

The transition to adulthood among second generation Turkish and Moroccan men and women in Flanders (Belgium).

Martine Corijn & Edith Lodewijckx, Research Centre of the Flemish Government, Brussels

1. Research question and data source

Second generation young adults of Turkish and Moroccan origin enter their adulthood navigating between the culture of their family and that of their age mates. How does the timing and pathway of this transition look like? And what about the partner choices?

Population register data of the Flemish Region of the birth cohorts 1974-87 (16-29 years old on 1.1.2004) concern 34.000 second generation Turks and Moroccans (born in Belgium or migrated before the age of 3), 10.000 marriage migrants and 856.000 natives.

2. Living arrangements of young adults

A picture of the living arrangements of the young adults aged 20-24 illustrates the dynamics of their pathways and their timing of the transition to adulthood (Table 1). Second generation Turks take an early start, but young men do this often by living married in the parents' home. Unmarried cohabitation is almost inexistent among the young Turks and Moroccans. Living alone is mainly for second generation Moroccan men a temporary stage; for Moroccan marriage migrants it is at this age already a (temporary) post-marriage stage.

Table 1. Living arrangements of the 20-24 years old, among the Moroccan and Turkish second generation, the marriage migrants and the Belgians, by gender, Flanders, 1.1.2004 (in %)

	Men					Women				
	B	M2	Mm	T2	Tm	B	M2	Mm	T2	Tm
<i>Living with parent(s)</i>	79.6	76.8	0.3	62.0	0.5	66.9	52.9	0.6	42.6	0.2
<i>Living with partner, no children</i>	7.8	5.2	57.7	12.6	48.6	17.3	16.6	34.4	22.1	23.7
married (own household)	1.3	2.5	42.3	5.3	38.6	3.9	12.2	27.4	16.2	12.8
married (in parents' household)	0.1	1.3	14.7	6.6	9.6	0.3	2.5	6.9	4.8	10.9
non-married	6.3	1.4	0.6	0.7	0.4	13.1	1.9	0.1	1.1	0.0
<i>Living with child(ren)</i>	2.3	2.2	26.0	16.0	38.0	7.2	20.2	56.7	27.8	68.2
married (own household)	0.7	1.2	23.5	6.1	33.5	2.6	16.6	46.9	20.6	38.4
married (in parents' household)	0.1	0.6	1.9	9.3	4.4	0.2	0.8	7.2	4.3	27.4
non-married	1.5	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.1	3.2	0.8	0.0	0.6	0.1
lone parent	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.0	1.2	2.0	2.5	2.2	2.2
<i>Alone</i>	6.8	10.6	10.0	4.8	6.9	5.6	6.9	4.6	3.6	2.2
never married	6.7	9.6	0.0	3.6	0.0	5.5	3.5	0.0	1.9	0.0
(ever) married	0.1	1.0	10.0	1.2	6.9	0.2	3.3	4.6	1.7	2.2
<i>Other</i>	3.6	5.2	6.0	4.7	6.0	3.0	3.4	3.7	3.9	5.8

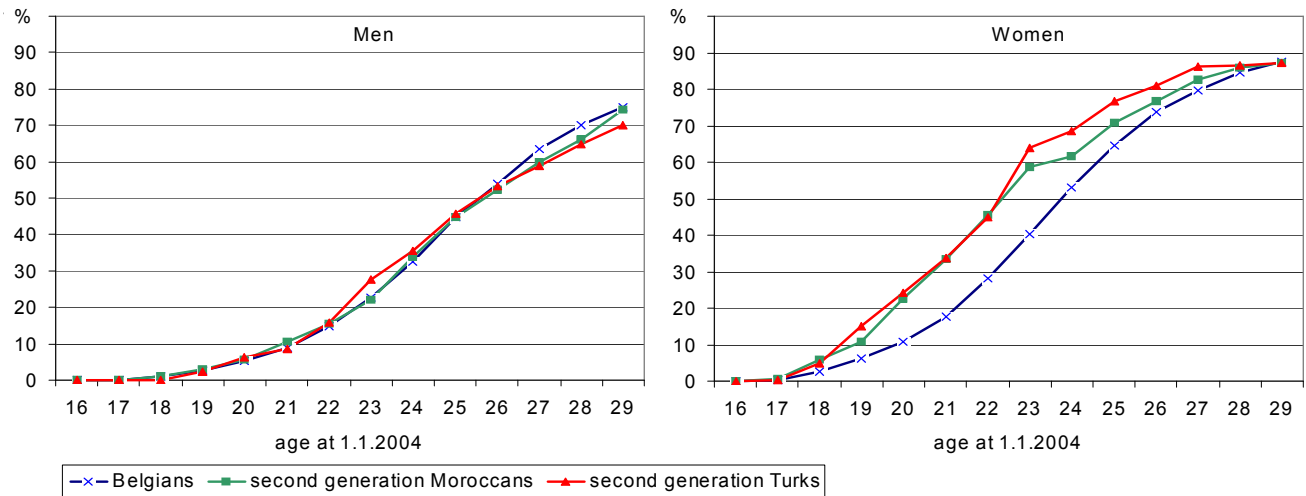
B= Belgians, M2 = second generation Moroccans, T2 = second generation Turks, Mm = Moroccan marriage migrants, Tm = Turkish marriage migrants

Source: Population Register

3. Leaving the parental home

As the tradition of staying for a while with the parents after marriage prevails particularly among the Turkish men, the timing of leaving the parental home is approached by the timing of having lived independently from the parents. The second generation Moroccan men approach in this regard best the Belgian time path (Figure 1). The second generation Moroccan women take a middle position between the Belgian women and the Turkish second generation ones.

Figure 1. Having experienced independent living from the parents, by age, origin and gender, Flanders, 2004 (in %)

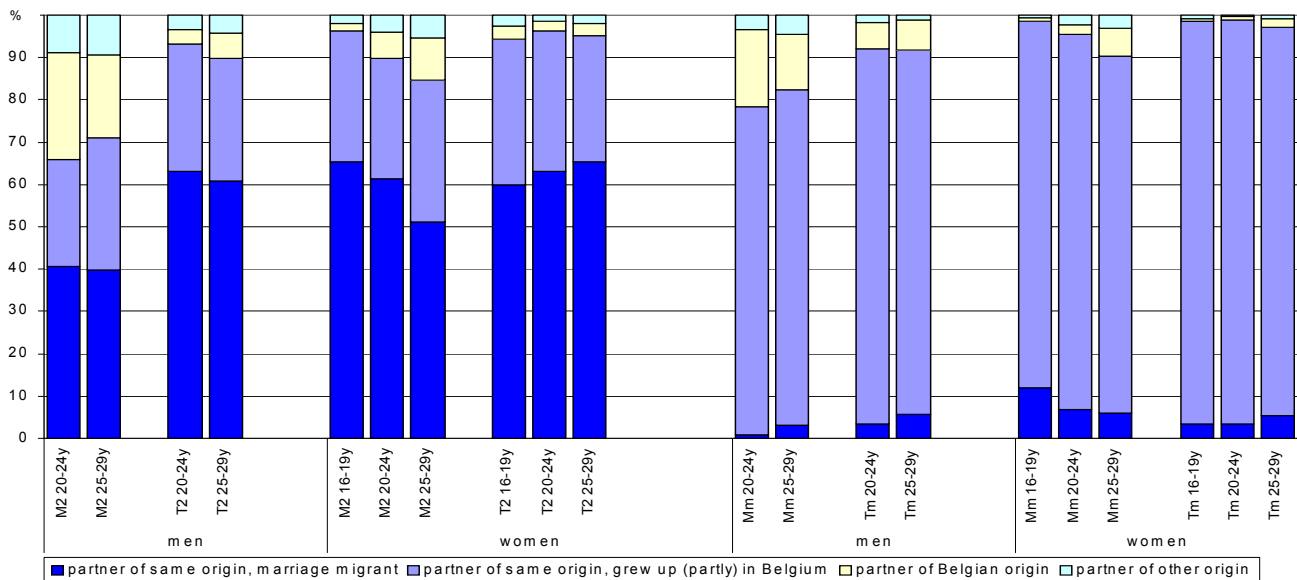


Source: Population Register

4. Partner choice

The partner choices among the Turkish and Moroccan second generation reveal their strong preferences for a partner with the same origin and in particular for a partner that was born and grew up in their country of origin (Figure 2). About 6 out of 10 second generation Turks and Moroccans marry with a marriage migrant. Only Moroccan men make an exception by marrying more often with a Belgian partner. In the rare cases of non-married (Moroccan) cohabitation, the partner is more often a Belgian native. About 2 out of 10 male Moroccan marriage migrants have a partner of non-Moroccan origin.

Figure 2. Partner choices of the second generation and of marriage migrants, by age, origin and gender, Flanders, 2004 (in %)



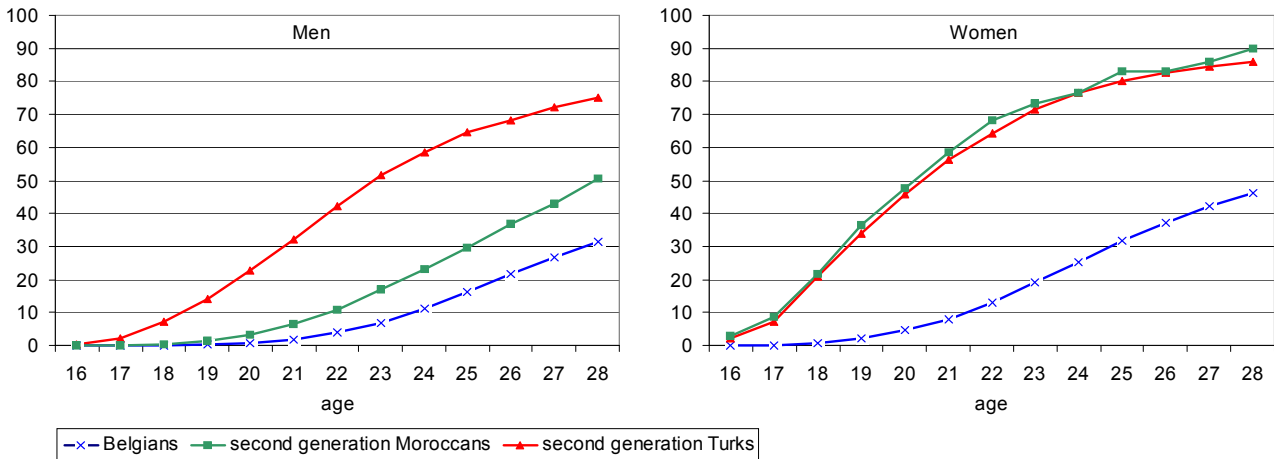
M2 = second generation Moroccans, T2 = second generation Turks, Mm = Moroccan marriage migrants, Tm = Turkish marriage migrants

Source: Population Register

5. Marriage timing

Turkish second generation men marry quite early. Moroccan second generation men approach the Belgian male first marriage timing. Moroccan second generation women have a similar first marriage timing as the Turkish ones (Figure 3). Second generation young adults marrying with a partner living in their country of origin do this at a younger age than those marrying with a (same origin) partner living in Belgium. This is however, not the case among Turkish women. Postponement of the first marriage across birth cohorts is a general trend, also among the second generation.

Figure 3. Inverted survival curves of the first marriage timing, by origin and gender, Flanders, 2004 (cumulative % married)

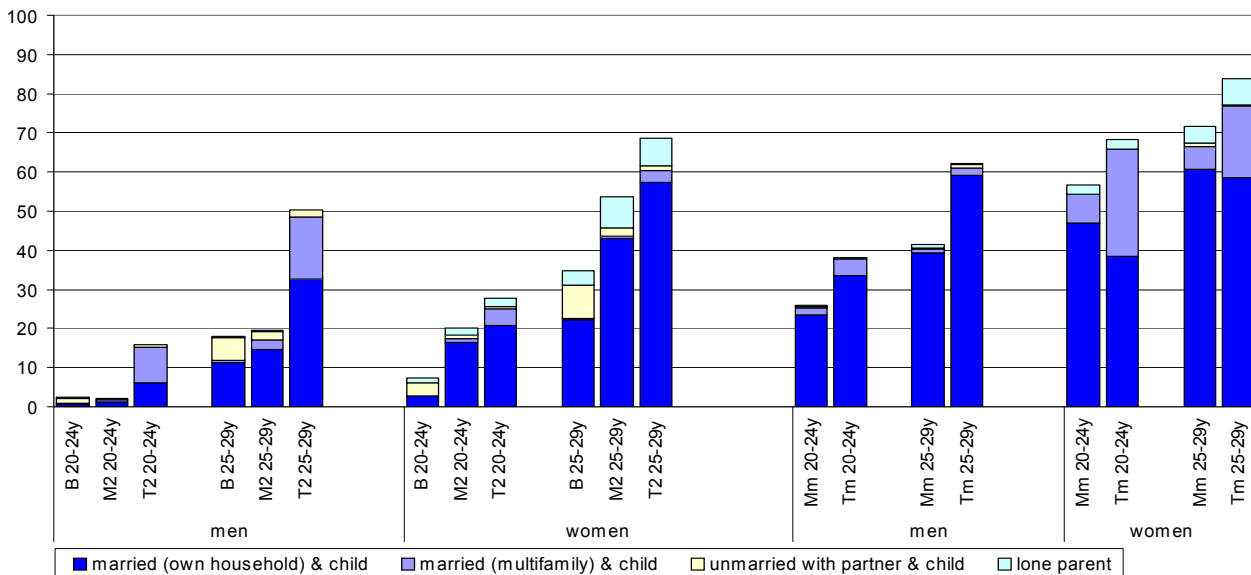


Source: Population Register

6. Family formation

Second generation Moroccan men form families along the same time path as Belgian men, but differ from them as they do not form unmarried families. Second generation Turkish men form families at much younger ages. Among women, Moroccans take a position in-between the Belgian and Turkish ones. Turkish and Moroccan young women are more often already lone parents due to an early divorce. Marriage migrants are more living with children than their second generation age mates (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Living together with children among the Moroccan and Turkish second generation and marriage migrants and among the Belgians, by age and gender, Flanders, 2004 (in %)

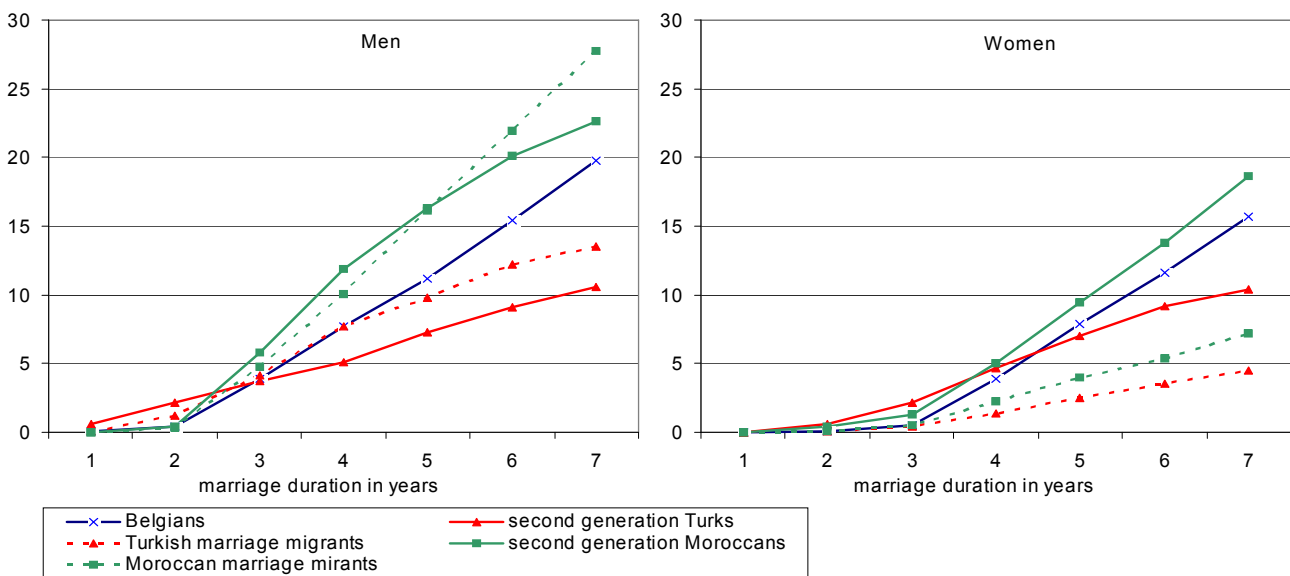


B = Belgians M2 = second generation Moroccans, T2 = second generation Turks, Mm = Moroccan marriage migrants, Tm = Turkish marriage migrants
 Source: Population Register

7. Divorce in first marriage

Second generation Moroccan men divorce more often and much sooner than Belgian men but somewhat lesser than Moroccan marriage migrants. Also Turkish marriage migrants divorce more/sooner than their second generation mates. Second generation Moroccan women follow the pattern of the Belgian women. Turks of the second generation are somewhat more reluctant to divorce, however not in the first three years of their marriage. Female marriage migrants divorce much less than their male counterparts and than their second generation mates (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Inverted survival curves of the divorce timing, by origin, migration type and gender (cumulative % divorced)



Source: Population Register

Shortly after divorce, more second generation Moroccan men than Belgian men live alone. Turkish men live less often alone because they live much more often with their parents. More second generation Turkish women live as lone parent than Moroccan ones, because more often children are involved in their broken marriage. Marriage migrants end up living alone.

8. Conclusion

Second generation Turks living in Flanders enter adulthood in a traditional way: an early transition towards a married family with children. For Turkish men this transition starts often with a marriage while staying in the parents' household. Moroccan men start along a stage of living alone, even more often than their Belgian age mates. Unmarried cohabitation, and especially an unmarried family, is still inexistent among the Moroccans and Turks. Marriage migration remains an important way to form families and to migrate. Divorce quite early in marriage is not uncommon, particularly not among Moroccan men and among marriage migrants.

In a paper – available in Dutch – more detailed analyses are provided revealing more interesting similarities and differences between the second generation, the in-between generation and the marriage migrants from Turkish and Moroccan origin and the Belgian natives.