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Post-separation Residential Mobility Among Immigrant-Native Mixed Couples. A Matter of Relative Bargaining Positions Within Households?

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Abstract

This paper investigates post-separation residential outcomes among immigrant, native, and immigrant-native mixed couples. Previous research shows that women are more likely than men to leave the family home upon separation indicating their weaker bargaining position. By distinguishing male and female partners by migrant origin, we consider how gendered power imbalances interact with migration status to create specific bargaining dynamics within households. We use Swiss administrative data and estimate multinomial logistic models for two post-separation residential mobility outcomes: who leaves the family home and to what distance this person relocates. We find that among immigrant-native mixed couples, the immigrant ex-partner (the man or the woman) is significantly more likely to move out of the joint home following a separation. The results suggest that migration status brings in a new dimension of bargaining within separating couples, which affects the gender-specific residential mobility outcomes reported in previous studies. While family migration decisions are generally biased toward the human capital of men, this study shows the advantage of the native partner in immigrant-native couples.

Keywords: Immigrants, separation, divorce, residential mobility, bargaining power

Introduction

Immigrant-native intermarriage is increasingly common in European countries. In Switzerland, these unions represented about 34% of new marriages in 2020 (SFSO – BEVNAT, 2020). As with other exogamous partnerships (e.g., dissimilarity in education, religion, or language) ethnically mixed couples have a higher risk of divorce than endogamous couples, especially among partners who are considered “culturally distant” from one another (Milewski and Kulu

2014). Yet, the disruptive impacts of a separation on immigrants' residential mobility and their gendered expression in the context of immigrant-native relationships have not been explored.

Studies on majority populations across industrialised countries have shown that separation and divorce have a long-lasting negative impact on people's housing conditions and outcomes (Mikolai et al. 2020; Mikolai and Kulu 2018). The question of who stays and who moves out of the family home is one of the first subjects of negotiation between ex-partners upon separation, the outcome of which has important consequences on the lives and housing careers of the ex-partners (Fiori 2019). It is expected that any separating person for whom the costs of moving are higher than the costs of staying will prefer to stay in the family home (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2010). Resource asymmetries and power dynamics within separating couples play an important role in this outcome (Feijten and Mulder, 2010). A partner who has more resources is better positioned to afford housing cost of housing alone; they may also derive more bargaining power from these resources when negotiating who should stay in the family home (Clara H. Mulder et al. 2012).

Next to the question of who moves out, the distance (or the destination) moved also reflects certain bargaining dynamics within couples. The family migration literature suggests that family members are likely to have different and conflicting locational ambitions, and therefore, the place of residence of a family most likely result from a compromise by one of the partners (Cooke et al. 2016; DaVanzo 1976; Mincer 1978). A separation may be an opportunity to move to a more ideal location (perhaps even to the origin country) and resolve possible locational conflicts faced by one of the partners during the relationship.

This paper tests the relative bargaining principle among immigrant and immigrant-native mixed couples. Who leaves the family home and to what distance this person relocates to serve as indicators of the relative bargaining position of each ex-partner within the household. A weaker bargaining position should translate into greater difficulties to remain in the family home upon

separation. Moreover, the person who had less influence over previous migration decisions should experience greater locational conflict at the time of separation, and thus move over longer distance (Cooke *et al.*, 2016). In addition to the traditional markers of intra-couple bargaining power, this paper considers the ethnic composition of the couples as an important dimension. By distinguishing male and female partners by migrant origin, we examine whether the gender balance and bargaining power between ex-partners are the same for male-immigrant/female-native and for male-native/female-immigrant couples.

Family migration decisions are gendered and biased towards the human capital characteristics of men (Compton and Pollak 2007; Cooke 2008). Post-divorce residential outcomes are no exception and seem to reflect normative beliefs regarding gender roles in- and outside the household. While men are more likely to contribute a higher share of the household's income, women are disproportionately more likely to have custody of the children upon separation. Both factors are strongly related to moving out of or staying in the family home. Although research has extensively explored the role of relative resources and the bargaining position of ex-partners following separation, and deepened our understanding of the gender-specific residential and housing consequences of a separation, little is known about these processes among native-immigrant mixed couples.

Including immigrant-native mixed couples in the study of post-separation mobility outcomes allows us to consider how gendered power imbalances interact with migration status to create specific bargaining dynamics within households. Having a migration background may bring in a completely new dimension of bargaining within couples. Immigrants often have lower human (and location-specific) capital compared to the native population. They also experience greater difficulties in translating these resources into residential advantage (Wright *et al.* 2013). Therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that immigrants in a mixed partnership will have lower bargaining power and less influence over family migration decisions than their native

partners. This may be even more obvious for recently arrived immigrants or tied movers for whom the ex-partner may be the main anchor to the current location.

Drawing on linked administrative registers and a large sample from the Structural Survey (N=21,747 separated couples), this study analyses post-separation residential outcomes among immigrant, native, and immigrant-native mixed couples in Switzerland. In addition to having comprehensive data on migration and residential mobility, Switzerland has one of the largest and most socio-culturally diverse immigrant population in Europe. The foreign-born individuals make up 30% of the population (SFSO - STATPOP, 2020). Moreover, mixed marriages are relatively common compared to other immigration countries (Lanzieri 2012). This makes Switzerland an ideal laboratory for conducting research on post-separation mobility outcomes among mixed couples. Using multinomial logistic models, we analyse two outcomes of separation: who moves out of the family home (the man, the woman, or both) and to what distance this person relocates to (within/between labour-market areas, or abroad, proxies for the distance moved). We investigate whether the gender dynamics at the time of a separation hinges on the partners' origin.

Residential Mobility Upon Separation: Who Moves and to What Distances?

Theoretical Background

The disruptive impact of a separation on individual's residential mobility and housing conditions has brought attention to the mechanisms behind the decision of who moves out of the joint home following this event (Das et al. 2017; Fiori 2019; Clara H. Mulder et al. 2012; Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011; Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2010; Thomas et al. 2017a). Following the costs-benefit argument developed by Mulder and Wagner (2010) it is expected that any ex-partner for whom the monetary and non-monetary costs of moving exceed the costs of staying will prefer to stay in the family home. In many cases, the costs of moving are higher than the costs of staying for both partners, and therefore, both partners would prefer to stay. In

this situation, a negotiation between the former partners must take place, weighting the relative costs of the move for one, the other, or both partners (Thomas et al. 2017b).

Resource asymmetries and power dynamics within the couple play an important role in this outcome. The relative bargaining principle states that the ex-partner with greater relative resources is better positioned to independently bear the costs of housing, and therefore, will be more likely to stay in the family home upon separation (Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011; Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2010). Numerous studies confirmed a positive effect of relative income, education, and age differences between partners on the propensity to stay (Clara H. Mulder et al. 2012; Theunis et al. 2018). In a negotiation process, the person with more resources is also expected to have greater levels of self-determination and derive more bargaining power from the resource asymmetries (Clara H. Mulder et al. 2012; Thomas et al. 2017a). Bargaining power also derives from gendered marital household-task division and traditional assortative mating which tend to place women in weaker bargaining position compared to men (Zilincikova and Schnor 2021). Therefore, when analysing the outcome of the move one has to consider the characteristics of both ex-partners and weigh their characteristics in terms of costs and opportunities.

The distance (or the destination) moved also reflects power relations and bargaining dynamics within couples. Relocation after separation mostly occurs over short distances (Mulder, 1993; Feijten and Van Ham, 2007). Nevertheless, long-distance moves are common and often consist of return migration (Cooke et al. 2016; Spring et al. 2021). This brings us to the notion of locational conflict (Cooke et al. 2016) suggesting that the place of residence of a family most likely results from a compromise by one of the partners, and when this compromise is no longer necessary, separation may be an opportunity for one of the partners to move to a more ideal location. This means that locational continuity may not be the desired outcome for all, especially for the partner who had less influence over previous family migration decisions.

Locational disadvantage during the relationship should lead to an increased likelihood of moving over a longer distance at separation, often back to a familiar location. Again, the tied mover (the person who made a compromise on the place of residence) is most likely the one with lower relative resources and bargaining power.

Gender

Studies show that gendered power dynamics within households generally play into decisions about where to live or where to move (Wright et al. 2013). In the context of separation, a number of studies have reported that women are more likely than men to leave the family home (Cooke et al. 2016; Ferrari et al. 2019; Fiori 2019; Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2008; Clara H. Mulder 2013; Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011; Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2010, 2012; Schnor and Mikolai 2020; Theunis et al. 2018). The fact that women leave the family home more often than men is partly explained by a difference in resources (note that this pattern differs by presence of children – specific hypotheses are developed in a later section).

Having sufficient financial resources is the most obvious requirement for staying in the family home upon separation. Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen (2008) have shown for Denmark that employed ex-partners with higher income were much more likely to stay in the family home upon separation compared to those in less favourable socio-economic positions. Mulder and colleagues (2012) stressed the importance of relative income in addition to absolute income. They found a stronger effect of relative income on the propensity to stay for men than for women. This is in line with the assumption that only when the woman has a disproportionately higher level of human capital than the man is the family migration decision directed towards the human capital of the woman (Clara H Mulder and Malmberg 2014).

Residential choices upon partnership formation should also influence residential dynamics at separation. At the time of marriage, women are more likely than men to move into the home of their partners (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 1993). Traditional assortative mating partly

explains this dynamic. In many cases, the man is older than the women and has further progressed in the professional career, leading to a strengthening of the negotiating position. The factors that were decisive in determining the couple's place of residence upon partnership formation (i.e., the woman moving into the home of their partner) may be just as decisive at the time of separation (i.e., higher chances that the woman moves out of the joint home) (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2012). In line with the gendered model of family migration, women, and especially women with low levels of human capital, are more likely to end-up living in a less-than-optimal location, experience greater locational conflict, and to move over a longer distance at separation (Cooke et al. 2016).

Migration Status

Although a few studies on post-separation mobility outcomes have reported a difference in the likelihood of moving by migration status, none has specifically accounted for the ethnic composition of couples (i.e., the origin of both the man and the woman and whether they are in an exogamous or endogamous union). Focusing on the residential mobility behaviours of women from different migration backgrounds, Rooyackers et al (2015) reported a higher mobility rate at the time of separation for Dutch women compared to immigrant women. Although they did not account for the origin of the ex-partners, they inferred that immigrant men moved out relatively more often compared to Dutch men. This conclusion is only correct if one assumes ethnic homogamy among separating couples. In the context of Sweden, Malmberg and Mulder (2011) found that those living in the country of birth were less likely to move compared to those born abroad. The likelihood of moving also proved to be smaller when the partner was foreign-born. As pointed out by the authors, the results are not easily interpreted without information on the ethnic composition of the couples.

There are reasons to believe that the residential mobility of men and women depend on the ethnic composition of couples. Studies consistently show that immigrants have lower human

(and location specific) capital compared to the native population, that they are less represented in the labour market (especially immigrant women), and overrepresented in lower paid jobs (Aguilera and Massey 2003; Dustmann and Fabbri 2003; Ebner and Helbling 2016; Heath and Cheung 2007). In a mixed partnership, this may lead to lower relative resources and a weaker bargaining position for the foreign-born partner. In addition, minorities experience greater difficulties in translating their human capital into residential advantages (Wright et al. 2013). This implies that immigrants would need considerably higher levels of human capital to influence the family migration decisions. We also argue that immigrants in mixed partnerships, as well as women in any partnership, are more likely to be tied movers and to have moved in with their partner at the time of family formation (or to their partner's ideal location). This is all the more evident when the foreign-born partner migrated to Switzerland to join his/her partner. At separation, immigrants might consider moving back to their origin country to resolve the locational conflict experienced during the relationship.

Considering that a weaker bargaining position should translate into greater difficulties in remaining in the family home upon separation and a higher propensity to move a longer distance, we derive the following hypotheses. First, in households composed of two native or two immigrant ex-partners (i.e., where there are no intersectional dynamics at play involving both gender and migration status), women will be more likely to leave the joint home upon separation than men, and to relocate over a longer distance if they move (*gender hypothesis*). Second, we expect the immigrant ex-partner (both female and male) in a mixed partnership to leave the family home more often. We also expect immigrants to have more locational conflict at the time of separation and therefore, to move over a longer distance, and even back to their origin country (*migration status hypothesis*). Alternatively, one might expect the effect of gender to depend on the ethnic composition of the household. Cumulative disadvantage can be identified if immigrant women partnered with native men are more likely to move out (and

relocate over a longer distance) compared to immigrant men partnered with native women (*intersectional hypothesis*). A lower bargaining position for immigrant women may be expected because of a lower representation in the labour market (i.e., lower financial independence) and higher propensity to be tied movers.

Location-Specific Capital

Whether locational continuity is feasible and desirable not only depends on socio-economic resources of the ex-partners but also on their location-specific capital (Schnor and Mikolai 2020). Location-specific capital was defined by DaVanzo (1981) as the ties that bind people to a specific place. These ties influence both the likelihood of a move and the distance moved as they can be attached to either the home itself or to the location. The ties fixed to the home such as being the sole homeowner or having had the partner move into the home strongly increases the likelihood of staying in the family home following separation (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2012).

Ties to a location are also important determinants of geographical immobility. Having parents or siblings close by, or living close to the workplace reduce the likelihood of moving (Fischer and Malmberg, 2001; Mulder and Malmberg, 2011; Mulder *et al.*, 2012; Schnor and Mikolai, 2020). The literature emphasises differential impacts of location-specific capital for men and women. While the impact of work ties is greater for men (Clara H Mulder and Malmberg 2014), family ties affect women's mobility more than men's (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2012; Thomas and Dommermuth 2020). Although fewer in number, studies have also shown that the mobility of immigrants is more influenced by family ties than that of the native-born (Thomas and Dommermuth 2020; Zorlu 2009).

Living in the country of birth and a long history in the place of residence matter in the propensity to move (Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011; Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2012). The longer one lives in a location the more likely it is that they have developed local ties whether in the

form of a social network, emotional ties, or familiarity with the location. The better-connected partner may argue that it is only fair that they should stay in the family home – the costs of severing these ties would be too high (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2012). Considering that long-term stayers are expected to be more embedded in their environment (Schewel 2020) and their home, a longer time spent in the country is expected to increase the chances of staying in the family home and to move over a shorter distance among movers (*local ties hypothesis*).

Children

Residential dynamics are somewhat different when the former couple has joint children. Former partners with (young) children encounter additional constraints in their moving behaviours. They need to coordinate their post-separation residential locations to facilitate child visitation and the sharing of parental responsibilities (Stjernström and Strömgren, 2012; Thomas *et al.*, 2018). Studies show that compared to former partners without children, separated parents tend to move significantly shorter distances and to live in closer geographical proximity (Cooke et al. 2016; Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2008; Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011; Thomas et al. 2017a).

Studies show that when the former couple has children the man is more likely to move out than the woman (Fiori 2019; Thomas et al. 2017a). Part of this dynamic is explained by the fact that women more often have custody of the children, and the former partner with whom the children reside following a separation is more likely to remain in the joint home (Clara H. Mulder and Wagner 2010). Because of the norms that favour the mother's co-residence with the child in the family home, the relevance of bargaining models and the relative distribution of resources between ex-partners is less relevant when children are present (Fiori 2019; Thomas et al. 2017a). As such, we expect women with children to be more likely to stay in the family home, regardless of the partner's origin. We also expect former couples with children to move over a shorter distance (*children hypothesis*).

The Swiss Context

In Switzerland, the share of the immigrant population is 30%, which is considerably higher than in other European countries with a long tradition of immigration (e.g., 20% for Sweden, 18% for Germany or 13% for France) (Eurostat 2020). Not only is the proportion of the immigrant population significant, but it is also particularly diverse in terms of geographic and cultural origin, as well as socio-economic status (Fibbi et al. 2007; Laganà et al. 2014). This is a legacy of the political and economic circumstances starting after the Second World War and continuing with the 2002 free movement agreement with the European Union (EU).

Starting with a first phase of mass immigration after the War, Switzerland recruited a low-skilled workforce mainly from Southern Europe (Italy, Spain, and later, Portugal). The guest worker policy intended to ensure the temporary nature of these migrations. Despite several political attempts to reduce immigration settlement, the share of the foreign population has only increased over time. The origin of the immigrant population gradually diversified in the 1980s and 1990s with the arrival of refugees from former Yugoslavia, Albania, and Turkey (Laganà et al. 2014). In 2002, the introduction of the bilateral agreement with the EU granted free movement and labour-market access to EU and EFTA nationals. As a result, the most recent inflows of immigrants are highly educated, skilled workers from the EU, with neighbouring countries in the lead.

Intermarriage in Switzerland is more common than in other immigration countries (Lanzieri 2012). In three decades, the number of mixed marriages has tripled to more than one in three today (SFSO 2017). In a recent study on mixed marriages in Switzerland, Potarca and Bernardi (2018) found a segmented marriage market with migrants from neighbouring Western European countries having higher chances of getting married to a Swiss native and lower risks of divorcing their Swiss spouse compared to other migrant groups. When married to Swiss nationals, foreign partners can benefit from an accelerated naturalization procedure, provided

that they have lived in the country for at least five years and that they have been living in a conjugal union for three years.

Although marriage remains the main form of union in Switzerland, cohabitations are becoming increasingly common. In 2016, 83% of couples were married and 16% were cohabiting. Children are largely born within marriage with nearly three out of four births. In the event of a separation, parental authority is most often attributed to both parents. Nevertheless, most children whose parents are separated live with their mother. There were almost six times as many single-mother as single-father households in 2017 (SFSO 2017).

Data and Methods

Data

We combine data from the Swiss population register (Statpop 2010-2014), the income register (CCO 2010-2014), and the Structural Survey (SS 2010-2013), a nationally representative survey conducted every year on a new sample of at least 200,000 individuals. Since 2010, the population register provides information on the permanent resident population, including the exact date of any childbirth, marriage, divorce, death, immigration, emigration, changes of citizenship, and changes of dwelling (available once a year). The Structural Survey complements the population register with cross-sectional information on the socioeconomic and sociocultural structure of the resident population aged 15 or older. Most importantly, the survey contains information on the link between household members, which is needed to follow the residential trajectories of couples at the time of separation. The income register provides information on taxable income. The date of reference for all datasets is December 31st each year. These data sources can be linked using the personal identification number allowing us to track individuals across different data sources.

The dataset was built as follows. First, we pooled four years of cross-sectional data from the Structural Survey as a base sample. The survey gathers information on all household members, basic demographic attributes, socioeconomic characteristics (educational level, employment status), and household position. We restricted the sample to two-gender couples, either married or cohabiting, registered at the same address at the time of the survey. Second, we retrieved the migration and residential trajectories of these couples from the population register. The Swiss population register does not provide direct information on separation. This information is inferred from the residential trajectories of both partners. By tracking the place of residence of both partners each year one can identify couples who split up and move to different addresses. The population register documents the place of residence by means of a Federal Building ID. Separating partners are identified by comparing the Federal Building ID on December 31st of year t and on December 31st of year $t+1$ considering four possible options: 1) both partners remained at the same address, 2) both partners moved to the same address, 3) both partners moved but to different addresses, and 4) only one partner moved to a different address. The last two outcomes are defined as a separation. Unlike most previous studies, we were able to consider a move abroad as a possible outcome of separation. However, if both partners moved abroad, it is not possible to tell whether they moved abroad as a couple or as separated individuals. Therefore, these moves are not considered as separation. Couples' residential trajectories are observed from the year they participated in the Structural Survey (any time between 2010 and 2013) until a separation, emigration of both partners, death, or the end of observation (2014). The analytical sample is restricted to 21,747 couples who experienced a separation between 2011 and 2014.

Using administrative data to analyse post-separation mobility behaviours comes with some limitations. First, couples can stop living together for other reasons than a separation (e.g., living apart together). Although these partnerships are increasingly common, they still represent

a negligible share of couples. To minimise the risk of misclassification, we checked that the partner did not move back a year later (following Fiori 2019). Second, some individuals may not register their new address immediately, especially those moving to temporary accommodation in the first step of the relocation process (Clara H. Mulder and Malmberg 2011). Therefore, in some cases, the separation may only be identified with some delay. Third, moves are only registered on a yearly basis. This means that if both partners leave the home a few months apart, we will consider only the person who moved out first if these moves occur over two calendar years. We conducted sensitivity analysis where we considered both partners to have moved out (not shown) if one of the partners moved during the next year. Although this specification shows more situations where both partners moved out (23% vs. 16% in the main specification), the results remained unchanged. Finally, other variables known to influence the bargaining process are not available in the dataset. For instance, it is not possible to identify which partner moved in with the other, or whether and which partner owns the property.

Analytical Strategy

We analyse two post-separation residential outcomes. First, we study the probability of moving out of the joint home upon separation. For this set of analysis, the unit of observations are couples (N=21,747). We account for three possible outcomes: the man moved out, the woman moved out, or both ex-partners moved out. We estimate three multinomial logistic models stepwise. Model 1 reports the probability of moving out for each ex-partner distinguishing male and female partners by migrant origin. We distinguish native households (both partners are born in Switzerland) from immigrant households (both partners are foreign-born), and immigrant-native mixed couples (immigrant woman and a native man or immigrant man and a native woman). Model 2 considers the role of time since immigration to Switzerland in this process, a proxy for the accumulation of location specific capital and attachment to the current location.

This variable has three categories allowing for a distinction between recent immigrants (arrived less than five years ago), immigrants who arrived five to ten years ago, and long-term stayers who spent more than ten years in the country. When both ex-partners are of foreign origin, the model accounts for the partner who spent more time in the country. Model 3 includes an interaction term between the household composition and the presence of children to test whether the decision of who moves out varies by the presence of children.

Second, we study the distance of moves among those who move out of the joint home upon separation (N= 25,329). In this set of analysis, the unit of observations are individuals. Because some separations involve the mobility of both ex-partners, the number of observations (couples vs. individuals) differs slightly from the first set of analyses. Previous studies have used the Euclidean distance between the two locations to estimate the distance moved. As the dataset does not contain this information, we distinguished moves within labour-market areas (a proxy for short-distance moves) from moves across labour-market areas, and moves abroad; the latter two considered as long-distance moves. There are 101 labour-market areas in Switzerland defined as a region in which the majority of the working population lives and works (SFSO 2018). We follow the same analytical steps as for the analysis on who moves out, and present three models stepwise. Model 1 distinguishes movers by gender and migration status. Model 2 includes time since immigration, and Model 3 introduces an interaction between household composition and the presence of children.

Variables

For the outcome of who moves out, we consider the characteristics of both ex-partners in the models. This includes the presence of children, union type (cohabiting or married), the age difference between the ex-partners as well as the educational and income differences between the man and the woman. All covariates are measured at the time of separation except for the level of education which is only available at the time of the survey.

The part of the analysis that focuses on the distance moved only controls for the characteristics of the movers. As pointed out by Mulder and Malmberg (2011) there seems to be no reason to expect the partners' characteristic to influence the distance of the move. These variables include the presence of children, union type, and the age, education, and income level of the person who moved out. We also expect two municipality characteristics to influence the propensity to move over long-distance: population density and the share of foreign nationals. Since most of the services and jobs are concentrated in cities, individuals living in these areas should be less likely to leave. The share of foreign nationals is taken as an indicator of the presence of social networks for immigrants, which should lower their propensity to move further away. As a sensitivity analysis, we test the effect of the partner's characteristics and origin on the distance moved. We find a slight increase in the likelihood of moving abroad for foreign women in a couple with a foreign men (not shown). The other results remain the same.

Descriptive Results

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 report two post-separation housing outcomes: the probability of moving out of the joint home for each ex-partner, and the probability to move to different destinations among movers. Men and women are almost equally likely to leave the family home upon separation. It is also frequent (about one in six) that both ex-partners leave the family home. Additionally, the person who leaves the family home is likely to relocate over a short distance. Most moves (73%) take place within the same labour-market area and longer distance moves are less common (21%). The likelihood of moving abroad, while the lowest, is non-negligible, with a 6% chance of migrating to another country following separation.

Table 1 Descriptive results on the probability of moving out of the joint home for each ex-partner upon separation and the distance of the moves

	Probabilities
Who moved out	
Man	0.415
Woman	0.420
Both	0.165
N	21,747
Distance of the move	
Within labour-market area	0.73
Between labour-market areas	0.21
Abroad	0.06
N	25,328

Source: Authors' calculations using data from Statpop (2011-2014) and SS (2010-2013)

The characteristics of separating couples are shown in Table 2. The majority of couples who separate are formed by two native partners (60%). Nevertheless, more than 40% of separated couples are composed of at least one immigrant partner (19% are mixed couples and 22% are formed by two immigrant partners). Even after distinguishing between households by time since immigration, all categories are large enough to warrant detailed statistical analyses by time since migration. Long-term stayers (i.e., those who arrived more than ten years ago) are slightly overrepresented among mixed couples. Among immigrant households, both partners often have the same residence history, most likely because they arrived as a couple.

The distribution of individual characteristics is consistent with what is reported in other studies. More couples are married (62%) than cohabiting and over half of them have at least one child. Men are more likely to be partnered with younger women (68%), while about 10% have the same age. In the majority of couples (56%), the man and the woman have the same level of education whilst in 28% of the couples, the man is more educated and in 17% of the couples, the woman has a higher level of education. The level of income is also to the advantage of men; 62% have a higher salary than their female partner. In 17% of the couples, the man and the woman have about the same income.

Table 2 Characteristics of separating couples (N=21,747)

	N	% Sample
Household Composition by Gender & Nativity		
Swiss man & Swiss woman	12 956	59.6
Swiss man & foreign woman	2 034	9.4
Swiss woman & foreign man	1 981	9.1
Foreign man & foreign woman	4 776	22.0
Household Composition by Gender, Nativity & Time since immigration		
Swiss man & Swiss woman	12 956	59.6
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm<5	475	2.2
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm 5-10	688	3.2
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm>10	871	4.0
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm<5	432	2.0
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm 5-10	582	2.7
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm>10	967	4.5
Foreign man & foreign woman - Same Tsm	2 870	13.2
Foreign man & foreign woman - Tsm W>M	848	3.9
Foreign man & foreign woman - Tsm W<M	1 058	4.9
Type of union		
Married	13 486	62.0
Cohabiting	8 261	38.0
Children in household		
No	11 540	53.1
Yes	10 207	46.9
Age		
Same age	2 070	9.5
Man older than woman	14 779	68.0
Woman older than man	4 898	22.5
Education		
Both up to lower secondary	1 570	7.2
Both upper secondary	6 977	32.1
Both post-secondary	3 602	16.6
Man higher educational level than woman	5 994	27.6
Woman higher educational level than man	3 604	16.6
Income		
Man and woman have the same income	4 624	21.3
Man has higher income	13 485	62.0
Woman has higher income	3 638	16.7

Source: Authors' calculations using data from Statpop (2011-2014), SS (2010-2013), and CCO (2011-2014)

Multivariate Results

Who Moves Out?

Figure 1 reports the probability of moving out of the joint home for each ex-partner among native, immigrant, and immigrant-native mixed couples distinguishing male and female partners by migrant origin. The full models are shown in appendix A.1 and A.2. In all family compositions, the most frequent outcome is that only one of the ex-partners moves out of the joint home; the probability that both ex-partners move out is 14% (households composed of Swiss men and foreign women) to 18% (households composed of Swiss women and foreign men).

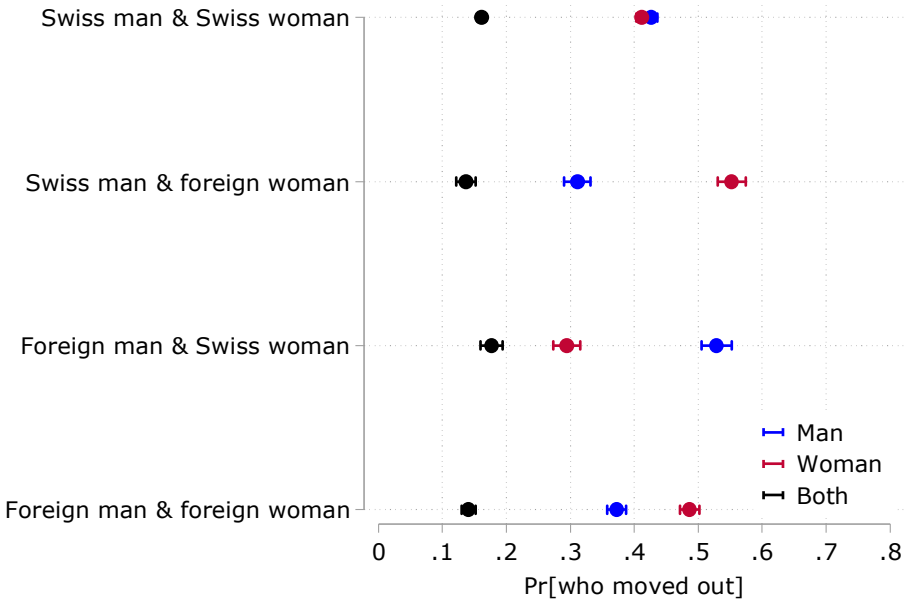


Figure 1: Probability of moving out of the joint home upon separation by household composition: gender & migration status. Note: the model controls for the presence of children, partnership status, age, education, and income differences between ex-partners. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

Among households composed of two Swiss-born partners, men and women are equally likely to leave the family home upon separation. This dynamic contrasts with that of mixed-nativity couples where the foreign-born ex-partner is disproportionately more likely to leave the family home. The likelihood of moving out is almost identical for male and female immigrants

partnered with Swiss natives. In fact, the immigrant partner is about 20 per cent points more likely to leave the family home compared to their Swiss ex-partner, regardless of gender. In households with two foreign-born partners, women's likelihood of moving out is 12% greater than that of men.

Figure 2 shows whether the time spent in the country alters individuals' chances of staying in the joint home upon separation. The results for foreign-born women partnered with Swiss-born men are unambiguous: the longer the woman lives in the country, the more likely she is to stay in the joint home following separation. This picture resembles that of foreign-born men partnered with Swiss-born women, although we do not find a clear gradient of this effect over time. Nevertheless, even after more than ten years in the country, the foreign-born partner is still more likely than the native partner to move out of the joint home (10% more for woman and 13% for man) following a separation. When both ex-partners are of foreign origin, the model accounts for which one, the male or the female, spent more time in the country. We found that the person who migrated first to Switzerland was more likely to remain in the family home upon separation. However, this effect is not symmetrical for men and women. If the woman has lived in the country longer than the man, she is 15 per cent points more likely to stay in the family home whereas if the man has spent more time in the country, his chances of staying increase by 32 per cent points. Additional gender asymmetry is observed among couples where both partners are foreign-born and have migrated to Switzerland at the same time. In these couples, women are more likely to move out of the joint home upon separation than men.

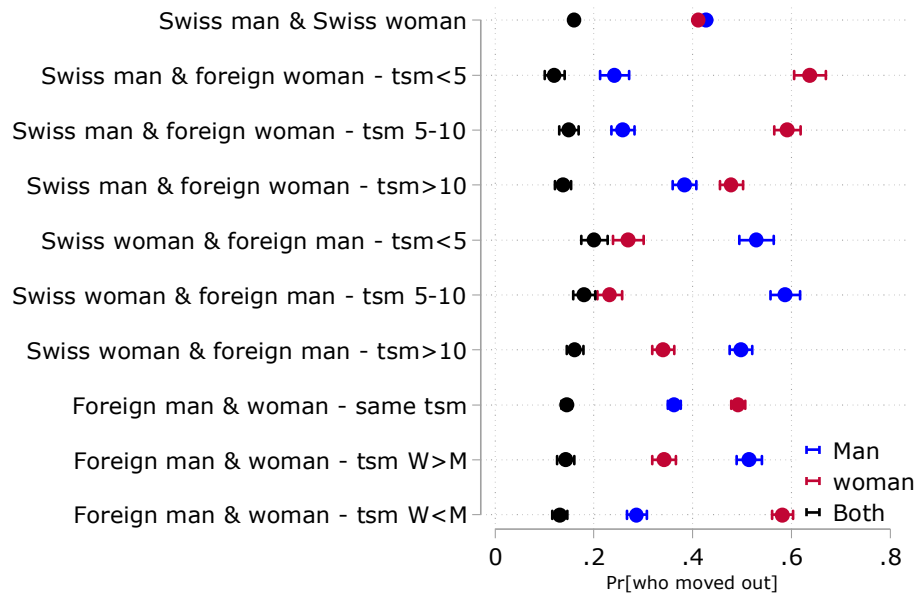


Figure 2: Probability of moving out of the joint home upon separation by household composition: gender, migration status, and time since immigration. Note: the model controls for the presence of children, partnership status, age, education, and income differences between ex-partners. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

Figure 3 includes an interaction term between the household composition and the presence of children to measure the influence of children on the propensity of each ex-partner to move out of the joint home upon separation. Men are more likely to stay (and conversely, women are more likely to move) if the former couple was formed of two native partners and did not have children. In similar households with resident children, the woman is more likely to stay and the man to move. This dynamic contrasts with that of immigrant-native mixed couples. The foreign-male ex-partner is more likely to leave, regardless of the presence of children, although the gap in the probability of moving between men and women increases when children are present in the household. There is an even larger difference in the propensity to move between the two ex-partners in households composed of a foreign female and a native male. In such households, the woman is significantly more likely to leave the joint home when no children are present (62% vs. 21% for the man). When children are present, these differences disappear; both men's and women's likelihood of moving is around 40%.

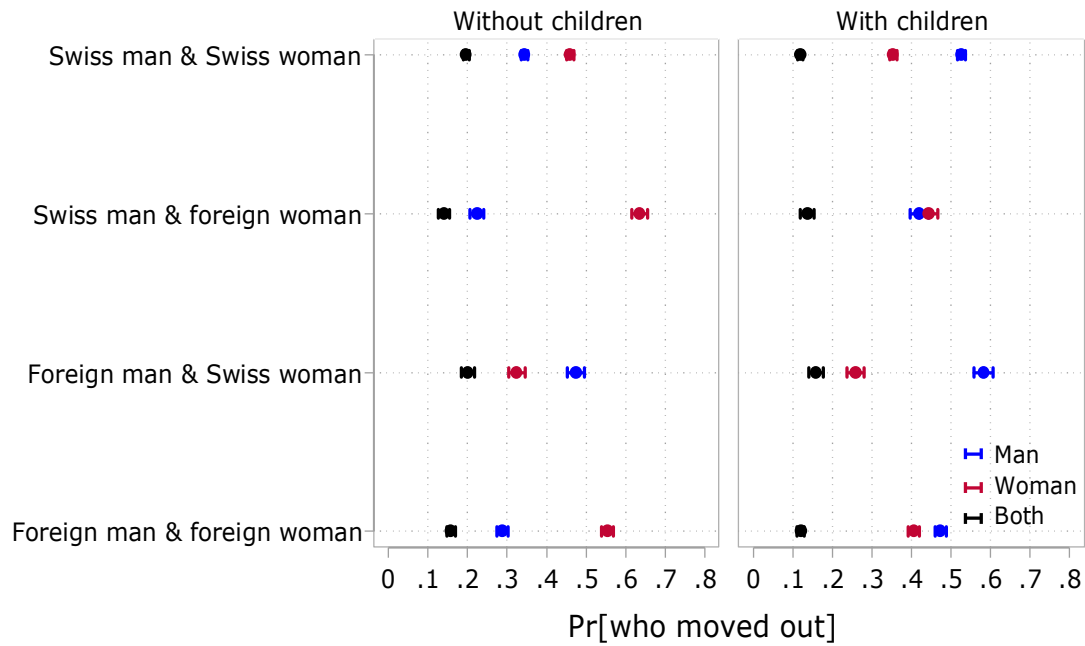


Figure 3: Probability of moving of the joint home upon separation by household composition, separately by presence of children. Note: the model controls for the presence of children, partnership status, age, education, and income differences between ex-partners. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

The gender dynamic in immigrant households resembles that of native households: men are more likely to leave upon separation if children are present, and conversely, women are more likely to leave when no children are present in the household. However, the magnitude of this gap differs slightly. In contrast to the moving behaviours of native ex-partners, the gender gap is larger among immigrant ex-partners without children and smaller among those with children. Overall, the presence of children has a positive effect on women’s likelihood of staying in the family home. The difference in the propensity to stay for women with and without children is about 20% in all family configurations, except for Swiss women in a couple with foreign men, where the difference is only 11%.

Destination of Moves

For the distance moved, we estimated the probability of moving to three destinations among movers: short-distance (within labour-market areas) and long-distance (between labour-market areas) moves, and moving abroad. The person who moves out is most likely to relocate over

short-distance, that is, within the same labour-market area (Figure 4). This pattern holds for natives and immigrants of both genders. The second most common outcome is a move between labour-market areas (20%). There are hardly any differences in the distance moved across nativity groups. One noticeable exception, however, is the highest propensity of female immigrants to move abroad (21% vs 4% among men).

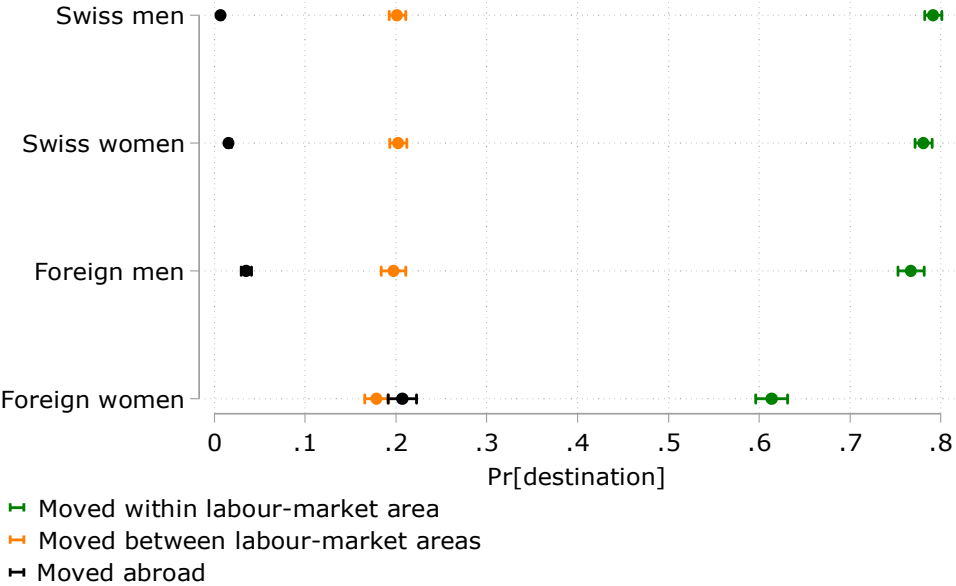


Figure 4: Probability of moving over different distances by gender and migration status. Note: the model controls for age, presence of children, partnership status, educational level, income, population density and share of foreigners in the municipality. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

Although short-distance relocation is the most frequent outcome for all, we find a clear time component on the likelihood of moving over different distances (Figure 5). Again, immigrant women are the most affected by this factor. The longer they have lived in Switzerland, the more likely they are to move a shorter distance. Immigrant women living in the country for less than five years relocate within the same labour-market area about half the time; the probability increases to 62% for those who spent five to ten years in the country, and to 69% for those who arrived more than ten years ago. The probability of moving between labour-market areas remains remarkably stable over time. In contrast, the likelihood of moving abroad for immigrant women decreases sharply with time spent in the country, ranging from 35% among those who

arrived less than five years ago to 13% among those who stayed for more than ten years. Although much smaller than for immigrant women, immigrant men also show some differences in the propensity to move over different distances by time since immigration. They are slightly more likely to move abroad in the first five years, and more likely to relocate over a shorter distance when they have lived in Switzerland for more than five years.

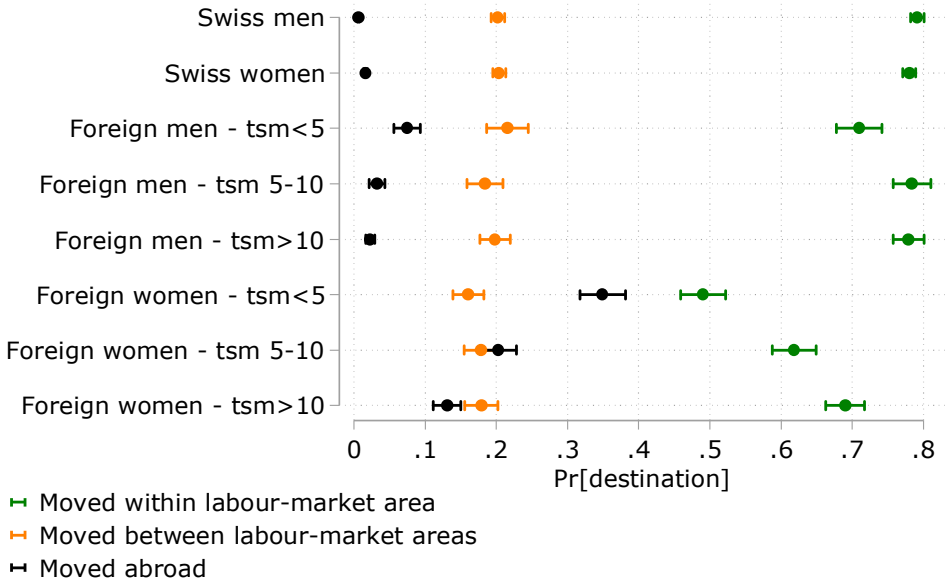


Figure 5: Probability of moving over different distances by gender and migration status, and time since immigration. Note: the model controls for age, presence of children, partnership status, educational level, income, population density and share of foreigners in the municipality. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

The person who moves out upon separation tends to relocate a shorter distance when the former couple had children (Figure 6). Parents’ likelihood of moving within the same labour market area is about 7 per cent points higher than that of non-parents. By contrast, parents are less likely to relocate between labour market areas; the propensity to move abroad remains unchanged. This pattern is similar for all groups, although having children only increases the likelihood of moving a short distance by 4 per cent points for foreign men.

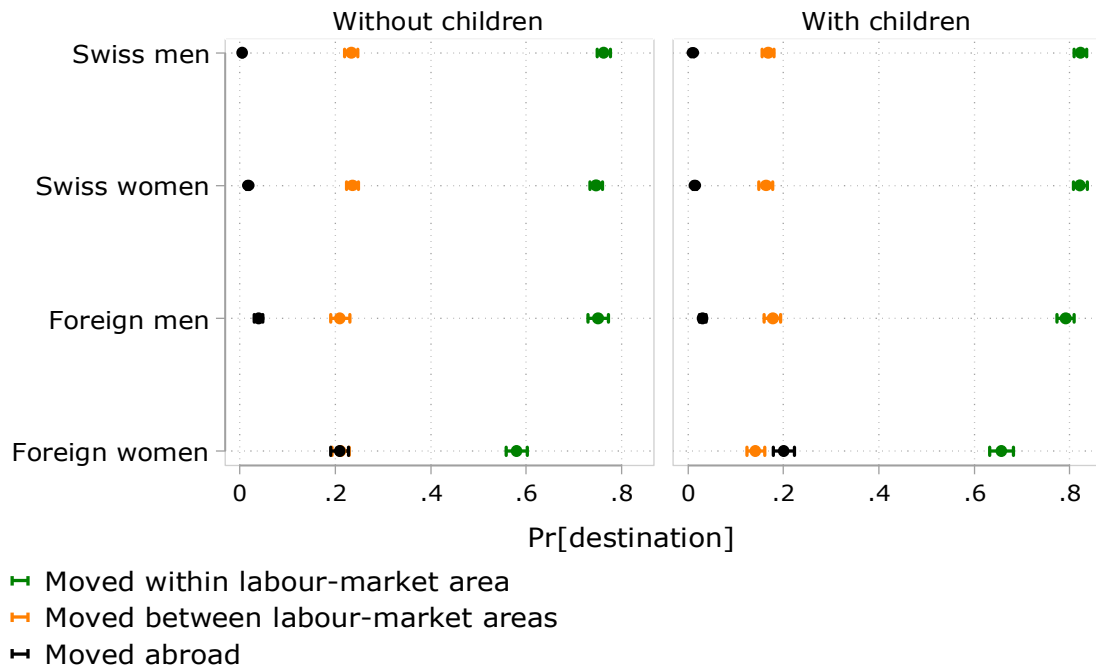


Figure 6: Probability of moving over different distances by gender, migration status, and presence of children. *Note: the model controls for age, presence of children, partnership status, educational level, income, population density and share of foreigners in the municipality. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).*

Discussion

This paper is the first to consider the effect of the partner's origin on post-separation mobility outcomes for men and women. We estimated the probability of moving out of the joint home and to move over different destinations among movers. The person leaving the joint home after separation was expected to have lower bargaining power than his or her former partner. In addition, a person who moves over a long distance is thought to have had less influence on the family's place of residence, again reflecting a lower bargaining position within the household. We tested these hypotheses combining rich administrative data with a nationally representative survey in Switzerland, a country where the prevalence of mixed marriage is higher than in other migration countries in Europe.

In line with the gender hypothesis and previous research on majority populations, we found that women were more likely to move out of the joint home upon separation than men among

immigrant households. We did not find such differences in households composed of two native ex-partners; men and women were equally likely to move out. This new finding suggests that the gendered pattern found in previous studies differs across population subgroups.

By bringing in the specific case of immigrant-native mixed couples, we considered an additional marker of intra-couple bargaining power: migration status. The results clearly confirmed the migration status hypothesis. Among immigrant-native mixed couples, the immigrant ex-partner was more likely to move out of the joint home upon separation. This pattern was the same for female and male immigrants, meaning that the migration status prevails over gender in this dynamic. However, the analysis did not support the intersectionality hypothesis; the propensity to move for immigrant women partnered with native men did not differ from that of immigrant men partnered with native women.

Analysing the distance moved revealed some gender differences with immigrant women being five times as likely as immigrant men to move abroad following separation. Different migration processes for men and women can explain this pattern. Women are more likely than men to migrate through the family reunion program, and therefore, they are more likely to have their conditions of residence linked to their partner. Upon separation, some immigrant women may have no choice but to leave the country. Similarly, if the ex-partner was the main reason for moving and staying in the country, separation could affect the desire to stay. Tied movers are expected to have lower bargaining power, and as we know from research on family migration, women are much more likely than men to be in this situation. Given how often immigrant women move abroad upon separation stresses the importance of considering this outcome to better understand the disruptive effect of a separation on immigrants' lives. This is another novelty of this paper.

The results also showed a clear time component in post-separation residential mobility, again, especially for immigrant women. The longer they have lived in the country, the higher the

chances that they stay in the family home upon separation. When they move, recently arrived female immigrants were more likely to move abroad compared to long-term stayers, thus confirming the local ties hypothesis. The effect of time was less obvious for immigrant men who showed only a slight increase in the probability to move abroad in the first five years in the country. These findings suggest that, compared to immigrant men, immigrant women develop more locational ties and bargaining power over time.

The presence of children also affects the propensity to move and to move over different distances. It decreased the likelihood of moving for women in all family configurations, which is in line with the children hypothesis. It is often argued that women with different geographical backgrounds have different views on gender roles, including the involvement of the mother and father in raising the children. As such, one could have expected a different effect by migration background. The findings did not support such a distinction. However, this result is consistent with the idea that the bargaining principle and the distribution of resources within the couple are less relevant when children are present (Thomas *et al.*, 2017a).

Taken together, this paper contributes to the family migration literature by offering new insights on the interaction of gender, migration status, and household bargaining power in family migration decisions. Results suggest that the migration status brings in a new dimension of bargaining within separating couples, which affects the gender-specific residential mobility outcomes reported in previous studies. While family migration decisions are generally biased toward the human capital of men, evidence shows the advantage of the native partner in immigrant-native couples.

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Appendices

Appendix A.1 Multinomial logistic models: Predicted probabilities for who moves out of the joint home upon separation (Model 1, Model 2 and Model 3)

	Who moves out (Model 1)					
	Man		Woman		Both	
	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
Swiss man & Swiss woman	0,427	0,005	0,412	0,005	0,161	0,003
Swiss man & foreign woman	0,311	0,011	0,553	0,011	0,136	0,008
Foreign man & Swiss woman	0,529	0,012	0,294	0,011	0,177	0,009
Foreign man & foreign woman	0,373	0,008	0,486	0,008	0,141	0,006
Age (<i>same age</i>)	0,456	0,011	0,376	0,011	0,168	0,008
Man older than woman	0,379	0,004	0,466	0,004	0,155	0,003
Woman older than man	0,503	0,007	0,344	0,007	0,152	0,005
Children (no)	0,332	0,005	0,484	0,005	0,184	0,004
Children (yes)	0,512	0,006	0,362	0,005	0,126	0,004
Married	0,456	0,005	0,420	0,005	0,123	0,003
Cohabitation	0,343	0,006	0,433	0,006	0,224	0,005
Education (<i>both up to lower secondary</i>)	0,469	0,014	0,396	0,013	0,135	0,010
Both upper secondary	0,390	0,006	0,431	0,006	0,179	0,005
Both post-secondary	0,415	0,009	0,444	0,009	0,141	0,006
Man higher educational level than woman	0,413	0,007	0,443	0,007	0,143	0,005
Woman higher educational level than man	0,434	0,009	0,402	0,009	0,164	0,006
Income (<i>man & woman have the same income</i>)	0,448	0,008	0,381	0,008	0,171	0,006
Man has a better income	0,387	0,005	0,461	0,005	0,152	0,003
woman has a better income	0,470	0,009	0,378	0,008	0,151	0,006

	Who moves out (Model 2)					
	Man		Woman		Both	
	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
Swiss man & Swiss woman	0,427	0,005	0,412	0,005	0,161	0,003
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm<5	0,242	0,021	0,638	0,023	0,120	0,015
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm 5-10	0,259	0,017	0,592	0,019	0,149	0,014
Swiss man & foreign woman - Tsm>10	0,384	0,017	0,479	0,017	0,138	0,012
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm<5	0,530	0,025	0,270	0,022	0,201	0,019
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm 5-10	0,587	0,021	0,232	0,018	0,181	0,016
Swiss woman & foreign man - Tsm>10	0,498	0,017	0,341	0,016	0,162	0,012
Foreign man & foreign woman - Same Tsm	0,363	0,009	0,492	0,010	0,145	0,007
Foreign man & foreign woman - Tsm W>M	0,515	0,018	0,342	0,017	0,143	0,013
Foreign man & foreign woman - Tsm W<M	0,287	0,014	0,582	0,016	0,131	0,011

		Who moves out (Model 3)					
		Man		Woman		Both	
		prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
Without children	Swiss man & Swiss woman	0,344	0,006	0,459	0,007	0,197	0,005
	Swiss man & foreign woman	0,224	0,013	0,635	0,014	0,141	0,010
	Foreign man & Swiss woman	0,474	0,016	0,325	0,015	0,201	0,012
	Foreign man & foreign woman	0,288	0,010	0,554	0,011	0,159	0,008
With children	Swiss man & Swiss woman	0,527	0,007	0,354	0,007	0,119	0,005
	Swiss man & foreign woman	0,420	0,017	0,443	0,017	0,137	0,012
	Foreign man & Swiss woman	0,583	0,017	0,259	0,015	0,159	0,013
	Foreign man & foreign woman	0,474	0,010	0,406	0,010	0,120	0,007

Note: all models control for age, presence of children, partnership status, educational level, and income. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).

Appendix A.2 Multinomial logistic models: Predicted probabilities for distance of moves among movers (Model 1, Model 2 and Model 3)

	Distance moved (Model 1)					
	Within LMA		Between LMA		Abroad	
	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
<i>Swiss men</i>	0,791	0,005	0,202	0,005	0,007	0,001
Swiss women	0,781	0,005	0,203	0,005	0,016	0,001
Foreign men	0,767	0,007	0,197	0,007	0,035	0,003
Foreign women	0,614	0,009	0,179	0,007	0,207	0,008
Age (<30=	0,770	0,006	0,211	0,006	0,019	0,002
30-39	0,779	0,005	0,199	0,005	0,023	0,002
40-49	0,781	0,006	0,196	0,005	0,023	0,002
<50	0,768	0,007	0,211	0,006	0,021	0,002
Children (no)	0,744	0,004	0,234	0,004	0,022	0,001
Children (yes)	0,810	0,004	0,170	0,004	0,021	0,001
Married	0,771	0,004	0,207	0,004	0,022	0,001
Cohabitation	0,780	0,005	0,198	0,005	0,021	0,001
Education (lower secondary)	0,794	0,007	0,187	0,007	0,019	0,002
Upper secondary	0,779	0,004	0,202	0,004	0,018	0,001
Post-secondary	0,756	0,005	0,214	0,005	0,030	0,002
Income (no income)	0,788	0,009	0,137	0,007	0,074	0,005
1-40000)	0,763	0,006	0,204	0,006	0,033	0,002
40000-80000	0,779	0,005	0,205	0,005	0,016	0,001
>80000	0,757	0,006	0,229	0,006	0,014	0,001

	Distance moved (Model 2)					
	Within LMA		Between LMA		Abroad	
	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
Swiss men	0,791	0,005	0,202	0,005	0,006	0,001
Swiss women	0,780	0,005	0,204	0,005	0,016	0,001
Foreign men - tsm<5	0,710	0,016	0,216	0,015	0,074	0,010
Foreign men - tsm 5-10	0,784	0,014	0,184	0,013	0,032	0,006
Foreign men - tsm>10	0,779	0,011	0,198	0,011	0,023	0,003
Foreign women - tsm<5	0,490	0,016	0,161	0,011	0,349	0,016
Foreign women - tsm 5-10	0,619	0,016	0,179	0,012	0,202	0,013
Foreign women - tsm>10	0,690	0,014	0,179	0,012	0,131	0,010

		Distance moved (Model 3)					
		Within LMA		Between LMA		Abroad	
		prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.	prob.	std. err.
Without children	<i>Swiss men</i>	0,762	0,007	0,233	0,007	0,005	0,001
	Swiss women	0,746	0,007	0,236	0,007	0,017	0,002
	Foreign men	0,750	0,011	0,210	0,010	0,039	0,005
	Foreign women	0,580	0,011	0,211	0,009	0,209	0,010
With children	<i>Swiss men</i>	0,823	0,007	0,168	0,006	0,010	0,002
	Swiss women	0,822	0,008	0,164	0,007	0,014	0,002
	Foreign men	0,791	0,009	0,177	0,009	0,031	0,004
	Foreign women	0,657	0,013	0,142	0,009	0,201	0,011

Note: all models control for age, presence of children, partnership status, educational level, income, population density and share of foreigners in the municipality. Source: Statpop (2011-2014); SS (2010-2013); CCO (2011-2014).