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The divergence of labour force participation upon motherhood among migrant descendants and natives in Germany

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Abstract

This study investigates labour force participation of women of immigrant family background in Germany before and after having a first child. We consider the labour market characteristics of their parents to contribute to the debate of structural versus cultural differences in labour market outcomes among descendants (native-born with immigrant family background) and autochthonous individuals ("natives", native-born without detectable immigrant family background). We apply competing risks event history models to data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) to study transition to the labour market after education and after giving a first birth. First, women from Southern European and Polish descent are more likely than their non-European counterparts to engage in the labour market before and after giving a first birth. Second, we find that women whose parents worked in higher prestige jobs have higher rates of entry to employment and return to the labour market after having a first child. The effects of the mother's occupation and those of the father's are similar, showing little gender-specific social reproduction. Group differences in labour market entrance diminish after a first birth, suggesting that parenthood itself is a selective process regardless of individuals' social and family background. We find support for intergenerational transfer of gender roles, particularly among those whose parents had lower prestige jobs and from non-European family backgrounds. This work significantly enriches research on ethnic minority integration by highlighting the interplay between social background and ethnic origin.

Introduction

The growth of the number of second-generation individuals, or native-born people with at least one migrant parent, in high-income countries has led to the proliferation of studies comparing the social and economic outcomes between individuals with or without immigrant family background. Previous research has shown that the descendants of immigrants (hereafter 2G) have lower employment levels than native population in Europe (with two native-born parents), although employment rates vary across descendant groups (Longhi et al., 2013), especially among women (Dale et al., 2006). Research has proposed two explanations for the employment gap between natives and second-generation individuals. First, many of the descendants of post-WWII labour migrants are likely to have low educational levels and poor labour market prospects because their parents had low education and they mostly worked in unskilled and skilled occupations (Clauss and Nauck, 2010). Second, conservative gender values partly, due to high levels of religiosity may explain the low female employment among some immigrant groups (Khoudja and Fleischmann, 2015; 2017). Briefly, these can broadly defined as "cultural" versus "structural" explanations of ethnic inequalities in the labour market (Heath & Brinbaum, 2007).

Early childhood socio-economic disadvantages and limited access to high quality education and services, have been identified as prominent issues limiting the success of 2G individuals (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Portes et al., 2009). The reason for their economic disadvantage may be hidden in the migration process of their parents. The selection of immigrants (1G) inevitably leads to the inadvertent selection of their 2G children. For example, the large number of low skilled individuals arriving from rural and poorer regions of Anatolia (Idema & Phalet, 2007) entails a large 2G population with Turkish background who are children of low skilled individuals. On the other hand, they are also children of healthy (Abraido-Lanza et al., 1999), motivated individuals who took calculated risks to improve the life chances of themselves and their offspring. In particular, previous studies on successful minority groups in the US—dubbed "model minority"—spotlighted the out-performance of descendants of migrants over majority populations (Kao,

1995). Social inheritance in observable and unobservable aspects thus cannot be overlooked when examining the outcomes of the second generation.

The ethnic and gender effects are further aggravated by the selection of 1G by migration type, e.g., through family reunification or labour prospects, leading to unique gender dynamics within migrant households. Migration is both gendered and gendering (Pedraza, 1991), with male migrants often leading the move for their job prospects especially during periods of intense labour demand in the agricultural and construction sectors which tend to be male dominated. In post-WWII Europe, this process gave rise to a composition of migrant families where men and women were positioned to foster gender specialization within the household (Polavieja et al., 2018) creating a family environment in which gender traditionalism was more strictly observed. Gender attitudes or norms can then be passed on to the second generation through several pathways.

Mothers who work in the labour market tend to have daughters who work (Stinson & Gottschalk, 2016; Vidal et al., 2020). Tied migrants, or those who followed the lead migrant for their job prospects, are disproportionately women who, as a result, are less likely to enter the labour market (Krieger, 2020). The gender division of work often hinges on social reproduction, or the maintenance of daily life bearing activities and attitudes that are transferred intergenerationally (Laslett & Brenner, 1989). Among those with the intention to enter the labour market, motherhood is perhaps the most prominently identified labour market barrier for women. Unavailability or inaccessibility to adequate childcare arrangements often lead to women's exit from the labour market, significant reduction of work hours, or long spells of labour market inactivity rendering their return difficult (Roder et al, 2018).

In contrast, men's labour force participation, is normally little affected by fatherhood, regardless of origin (Liu & Kulu, 2022). Furthermore, the combination of parental gendered pattern of migration and the inheritance of ideologies pertaining to gender roles render 2G women's story particularly interesting. Due to parental migration circumstances, some groups of 2G women are plausibly socialised under gender specialization of household and labour market activities. If one's parents were employed in lower end jobs and those characteristics are inheritable through the social reproduction framework, economic and social reward derived from labour market engagement may not prove sufficient to entice an individual to stay in the labour market when an important time-consuming life event occurs: the birth of a child.

This study examines labour market participation among second-generation women in Germany after finishing school, and after becoming a mother. We focus on the occupational characteristics of both parents for the 2G individuals. We ask whether those who had a working parent with higher status jobs are more likely to enter the labour force upon the end of school, and whether they return to the labour market after giving a first birth. To our knowledge, few studies have explicitly investigated childbirth and labour market engagement by parental occupational status, and none have done so in the German context. The data allows us to identify participation in full- and part-time work, an important ingredient in identifying women's economic role within the household. Our work takes the literature one step forward toward pinning down the role social origin plays in the labour market gap between 2G and native women. This work contributes to the clarification of the roles cultural and structural factors play in the integration of minority populations in Germany where political discourse often centers around the integration of its diverse second generation.

Germany serves as a unique and ideal ground for this research for several reasons. First, it has been one of the largest migrant receivers in the Western world in the past decades (Eurostat, 2011). As a result, it has a large 2G population that has since aged into adulthood. Second, Germany has high quality longitudinal data such as the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) which is instrumental in identifying socioeconomic characteristics associated with social origin that are often lacking in large-scale administrative data. Lastly,

its migrant population arrived under a wide range of circumstances, such as for labour market, family reunification, and political reasons, leading to a vibrantly diverse 2G population.

Background

2G in Germany

Much of the literature on second generation is based on migrant families in the United States, due to its long migration history and migrant population size. In the recent years, the number of the descendants of immigrants has significantly grown in Europe (Eurostat, 2017). In particular, the number of individuals with non-European background has increased by 33% from 2008 to 2014, a relatively short period of time, while those with European origin have grown by 12%. This growth is particularly prominent in large cities, where immigrants tend to settle re-shaping the demographics of urban landscape (Winders, 2014).

The second-generation population of Germany tend to be children of immigrants who arrived in West Germany after World War II (Heckmann, 2016; Worbs, 2003). During this time and decades after, several waves of immigrants moved to West Germany under a variety of schemes. First, immediately after the war, ethnic German refugees and expellees flocked to Germany from Southeastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, such as from Russia or Kazakhstan, as one of the consequences of the war. Second, the economic boom in the 1960s brought predominately male immigrants from Turkey and Southern Europe (Heckmann, 2016). These individuals mostly came from rural areas of their respective countries with limited educational attainment, ready to perform unskilled labour. Third, family reunification schemes went into full swing in the 1970s, bringing immediate relatives, such as spouse and young children, of the earlier labour migrants into Germany. Fourth, the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1991 saw another two million ethnic Germans arriving from Southeastern and Eastern Europe. Taken together, the migration waves led to the gradual formation of a 2G population that is as heterogeneous as their 1G parents.

Most studies on German immigrants and migrant descendants focus on West Germany where most migrants live. It is important to note the unique characteristics of West German women without immigrant family background. Compared to East Germans, West Germans hold more stigmatised view over working mothers, commonly known as *Rabenmutter* (Raven Mother—known to neglect her offspring). As recent as 2008, only 19% of West German mothers worked full-time compared to roughly half of East German mothers (Goldstein & Kreyenfeld, 2011). As a whole, women in Germany are far more likely to work part-time than women of other high-income countries, with 37% all employed women working part-time compared to the OECD average of 25% (OECD, 2017). This baseline is essential in contextualizing comparisons drawn among individuals with or without immigrant family background in West Germany.

Germany's measures toward immigrants can largely be defined as integrationist (Heckmann, 2016). This model gears toward creating a society with increasing similarity between group ideologies and living conditions, while decreasing ethnic stratification. Notwithstanding, policies can only facilitate structural opportunities and incentivise decisions, but cannot coerce individuals into integration. Several studies have identified strongly homogenous ethnic network among groups such as Turkish individuals in Germany, with the 2G showing some signs of broadening beyond their groups (Worbs, 2003). These strong interethnic links are hypothesised to strengthen intergroup norms, such as earlier and higher fertility (Krapf & Wolf, 2016), that often differ from the autochthonous population. Along with other group-specific cultural norms such as gender division of house and care work and adherence to male-breadwinner family models (Holland & de Valk, 2017; Huschek et al., 2011), labour market outcomes plausibly differ not only among 2G groups and natives as a whole, but also among 2G women and native women, and 2G women and 2G men.

Theoretical overview: The unique challenges faced by second-generation women

Several studies have examined 2G social outcomes in Europe, although few have examined the intersection of migrant background and social origin. Even fewer have explicitly test whether non-migration-specific theories pertaining to the intergenerational transfer of (dis)advantages operate differently among individuals with and without immigrant family background. This creates a gap in understanding whether 2G disadvantages are specifically attributable to minority-particular challenges such as ethnic discrimination, or to processes that also affect autochthonous individuals, such as lower socio-economic origin. This has been broadly defined as “cultural” versus “structural” explanations of ethnic inequalities (Heath & Brinbaum, 2007).

Assimilation or integration are often used interchangeably in migration literature. Several studies have noted that both words can carry a negative connotation as meaning the erasure of a lesser culture, but generally redefine them as the erosion of ethnic, religious and other boundaries in determining the outcome of the offspring of newcomers (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Schieckoff & Sprengholz, 2021). The view of assimilation has been further refined by scholars in the US in light of social stratification theories. In urban ethnic enclaves, minority youths with little resources can become assimilated to deprived, native, urban youth—a process known as downward assimilation under the segmented assimilation theory (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Their more successful counterparts assimilate upward, joining the ranks of the middle-class mainstream society, at which time, ethnicity becomes fluid and the expression of such, a choice (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Drouhot & Nee, 2019).

Low education and poor employment prospects

Compared to the autochthonous population, second generation individuals in Europe are often disadvantaged in the labour market (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Maes et al., 2021). This disparity often occurs prior to labour market entrance, reflected by different educational trajectories (Worbs, 2003). In the German case, the tracking system, or the placement of pupils with more promising academic achievements into university preparatory courses and the guidance of less academically-inclined pupils into vocational training, leads to further bifurcation of children from immigrant and non-immigrant backgrounds. While roughly half of German autochthonous youths fall into the higher career track, only 20% of those with Turkish or Yugoslavian background do (ibid). Partially as a result, Turkish and Yugoslavian 2G youths are also overrepresented among unskilled or routine occupations. Beyond structural challenges, ethnic discrimination has also been identified by field experiments conducted in Germany (Kaas & Manger, 2012) and Norway (Midtbøen, 2014), highlighting a possibility of uneven return for the same qualifications for 2G compared to the majority populations.

Conservative gender norms and roles

At the same time, migration is a gendered process in which gender permeates migration practices and identities (Pedraza, 1991; Ryan & Webster, 2008). Previous research cautioned that obstacles presented to girls and women in tight-knit migrant communities should not be overlooked in migration research (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003). Enforcement of gender roles is argued as the price of social cohesion. Several studies have pointed out the lower labour force participation of immigrant women compared to immigrant men, attributable to migration type (labour migrant predominantly male, family migrant predominantly female) (Maes et al., 2021; Samper & Kreyenfeld, 2021), cultural or religious influences over gender division of work (Kanas & Müller, 2021), and parity progression higher than that of natives which competes for immigrant women’s time (Adserà & Ferrer, 2015). Gender ideologies (Huschek et al., 2011), labour force participation and attachment (Couch & Dunn, 1997) have all been found to be intergenerationally linked. Immigrant women in Belgium (Wood & Neels, 2017), Germany (Liu & Kulu, 2021), and the UK (Mikolai

& Kulu, 2021) are more likely to enter motherhood as an alternative to entering the labour force thus exhibiting more traditional family trajectories. Therefore, the lower participation rate or gender specialization are likely transmissible from mother to daughter.

Although motherhood and employment are not entirely incompatible, a large volume of studies have identified the deleterious effect of the former on the latter (Cukrowska-Torzewska & Matysiak, 2020; Maes et al., 2021) citing the unavailability of childcare arrangement and adherence to stricter gender division of labour within the household once a child enters the equation (Vespa, 2009). These mechanisms are not specific to those with immigrant family background, but they may operate differently among ethnic groups. The labour force participation gap between mothers and non-mothers have particularly shown to be wide in West Germany and Spain compared to countries such as Italy and Sweden, with those with higher education more likely to stay on (Gutiérrez-Domènech, 2005). Although the gap does not appear to differ substantially for women with or without immigrant family background in Germany, second generation mothers in France and the Netherlands have been found to be less likely than mothers of the majority populations to participate in the labour market (Holland & de Valk, 2017).

Among women who transition back to employment upon parenthood, a trajectory more typical for those with higher educational attainment, they tend to reduce their hours, or switch from full- to part-time employment (Anderson et al., 2002, 2003). From then on, their labour market participation overwhelmingly remains part-time rather than transition back to full-time once children enter school. This marks an important diverging point within a male and female partnership which is the solidification of male production female reproduction gender roles (Gottschall & Bird, 2003). The intensity of labour market engagement post childbirth by parental occupational characteristics is less explored than employment in general, and virtually untapped in the second-generation literature.

Occupational inheritance

Several studies pointed to the role educational attainment and social origin play in labour market activities. Those who have higher earnings, position, and prospect have higher opportunity cost from non-participation in the labour market (Becker, 1993). Additionally, those with working parents or parents with higher reward jobs were likely raised in an environment that signals the importance of having an occupation, under the assumption of structural isomorphism where individuals play the roles in which they are embedded (Janoski & Wilson, 1995).

Structural explanations for the achievements of the second generation rely on the detection of social origin, which is often proxied by either parental education or parental occupation (Heath & Brinbaum, 2007; Kristen & Granato, 2007). Regardless of immigrant family background, children's labour force participation and occupation tend to strongly correlate with their parents' (Chetty et al., 2014), particularly in highly intergenerationally immobile societies. Internationally, the UK and the US are considered as less mobile than Canada and the Nordic countries, with Germany falling somewhere in between (Blanden, 2013; Gregg et al., 2019).

The selection of low educated first-generation individuals who occupied lower end jobs entails a secondary selection process for the second-generation in which they are likely to be the children of lower status individuals than autochthonous individuals on the aggregate. Although intergenerational transfer of disadvantages has been discussed as a potential pathway of the achievement or labour market outcome gaps between those with or without immigrant family background (Heath & Cheung, 2007; Heath et al., 2008), to our knowledge, it has not been explicitly tested in the German context, even less so under the lens of how different groups adhere to the gender division of labour within the family.

Labour market participation and work schedule tend to vary little among individuals without children (Anderson et al., 2002). The real divergences in labour market trajectories among parents and non-parents, and fathers and mothers occur following the birth of a child (Anderson et al., 2002, 2003; Cukrowska-Torzewska & Matysiak, 2020). The wage penalty widely discussed in gender and labour market literature points to the fact that upon parenthood, more women than men reduce their labour market activities to balance work and childcare duties. These decisions, along with career breaks, or complete exit from the labour market, have ramifications toward individual earnings and labour market position. These studies highlight the need to focus on a critical timepoint—the birth of a first child—in examining the labour market engagement of descendants of immigrants which tends to be lacking in the literature.

To disentangle the complex interplay among gender, social origin, and immigrant family backgrounds in 2G women's participation in the labour market, we aim to answering the following questions. Does ethnic origin explain women's labour market trajectories once parental occupation is accounted for? Do distinctions among groups arise before or after first birth? Is the father's or the mother's occupational status more influential for daughters' outcomes? Most importantly, do these mechanisms operate differently for 2G and natives? To answer these questions, we investigate both women's transition to work after the end of their education and after a first birth by their parental occupational status.

We focus on the occupational status of parents over other economic or social integration measures, such as income or earnings, for several reasons. First, occupation is a comprehensive indicator of social status of an individual, which carries information pertaining to an individual's skills, responsibility, authority, autonomy, comfort, and security. Second, it is less susceptible to shocks than income or earnings and carries the advantage of stability across time (Torche, 2015). Methodological challenges can arise in comparing intergenerational income mobility. Chetty and colleagues (2014) describe income distribution within a generation as a ladder. With economic changes within a society, the distance between the "rungs" of the ladder can increase if income inequality increases. This requires careful comparison of different generations who are products of different times. Although occupational structure can also change across generations, occupation signals status that is more time-consistent than income. It further incorporates education and social reward reaped from performing the job which provides additional information other than income.

This work contributes to the clarification of the roles cultural and structural factors play in the integration of minority populations in Germany where political discourse often centers around the integration of its diverse second generation.

Data and Methodology

German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP)

To answer our research questions, we use the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP), a long-running, nationally representative longitudinal survey of private households in Germany. Starting in 1984, approximately 10,000 individuals were surveyed annually (Goebel et al., 2019). This has been increased several times, such that in 2016 the sample included about 27,000 individuals in over 10,000 households. Since its start, GSOEP included a special subsample of migrants in West Germany. Migrants were oversampled by design to facilitate research on this subpopulation. The migrant sample has been extended several times since then, e.g., in 2013 a special subsample of about 5,000 migrants was drawn from the registers of the Federal Employment Agency and included permanently as a subsample in the study (Kühne et al., 2019). The GSOEP offers a large amount of rich background information, e.g., parental biography; birth and employment history; and education and qualifications, which can be used to analyze occupational transitions in-depth.

We focus on women born between 1950 to 1999 in West Germany with non-migrant parents (“natives”) and those with parents from Russia, Kazakhstan, Poland, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal (“2G”). Due to sample size constraints, groups with highly similar migration pathways and cultural characteristics are grouped together. Those from Russia and Kazakhstan are clustered together due to shared migration characteristics comprised of individuals with ethnic German background from the former Soviet Union. Those from Southern Europe (Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal) tended to have arrived as labour migrants, particularly those from earlier waves (Höhne & Koopman, 2010; Kalter & Kogan, 2014).

GSOEP records the biography of the parents of the respondents to convey their social origin. The parental biography questionnaire contains information on parents’ place of residence, year of birth and death, and occupational status when the respondent was 15 years old. The information of the parent’s biography are collected in two ways: through proxy reporting from the child (respondent), and from the parents themselves if they lived in the same household as the respondent and participated in GSOEP (Schnitzlein et al., 2018). The occupations of the parents are recorded in ISCO88 or ISCO08, which are linked to the International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI).

International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI)

The International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI) is a commonly used measure for socioeconomic status, particularly in social stratification research (e.g., Pförtner et al., 2015; Witteveen & Velthorst, 2020; Xing et al., 2021). ISEI is derived from optimal scaling procedures across 271 occupations under the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) in 16 countries to maximise the role of occupation as an intervening variable between earnings and education level required to perform the job (Ganzeboom et al., 1992; Ganzeboom & Treiman, 1996). The ISEI was first designed for ISCO-88 then later updated with ISCO-08. It is a numerical scale with the lower end of the scale typically assigned to lower income jobs that require less training, such as subsistence livestock farmers (score of 11), and the higher end depicting either higher earning jobs that require more training, or jobs that convey higher social reward, such as judges (score of 88). We convert the continuous variable of ISEI into categorical by tertile for both the mother’s and the father’s occupation among those who worked, forming the categories: “low” (lowest tertile), “medium”, and “high” (highest tertile). In our sample, 91% had a working father while 60% had a working mother.

Since parental records are not collected every year, 23% of father’s and 15% of mother’s occupational records are missing. We assume that the missing values are completely at random (MCAR) due to the reason of non-collection of data purely administrative, hence suitable for imputation. For those missing ISEI information, we implemented multivariate imputation by chained equations (MICE) using classification and regression trees (CART). We use parental levels of education, religion, and number of children to infer parental ISEI. The procedure fills in missing data through iterative series of predictive models using non-missing values in the above specified variables. We use the R package MICE to conduct the procedure (Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). Observations with no information available at all to feed into the algorithm are coded as missing. Using this technique, we reduced the number of missing values on mother’s work from 2,657 to 206, and father’s work from 3,973 to 504. The average ISEI of mother and father when stratified by immigrant family background and birth cohort are generally comparable across the full (our final analytical sample) and reduced (list-wise deleted) samples, as shown in Appendix A1.

Descriptive and regression methods to study labour market entrance

Our main outcome of interest is the employment of 2G women. First, we calculate cumulative incidence functions separately for each descendant group to describe their likelihood of entering the labour market or

having a first child after the completion of education or training. Next, we investigate their likelihood of entering into part- or full-time work or giving a second birth after the birth of a first child, a critical period of divergence between continual engagement or disengagement in employment for women. This framework is particularly suitable for women, whose entrance into parenthood often leads to more substantial employment disruption to their male partner's (Cukrowska-Torzewska & Matysiak, 2020). The first step is applied to 16,999 women (all women who finished school) in the analytical sample, while the second step is applied to 10,151 women (all women who had a first birth during the observation period). We use competing-risks event history models or survival analysis to investigate employment entry and childbirth of 2G women with and without adjusting for various factors (Putter et al., 2007). We show both baseline models (descendant group only) and those adjusted for the women's own education and her parental employment status. We model transition to employment or having a child after education and after the birth of a first child. The first starting time point is marked by the latest episode of training (e.g., apprenticeship) before the respondent's first part- or full-time job. The second starting time point is the birth moment of the respondent's first child. The individual is followed until she enters part- or full-time work or has a second child. Individuals who do not experience the above events within seven years of observation are censored. Due to sample size limitations, we further simplify parents' work status into two groups: parent did not work or parent worked but had a lower status job; and parent worked and had a medium status job, and parent worked and had a higher status job. Our competing risks-model is specified as follows:

$$\ln\mu_k(t) = \ln\mu_0(t) + \sum_m \beta_m x_m(t) + \gamma_k z, \quad (1)$$

where $\mu_k(t)$ denotes an individual's hazard of entering employment ($k=1$) or having a child ($k=2$) and $\mu_0(t)$ is the baseline hazard at duration t (time since leaving education or since the birth of a first child), which is defined as piecewise constant and is common to all transitions; $x(t)$ is a variable measuring an individual's own education or parental occupation and β is the parameter estimate for these variables, with m variables; γ_k represents the effect of variable z (descendant group) on transition k . Such a model assumes a common baseline for all transitions and the same effect of control variables across the outcomes. The effect of descendant group is allowed to vary by transition. The advantage of the proposed model is that the rates of entry to employment and that of having a child by descendant group can be compared as they have one reference point. An interaction term between variables z and x informs us whether the effect of a covariate varies by descendant group and the transition type.

Results

Table 1 shows the risk time by person-years, and number of events for part-time, full-time work, and first births after the completion of education or training by group. German natives have the highest rate of moving to full-time work after education, followed by Polish 2G women. Turkish 2G women have the lowest rate for both part-time and full-time work compared to all groups. Russian or Kazak 2G women have the highest transition rate to first birth. This is corroborated by Figure 1, which depicts the cumulative probability of the three events. Overall, full-time employment is the most likely outcome for everyone after schooling. Over 70% of German native women enter full-time work (by seven years) after schooling compared to 50% for Turkish, Russian, and Kazak 2G women. Turkish, Russian, and Kazak 2G women also have the highest first birth risks compared to all other groups, but all groups are most likely to enter full-time work after the end of education compared to other outcomes.

Table 1. Sample description, number of events, and transition rate from the end of education to first work or parenthood by immigrant family background

	Person- years	Events (FT)	FT Rate	Events (PT)	PT Rate	Events (B1)	B1 Rate
German	19726	9559	0.485	2531	0.128	1161	0.059
Polish	695	285	0.410	119	0.171	45	0.065
Russian/Kazak	720	223	0.310	126	0.175	79	0.110
Southern European	1149	405	0.352	155	0.135	40	0.035
Turkish	1516	434	0.286	191	0.126	112	0.074
Older cohort: Born 1950-1969	9277	5527	0.596	494	0.053	615	0.066
Young cohort: Born 1970-1999	14530	5379	0.370	2628	0.181	822	0.057
Education: Low	6166	1166	0.189	707	0.115	470	0.076
Education: Medium	12760	7180	0.563	1357	0.106	682	0.053
Education: High	4881	2560	0.524	1058	0.217	285	0.058
Father did not work	771	259	0.336	88	0.114	61	0.079
Father worked low prestige job	7876	3713	0.471	768	0.098	569	0.072
Father worked medium prestige job	7741	3672	0.474	892	0.115	443	0.057
Father worked high prestige job	7419	3262	0.440	1374	0.185	364	0.049
Mother did not work	296	120	0.405	30	0.101	33	0.111
Mother worked low prestige job	8105	3656	0.451	842	0.104	528	0.065
Mother worked medium prestige job	7727	3743	0.484	912	0.118	481	0.062
Mother worked high prestige job	7679	3387	0.441	1338	0.174	395	0.051

Note: PT (part-time work): N=3585; FT (full-time work): N=14406; B1 (first birth): N=1813; Person-years: N=23806

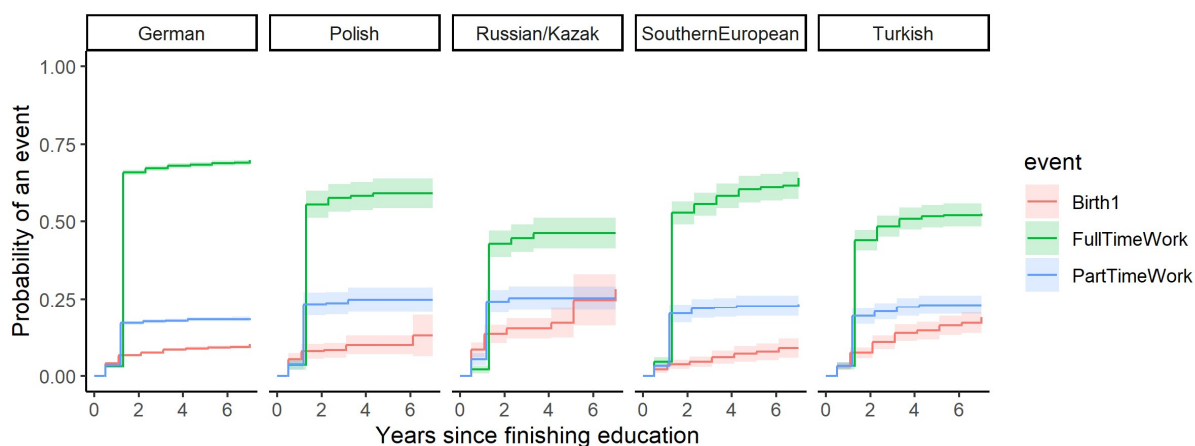


Figure 1. Cumulative incidence function of entering part-time work, full-time work, or parenthood (“Birth1”) after schooling by group.

In Figure 2, we examine the competing pathways of first birth or work after education among the 2G and native groups with (“covariates”) and without (“baseline”) SES indicators, namely one’s own education level, and her parent’s work status. Using the risk of German natives entering work after schooling as comparison, Figure 2 shows that Polish 2G have remarkably similar propensity of entering work with or without considerations to parental work status or one’s own education. Turkish, Russian, and Kazakh, and Southern European 2G have a lower hazard of entering work in comparison, but the gaps diminish once parental work and one’s education are accounted for.

Figure 2 also shows that compared to entrance into work, women are far less likely to directly enter parenthood post-education overall, but important distinctions emerge among the groups. Individuals with Russian and Kazakh backgrounds exhibit a higher risk of directly entering parenthood after schooling, followed by Turkish 2G. Southern European women are even less likely than German women to give a first birth directly after schooling. Parental work and one’s own education contribute little to the group differences, suggesting that early parenthood is more associated with descendant group than labour market entrance.

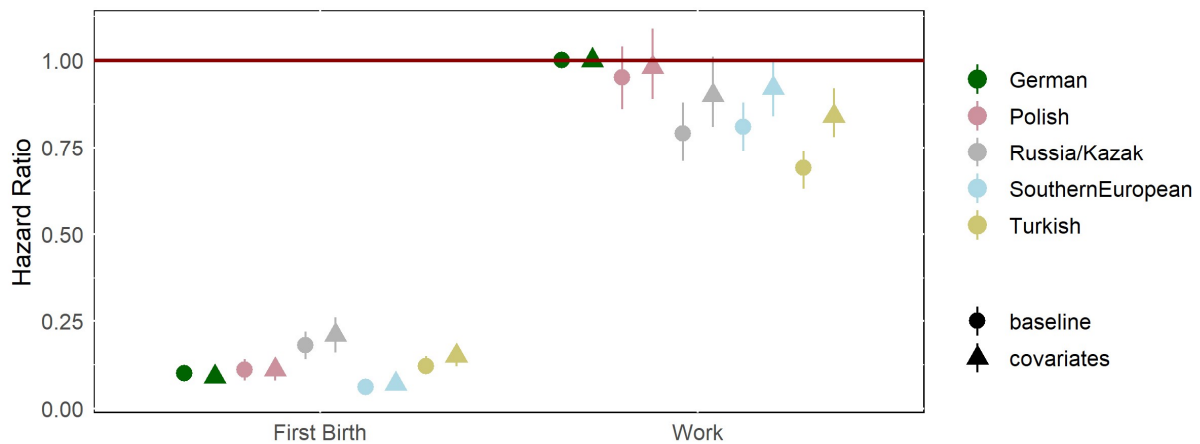


Figure 2. Relative of risks of entering work (full- or part-time) or parenthood (“first birth”) by group.

Note: Baseline models include origin only; covariates models include origin, one’s own education, and mother’s and father’s work status.

In Figure 3, we show the hazard of entering work or have a first child after schooling by father’s (left column) and mother’s (right column) occupational prestige (“did not work”, “low”, “medium”, “high” prestige) in four panels, with the top row displaying results only for those with an immigrant family background (excluding those with no migration family background) and the bottom row showing the full sample (including those with no migration family background). Due to sample size differences (see person-years in Table 1), results for the full sample are mainly driven by autochthonous Germans. However, the father’s occupational status is associated with higher rates of women’s entrance into the labour market post-schooling in both the 2G only and full samples. In the full sample, mother’s occupational status is also linked to higher rates of employment entry for women, and both mother’s and father’s occupational status is correlated with lower hazard of giving a first birth directly after schooling. Among 2G individuals, mother’s occupational status is not clearly linked to entrance into work, and neither parents’ occupation statuses show clear relationships with 2G women’s risks of giving a first birth. Due to the small sample size of 2G individuals, the interaction between parental occupational status and each family background

produced less interpretable results, shown in Appendix A2 and A3 by father’s and mother’s occupational status respectively.

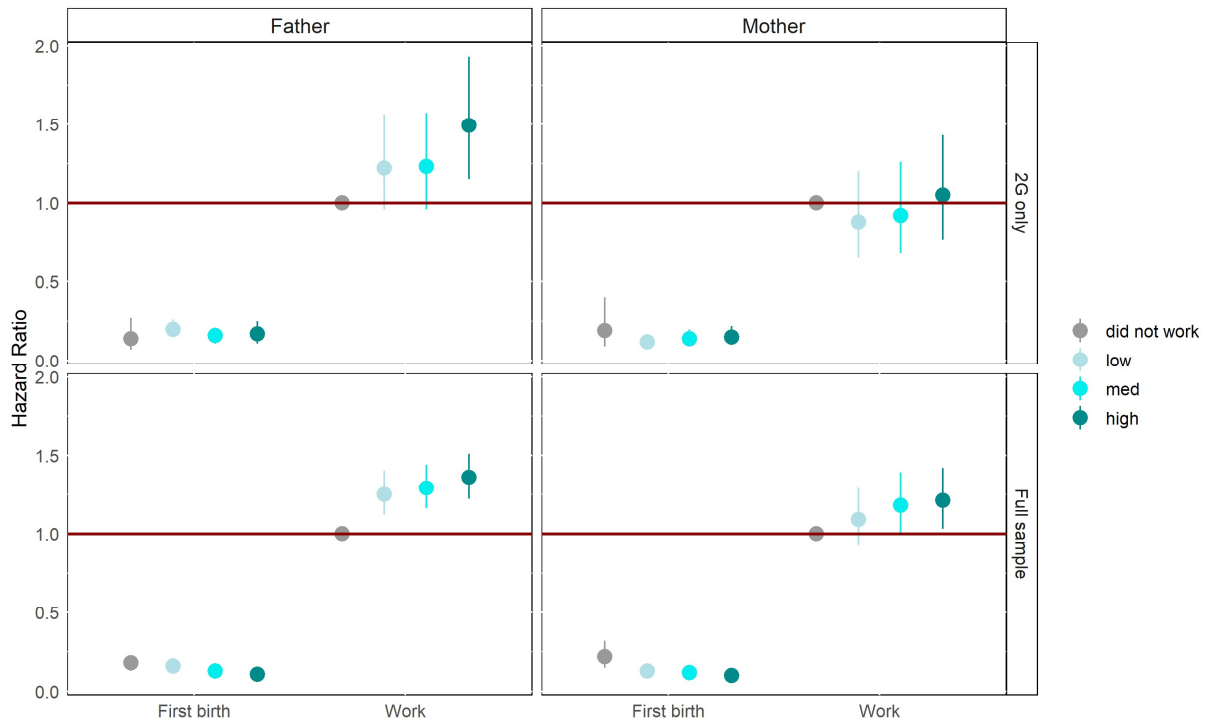


Figure 3. Relative risks of entering work (part-time or full-time) or giving a first birth by group and father and mother’s occupational status in stratified (“2G only”) and full sample.

Next, to test whether women’s family background is associated with different propensity to return to work upon motherhood, we focus on only women who have given a first birth. Table 2 describes the person years, number of events of part-time work, full-time work, and second births, and transition rates by group. We observe that rates for all three events are now more similar across groups compared to the first step shown in Table 1. Women with Russian or Kazak backgrounds are the least likely to enter full-time work after giving a first birth, and women with Turkish background are the least likely to enter part-time work compared to other groups.

Figure 4 shows the cumulative probability of entering part-time work, full-time work, and having a second child since the birth of a first child. Overall, a first birth leads to the convergence of outcomes among women of different backgrounds. All women are unlikely to work full-time after having a first child, consistent with previous findings on mothers’ labour force participation in Germany (Gangl & Ziefle, 2009) and corroborates with earlier research on parenthood and the diverging point of women’s career trajectory.

Nevertheless, a clear bifurcation among the groups can be observed in Figure 4. German natives, Polish 2G and Southern European 2G are slightly more likely to enter employment directly than to give a second birth, whereas Russian/Kazak 2G and Turkish 2G are more likely to experience a second birth after a first birth.

Table 2. Sample description, number of events, and transition rate from the first birth to part-time (PT) or full-time (FT) work or second birth by immigrant family background

	Person years	Events (FT)	FT Rate	Events (PT)	PT Rate	Events (B2)	B2 Rate
German	22094	1928	0.087	3306	0.15	2911	0.132
Polish	691	66	0.096	97	0.14	88	0.127
Russian/Kazak	690	33	0.048	70	0.101	99	0.144
Southern European	760	73	0.096	110	0.145	78	0.103
Turkish	1198	111	0.093	85	0.071	172	0.144
Older cohort: Born 1950-1969	13689	1491	0.109	1720	0.126	1931	0.141
Young cohort: Born 1970-1999	11744	720	0.061	1948	0.166	1417	0.121
Education: Low	4071	252	0.062	338	0.083	573	0.141
Education: Medium	15956	1326	0.083	2309	0.145	2111	0.132
Education: High	5406	633	0.117	1021	0.189	664	0.123
Father did not work	731	43	0.059	79	0.108	103	0.141
Father worked low prestige job	9358	805	0.086	1195	0.128	1252	0.134
Father worked medium prestige job	8503	703	0.083	1208	0.142	1117	0.131
Father worked high prestige job	6840	660	0.096	1186	0.173	876	0.128
Mother did not work	340	38	0.112	27	0.079	47	0.138
Mother worked low prestige job	8876	745	0.084	1160	0.131	1215	0.137
Mother worked medium prestige job	8908	729	0.082	1307	0.147	1152	0.129
Mother worked high prestige job	7309	699	0.096	1174	0.161	934	0.128

Note: PT (part-time work): N=7980; FT (full-time work): N=4119; B2 (second birth): N=8924; Person-years: N=25432

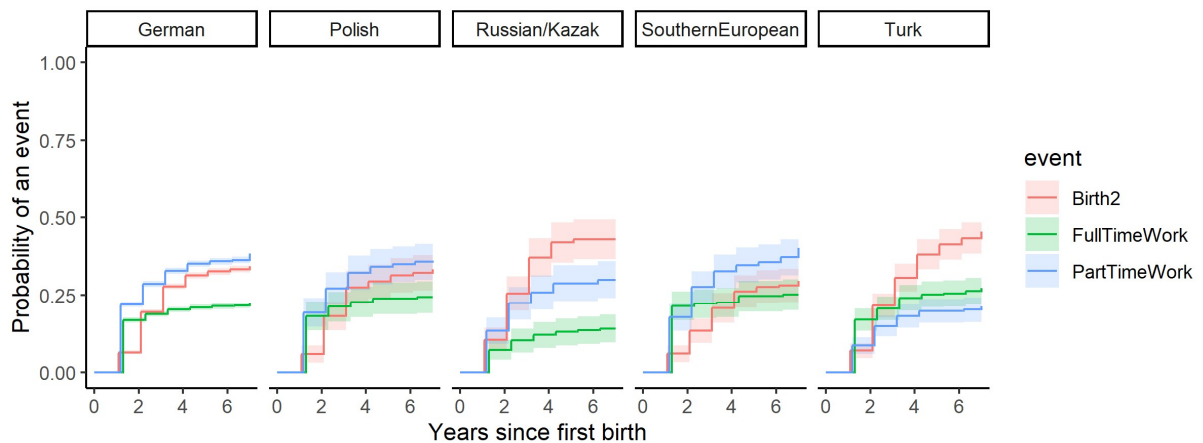


Figure 4. Cumulative incidence function of entering part-time work, full-time work, or giving a second birth after first birth by group.

Figure 5 shows the relative hazard of entering work or giving a second birth after giving a first birth, with German native women who move into work after giving a first birth as the baseline hazard. We control for whether they had work experience prior to giving the first birth (binary variable of 0 or 1). Compared to German natives, Polish and Southern European 2G women are similarly likely to return to work, while those with Turkish, Russian, and Kazak backgrounds are less likely. This mirrors the bifurcation observed in in Figure 5. In the same vein, those with European origins are less likely to give a second birth directly after a first birth, compared to women with Turkish, Russian, and Kazak backgrounds. It is important to note that after a first birth, SES seems to play a smaller role in group differences in the choice between work and second birth, indicated by similar coefficients for “baseline” and “covariates” models.

Next, Figure 6 shows the effects of father’s (left column) and mother’s occupational status (right column) for transition to work or second birth. The top panels show the results for 2G only, while the bottom panels show the results for everyone, including German natives. Compared to those whose mother or father did not work, those with working parents, especially if the parent had a higher occupational position, are more likely to directly transition to work after giving a first birth. Despite larger confidence intervals for the 2G samples, the positive relationship between both maternal and paternal status and women’s propensity to return to work is clear. The relationship between parental statuses and women’s likelihood of having a second birth is less clear. The interaction between paternal and maternal occupational status and family origin on the competing risks of work and second birth are shown in Appendix A4 and A5 respectively. Due to the small sample size, the four occupational groups are further simplified into “did not work/worked lower status job” and “worked medium or higher status job.”

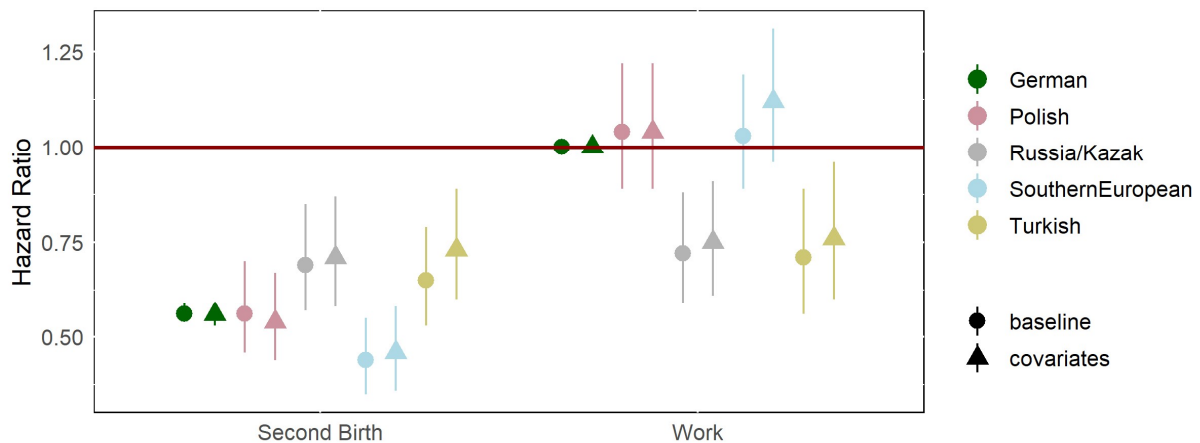


Figure 5. Relative risks of entering work (full- or part-time) or parenthood (“Second Birth”) by group.

Note: Baseline models include origin and prior work experience (binary) only; covariates models include origin, prior work experience, one’s own education, and mother’s and father’s work status.

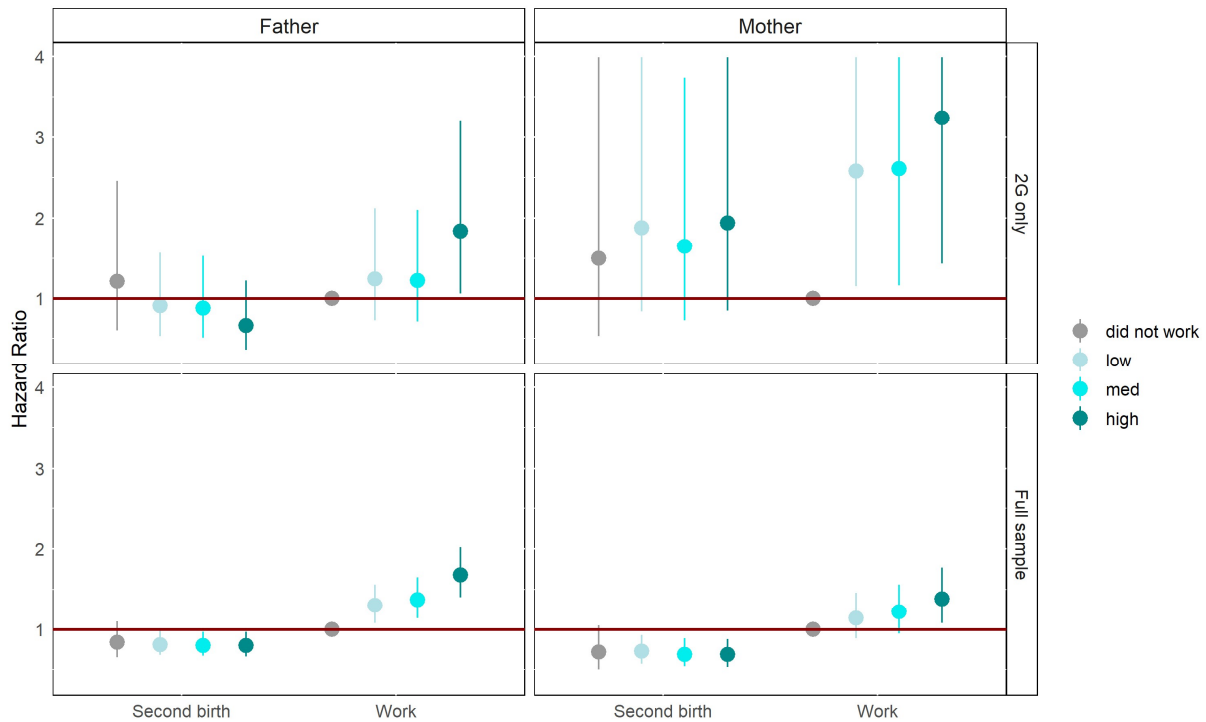


Figure 6. Relative risks of entering work (part-time or full-time) or giving a second birth by group and father and mother's occupational status in stratified ("2G only") and full sample.

Note: Having prior work experience (binary) controlled; CI extends beyond hazard ratio of 4 for mother's occupational status for 2G only.

Discussion

Growing diversity of European demographics prompted scholars to uncover mechanisms behind unequal outcomes among individuals with or without immigrant family background in European countries. Germany has a vibrant second-generation population whose parents arrived via a plethora of migration schemes, ranging from economic, family, to political entries. The wide range of circumstances under which immigrants arrived sparked debates over whether the disparity between children of migrants or autochthonous individuals are due to discrimination, selection of migrant characteristics, or differences in structural opportunities. For 2G women, the picture is further complicated by the possibility of different cultural views regarding gender roles, such as stricter adherence to gender division of labour within households, rendering their socio-economic well-being less visible.

Our work highlights the need to examine post-motherhood labour market participation among women with migration family background compared to those without in a social inheritance framework. Earlier work outlined the importance of considering mothers' loss of human capital during child-related career breaks, along with their choice of jobs and work schedules which allow the flexibility to combine labour market work and childcare (Cukrowska-Torzewska & Matysiak, 2020). We use this framework to examine the gap between 2G and autochthonous women in the labour market participation.

We found that some group differences immediately emerge after the end of women's education. German natives and Southern European 2G are the most likely to transition into full-time work, whereas 2G with Russian or Kazak and Turkish backgrounds have higher risks of directly transitioning into motherhood compared to the other groups. Family socio-economic status shows a moderating effect on family background. However, the likelihood of working is still lower for Turkish 2G compared to the other groups, regardless of family SES. Similar rates of entrance into the labour market after the end of schooling is observed among individuals with higher social status. The likelihood of having a first birth after schooling, however, varies substantially across origin groups. Father's occupational status shows clear linkage to the reduction of the first birth rate, and the increase of the employment rate for all groups, while mother's status shows a positive relationship in a transition to work and a lower transition to first birth overall, but the relationship is unclear once we look at only 2G women.

After giving a first birth, Russian, Kazak, and Turkish 2G are also more likely to give a second birth rather than transition into work. However, regardless of immigrant family background, all women are most likely to go into part-time work after becoming a mother, consistent with previous research on West German families (Krapf & Wolf, 2016; OECD, 2017). Overall, groups also converged in their propensity to give (an additional) birth or work compared to the previous process. This shows that motherhood by itself is a selective process, after which the heterogeneity across groups decreases. As a result, family SES plays a smaller role in the choice between (re)entry into work or giving a second birth, and most differences are attributable to family origin background.

We find limited support for a homogenous social class mechanism across all origin groups. This study does not rule out that cultural differences might play a bigger role in female labour force participation disparity between native and 2G individuals. However, we should highlight the differences in parental composition, with relatively few 2G Turkish women having a higher status mother compared to their native counterpart. The uncertainty for this group of individuals is particularly large in our analyses. Among native individuals, the relationship between parental occupational status and employment after motherhood supports intergenerational social inheritance theory.

Both father's and mother's status similarly influence women's labour force engagement. We do not find evidence that mother's work matters more than father's. However, it is likely that father's work signals family socio-economic status far more than mother's, given the overall higher male versus female labour force participation. More than 30% of individuals had mothers who did not work compared to 9% who had fathers who did not. Having a non-working father can thus be plausibly interpreted as growing up with a higher level of economic vulnerability.

Overall, we find that the likelihood of giving subsequent birth or (re)entering employment converges across groups upon motherhood, but women with Russian, Kazak, and Turkish backgrounds are distinct from those with German, Polish, and Southern European backgrounds. The former groups have higher birth rates and lower employment propensities compared to the latter groups. The differences do not disappear after controlling for both the mother's and the father's occupational status. We find some support for both structural and cultural explanations in 2G and non-2G women's gap in employment. Parental statuses significantly moderate origin group differences for the transition into first birth or first employment ("structural" explanation) but are negligible for the transition into second birth or employment, suggesting that higher order births are more sensitive to origin effects ("cultural" explanation).

There are several limitations to our study. First, the small sample size of second-generation individuals in the data is reflected in the large confidence intervals of our estimations. Second, we rely on multiple imputation for missing values in parental occupations, which rely on assumptions made by the authors,

based on findings in other studies. Therefore, some caution is needed when interpreting our results on the effect of parental background.

Previous work has found that women tend to derive higher satisfaction of work-life balance from part-time employment compared to men (Beham et al., 2019). This opens a conversation regarding the need to consider supportive cultural-normative environment and institutional support to achieve true gender egalitarianism. We take this one step further and invite researchers to consider how both micro- and meso-level influences, such as socially stratified family norms and ethnic group norms respectively, play a role in reinforcing a gender division of labour and to closely follow changing gender climate and structural opportunities within minority groups in Europe.

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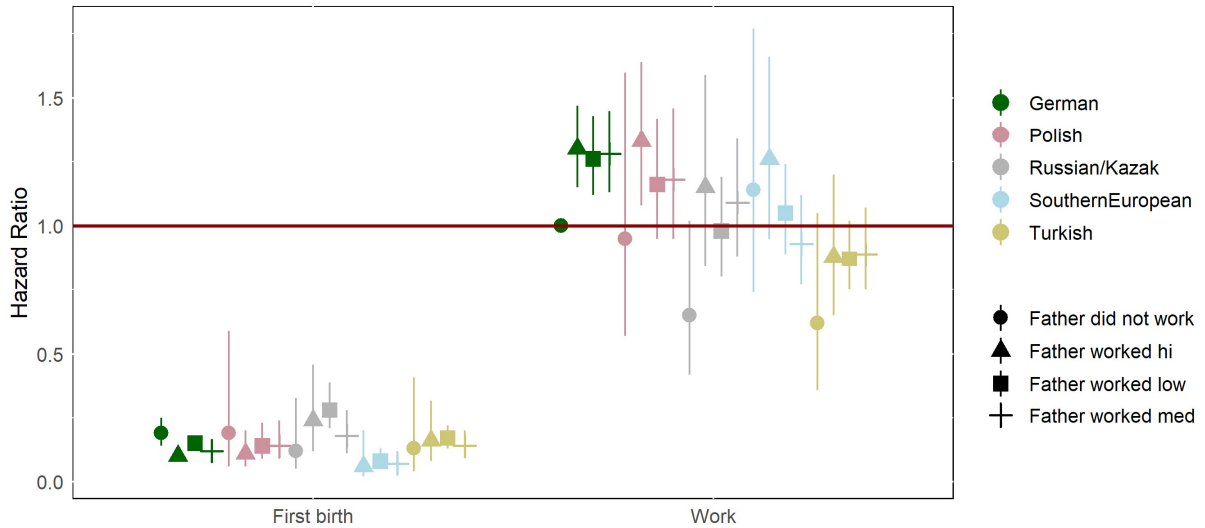
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Appendix

A1. Average ISEI of mother and father by immigrant family background and birth cohort in the analytical sample (“Imputed”) compared to list-wise deletion.

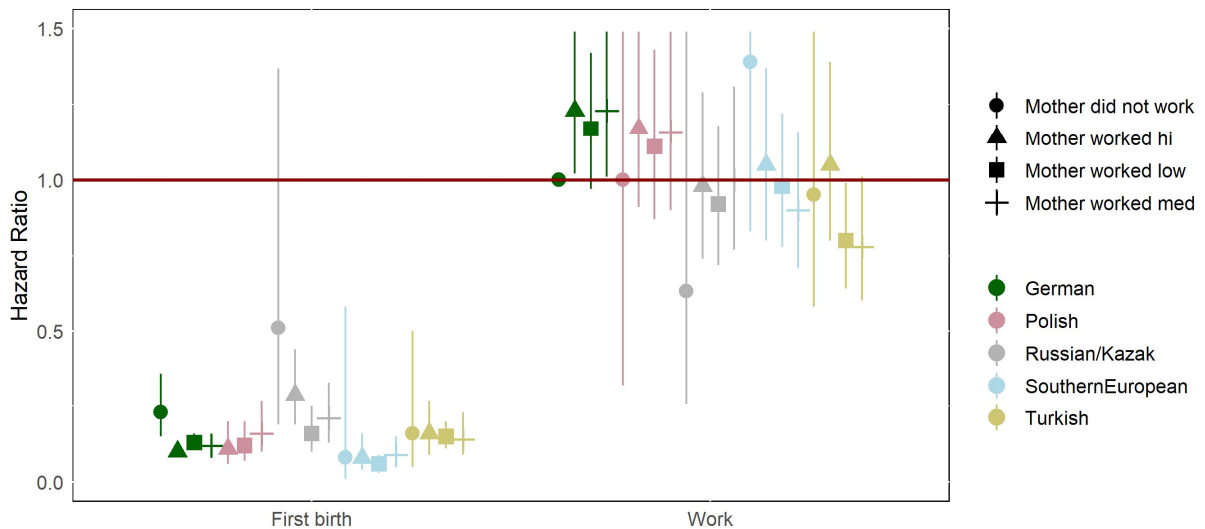
By immigrant family background and birth cohort	Imputed sample (mother's ISEI)	List-wise deleted sample (mother's ISEI)	Imputed sample (father's ISEI)	List-wise deleted sample (father's ISEI)
1.5G Polish 1950-1969	36.6	41.3	39.7	37.7
1.5G Polish 1970-1999	35.1	34.4	35.7	35.7
1.5G Russian/Kazak 1950-1969	30.9	24.2	32.4	33.7
1.5G Russian/Kazak 1970-1999	34.7	34.5	34.2	33.3
1.5G Southern European 1950-1969	29.2	26.1	31.4	31.0
1.5G Southern European 1970-1999	31.0	29.2	33.4	34.0
1.5G Turkish 1950-1969	26.5	26.4	29.5	29.0
1.5G Turkish 1970-1999	26.7	27.0	31.8	32.0
2G Polish 1950-1969	39.3	37.4	44.0	43.4
2G Polish 1970-1999	38.4	39.0	42.4	42.6
2G Russian/Kazak 1950-1969	36.8	39.1	44.3	44.3
2G Russian/Kazak 1970-1999	35.2	34.8	36.7	36.3
2G Southern European 1950-1969	34.7	34.1	36.8	36.9
2G Southern European 1970-1999	32.2	31.9	33.7	33.6
2G Turkish 1950-1969	35.4	31.9	41.1	40.6
2G Turkish 1970-1999	28.9	28.5	32.8	32.6
German 1950-1969	37.3	38.9	41.4	41.4
German 1970-1999	41.6	43.0	45.3	45.6

A2. Piecewise constant hazard model coefficients of risks of entering work (part-time or full-time) or giving a first birth by immigrant family background and father’s occupational status.



Note: No observations for Southern Europeans (“SE”) who gave a first birth and had a father who did not work

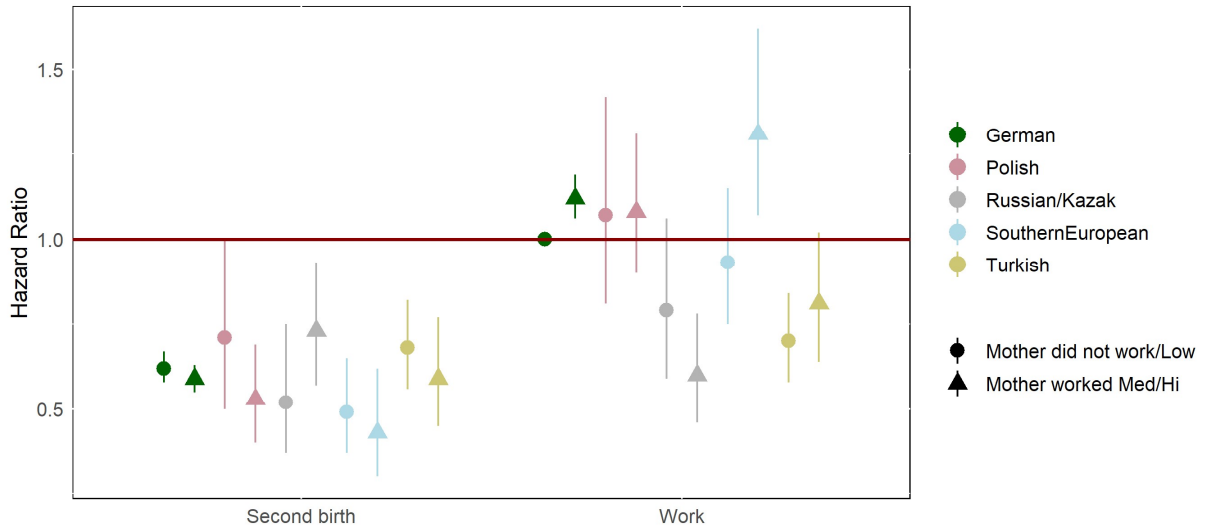
A3. Piecewise constant hazard model coefficients of risks of entering work (part-time or full-time) or giving a first birth by immigrant family background and mother’s occupational status.



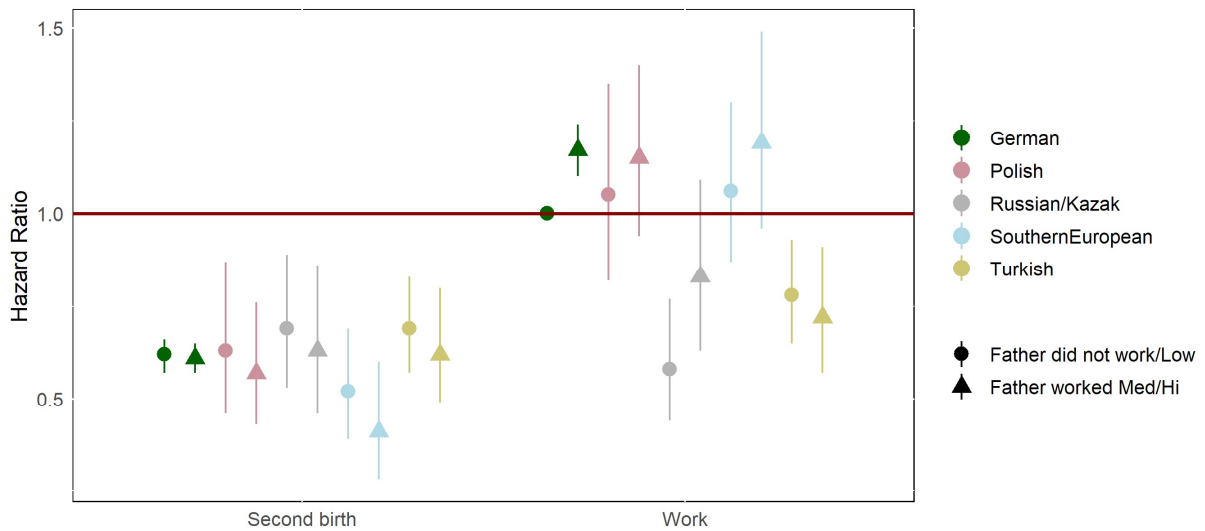
Note: No observations for Polish who gave a first birth and had a mother who did not work. Few observations (n=4) for Polish who worked and had a mother who did not work. Southern European women who worked and had mother who did not work had an upper CI exceeding 1.5 are cropped.

A4. Piecewise constant hazard model coefficients of risks of entering work (full- or part-time) or parenthood (“first birth”) by immigrant family background and mother’s occupational status.

Note: Baseline models are origin and prior work experience (binary) only; covariates models include origin, prior work experience, one’s own education, and mother’s and father’s work status.



A5. Piecewise constant hazard model coefficients of risks of entering work (part-time or full-time) or giving a second birth by immigrant family background and father’s occupational status.



Note: Prior work experience (binary) controlled