish immigrants in the Netherlands. Despite a large increase in Polish migration to Western European countries over the last decade, including the Netherlands, empirical research on the family life behavior of this large and growing group of immigrants has remained rather limited (for exceptions, see Lübke, 2015; Waller et al., 2014). The role of family life in migration decisions may, however, be particularly interesting for Polish immigrants, as there are no legal barriers to mobility within the EU. Using data from the Dutch population registers, we select all Polish immigrants who arrived in the Netherlands between the ages of 20 and 30 in the period May 2004 to January 2007 and observe them for a period of five years. Rather than focusing on a specific family event, we apply sequence analysis to study the entire family trajectory over these five years. More specifically, applying optimal matching (OM) and cluster analysis, we build

an empirical typology of 'typical' life course trajectories. Subsequently, we apply logistic regression analysis to investigate potential factors of importance on the different family life paths, including amongst others migration motive, ethnic background of the partner, age at immigration, and labor market participation.

Chapter 6 summarizes and discusses the main findings of the four empirical chapters outlined above. Theoretical and social implications are discussed. In addition, we address some of the limitations of this study and propose several suggestions for potentially interesting avenues for future research.

