Partner choice among Muslim migrants and natives in Western Europe

Interethnic marriages

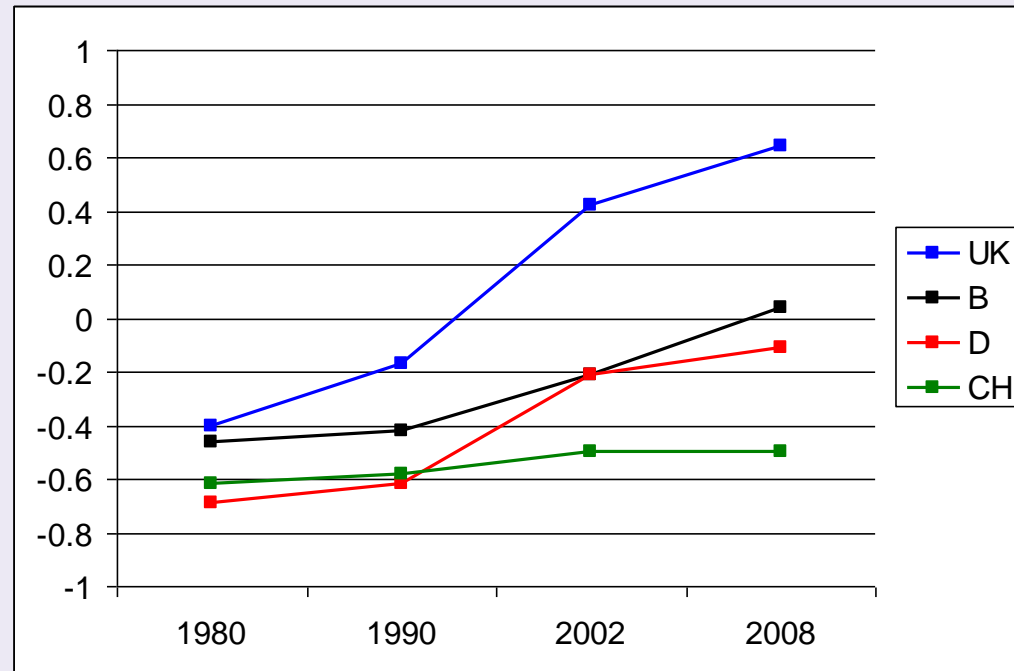|	Male 1st	Male 2nd	Female 1st	Female 2nd	Average
West-Indians (UK, NL) colonial migrants	26	60	26	46	40
Italian, Greek, Yugoslav (DE), Spanish, Portuguese (FR) guest-workers	22	48	15	38	31
Moroccan, Turkish (DE, NL, BE), Algerian (FR) guest-workers	11	16	5	8	10
Algerian, Moroccan (FR), Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi (UK), Surinamese (NL) colonial migrants	5	11	7	10	8

Source: Lucassen & Laarman (2009)

Mechanisms

➢ Homophily?

➢ Proximity?

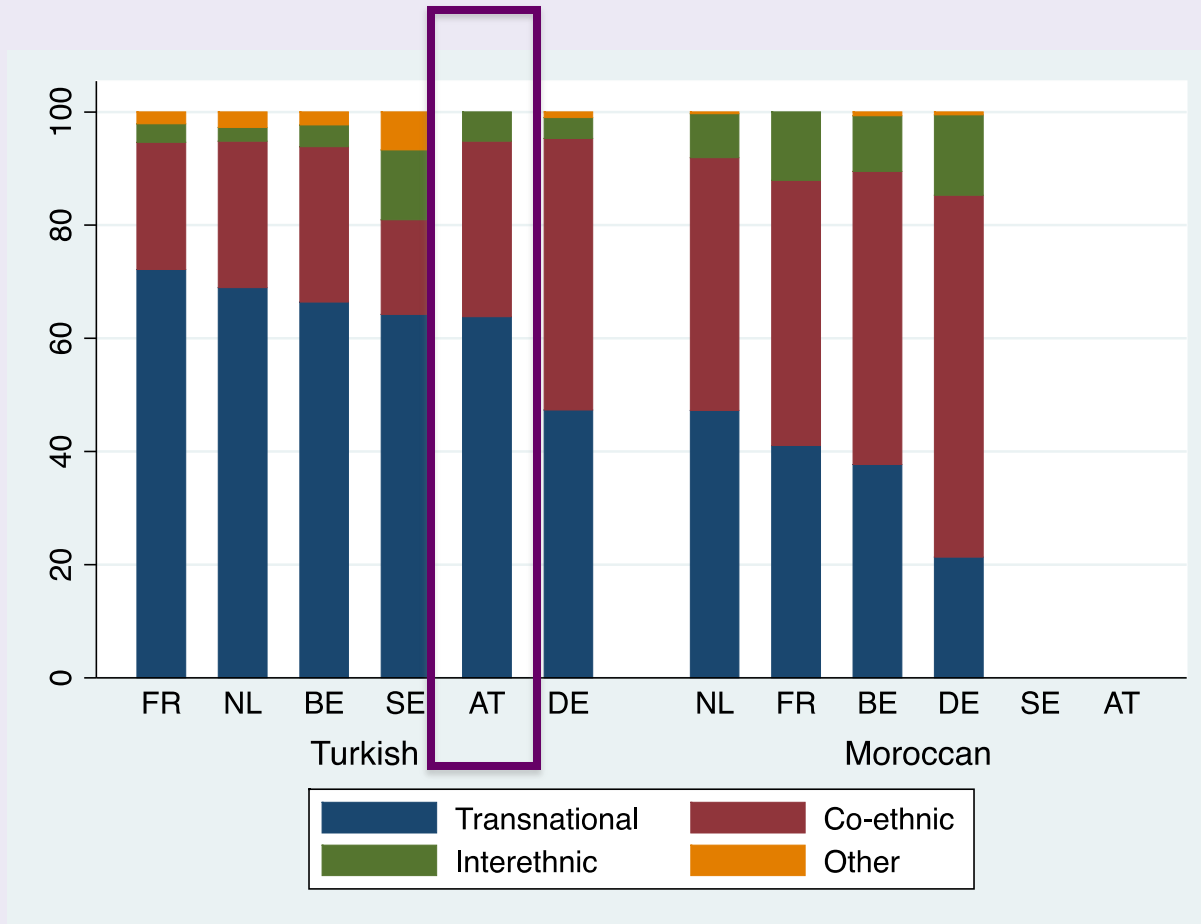➢ Third parties (e.g. state, communities, parents)?

Research questions

➢ To what extent can ethnic differences in intermarriage be explained by religious differences?

➢ Which role does religious accommodation play for intermarriage? Do policies promote intergroup relationships or do they foster they maintenance of intragroup relationships?

➢ Does parental influence weaken the chances for intermarriage?
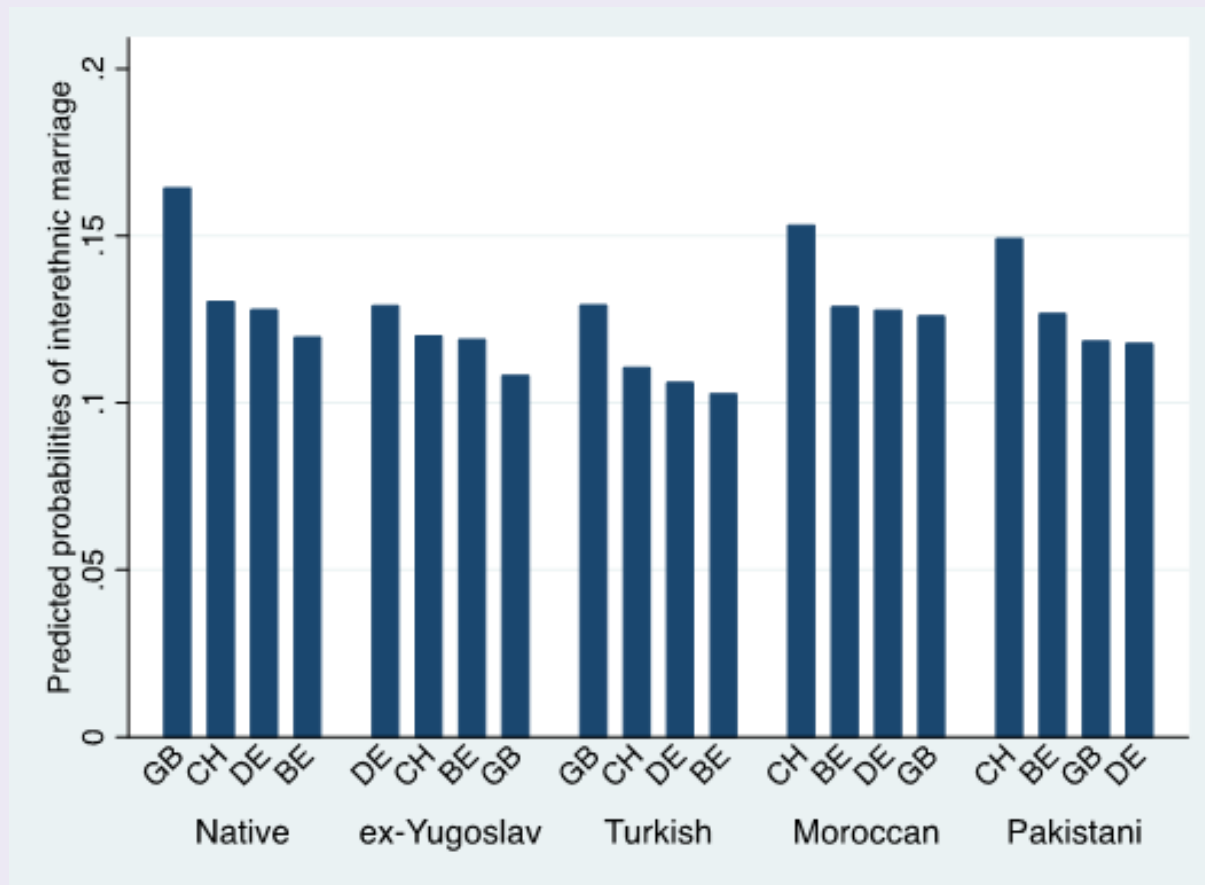
Accommodation of Muslim religious rights

Partner choice

Data: SCIICS

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EURISLAM-Survey

- **C**omputer **A**ssisted **T**elephone **S**urvey
- **Sampling:** Surname-based for migrants and a random sample of natives from phonebooks
- **Sample size:** 1.239 Turkish, 892 Moroccan, 857 ex-Yugoslavian, 556 Pakistani migrants with a Muslim background and 1.547 natives
- **Quotas**:

  - at least 60 % of the interviews should be carried out in the evening or at the weekend;

  - at least 25% during the day in the week;

  - at least 40% men and 40% women among migrants

  - at least 15% first generation, min. 25% 1.5 generation (immigrated under 18), min. 25% second generation;

  - a representative sample of natives regarding age and gender (with a range of -5%, +5%)
- bilingual interviewers

Intermarriage propensity

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Analysis – Policy effects?

	(1) Socio-demographic	(2) Meeting Opportuntities	(3) Family values	(4) Religiosity	(5) Cultural distance	(6) Preferences	(7) Parental influence
Germany (ref.)							
Belgium	-0.076***	-0.072***	-0.064***	-0.061***	-0.060***	-0.060***	-0.058***
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Britain	0.008	0.012	0.012	0.002	0.003	0.002	0.025
	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Switzerland	-0.029+	-0.018	-0.025	-0.025	-0.025	-0.027	-0.031+
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)

Controlled for ethnic origin, country of birth, educational track, marital status, language problems

n = 2,659 migrants

Linear probability model with robust standard errors

Data: EURISLAM

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Analysis – Ethnic differences

	(1) Socio-demographic	(2) Meeting Opportuntities	(3) Family values	(4) Religiosity	(5) Cultural distance	(6) Preferences	(7) Parental influence
Ex-Yugoslav (ref.)							
Turkish	0.004	0.015	0.025	0.040*	0.043*	0.040*	0.050**
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.018)
Moroccan	0.108***	0.115***	0.131***	0.151***	0.151***	0.151***	0.156***
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Pakistani	0.034+	0.043*	0.064**	0.089***	0.090***	0.088***	0.125***
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.024)

Controlled for ethnic origin, country of birth, educational track, marital status, language problems

n = 2,659 migrants

Linear probability model with robust standard errors

Data: EURISLAM

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Analysis – Parental effects

	(2) Meeting Opportunties	(3) Family values	(4) Religiosity	(5) Cultural distance	(6) Preferences	(7) Parental influence
Premarital sex not justifiable		-0.009***	-0.005*	-0.004+	-0.004+	-0.003
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Family values		-0.052***	-0.038*	-0.037*	-0.034*	-0.030*
		(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Religious identity			-0.022**	-0.021*	-0.020*	-0.019*
			(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Praying frequency			-0.001	-0.001	-0.000	0.000
			(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Religious practice			-0.061*	-0.059*	-0.053*	-0.053*
			(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)
Perceived cultural distance				-0.015	-0.009	-0.008
				(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Intermarriage attitudes					0.038**	0.028*
					(0.012)	(0.013)
Arranged Marriage						-0.094***
						(0.015)
Semi-Arranged Marriage						-0.070***
						(0.016)

Data: EURISLAM

Controlled for ethnic origin, country of birth, educational track, marital status, language problems

n = 2,659 migrants

Linear probability model with robust standard errors

EURISLAM

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Conclusion

➢ Nation states can create meeting opportunities, but social integration is beyond state control

➢ Opportunities alone cannot explain social integration

➢ Ethnic differences in intermarriage are linked to different levels of religiosity and family values providing stability to relationships

➢ Minority parents' ideas play a bigger role than native parents', which ensures intergenerational stability in marriage patterns

Thank you!

Operationalization

Dependent variable
▪Interethnic marriage (binary)

Main independent variables:
▪Country and group dummies
▪Family values (4-point scale, e.g. "The worst thing one can do is to bring disgrace to one's family reputation")
▪Muslim/Christian identification (5-point scale, e.g. "To what extend are you proud of being a Muslim")
▪Frequency of praying
▪Religious practice (e.g. covering the head, wearing religious symbols)
▪Premarital sex (1 "always justifiable" to 10 "never justifiable")
▪Perceived distance to out-group (4-point scale, "How different or similar do you think most people of [residence country] origin/Muslims living in [the receiving society] are compared to you on the following topics?
▪…in the values they teach their children, in the way they think about sexual abstinence before marriage, how they think about the role of religion in society)
▪Problems with host society language
▪Estimated share of out-group members in neighbourhood (1 "almost none" to 5 "nearly all")
▪(Semi-) Arranged Marriage

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