DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH
A peer-reviewed, open-access journal of population sciences

DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

VOLUME 47, ARTICLE 17, PAGES 489–528
PUBLISHED 27 SEPTEMBER 2022
https://www.demographic-research.org/Volumes/Vol47/17/
DOI: 10.4054/DemRes.2022.47.17

Research Article

Endogamy and relationship dissolution: Does unmarried cohabitation matter?

Layla Van den Berg

Dimitri Mortelmans

Contents

Demographic Research: Volume 47, Article 17
Research Article

Endogamy and relationship dissolution: Does unmarried cohabitation matter?

Layla Van den Berg[1]

Dimitri Mortelmans[2]

Abstract

BACKGROUND
Previous studies on the role of partner choice in relationship dissolution have shown that exogamous marriages often have higher divorce risks. Yet, given that these studies focus only on marriages, it remains unclear whether the same dynamics can be seen in unmarried cohabiting couples, or what the exact role of a premarital cohabitation period is.

OBJECTIVE
This paper aims to examine whether the link between union dissolution and endogamy differs across relationship types by comparing marriages with and without a period of premarital cohabitation and unmarried cohabiting couples.

METHODS
Based on survival analyses and multivariate event history models, this study analyzes union dissolution risks among married and unmarried cohabiting couples with at least one partner of Belgian, Southern European, Turkish, Moroccan, Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan descent. We use longitudinal data from the Belgian National and Social Security registers for a sample of couples formed between 1999 and 2001.

RESULTS
The results indicated that exogamous direct marriages have substantially higher risks of relationship dissolution. Yet, differences in dissolution risks between exogamous and endogamous couples with and without a migrant background become smaller or disappear entirely when unmarried cohabitation is involved.

[1] Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium. my OrcID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6846-2186.
Email: layla.vandenberg@uantwerpen.be.
[2] Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium. OrcID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3285-8223.
Email: Dimitri.mortelmans@uantwerpen.be.

CONTRIBUTION

This paper contributes to the literature on endogamy and union dissolution by going beyond the study of marriages. In contexts where unmarried cohabitation has become a common entry point to relationship formation but still has different meanings among majority and minority populations, this paper shows that cohabitation can no longer be disregarded when studying the link between endogamy and relationship dissolution.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, most European countries have experienced a sharp increase in the share of their population with a migrant background (Van Mol and de Valk 2016). In light of this increase, a research tradition has developed that focuses on mapping the position and integration within society of immigrants and their children and grandchildren. Among both native and migrant origin groups, a high degree of endogamy, in which both partners come from the same origin group, is often seen as indicating that group boundaries are strongly closed and that integration into the host society is limited (Coleman 1994; Kalmijn 1998). Exogamy, or marrying outside one's own origin group, is generally perceived as indicating changing social boundaries and increased integration. However, research shows that the risks of separation for mixed couples, in terms of origin, are higher than for endogamous couples (Kulu and González-Ferrer 2014).

Previous research on endogamy has focused primarily on marriage and has provided little or no information on the impact of endogamy in origin on the dissolution of unmarried cohabiting couples. In addition, no research has been conducted on the difference between direct marriages and marriages after a period of premarital cohabitation. This is remarkable, given the emergence of unmarried cohabitation both as a premarital relationship type and as an alternative to marriage (Hiekel, Liefbroer, and Poortman 2014; Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015; Manning 2020). Several studies have shown that unmarried cohabitants have much higher risks of breaking up (Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010; Pasteels, Lodewijckx, and Mortelmans 2013; Van den Berg and Mortelmans 2018). In addition, the choice to marry is a selective process (Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010). It is therefore unclear whether endogamy has an identical role for married couples and unmarried cohabitants. In order to further understand the dynamics of relationship dissolution for couples with and without a migration background, it is relevant to investigate the role of relationship type. This paper also has a clear societal relevance. Interest in exogamy as an indicator of assimilation and integration has risen as a consequence of the increasing diversity in terms of migration background in Western societies (Hannemann et al. 2018; Kulu et al. 2019). However, if mixed couples were to

have consistently higher dissolution rates than endogamous couples it would tell us that choosing a partner outside of one's origin group is still associated with substantial difficulties. Comparing dissolution risks for mixed couples with those of endogamous couples with and without a migrant background across all relationship types, instead of just marriage, provides an opportunity to see whether exogamy can lead to durable relationships in contexts where marriage is no longer the only option.

This article examines the role of endogamy and exogamy in the dissolution of married (with and without a premarital cohabitation period) and cohabiting couples. We used individual and longitudinal data from the Belgian National and Social Security Registers on a sample of couples formed between 1999 and 2001. These couples were followed up to (and including) 2013. We compare dissolution risk between endogamous Belgian couples on the one hand and endogamous and exogamous couples with at least one partner of Southern European, Moroccan, Turkish, Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin on the other hand. Partners of non-Belgian origin have either migrated to Belgium (first generation) or have parents that migrated to Belgium (second generation). In addition to the fact that the selected origin groups are among the largest migrant communities in Belgium (Van den Broucke et al. 2015), they all have strong ties with Belgium – through past colonization for those of Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan origin and through organized labor migration for Southern European, Moroccan, and Turkish origin groups (Van Mol and de Valk 2016). Yet, earlier research indicates substantial cultural and socioeconomic differences between these selected origin groups (FOD WASO and UNIA 2017; Maes, Wood, and Neels 2020).

2. Background

2.1 Endogamy and exogamy

People usually choose a partner with similar characteristics in terms of socioeconomic status, educational level, religion, age, and origin (Kalmijn 1998; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010). The literature distinguishes between homogamy and endogamy. When both partners have similar or different status, this is called homogamy and heterogamy, respectively (Kalmijn 1998). When partners do or do not belong to the same (origin) group, we define this as endogamy and exogamy, respectively. Although these patterns may overlap, this article specifically focuses on choosing a partner within or outside one's own origin group and uses the terms endogamy and exogamy.

An extensive review by Kalmijn (1998) provides various hypotheses as to why people usually start a relationship with someone from their own origin group. First, personal preferences play an important role. People prefer to choose a partner who has

similar values, norms, and opinions. These similarities confirm their own behavior and worldview. The resulting mutual understanding facilitates conversation and engaging in joint activities such as spending free time, buying a house, and raising children. Second, the behavior of third parties – those not directly involved in the relationship – can encourage endogamy. Because relationships with someone outside the group can threaten a group's cohesion and homogeneity, members of a group often try to discourage exogamy. This can be done through strong group identification, which can make members less likely to choose a partner from outside the group. In addition, third parties, such as family or religious authorities, can sanction exogamy by removing support. Third, structural mechanisms of supply and demand in the partner market play a role. Endogamy is easier when people are more likely to come into contact with other members of their own group. The chance of contact with one's own group strongly depends on the size, composition, and geographic distribution of that group.

In Belgium, we see a high degree of endogamy among the native Belgian origin group. According to a study by Corijn and Lodewijckx (2009b), only a small minority (under 10%) of Belgian (Flemish) men and women chose to marry a partner of non-Belgian origin. A large prevalence of endogamy, albeit smaller than that of Belgian natives, is also found within Turkish and Moroccan origin groups (Corijn and Lodewijckx 2009b; Hannemann et al. 2018; Stuyck et al. 2018). Historically, large numbers of Moroccan and Turkish men migrated to Belgium in the context of labor migration in the 1960s (Reniers 1999; Noppe et al. 2018). After the Belgian government limited labor migration in 1974, many of these labor migrants settled permanently in Belgium. Here, they formed communities that strongly mirrored specific regions in their home country. Migration from Morocco and Turkey continued mainly within the context of family reunification, as unmarried men predominantly opted for a partner from their home country (partner migration). The trend toward endogamy largely persits among the children of these migrant workers, the second generation (Caestecker et al. 2013). The second generation can usually choose between a (local) partner of the same origin who resides in Belgium, a partner who migrated from their country of origin, or a partner from a different origin group. Due to strong ties with home countries, partner migration has long been an important migration channel, and most second generation Turkish and Moroccan men and women opt for a partner from their country of origin (Lievens 1999; Timmerman 2008; Timmerman, Lodewyckx, and Wets 2009). However, recent research shows that the choice of a migrant partner has decreased sharply in the past twenty years, while the choice of a local partner from the same origin group has increased (Caestecker et al. 2013; Van Kerckem et al. 2013). Although the share of exogamous couples has increased slightly, the majority of men and women of Moroccan or Turkish origin still choose a partner from the same origin group (Caestecker et al. 2013; Dupont et al. 2017). Research by Dupont et al. (2017) and Corijn and Lodewijckx (2009b) indicates that

Moroccan groups show slightly more variation and enter into marriages outside their own origin group more often than Turkish groups.

Other origin groups in Belgium show much lower levels of endogamy. For example, from the 1950s onwards many Southern European migrants came to Belgium in the context of labor migration. After labor migration was halted, they often moved back to their home countries as job opportunities and the quality of life in Southern Europe improved (Van Mol and de Valk 2016). Citizens of EU member states have been able to move freely within Europe since 1992, which means that they did not use partner migration as a migration strategy. We therefore see that migrants and their children of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, or Greek origin are much less likely to marry a partner from the same origin group (Lucassen and Laarman 2009). The study conducted by Corijn and Lodewijckx (2009b) shows that only a quarter of marriages involving women or men of Italian origin are with a partner of the same origin group. In addition to origin groups that are tied to labor migration, Belgium has many people of Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan origin because of its colonial past (Phalet and Swyngedouw 2003). Although Belgium did not experience a major post-colonial migration wave, many immigrants from Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda came to Belgium in the 1980s and 1990s as refugees, asylum seekers, or students (Phalet and Swyngedouw 2003; Van Mol and de Valk 2016). Research into partner choice within these groups is virtually absent. Only Dupont et al. (2017) find a high prevalence of exogamy within the group of people of Congolese origin.

2.2 Endogamy and relationship dissolution

Research in different European contexts indicates that in terms of origin, exogamous couples have a higher risk of separating than couples consisting of partners with the same origin (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Dribe and Lundh 2012; Milewski and Kulu 2014). In the Belgian context, Eeckhaut et al. (2011) find higher divorce rates for exogamous marriages compared to endogamous marriages within the Turkish and Moroccan groups. We can explain these results using the exogamy hypothesis. This hypothesis contains several explanations that are strongly linked to the hypotheses about why people initially avoid exogamy and prefer endogamy. First, differences in background characteristics can be strongly related to differences in preferences, values, norms, and communication styles (Kalmijn 1998; Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Zhang and Van Hook 2009). These differences make it more difficult for partners to understand each other and make joint decisions. Second, the higher divorce rates for exogamous couples may be associated with social boundaries. If one chooses a partner from a different origin group, then he or she crosses a social and symbolic boundary (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005). Mixed couples can therefore lose support from

their social networks, which can be particularly important when couples are going through a difficult time. Third, mixed relationships confront more frequent discrimination (Hibbler and Shinew 2002; Zhang and Van Hook 2009). They are more likely to experience public disapproval and insults than endogamous couples. These negative experiences can increase the risk of relationship breakdown (Bratter and Eschbach 2006; Milewski and Kulu 2014).

A greater cultural distance between partners can enhance the effects of the three dynamics above (Milewski and Kulu 2014). Research indicates that divorce rates are higher when partners come from very different cultures because they experience greater differences in values and norms, receive less support from family and the wider community, and experience more discrimination (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Dribe and Lundh 2012).

Based on the exogamy hypothesis, we expect that mixed relationships (exogamy) will dissolve faster and more often than relationships between partners of the same origin (endogamy). When comparing endogamous and mixed couples, we expect these differences to be most pronounced for mixed couples consisting of a Belgian partner and a partner of Turkish or Moroccan origin. Research generally finds more traditional norms and values among Turkish and Moroccan origin groups regarding gender roles (Bernhardt, Goldscheider, and Goldscheider 2007; Idema and Phalet 2007; de Valk 2008; Diehl, Koenig, and Ruckdeschel 2009; Huschek, de Valk, and Liefbroer 2011) and also parental roles (Pels 2000), compared to people without a migrant background. The results of the Coexistence in Diversity Survey (Stuyck et al. 2018) further indicate that people of Turkish and Moroccan origin differ from the Belgian origin group in terms of religious perception and social identity. In addition, research shows that informal help for people of Turkish and Moroccan origin can be an important source of support (Koelet et al. 2009). Mixed marriages, especially if they take place between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man, are problematic in Islam because children from these marriages no longer belong to Islam (Corijn and Lodewijckx 2009b) and are more often disapproved of (Stuyck et al. 2018). If exogamous relationships are sanctioned by removing or diminishing informal support, this likely will have a strong impact on the emotional, social and possibly economic well-being of these groups. Yet, we also expect differences between people of Turkish and Moroccan origins. Family and community ties are generally stronger for people of Turkish descent (Surkyn and Reniers 1996; Lievens 1999). Because Turkey had no colonial ties with Europe the influence of Islam and the tradition of endogamy are much stronger (Lucassen and Laarman 2009). The greater heterogeneity of the initial Moroccan migration flow, which resulted in looser community ties (Surkyn and Reniers 1996; Reniers 1999), could narrow the cultural gap between people of Moroccan descent and Belgians without a migration background.

Because research into cultural differences for Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan origin groups is rather limited, it is difficult to formulate expectations for these groups. However, recent research indicates that more members of the Congolese origin group attach importance to religiosity than in the Belgian origin group (Stuyck et al. 2018). They also face negative experiences in education, the labor market, and public spaces based on their skin color. If these elements lead to a greater cultural gap in mixed couples with a Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan partner, we might expect these couples to separate more often than endogamous couples. We expect that couples with at least one partner of Southern European origin experience the smallest cultural gap and thus the smallest difference between mixed and endogamous couples in terms of relationship dissolution. However, scientific research into possible differences in norms and values is lacking. We do know that these groups have similar religious backgrounds and that the structural links with community and homeland are more limited (Lucassen and Laarman 2009).

Besides the exogamy hypothesis, some alternative hypotheses have been developed to explain the higher divorce rates of mixed couples. The convergence hypothesis states that the likelihood of relationship breakdown stems from the combination of both partners' cultural norms and values regarding divorce (Jones 1994, 1996; Zhang and Van Hook 2009; Dribe and Lundh 2012); i.e., the higher divorce rates for mixed marriages reflect cultural and religious differences in traditions and attitudes surrounding divorce. When the separation risk of the origin group of one partner is higher than that of the other partner, the separation risk for a mixed couple is expected to lie in between. Empirical results confirming this hypothesis are rather limited (Jones 1994, 1996; Zhang and Van Hook 2009). Finally, the selection hypothesis states that partners in endogamous and mixed marriages may fundamentally differ from each other in terms of important background characteristics, such as the age difference between partners, marriage age, socioeconomic status, and values and norms regarding divorce (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005). According to this hypothesis, if these characteristics are controlled for, differences in divorce rates between endogamous and mixed couples would disappear. However, this hypothesis has not yet been formally tested (Milewski and Kulu 2014).

2.3 The role of relationship type

Given the rise in unmarried cohabitation observed throughout Europe during the last quarter of the 20th century and particularly the start of the 21st century (Billari and Liefbroer 2010; Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015), the literature has examined the role of cohabitation as a union transition. For many couples, unmarried cohabitation is a premarital living arrangement (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015). Yet, over the past

decades, cohabitation has increasingly become an alternative to marriage (Hiekel, Liefbroer, and Poortman 2014; Manning 2020). Studies find that union dissolution risks are generally higher for unmarried cohabitations than for marriages. Whereas the marriage ritual itself can decrease divorce risks through social support and pressure, differences are often explained by the self-selection of more stable relationships into marriage (Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010). In addition, premarital cohabitation can decrease dissolution risks as it provides the opportunity to 'test' the relationship without the long-term investments associated with marriage as an institution (Bennett, Blanc, and Bloom 1988; Kulu and Boyle 2010; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010).

Despite more extensive research on the dissolution risks of married and unmarried cohabiting unions, studies on the role of endogamy generally focus only on marital dissolution. Therefore, the extent to which the same dynamics apply to unmarried cohabitants remains unclear. Although literature on endogamy among unmarried couples is rather limited, several studies in the US and European contexts indicate that the preference for a similar partner in terms of status, education level, religion, and origin does not differ for married and unmarried cohabiting couples (Blackwell and Lichter 2004; Hamplova 2009; Verbakel and Kalmijn 2014). People use clear selection criteria for their partner, regardless of relationship type.

Research into how exogamy influences the dissolution of unmarried cohabiting couples is scarce. A Swedish study by Dribe and Lundh (2012) indicates that both married and unmarried couples with partners of different origin have higher separation rates than endogamous couples. However, the authors indicate that it is important to account for the differences in prevalence of marriage and unmarried cohabitation by migration background. While unmarried cohabitation has strongly penetrated European populations without a migration background, other origin groups are more often characterized by a strong preference for marriage. Furthermore, unmarried cohabiting relationships tend to be more unstable. In populations without a migration background, unstable relationships are therefore more often found in the group of unmarried cohabiting couples. Within origin groups in which marriage has a prominent place this selection takes place to a lesser extent and unstable couples will usually also marry. As a result, the divorce rates of exogamous couples with a partner from an origin group that prefers marriage may be higher than those of endogamous couples without a migration background.

Research in the Belgian context shows that unmarried cohabitation, rather than marriage, has become the main first union type among the Belgian majority population (Corijn 2017; Pasteels and Mortelmans 2011). By contrast, unmarried cohabitation has been found to be uncommon in Turkish and Moroccan origin groups (Corijn and Lodewijckx 2009a). The low prevalence of unmarried cohabitation can partly be linked to the importance of marriage as an institution in Islam (Koelet et al. 2009). Research by Wets and colleagues (2009) also indicates that men of Turkish and Moroccan origin

perceive unmarried cohabitation as volatile and unstable. Marriage, on the other hand, is considered to provide security and a good foundation for building a family. In addition, the criteria for partner migration are less strict for marriages than for unmarried cohabitations (European Migration Network 2017). This encourages people of Moroccan or Turkish origin to marry their partner from the country of origin before the migration process starts. Within the Turkish and Moroccan origin groups, opting to marry is strongly related to choosing a partner from one's own origin group. By the same logic, the choice to enter an unmarried cohabitation can also be related to partnering with someone from a different origin group. Given that marriage still occupies a prominent place for people of Turkish and Moroccan descent and that marrying someone from a different origin group is more controversial, cohabitation without marriage may offer a less visible alternative for couples that cross group boundaries (Wets et al. 2009). Unmarried cohabitation can give these partners the opportunity to get to know each other better without the family or wider community being aware or involved. In addition, we should note that endogamous couples of Turkish or Moroccan origin that still opt to live together unmarried may be a strong selection. As they cross the symbolic boundary of marriage, their relationship with family and the wider community may be weaker, and their norms and values may differ from couples who choose to marry directly. However, this hypothesis has not yet been explored. Research into the status of marriage in groups of Southern European or Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan descent is also currently missing.

Given that attitudes toward cohabitation differ strongly between groups with and without a migration background (Wets et al. 2009), it is relevant to determine whether the association between partner choice and relationship dissolution differs by relationship type. In this way, we can further dissect the dynamics of relationship breakdown. If we see similar dynamics regardless of relationship type we can then assume that the internal relationship dynamics play the biggest role. In that case, the explanations developed for marriages can also be applied to unmarried cohabitants. However, if the dynamics differ depending on whether couples are married or cohabiting without being married, this will indicate that attitudes toward cohabitation or selection mechanisms also play important roles in the dissolution process.

2.4 Hypotheses

When formulating hypotheses regarding the role of relationship type in the link between endogamy and relationship dissolution, we can look at a wide range of combinations based on the origin of both partners. In order to provide a clear and insightful interpretation of the results, the hypotheses in this paper will focus on differences in

dissolution risks between endogamous and mixed couples within each of the origin groups and how we expect these to differ by relationship type.

With regard to the Belgian origin group, we expect endogamous Belgian couples to be more stable than mixed couples with one Belgian partner regardless of whether the couple married without living together previously, married after first cohabiting or was cohabiting without having married (yet) (Hypothesis 1). Given that unmarried cohabitation has become a common entry point to marriage as well as a widespread alternative to marriage among the Belgian majority population (Hiekel, Liefbroer, and Poortman 2014; Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015), we expect that endogamy will provide the same benefits regarding common norms, values, and communication styles, and will be sanctioned similarly by third parties regardless of the type of relationship (Kalmijn 1998; Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005).

For couples consisting of at least one partner of Moroccan of Turkish origin, we expect that relationship type will play a more important role and will affect the differences in relationship dissolution risks between endogamous and mixed couples. In line with the exogamy hypothesis (Kalmijn 1998; Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Zhang and Van Hook 2009), we expect that Moroccan and Turkish endogamous couples who married without a period of unmarried cohabitation will have a lower risk of relationship dissolution than directly married mixed couples (Hypothesis 2). Yet, among couples who have experienced unmarried cohabitation either before marriage or as their current living arrangement, we expect the difference in dissolution risks between endogamous and mixed couples of Turkish or Moroccan backgrounds to be more limited than those of directly married couples (Hypothesis 3). Whereas in the Moroccan and Turkish origin groups endogamy can provide many of the same benefits for unmarried couples, there are a number of dynamics that are specific to unmarried cohabitation and may reduce the differences in dissolution rates. First, among Moroccan and Turkish origin groups, unmarried cohabitation is not the norm. The majority of couples from a Moroccan or Turkish background enter marriage without experiencing unmarried cohabitation (Corijn and Lodewijckx 2009a). In addition, cohabitation is often seen as an unstable living arrangement that is incompatible with family formation (Wets et al. 2009). Deviating from this norm of (direct) marriage may invite additional stress on endogamous couples of Moroccan and Turkish origin through the disapproval of third parties. Endogamous Moroccan and Turkish couples opting to cohabit may also be a strong selection of couples that are more likely to dissolve. The disapproval of unmarried cohabitation is potentially less impactful for mixed couples who have already crossed an important social and symbolic boundary by partnering outside of the origin group (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005). Mixed couples are also expected to be less strongly tied to the norms and expectations of family and the broader community, either through the loss of (informal) support or through selectivity mechanisms.

Second, unmarried cohabitation may be a particularly helpful living arrangement for mixed couples of Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds. Unmarried cohabitation can be a less visible way of forming relationships among couples that want to avoid the (negative) implications of entering into a relationship with a partner from outside their origin group (Wets et al. 2009). By opting to cohabit instead of entering into marriage, mixed couples may be less affected by third party sanctions such as withdrawal of emotional, social, and economic support. In addition, unmarried cohabitation gives mixed couples a way of testing their compatibility as partners while limiting the external influence of family and community. Hence, the theory that unmarried cohabitation can be seen as a trial marriage (Bennett, Blanc, and Bloom 1988; Kulu and Boyle 2010; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010) is expected to be particularly relevant for mixed couples of Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds.

Because there is no research on perceptions surrounding marriage and cohabitation for Southern European, Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan origin groups, it is not possible to formulate a hypothesis for these origin groups.

3. Data and methods

3.1 Data

We analyze variation in the role of endogamy and exogamy in union dissolution by relationship type using longitudinal microdata for a sample of couples from the Belgian National Registers and Social Security Registers. These registers are operated by Belgian government services and provide yearly administrative data on civil status, household position and composition, descent, and socioeconomic status for all legal Belgian residents. The data for this paper are based on a sample of married and unmarried cohabiting couples formed in 1999, 2000, and 2001. The data provide yearly information for the sampled couples from the start of their co-residential union until the end of the observation in 2013. In order to study differences by origin group adequately, the sample was stratified by migrant status (Belgian, European, non-European) and gender of at least one of the partners. 'Migrant status' is defined as being a first-generation, second-generation (parents), or third-generation (grandparents) migrant based on the country of birth of the individual and of his/her (grand)parents. If no information on the country of birth was available, we used an individual's first nationality as an alternative indicator of his/her origin. This sampling method yielded 30,000 couples without a migrant background, 3,000 couples with a woman of European origin, 3,540 couples with a man of European origin, 3,000 couples with a woman of non-European origin, and 1,890 couples with a man of non-European origin.

3.2 Relationship type

The selection of the sample, as well as the analyses, are performed at the couple level. In order to identify married and unmarried cohabiting couples between 1999 and 2001, we make use of the LIPRO[3] typology. The current LIPRO typology, developed by Van Imhoff and Keilman (1991), provides a way of categorizing households based on the relationship of household members to the administrative head of the household, and the age and sex of the household members. The typology is particularly useful for identifying unmarried cohabiting couples, given that the National Register only registers legal cohabitations. According to Corijn (2012), only a fraction of factual cohabiting couples – in 2012, 1 in 4 couples who lived together – register their relationship officially as legal cohabitation, and this group appears to be highly selective in terms of age, relationship history, and household composition. According to the LIPRO typology, a couple is considered married if the administrative head of the household co-resides with a spouse (according to civil status) and if both administrative head and his/her spouse are older than 15 years of age.[4] A couple constitutes an unmarried cohabitation if the administrative head of the household is 18 years or older, lives with a "potential partner", and does not have a spouse in the household. This "potential partner" is defined as a household member who is 18 years of age or older, is of the opposite sex, and has no family relationship with the administrative head. If the household contains multiple potential partners, the potential partner with the smallest age gap is selected as the partner. If the age gap between the selected potential partner and all other potential partners is smaller than 15 years, no coresidential union is defined.

Whereas the LIPRO classification allows us to identify factual unmarried cohabitations, instead of only registered cohabitations, it has some limitations. Because the definition of an unmarried cohabiting couple explicitly imposes the condition that both partners are of a different sex, the classification cannot be used to determine unmarried cohabiting couples of the same sex. For this reason, this article focuses only on married and unmarried couples consisting of partners of the opposite sex. In addition, the use of the LIPRO position implies a certain margin of error. For example, it is possible that people who live together as friends are incorrectly included in the group of cohabitants. However, this could also not be avoided if we only considered legal cohabitations. After all, legal cohabitation does not require a romantic relationship between two partners. A study by Lodewijckx and Deboosere (2008) has validated the use of the LIPRO typology using the 2001 Belgian Census and indicates that 9 in 10

[3] Referring to 'Lifestyle Projections' (Van Imhoff and Keilman 1991).

[4] According to Belgian law, 18 years is the minimum age for a legal marriage. However, exceptions are possible: minors can marry if the family court and all parents agree (Swennen 2019). In our sample, 34 couples (0,0010% of the total sample) include one or two partners that married before age 18.

households are correctly identified as unmarried cohabitations even when using the most conservative criteria.

For this paper we use a sample of couples who entered into a marriage or started an unmarried cohabitation between 1999 and 2001 based on their LIPRO position. Additionally, in the year prior to the sampling, partners must be "unmarried" according to civil status and may not be cohabiting. Thus, we know that the sampled couples were never married before and were not living with another partner in the year prior to the sampling. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that they have previously lived unmarried with another partner. The sampled couples are followed up to 2013 to see whether or when their union dissolved.

3.3 Origin

From the original sample we selected couples consisting of at least one partner of Belgian, Southern European (Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece), Moroccan, Turkish, or Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan origin. In this study, we define migration background based on the country of birth of the person in the sample and their parents. According to our operationalization, individuals have a migration background if the individuals themselves (first generation) or one of their parents (second generation) were born outside Belgium.[5] If the individual and both their parents were born in Belgium, this person has no migration background. If information on country of birth is missing for both parents[6] we only consider the country of birth of the individual in the sample. A possible disadvantage of using country of birth instead of nationality at birth is the incorrect classification of Belgian children born abroad. Hence, if the country of birth of both parents is Belgium, individuals are indicated as having no migration background even if they were born outside Belgium. This is a particularly important correction in light of the Belgian history of colonization in Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda. For those with a migration background who were born outside Belgium themselves, origin is determined based on country of birth. For those with a migration background who were born in Belgium but have two parents or only a father born outside Belgium, origin is derived from the father's country of birth. If the country of birth of the father is not available or the father was born in Belgium, the country of birth of the mother determines the origin.

[5] We have opted to exclude the third generation, which can only be defined based on the country of birth of the grandparents. This data is often missing or unreliable for at least some of the grandparents, which makes correct identification of the third generation difficult.

[6] Information on country of birth of both parents is missing for 4.69% of male partners and 3.98% of female partners.

Because analyses are performed at the couple level, couples are classified into origin groups based on the origin group of at least one of the partners. In this study we select couples in which both partners are of Belgian origin and couples with at least one partner of Southern European, Moroccan, Turkish, or Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan origin. After making this selection we have a sample of 33,511 couples. Within the origin groups we further distinguish by couple composition: (1) both partners have the same origin (endogamy), (2) one of the partners is of Belgian origin (mixed-Belgian), (3) one of the partners is from a different, non-Belgian origin group (mixed-other). Table 1 shows the detailed breakdown of the sample according to the origin of at least one of the partners, relationship type, and couple composition. For mixed (exogamous) couples consisting of partners who fall within the selected (non-Belgian) origin groups, these categories are not mutually exclusive. A couple consisting of a woman of Southern European origin and a man of Moroccan origin is categorized both as a couple with at least one partner of Southern European origin and as a couple with at least one partner of Moroccan origin. Of the selected couples, 257 (0.008%) belong to the category 'mixed-other' for two origin groups. Given that these couples are in fact part of both origin groups and sensitivity checks have shown that including these couples does not alter the descriptive or multivariate results compared with leaving them out, these couples are included in the analyses for both origin groups. Table 2 shows which couples appear twice in the analyses.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of couples by origin group

	Belgium	Southern Europe	Morocco	Turkey	Congo/Burundi/Rwanda
n. couples (total)	29,940	2,458	2,066	739	673
n. unique couples[a]	-	*2,298*	*1,922*	*679*	*603*
% unique couples	-	*93.49*	*93.03*	*91.88*	*89.60*
n. couple-years (total)	326,010	23,074	17,610	7,679	6,133
n. relationship dissolutions (total)	11,780	1,119	1,047	328	331
Relationship type (% of total n couples)					
Marriage without premarital cohabitation	36.99	43.25	56.87	66.17	28.08
Marriage after premarital cohabitation	25.96	17.29	12.92	9.20	24.52
Unmarried cohabitation	37.05	39.46	30.20	24.63	47.40
Composition (% of total n. couples)					
Endogamous	78.31	17.74	45.55	55.21	8.62
Mixed – Belgian	21.69	60.74	33.16	26.52	60.92
Mixed – Other	-	21.52	21.30	18.27	30.46

Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation.
Notes: [a] Unique couples are couples that do not occur twice in the analysis for the different origin groups (Figures 3–6 and Table A-1). Couples are not unique when the couple consists of two partners from the selected (non-Belgian) origin groups. Example: a couple consisting of a Turkish man and Moroccan woman occurs in the analysis for couples with one Turkish partner and in the analysis for couples with one Moroccan partner. In both analyses, the couple is categorized as 'mixed – other'. Endogamous Belgian couples and couples consisting of partners of Belgian and non-Belgian origin by definition do not overlap in the analyses for the different origin groups.

Table 2: Number of couples by origin of both partners

	Origin woman						
Origin man	Belgian	Southern Europe	Morocco	Turkey	Congo/ Burundi/ Rwanda	Other	Total
Belgian	23,447	622	230	71	226	1,789	26,385
Southern Europe	871	436	56	19	31	236	1,649
Morocco	455	33	941	11	18	180	1,638
Turkey	125	13	15	408	1	49	611
Congo/Burundi /Rwanda	184	8	11	1	58	53	315
Other	1,920	133	116	26	82	636	2,913
Total	27,002	1,245	1,369	536	416	2,943	33,511

Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation.
Notes: Marked cells are pairs that occur twice in the category 'mixed – other' for the respective origin groups in the survival curves by origin (Figures 2–5) and the multivariate analysis (Figure 6 and Table A-1).
Unmarked cells are unique couples that occur only once in Figures 2–6 and Table A-1.
Individuals in the 'other' categories are those who do not fall within the selected origin groups. These individuals are included as partners in the category 'mixed – other'.

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 Survival analysis

In a first step, we perform survival analysis using Kaplan–Meier estimates to investigate how the cumulative incidence of union dissolution differs according to couple composition and relationship type. While all couples enter the observation as married or unmarried cohabiting, we conduct separate survival analyses for couples who married directly without a substantial period (less than a year) of cohabitation, cohabiting couples who married during the observation, and cohabiting couples who did not marry during the observation period. We make this distinction in order to take the total duration of a co-residing union into account while also accounting for differences in relationship trajectory (Teachman and Polonko 1990; Kulu and Boyle 2010). The start of the observation (between 1999 and 2001) is the start of coresidential union formation ($t = 0$) regardless of relationship type. Couples are followed until they break up (event) or until they are censored due to death, emigration, or the end of the observation period (2013).

3.4.2 Event history analysis

In the second step, we model union dissolution hazards by performing a discrete-time event history analysis with a logit link function. Relationship duration acts as the baseline for all models. The analyses are performed separately for couples with at least one partner

of Southern European, Moroccan, Turkish, or Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan origin. Through interaction effects, we examine whether the link between composition of the couple[7] and union dissolution differs by relationship type after controlling for relevant background characteristics.

Given that union formation and dissolution patterns are strongly affected by childbearing and the number and age of children (Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010) and given that couples of migrant origin are sometimes found to have higher fertility rates (Kulu et al. 2019), we include a time-varying variable that indicates for each year whether the couple has: no children, one child younger than 3, one child older than 3, two or more children with the youngest younger than 3, or two or more children with the youngest older than 3 living in the household. Because union dissolution (Kalmijn, Loeve, and Manting 2007; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010) and the choice to cohabit instead of marry (Kalmijn 2011) can depend on the economic position of the couple, the analyses include a yearly time-varying variable on the household income, which is the sum of the income from all household members and all income sources. Household income is made equivalent for household composition and size using the OECD modified equivalence scale (OECD 2013). Including this variable also controls for the fact that couples with a migrant background often occupy a more vulnerable socioeconomic position (Münz 2007; Heath, Rothon, and Kilpi 2008). A time-varying variable for region is included given regional differences in union dissolution (Mortelmans, Snoeckx, and Dronkers 2009) and distinguishes between living in Flanders, Wallonia, or the Brussels capital region in each year. Age of the woman and man at relationship formation and age difference between partners have also been found to affect union dissolution risks (Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010) and are included as time-constant variables. A time-constant variable is added that indicates whether the male and female partners' parents are of the same origin group, of a different origin group, or whether this is unknown. The origin of the parents is not only a first exposure to endogamy or exogamy in a couple's surrounding but also plays an important role in socialization, social integration, and in identification with one's origin group (Kalmijn 2010; Hartung et al. 2011; Huschek, de Valk, and Liefbroer 2012; Kalmijn 2015). Previous studies have also shown that children with parents from different origin groups are more likely to partner outside of the origin group themselves (Monden and Smits 2005; Logan and Shin 2012). Additional analyses by sex of the partner with a migration background showed only limited differences. Because this additional gender divided results into very small groups, the division was not retained in this article.

[7] Additional analyses were performed where endogamous couples were distinguished by whether partners were of the same or different generations. Given that these analyses were not feasible for all origin groups and differences by generation were limited, they are not included in this paper.

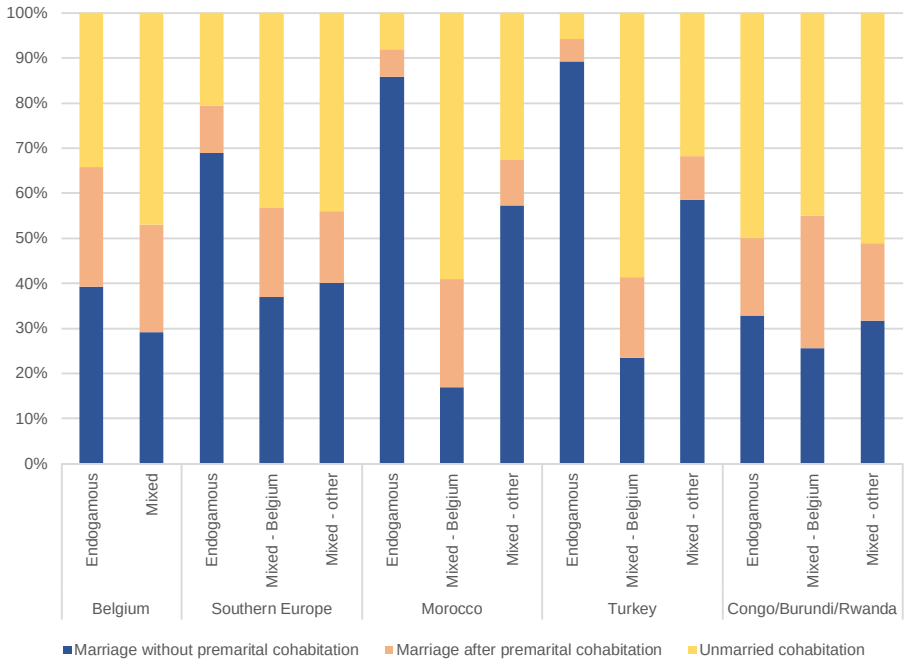
4. Results

4.1 Descriptive results

4.1.1 Relationship type

The results in Figure 1 indicate that the relationship type is strongly related to the couple's composition by origin. In general, endogamous couples enter into (direct) marriage more often than mixed couples. These differences are clearly visible within all origin groups except within the group of couples with at least one partner of Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan origin, where differences according to the composition of the couple are minimal.

Figure 1: Relationship type by origin and couple composition



Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation

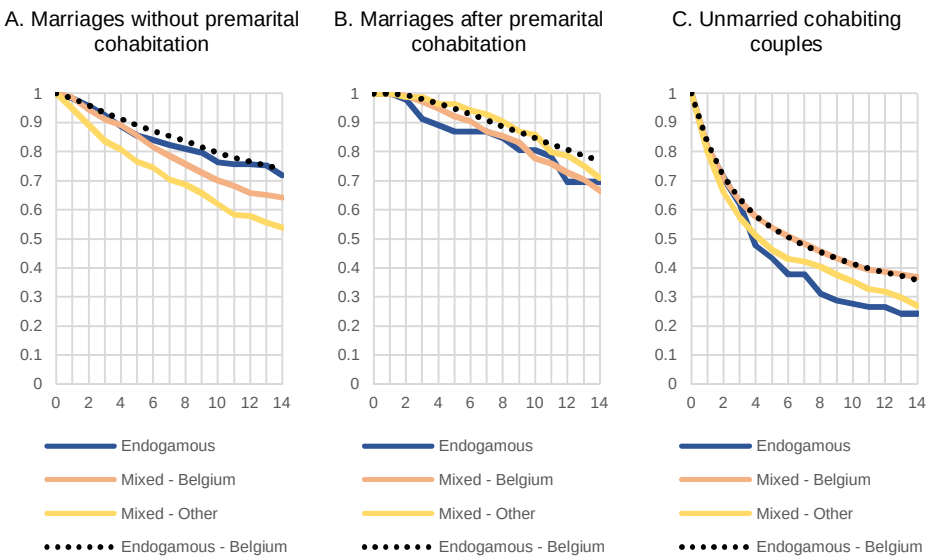
The differences are remarkably large within the group of couples with a Turkish or Moroccan partner. More than 80% of endogamous Turkish and Moroccan couples marry without a substantial period of premarital cohabitation. We see an opposite pattern for mixed couples consisting of a Moroccan or Turkish partner and a Belgian partner. Around 80% of these couples are not married when they start living together. Of the couples who started living together without being married, only a minority married during the observation period. Mixed couples consisting of a Moroccan or Turkish partner and a partner of other, non-Belgian origin are in an intermediate position. Half of these couples are already married when they move in together, whereas about 35% remains unmarried throughout the observation period. The high number of direct marriages among endogamous Turkish and Moroccan marriages is in line with the prominence of marriage in Islam and the view that unmarried cohabitation is volatile and an unstable basis for starting a family (Wets et al. 2009; Stuyck et al. 2018). If one of the partners migrated in the context of family formation, a marriage may already have been concluded in the country of origin, or marriage may have been encouraged in view of the stricter migration rules for couples who want to live together without being married after migration (European Migration Network 2017). The great contrast with mixed couples, where the vast majority are not married when they start living together, can be explained in various ways. Since these couples deviate from prevailing group norms by choosing a partner outside their own origin group, a weaker identification with the origin group or the loss of informal support can cause these couples to stop conforming to other group norms, such as those concerning marriage as an important institution. Unmarried cohabitation can also be a less visible way of living with a partner from a different origin group while avoiding social sanctions (Wets et al. 2009). The low number of unmarried cohabiting couples of Turkish or Moroccan origin also implies that the survival analysis of endogamous Turkish and Moroccan couples who opt to live together unmarried is only reliable to a limited extent. This is a small, possibly very selective group. This is also the case for the analysis of direct marriages with at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin. Only a minority of these couples choose to marry immediately, and the number of endogamous couples is very limited.

4.1.2 Southern European origin

Figure 2 shows the survival curves for couples consisting of at least one partner of Southern European origin. The curves for endogamous Belgian couples are included to determine how mixed couples with one Belgian partner compare to endogamous couples within the origin groups. Among married couples that did not live together before marriage (panel A), we find clear differences in divorce risks between endogamous and

mixed couples. Endogamous couples have the most stable marriages, with 70% of these couples remaining intact after fourteen years. The curve of endogamous couples of Southern European origin is also most similar to that of endogamous Belgian couples. They are followed by mixed couples with partners of Belgian and Southern European origin, respectively. Mixed couples consisting of a Southern European partner and a partner from another, non-Belgian, origin group are the least stable. For cohabiting couples that marry during the observation (panel B), there are no meaningful differences between endogamous and mixed couples. About 66% to 70% of the couples are still intact after 14 years. The results for cohabiting couples that have not (yet) married (panel C) again show substantial differences depending on the choice of partner. Here, however, the couples consisting of a Southern European and a Belgian partner appear to be the most stable and their curve is almost identical to that of endogamous Belgian couples, while endogamous Southern European couples and mixed couples with a partner of a different origin are more likely to end their cohabitation.

Figure 2: Proportion of intact couples with at least one partner of Southern European origin, by relationship duration, relationship type, and couple composition



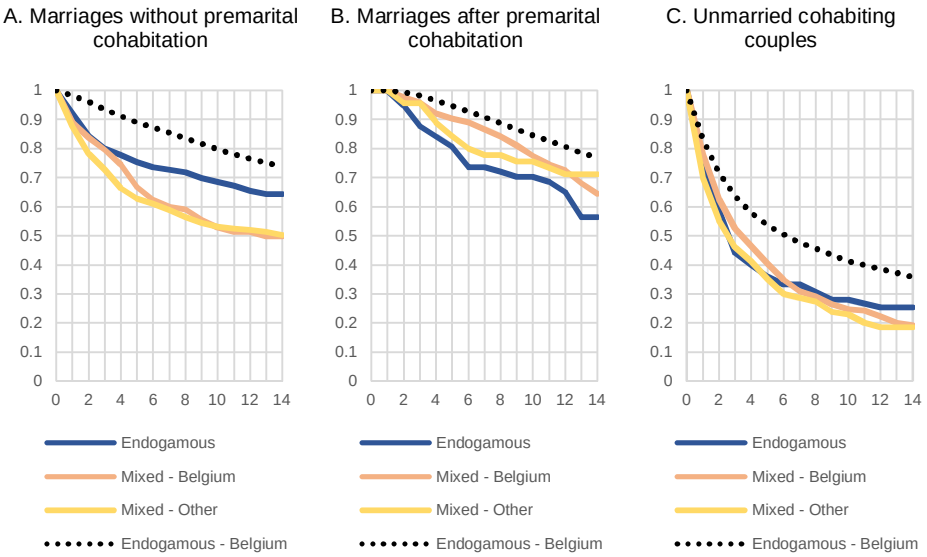
Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation.

4.1.3 Moroccan origin

Figure 3 shows the results for couples consisting of at least one partner of Moroccan origin. Among married couples that have not previously lived together (panel A), endogamous couples appear to be more stable, relative to mixed couples. Strikingly, the curve for mixed couples with a Belgian partner at up to (and including) four years is the same as for endogamous Moroccan couples. Therefore, there are no observable differences in the short term. After four years, the curve for mixed couples with a Belgian partner declines much more sharply. In the medium term, these couples clearly differ from each other. The sharp decline in the fourth year can be linked to the conditional right of residence. Until 2013, the conditional right of residence stated that during the first 3 years after applying for a residence card, the applicant needs to live with their partner (Dawoud 2014).[8] If the conditions for family reunification ceased to be met before the end of the 3-year period, the non-Belgian partner loses their right to reside in Belgium. After this period has expired, forming a family is no longer necessary, and permanent residence rights can be applied for. It is possible that divorces will be postponed until expiration of the period of conditional right of residence. For married couples that previously lived together (panel B), the union dissolution risks of mixed couples occupy a position in between those of endogamous Belgian couples and endogamous Moroccan couples. Among cohabiting couples that did not marry (panel C), the curves do not differ strongly according to partner choice. From these results we can conclude that the exogamy hypothesis is only applicable to marriages without a period of premarital cohabitation.

[8] In 2013 this period was increased to five years.

Figure 3: Proportion of intact couples with at least one partner of Moroccan origin, by relationship duration, relationship type, and couple composition



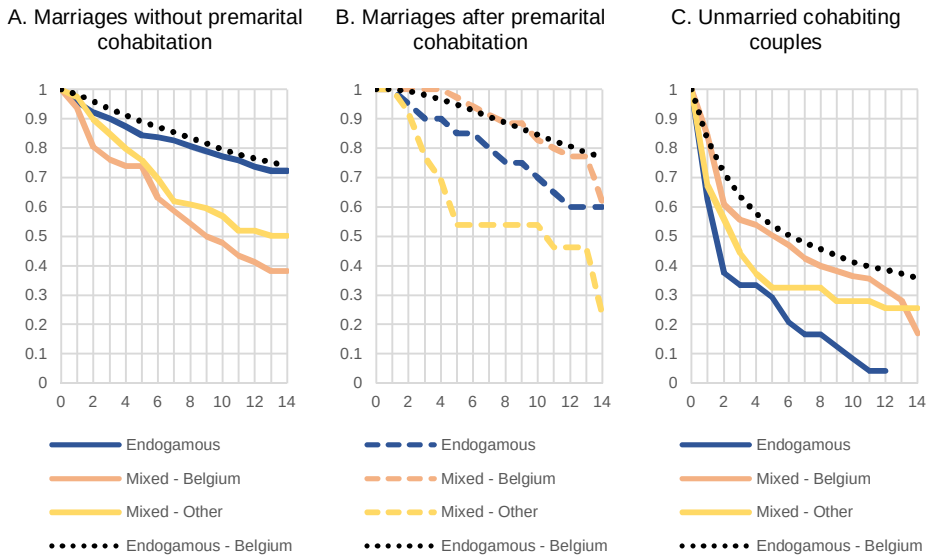
Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation

4.1.4 Turkish origin

Figure 4 shows the results for couples with at least one Turkish partner. The differences according to partner choice are more pronounced than for Moroccan couples. The results for directly married couples with a Turkish partner (panel A) show a clear dichotomy between endogamous couples on the one hand and mixed couples on the other. The curve for endogamous Turkish couples is very similar to that of endogamous Belgian couples. One-fourth of these couples has split up after 14 years. The proportion of intact mixed couples is much lower, between 40% and 50%. For mixed Turkish–Belgian couples we again see a sharper decline after the first four years, which may be linked to the conditional right of residence. Couples with at least one Turkish partner who choose to live together (panels B and C) are rather rare. Due to the low number of events, the curves are more erratic. Incidentally, this may concern a specific selection of couples that choose to deviate from the normative expectations regarding marriage. Among couples that married after a period of premarital cohabitation (panel B), mixed Belgian–Turkish

couples are the most stable and have union dissolution risks that are comparable to endogamous Belgian couples. That these results are not in line with the exogamy hypothesis may indicate that mixed couples with a Belgian partner are assimilating more strongly into the relationship dynamics observed among the majority population. The results further show that couples with a partner of Turkish origin who live together but have not (yet) married (panel C) are extremely unstable, especially in the first years after relationship formation. Yet, couples consisting of a Belgian and Turkish partner are again more stable than endogamous Turkish couples and are more similar to endogamous Belgian couples.

Figure 4: Proportion of intact couples with at least one partner of Turkish origin, by relationship duration, relationship type, and couple composition

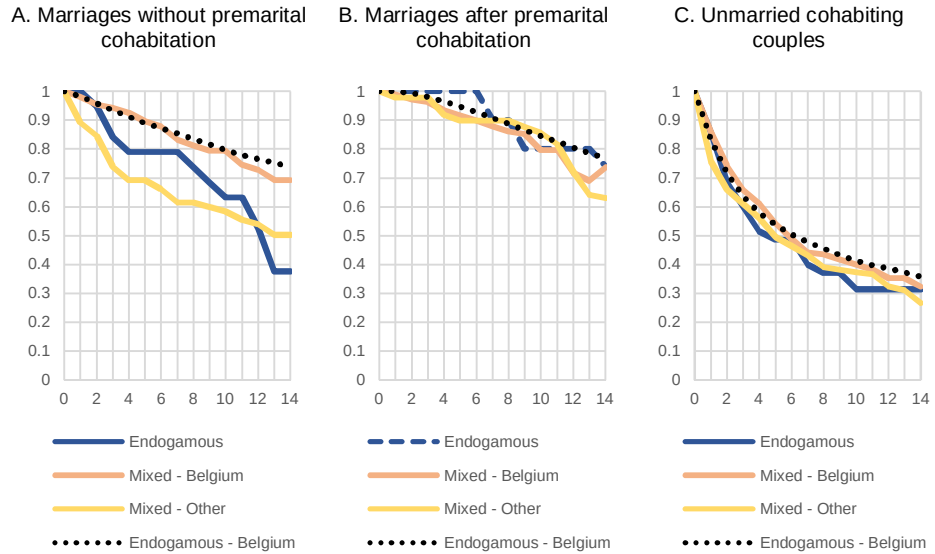


Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation
Note: Dashed line indicates that number of events is lower than 10.

4.1.5 Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin

Figure 5 shows the results for couples with at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin. Again, notably, only a minority of these couples opted for a direct marriage and in addition the group of endogamous couples is remarkably small (8.53%). With regard to couples that are married without a period of premarital cohabitation (panel A), couples in which a Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan partner is married to a Belgian partner are more stable and similar to endogamous Belgian couples, compared to endogamous Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan couples and couples in which the Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan partner married a partner with a different (non-Belgian) origin. The analysis does not show clear differences according to choice of partner for cohabiting couples that marry or do not marry (panels B and C). These curves do not show any major deviations from those of endogamous Belgian couples.

Figure 5: Proportion of intact couples with at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin, by relationship duration, relationship type, and couple composition



Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation
Note: Dashed line indicates that number of events is lower than 10.

4.2 Multivariate results

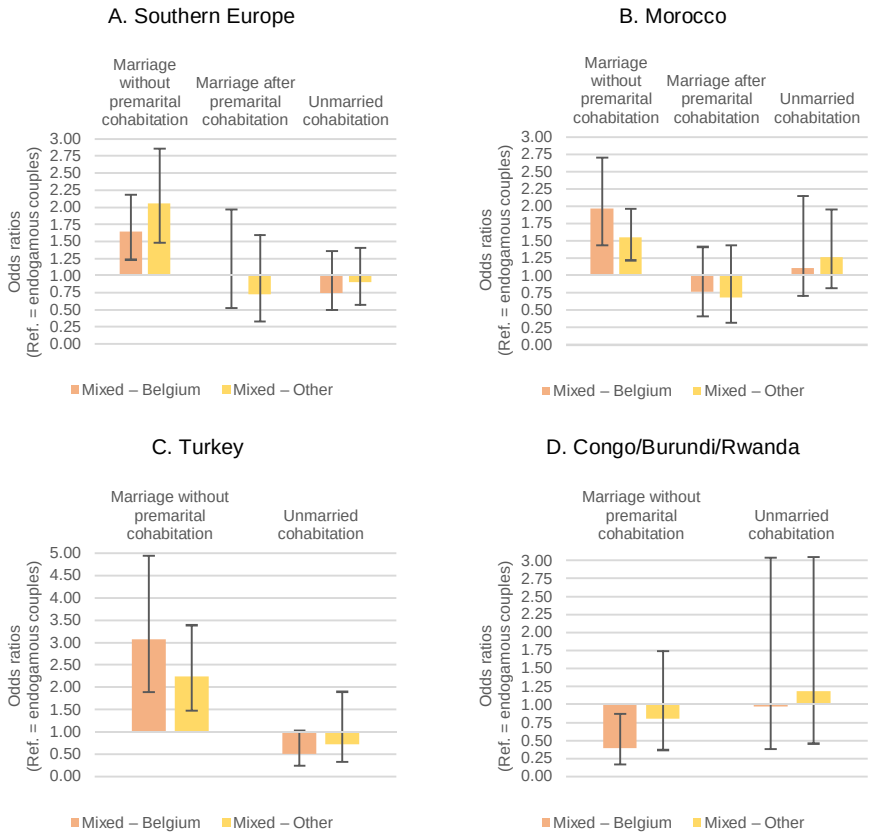
Figure 6 (and Table A-1 in Appendix) shows the results of the multivariate analysis. A discrete-time event history analysis was performed for each origin group separately, containing the interaction between couple composition and relationship type. In this way, we can examine whether the relationship between the couple composition in terms of origin and relationship dissolution varies according to relationship type after controlling for relationship duration, age of the woman and man at the start of cohabitation, age difference between partners, region, origin of the parents, household income, the number of children, and the age of the youngest child. It is important to take into account that this breakdown by composition and relationship type results in very low absolute numbers for some groups, such as couples with a Turkish or Congolese/Burundian/Rwandan background that married after cohabitation. Given that confidence intervals were very large and a meaningful interpretation was difficult, we refrain from reporting or discussing the results for these groups.

Among couples with at least one partner of Southern European, Turkish, or Moroccan origin (panels A-C) that married without a period of premarital cohabitation, the odds of relationship dissolution are substantially higher for mixed couples compared to endogamous couples. For couples with at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan background (panel D) we see the reverse pattern, in which marriages without a prior period of unmarried cohabitation have lower odds of dissolution when it concerns a mixed marriage with a Belgian, compared to an endogamous marriage.

For couples with at least one partner from the Southern European origin group (panel A), the results indicate that the differences in union dissolution risks between endogamous and mixed couples largely disappear if the couple lived together before their marriage or never married, compared to married couples that did not live together before marriage. This pattern is also observed among couples with a Moroccan (panel B) or Turkish (panel C) partner. The effects for mixed couples consisting of partners of Turkish and Belgian origin indicate that their odds of relationship breakdown are substantially lower than those of endogamous Turkish couples when these couples lived together before marriage or were not (yet) married.

The effects for couples consisting of at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin (panel D) indicate that mixed couples with a Belgian partner have lower dissolution risks than endogamous couples when they married without a period of premarital cohabitation. For the mixed couples with another, non-Belgian, partner that directly married and for mixed couples who are cohabiting, no differences with endogamous couples are found.

Figure 6: Odds ratios of origin groups' union dissolution compared to endogamous couples, by relationship type and couple composition



Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation
Note: Results are controlled for relationship duration, age of the woman and man at the start of the cohabitation, age difference between partners, number of children and age of the youngest child, region, household income, origin of parents.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Using survival analysis and discrete-time event history models of relationship dissolution, we investigated whether the association between partner choice and relationship dissolution differs according to relationship type. The results of this study indicate that the exogamy hypothesis is especially relevant when explaining the divorce

probabilities of couples that marry without a period of premarital cohabitation. Mixed couples with at least one partner of Southern European, Turkish, or Moroccan origin who married directly have higher risks of dissolution compared to both endogamous couples from the same origin groups and endogamous Belgian couples (confirming Hypothesis 2). When comparing mixed couples with a Belgian partner to endogamous Belgian couples across the different origin groups, we see that mixed Belgian couples are consistently more likely to divorce from a direct marriage when the other partner is of Southern European, Turkish, or Moroccan origin. These results are in line with previous findings on the role of exogamy in marital dissolution and are usually explained by the different norms and values of the partners, loss of informal support, and an increased risk of experiencing discrimination (Kalmijn 1998; Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Zhang and Van Hook 2009). Cultural distance also seems to play a role. Differences in divorce rates between endogamous and mixed couples are greatest for couples with at least one partner of Turkish origin. We find smaller differences for Moroccan and Southern European couples. These differences persisted after controlling for background characteristics, making the selection hypothesis less relevant as an explanation for these results. However, for couples with at least one partner of Congolese, Burundian, or Rwandan origin who married directly, we see the opposite pattern. According to the exogamy hypothesis these results may indicate open group boundaries, similar norms and values, and limited sanctions from third parties such as family and community (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005; Milewski and Kulu 2014). The high degree of exogamy in this group also points in that direction (Dupont et al. 2017). However, if these couples still experience discrimination (Hibbler and Shinew 2002; Zhang and Van Hook 2009; Stuyck et al. 2018), this finding is remarkable, as it does not appear to result in higher separation rates. Further research with larger sample sizes should reveal whether group boundaries between the Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan communities and the Belgian majority population have indeed become so blurred.

The main finding of this research is that the exogamy hypothesis cannot be applied uniformly to every relationship type and every origin group. We see that couples that have been involved in unmarried cohabitation show substantially different patterns than couples that married directly. Contrary to our expectation, the differences in divorce risks between Belgian couples and mixed couples with a Belgian partner across the different origin groups were smaller or diminished when the couple's union started out as an unmarried cohabitation (not confirming Hypothesis 1). Among the group of couples that married after premarital cohabitation or remained unmarried throughout the observation period, mixed couples' risks of dissolution were found to be minimally different from endogamous Southern European, Turkish, and Moroccan couples, or even lower (confirming Hypothesis 3). After controlling for various background characteristics, these differences persisted for the Turkish, Moroccan, and Southern European origin

groups. For the Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan origin groups, however, variation in the link between partner choice and relationship dissolution between relationship types was less convincing and subject to uncertainty, possibly due to low frequencies. The administrative data does not allow us to investigate the role of attitudes and informal support. However, we can consider possible mechanisms that may explain the differences in the proportion of intact couples and the results of the multivariate analysis.

Although the literature states that crossing group boundaries generally results in higher divorce rates compared to forming a relationship within one's own origin group, this does not always appear to be the case for marriages formed after a period of unmarried cohabitation. It is possible that this is the result of a selection mechanism that manifests itself in marriages formed after cohabitation. In the literature, cohabitation is often described as a 'trial marriage' (Bennett, Blanc, and Bloom 1988; Kulu and Boyle 2010). It gives partners the opportunity to start a household together and find out if they are compatible without the long-term investment often associated with marriage. This means that incompatible partners are often already selected out, so that marriages after cohabitation consist of a selection of couples that have already passed the first 'relationship test.' If we apply this principle to endogamous and mixed couples, we can assume that the mixed couples that were found to be incompatible dropped out before they got married. The exogamous couples that did get married are then a selection of the strongest couples. As exogamous couples cross different symbolic boundaries (Kalmijn 1998) they are likely to be tested more and couples entering marriage will be a stronger selection than endogamous couples that can count on more support from their immediate environment. As such, there is probably more to it than the selection mechanism. Unmarried cohabitation may offer a less visible alternative to marriage for mixed couples (Wets et al. 2009), thereby minimizing external pressure and possible social sanctions from third parties. This can provide an opportunity for mixed couples to more easily navigate the specific challenges associated with crossing group boundaries. An additional and possibly compatible explanation is that mixed couples that choose to live together unmarried do not merely deviate from the norm by crossing a social and symbolic border through exogamy (Kalmijn, de Graaf, and Janssen 2005): They also deviate from the norm by opting for unmarried cohabitation instead of marriage. As this combination can result in a stronger break with family and community, disapproval of the mixed relationship may have less impact than for couples that conform by marrying directly. This theory is somewhat supported by the higher dissolution rates for endogamous couples that have not (yet) married, compared to mixed couples. Additional research is needed to explore these dynamics and the role of unmarried cohabitation.

This research inevitably encountered some limitations that provide relevant avenues for future research. First, whereas we can theorize about possible explanations, the available data do not allow us to examine in detail the roles of culture and cultural

distance between partners, religious differences, discrimination, and other factors that may characterize and shape the experience of endogamous and exogamous couples. Additional studies are necessary to disentangle the influence of these factors in order to gain further insight as to why exogamy does not necessarily raise union dissolution risks among couples that have cohabited for at least a part of their relationship. Second, whereas we have included the composition of the parents in terms of origin as a control variable, this study has not examined the specific role of the couple's immediate environment and their exposure to mixed relationships, as this was beyond the scope of the paper. Third, aiming for an accurate estimate of recent divorce rates and accounting for variation in divorce timing, we used a sample of couples that married or began living together between 1999 and 2001. Research indicates that trends in partner choice were changing during this period. For example, among the Turkish and Moroccan second generation it was found that the choice of a migrant partner declined sharply in favor of a local partner from the same origin group (Caestecker et al. 2013; Dupont et al. 2017), and unmarried cohabitation has since gained in popularity throughout Europe (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015). It is therefore important to replicate this study's analyses using more recent marriage and cohabitation cohorts to examine the divorce experience of couples over a longer period of time. Fourth, we ran into several data limitations. As household position is registered on an annual basis it was not possible to include shorter periods (less than one year) of cohabitation in the data. We were also unable to examine the role of the length of premarital cohabitations because it would add another level of complexity and render particularly small cell sizes for several groups. In addition, it was not possible to distinguish, within the group of endogamous couples, between couples that were formed locally and couples that were the result of marriage migration. Research conducted by Eeckhaut et al. (2011) shows that marriages with a marriage migrant have higher divorce rates than locally formed marriages. As unmarried cohabitation is not the norm for Moroccan and Turkish couples we had to deal with very small groups in some combinations. For example, very few endogamous couples live together unmarried, making it difficult to estimate reliable divorce risks for this group.

Despite these limitations, this paper represents an important first step in research into the impacts of endogamy and exogamy on relationship dissolution. The results show that it is important to consider the increasing variation in relationship types when examining the relationship between partner choice and union dissolution. By comparing different relationship types and trajectories the impact of exogamy can be captured more accurately, and theoretical explanations for differences in relationship dissolution according to partner choice can be sharpened. In previous literature the preference for endogamous marriages has generally been associated with tightly closed group boundaries. This study indicates that unmarried cohabitation may play an important role in crossing these group boundaries. By extension, this paper shows that using exogamy

as a unilateral indicator for integration is complex. The higher divorce risks for mixed couples who marry directly indicate that often exogamy does not lead to sustainable unions in the mid- to long-term. This at least partly contradicts the idea that mixed couples are more integrated, given that they still encounter substantial obstacles that may lead them to relationship dissolution. Yet when couples opt to cohabit first, mixed couples do remarkably better. Although we cannot determine whether we are looking at a selection effect or whether unmarried cohabitation can be a strategy to relieve some of the stressors related to exogamy, it is clear that exogamy as an indicator of integration can no longer be studied without acknowledging the role of (unmarried) cohabitation.

References

Bennett, N.G., Blanc, A.K., and Bloom, D. E. (1988). Commitment and the modern union: Assessing the link between premarital cohabitation and subsequent marital stability. *American Sociological Review* 53(1): 127–138. doi:10.2307/2095738.

Bernhardt, E., Goldscheider, F., and Goldscheider, C. (2007). Integrating the second generation: Gender and family attitudes in early adulthood in Sweden. *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung-Journal of Family Research* 19(1): 55–70. doi:10.20377/jfr-337.

Billari, F.C. and Liefbroer, A.C. (2010). Towards a new pattern of transition to adulthood? *Advances in Life Course Research* 15(2–3): 59–75. doi:10.1016/j.alcr.2010.10.003.

Blackwell, D.L. and Lichter, D.T. (2004). Homogamy among dating, cohabiting, and married couples. *The Sociological Quarterly* 45(4): 719–737. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2004.tb02311.x.

Bratter, J.L. and Eschbach, K. (2006). 'What about the couple?'Interracial marriage and psychological distress. *Social Science Research* 35(4): 1025–1047. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2005.09.001.

Caestecker, F., Lievens, J., Van de Putte, B., and Van der Bracht, K. (2013). Trends in partnerkeuze van eerste en tweedegeneratiemigranten in België: Partnerkeuze van personen woonachtig in België met een migratieachtergrond, 2001–2008. Met bijzondere aandacht voor de bevolkingsgroep van Marokkaanse en Turkse herkomst in België.

Coleman, D.A. (1994). Trends in fertility and intermarriage among immigrant populations in Western Europe as measures of integration. *Journal of Biosocial Science* 26(1): 107–136. doi:10.1017/S0021932000021106.

Corijn, M. (2012). *Tien jaar wettelijke samenwoning in België. Een analyse op basis van Rijksregistergegevens* (SVR-Webartikel 2012, Issue 2). https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/tien-jaar-wettelijke-samenwoning-in-belgie.

Corijn, M. (2017). Gehuwd of ongehuwd samenwonen met een partner en/of kinderen: Trends, vooruitzichten en beleidsimplicaties in het Vlaamse Gewest. Studiedienst van de Vlaamse Regering. https://publicaties.vlaanderen.be/view-file/26004.

Corijn, M. and Lodewijckx, E. (2009a). *De start van de gezinsvorming bij de Turkse en Marokkaanse tweede generatie in het Vlaamse Gewest een analyse op basis van Rijksregistergegevens* (SVR-rapport 2009, Issue 6). https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/de-start-van-de-gezinsvorming-bij-de-turkse-en-marokkaanse-tweede-generatie-in-het-vlaamse-gewest-een-analyse-op-basis-van-rijksregistergegevens.

Corijn, M. and Lodewijckx, E. (2009b). *Echtscheiding en leefvorm na echtscheiding in het Vlaamse Gewest verschillen naar herkomst: een analyse op basis van Rijksregistergegevens voor volwassenen en kinderen*. Brussels, Studiedienst van de Vlaamse Regering. https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/echtscheiding-en-leefvorm-na-echtscheiding-in-het-vlaamse-gewest-verschillen-naar-herkomst-een-analyse-op-basis-van-rijksregistergegevens-voor-volwassenen-en-kinderen.

Dawoud, S. (2014). Gezinshereniging in België: Kan men het bos nog door de bomen zien? *T. vreemd* 3: 286.

de Valk, H.A.G. (2008). Parental influence on work and family plans of adolescents of different ethnic backgrounds in the Netherlands. *Sex Roles* 59(9–10): 738–751. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9464-9.

Diehl, C., Koenig, M., and Ruckdeschel, K. (2009). Religiosity and gender equality: comparing natives and Muslim migrants in Germany. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32(2): 278–301. doi:10.1080/01419870802298454.

Dribe, M. and Lundh, C. (2012). Intermarriage, value context and union dissolution: Sweden 1990–2005. *European Journal of Population/Revue européenne de Démographie* 28(2): 139–158. doi:10.1007/s10680-011-9253-y.

Dupont, E., Van Pottelberge, A., Van de Putte, B., Lievens, J., and Caestecker, F. (2017). Partner choices in long established migrant communities in Belgium. *Historical Life Course Studies* 4: 20–40. doi:10.51964/hlcs9337.

Eeckhaut, M.C., Lievens, J., Van de Putte, B., and Lusyne, P. (2011). Partner selection and divorce in ethnic minorities: Distinguishing between two types of ethnic homogamous marriages. *International Migration Review* 45(2): 269–296. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2011.00848.x.

European Migration Network (2017). Family reunification with third country national sponsors in Belgium. https://emnbelgium.be/sites/default/files/publications/Final%20BE%20report%20on%20family%20reunification%20of%20TCN_%20July%202017.pdf.

FOD WASO, and UNIA (2017). Socio-economische monitoring: Arbeidsmarkt en Origine 2017. https://www.unia.be/files/Documenten/Publicaties_docs/1215_UNIA_Monitoring_2017_-_NL-Anysurfer.pdf.

Hamplova, D. (2009). Educational homogamy among married and unmarried couples in Europe: Does context matter? *Journal of Family Issues* 30(1): 28–52. doi:10.1177/0192513X08324576.

Hannemann, T., Kulu, H., Rahnu, L., Puur, A., Hărăguş, M., Obućina, O., González-Ferrer, A., Neels, K., Van den Berg, L., Pailhé, A., Potarca, G., and Bernardi, L. (2018). Co-ethnic marriage versus intermarriage among immigrants and their descendants: A comparison across seven European countries using event-history analysis. *Demographic Research* 39(17): 487–524. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2018.39.17.

Hartung, A., Vandezande, V., Phalet, K., and Swyngedouw, M. (2011). Partnership preferences of the Belgian second generation: Who lives with whom? *Advances in Life Course Research* 16(4): 152–163. doi:10.1016/j.alcr.2011.09.001.

Heath, A.F., Rothon, C., and Kilpi, E. (2008). The second generation in Western Europe: Education, unemployment, and occupational attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 211–235. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134728.

Hibbler, D.K. and Shinew, K.J. (2002). Interracial couples' experience of leisure: A social network approach. *Journal of Leisure Research* 34(2): 135–156. doi:10.1080/00222216.2002.11949966.

Hiekel, N., Liefbroer, A.C., and Poortman, A.-R. (2014). Understanding diversity in the meaning of cohabitation across Europe. *European Journal of Population* 30(4): 391–410. doi:10.1007/s10680-014-9321-1.

Huschek, D., de Valk, H.A., and Liefbroer, A.C. (2011). Gender-role behavior of second-generation Turks: The role of partner choice, gender ideology and societal context [Article]. *Advances in Life Course Research* 16: 164–177. doi:10.1016/j.alcr.2011.09.005.

Huschek, D., de Valk, H.A., and Liefbroer, A.C. (2012). Partner choice patterns among the descendants of Turkish immigrants in Europe. *European Journal of Population/Revue européenne de Démographie* 28(3): 241–268. doi:10.1007/s10680-012-9265-2.

Idema, H. and Phalet, K. (2007). Transmission of gender-role values in Turkish-German migrant families: The role of gender, intergenerational and intercultural relations. *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung* 19(1): 71–105. doi:10.20377/jfr-338.

Jones, F.L. (1994). Are marriages that cross ethnic boundaries more likely to end in divorce? *Journal of the Australian Population Association* 11(2): 115–132. doi:10.1007/BF03029473.

Jones, F.L. (1996). Convergence and divergence in ethnic divorce patterns: A research note. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58(1): 213–218. doi:10.2307/353389.

Kalmijn, M. (1998). Intermarriage and homogamy: Causes, patterns, trends. *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 395–421. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.395.

Kalmijn, M. (2010). Consequences of racial intermarriage for children's social integration. *Sociological Perspectives* 53(2): 271–286. doi:10.1525/sop.2010.53.2.271.

Kalmijn, M. (2011). The influence of men's income and employment on marriage and cohabitation: Testing Oppenheimer's theory in Europe. *European Journal of Population/Revue européenne de Démographie* 27(3): 269–293. doi:10.1007/s10680-011-9238-x.

Kalmijn, M. (2015). The children of intermarriage in four European countries: Implications for school achievement, social contacts, and cultural values. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 662(1): 246–265. doi:10.1177/0002716215595391.

Kalmijn, M., de Graaf, P.M., and Janssen, J.P. (2005). Intermarriage and the risk of divorce in the Netherlands: The effects of differences in religion and in nationality, 1974–94. *Population Studies* 59(1): 71–85. doi:10.1080/0032472052000332719.

Kalmijn, M., Loeve, A., and Manting, D. (2007). Income dynamics in couples and the dissolution of marriage and cohabitation. *Demography* 44(1): 159–179. doi:10.1353/dem.2007.0005.

Koelet, S., Corijn, M., Lodewijckx, E., Mortelmans, D., d'Hooge, A., and Hermans, P. (2009). *Echtscheiding bij personen van Turkse en Marokkaanse herkomst. Deel 2: Kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve studie*. Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid - Consortium Universiteit Antwerpen en Universiteit Hasselt.

Koelet, S., Hermans, P., Torfs, N., Vanvoorden, K., and Timmerman, C. (2009). *Echtscheiding bij personen van Turkse en Marokkaanse herkomst Deel 1: Literatuurstudie*. Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid – Consortium Universiteit Antwerpen en Universiteit Hasselt.

Kulu, H. and Boyle, P.J. (2010). Premarital cohabitation and divorce: Support for the "Trial Marriage" Theory? *Demographic Research* 23(31): 879–904. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2010.23.31.

Kulu, H. and González-Ferrer, A. (2014). Family dynamics among immigrants and their descendants in Europe: Current research and opportunities. *European Journal of Population* 30(4): 411–435. doi:10.1007/s10680-014-9322-0.

Kulu, H., Milewski, N., Hannemann, T., and Mikolai, J. (2019). A decade of life-course research on fertility of immigrants and their descendants in Europe. *Demographic Research* S23(46): 1345–1374. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2019.40.46.

Lievens, J. (1999). Family-forming migration from Turkey and Morocco to Belgium: The demand for marriage partners from the countries of origin. *International Migration Review* 33(3): 717–744. doi:10.2307/2547532.

Lodewijckx, E. and Deboosere, P. (2008). *LIPRO: een classificatie van huishoudens*. Studiedienst van de Vlaamse Regering.

Logan, J.R. and Shin, H.-j. (2012, 2012/09/01/). Assimilation by the third generation? Marital choices of white ethnics at the dawn of the twentieth century. *Social Science Research* 41(5): 1116–1125. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2012.01.010.

Lucassen, L. and Laarman, C. (2009). Immigration, intermarriage and the changing face of Europe in the post war period. *The History of the Family* 14(1): 52–68. doi:10.1016/j.hisfam.2008.12.001.

Lyngstad, T.H. and Jalovaara, M. (2010). A review of the antecedents of union dissolution. *Demographic Research* 23(10): 257–292. doi:10.4054/demres.2010.23.10.

Maes, J., Wood, J., and Neels, K. (2020). *Diversiteit and Sociale Samenhang*. Universiteit Antwerpen. https://samenleven-in-diversiteit.vlaanderen.be/sites/samenleven-in-diversiteit/files/Bijlage%201%20-%20eindrapport%20vervolgonderzoek%20SID.pdf.

Manning, W.D. (2020). Young adulthood relationships in an era of uncertainty: A case for cohabitation. *Demography* 57(3): 799–819. doi:10.1007/s13524-020-00881-9.

Milewski, N. and Kulu, H. (2014). Mixed marriages in Germany: A high risk of divorce for immigrant-native couples. *European Journal of Population* 30(1): 89–113. doi:10.1007/s10680-013-9298-1.

Monden, C.W. and Smits, J. (2005). Ethnic intermarriage in times of social change: The case of Latvia. *Demography* 42(2): 323–345. doi:10.1353/dem.2005.0015.

Mortelmans, D., Snoeckx, L., and Dronkers, J. (2009). Cross-regional divorce risks in Belgium: Culture or legislative system? *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 50(8): 541–563. doi:10.1080/10502550902970520.

Münz, R. (2007). Migration, labor markets, and integration of migrants: An overview for Europe. (HWWI Policy Paper). Hamburg: HWWI.

Noppe, J., Vanweddingen, M., Doyen, G., Stuyck, K., Feys, Y., and Buysschaert, P. (2018). *Vlaamse Migratie-en Integratiemonitor 2018*.

OECD (2013). *OECD framework for statistics on the distribution of household income, consumption and wealth*. OECD Publishing. doi:10.1787/9789264194830-en.

Pasteels, I., Lodewijckx, E., and Mortelmans, D. (2013). Gezinstransities in de levensloop van mannen en vrouwen. In: Corijn, M. and Van Peer, C. (eds.). *Gezinstransities in Vlaanderen*. Studiedienst van de Vlaamse Regering: 37–72.

Pasteels, I. and Mortelmans, D. (2011). Huwen en scheiden in de levensloop. In: D. Mortelmans (ed.). *Scheiding in Vlaanderen*. Leuven: Acco. 65–84.

Pels, T. (2000). Muslim families from Morocco in the Netherlands: Gender dynamics and fathers' roles in a context of change. *Current Sociology* 48(4): 75–93. doi:10.1177/0011392100048004007.

Perelli-Harris, B., and Lyons-Amos, M. (2015). Changes in partnership patterns across the life course: An examination of 14 countries in Europe and the United States. *Demographic Research* 33(6): 145–178. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2015.33.6.

Phalet, K. and Swyngedouw, M. (2003). Measuring immigrant integration: The case of Belgium. *Studi Emigrazione / Migration Studies* XL(152): 773–804.

Reniers, G. (1999). On the history and selectivity of Turkish and Moroccan migration to Belgium. *International Migration* 37(4): 679–713. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00090.

Stuyck, K., Doyen, G., Feys, Y., Noppe, J., Jacques, A., and Buysschaert, P. (2018). *Survey samenleven in diversiteit 2017*.

Surkyn, J. and Reniers, G. (1996). Selecte gezelschappen: Over de migratiegeschiedenis en de interne dynamiek van migratieprocessen. *Bevolking en Gezin*, 25(themanummer): 41–72.

Swennen, F. (2019). *Het personen- en familierecht. een benadering in context* (Zesde, herziene uitgave ed.) Intersentia. https://vpn.uantwerpen.be?url=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ebscohost.com%2flogin.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26AuthType%3dip%2curl%2cuid%26db%3dcat01187a%26AN%3dABC.c.lvd.14803972%26lang%3dnl%26site%3deds-live.https://www.jurisquare.be/nl/book/9789400010406/index.html.

Teachman, J.D. and Polonko, K.A. (1990). Cohabitation and marital stability in the United States. *Social Forces* 69(1): 207–220. doi:10.2307/2579614.

Timmerman, C. (2008). Marriage in a 'culture of migration'. Emirdag marrying into Flanders. *European Review* 16(04): 585–594. doi:10.1017/S1062798708000367.

Timmerman, C., Lodewyckx, I., and Wets, J. (2009). Marriage at the intersection between tradition and globalization: Turkish marriage migration between Emirdag and Belgium from 1989 to present. *The History of the Family* 14(2): 232–244. doi:10.1016/j.hisfam.2009.04.002.

Van den Berg, L. and Mortelmans, D. (2018). De onzichtbare scheidingsgolf: Een analyse van relatieontbinding van samenwonenden en gehuwden in België. *Relaties En Nieuwe Gezinnen* 8(1): 1–31. https://www.relatiesennieuwegezinnen.be/Jaargangen/2018%20-%20Vol8/ReNG%20Vol8Nr1%20-%20VDBergh%20etal%20(2018)%20De%20onzichtbare%20scheidingsgolf.pdf.

Van den Broucke, S., Noppe, J., Stuyck, K., Buysschaert, P., Doyen, G., and Wets, J. (2015). *Vlaamse Migratie- en Integratiemonitor 2015*. Steunpunt Inburgering en Integratie.

Van Imhoff, E. and Keilman, N. (1991). *LIPRO 2.0: An application of a dynamic demographic projection model to household structure in the Netherlands* (Vol. 23). Swets and Zeitlinger Amsterdam.

Van Kerckem, K., Van der Bracht, K., Stevens, P.A., and Van de Putte, B. (2013). Transnational marriages on the decline: Explaining changing trends in partner choice among Turkish Belgians. *International Migration Review* 47(4): 1006–1038. doi:10.1111/imre.12053.

Van Mol, C. and de Valk, H.A. (2016). Migration and immigrants in Europe: A historical and demographic perspective. In: Garcés-Mascareñas, B. and Penninx, R. (eds.). *Integration processes and policies in Europe.* Cham: Springer: 31–55. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-21674-4_3.

Verbakel, E. and Kalmijn, M. (2014). Assortative mating among Dutch married and cohabiting same-sex and different-sex couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 76(1): 1–12. doi:10.1111/jomf.12084.

Wets, J., Descheemaeker, L., Heyse, P., Clycq, N., and Timmerman, C. (2009). *Partnerkeuze en huwelijkssluiting van allochtone mannen. Een kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve analyse van het partnerkeuzeproces en het huwelijk van Marokkaanse, Turkse en sikhmannen.* Instituut voor de gelijkheid van vrouwen en mannen.

Zhang, Y. and Van Hook, J. (2009). Marital dissolution among interracial couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 71(1): 95–107. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00582.x.

Appendix

Table A-1: Odds ratios for logistic regression of relationship dissolution, by origin group, couple composition, and relationship type

		Marriage without premarital cohabitation			Marriage after premarital cohabitation			Unmarried cohabitation		
		OR	95% CI		OR	95% CI		OR	95% CI	
Southern Europe	*Endogamous (ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000		
	Mixed – Belgium	1.640	1.232	2.182	1.017	0.525	1.970	0.740	0.494	1.108
	Mixed – Other	2.055	1.479	2.856	0.726	0.331	1.594	0.897	0.570	1.409
Morocco	*Endogamous (ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000		
	Mixed – Belgium	1.966	1.432	2.699	0.764	0.414	1.413	1.108	0.704	1.744
	Mixed – Other	1.545	1.218	1.960	0.680	0.321	1.439	1.261	0.815	1.952
Turkey	*Endogamous (ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000		
	Mixed – Belgium	3.060	1.893	4.945	0.517	0.171	1.562	0.498	0.240	1.036
	Mixed – Other	2.231	1.469	3.388	1.982	0.628	6.254	0.710	0.332	1.520
Congo, Burundi, Rwanda	*Endogamous (ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000		
	Mixed – Belgium	0.387	0.172	0.873	2.240	0.255	19.631	0.968	0.383	2.450
	Mixed – Other	0.801	0.368	1.743	2.885	0.314	26.537	1.180	0.457	3.044

Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998–2013, authors' calculation
Note: Results are controlled for relationship duration, age of the woman and man at the start of the cohabitation, age difference between partners, number of children and age of the youngest child, region, household income, origin of parents.

Table A-2: Odds ratios for control variables in logistic regression of relationship dissolution, by origin group

	Southern Europe			Morocco			Turkey			Congo, Burundi, Rwanda		
	OR	95% CI		OR	95% CI		OR	95% CI		OR	95% CI	
Relationship duration	0.938	0.915	0.962	0.931	0.906	0.958	0.964	0.920	1.010	1.014	0.967	1.062
Age of woman at start	0.960	0.929	0.992	0.987	0.958	1.016	0.956	0.892	1.025	0.924	0.872	0.980
Age of man at start	0.966	0.937	0.996	0.966	0.938	0.995	0.981	0.921	1.045	0.969	0.920	1.020
Age difference partners												
Woman older	1.334	0.935	1.903	1.561	1.083	2.250	1.265	0.596	2.684	2.066	0.973	4.389
Same age (±3 years) *(ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
Man older	1.128	0.908	1.400	1.219	0.983	1.512	1.262	0.840	1.895	1.118	0.754	1.658
Number of children and age youngest child												
None *(ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
One, < 3yo	0.539	0.442	0.658	0.405	0.330	0.498	0.382	0.260	0.563	0.405	0.276	0.593
One, ≥ 3yo	1.161	0.928	1.453	0.883	0.683	1.141	0.889	0.580	1.364	0.774	0.484	1.237
Two or more, youngest < 3yo	0.560	0.440	0.713	0.276	0.212	0.359	0.387	0.251	0.596	0.271	0.172	0.425
Two or more, youngest ≥ 3yo	0.920	0.705	1.200	0.567	0.420	0.764	0.665	0.399	1.110	0.494	0.305	0.798
Region												
Flanders *(ref.)*	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
Wallonia	0.992	0.811	1.214	1.180	0.973	1.432	1.305	0.972	1.752	1.010	0.698	1.462
Brussels Capital	1.059	0.826	1.357	1.272	1.069	1.515	1.543	1.126	2.113	0.999	0.673	1.482
Household income												
0%–33%	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
34%–66%	0.744	0.641	0.863	0.631	0.533	0.747	0.690	0.509	0.936	0.709	0.530	0.947
67%–100%	0.720	0.603	0.860	0.546	0.429	0.694	0.520	0.336	0.804	0.566	0.403	0.796
Origin parents woman												
Same origin	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
Different origin	1.091	0.941	1.264	1.022	0.834	1.253	0.686	0.458	1.029	0.643	0.471	0.877
Unknown	1.050	0.831	1.327	1.227	1.013	1.486	0.774	0.531	1.129	0.813	0.552	1.197
Origin parents man												
Same origin	1.000			1.000			1.000			1.000		
Different origin	1.224	1.062	1.411	0.904	0.724	1.128	1.363	0.846	2.197	0.831	0.602	1.147
Unknown	1.321	1.047	1.667	1.275	1.076	1.511	0.785	0.552	1.116	1.287	0.913	1.815

Source: Crossroads Bank for Social Security 1998-2013, authors' calculation