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# Differences in labour force participation by motherhood status among second-generation Turkish and majority women across Europe

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*Second-generation Turkish immigrants make up an increasingly important segment of European labour markets. These young adults are entering the prime working ages and forming families. However, we have only a limited understanding of the relationship between labour force participation and parenthood among second-generation Turkish women. Using unique data from the Integration of the European Second Generation survey (2007/08), we compared the labour force participation of second-generation Turkish women with their majority-group counterparts by motherhood status in four countries. We found evidence that motherhood gaps, with respect to labour force participation, were similar for majority and second-generation Turkish women in Germany and in Sweden; however, there may be larger gaps for second-generation mothers than for majority women in the Netherlands and France. Cross-national findings were consistent with the view that national normative and social policy contexts are relevant for the labour force participation of all women, regardless of migrant background.*

**Keywords:** labour force participation; motherhood; childbearing; second generation; children of immigrants; Turkish; Europe

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## Introduction

Across Europe, the labour force participation of the second generation (adult children of immigrants) is lower than for their majority counterparts (those born in their countries of residence with two native-born parents) (Heath et al. 2008; Algan et al. 2010; OECD 2010). This holds especially for second-generation women, who are more often found to be outside the labour force (OECD 2010). While men's labour force participation tends to be stable across the life course, women's labour market attachment is markedly lower during the prime childbearing years (Drobnič et al. 1999; Aassve et al. 2007). Although there is a rich literature exploring the nature and magnitude of the association between the presence of (young) children in the household and women's economic activity (e.g., Drobnič et al. 1999; Goldin 2006; Aassve et al. 2007; Misra et al. 2011), little is known about how second-generation Turkish women in Europe navigate the competing

responsibilities of work and family (De Valk, Windzio, et al. 2011). The experiences of second-generation women may differ from their majority-group peers, as they may have unique experiences and expectations regarding work and motherhood (Choo and Ferree 2010).

The study reported in this paper considered variation in women's labour force participation across three intersecting dimensions: migrant background status (i.e., second-generation Turkish or majority group), motherhood status, and country context. We explored the interplay of these dimensions in order to gain a better understanding of work orientation across the (early) family life course and potential ethnic differences in labour force attachment. Our study covered young adult women of the majority group and the daughters of Turkish immigrants, that is, the second generation, living in four European countries with distinctly different normative, cultural, and political approaches to combining work and family: Germany, France, the

Netherlands, and Sweden (Gornick and Meyers 2003).

We used data from the Integration of the European Second Generation survey (TIES, 2007/08). This unique, comparative survey was designed to investigate the lives of the young adult children of immigrants relative to their majority-group peers. Comparing women of the same migrant origin group who are living in different European contexts allows for a deeper understanding of the roles of both parental origin and country of birth in shaping the life courses of the children of immigrants (Holland and De Valk 2013). This may point to more and less favourable settings for combining work and family for women of immigrant origin.

Turkish immigrants and their descendants constitute the largest single-country origin group in Europe, totalling approximately 4 million individuals (Vasileva 2010). Large-scale migration from Turkey to Western and Northern Europe started in the early 1960s. This migration was enabled and bolstered by bilateral migration agreements between the governments of some European countries and the Turkish government. After the oil crisis in the early 1970s and the economic recession that followed, these European countries halted active recruitment of Turkish labour migrants. Still, many migrants stayed and formed families or were joined by family members from Turkey. The children of first-generation Turkish migrants, most of whom were born in the European host countries, are now coming of age, experiencing the transition to adulthood, leaving the parental home, completing education, entering the labour force, and forming families. They comprise an ever-increasing share of participants in European labour markets (Crul et al. 2012).

The labour force participation of migrants and their descendants, and of all women will become increasingly important for economic growth and the support of European welfare states, as countries face challenges associated with population ageing (Rubin et al. 2008). By comparing the labour market attachment of women by motherhood status and migrant background status, we shed light on inequality within and across countries. Because of the individualization of social policies in Europe (Knijn 2004), more often the right to welfare state benefits is based on one's own work history rather than on family relationships (Morgan 2006). As such, women's attachment to the labour force across the life course will become an ever more important stratifier of socio-economic position for themselves and their families. Women's employment

also increases their agency and may contribute to greater gender equality within families (e.g., Sørensen and McLanahan 1987; Brines 1994). By highlighting an important mechanism shaping the labour force participation of the daughters of immigrants, this study also provides insight into the state of gender equity in Europe.

### **Differences in labour force participation by migrant background status**

The labour force participation of immigrants has been widely studied in both North American and European contexts. Most studies of differences in economic activity by migrant background status focus on first-generation men newly arriving in host countries (e.g., van Tubergen et al. 2004; Pichler 2011). Recently, more attention has been devoted to the participation of second-generation immigrants. Since the seminal work of Portes and Zhou (1993) on the integration of the second generation in the US, scholars have become increasingly interested in the labour market position of the second generation and the factors determining their economic outcomes.

In European contexts, where the children of immigrants are now entering adulthood, increasing attention has been paid to understanding the relative position of this group (Lessard-Phillips et al. 2012). Recent studies suggest that second-generation young adults are in a less favourable position on the job market than majority youth, and their employment rates lag behind those of majority populations, particularly among women (Heath and Cheung 2007; Heath et al. 2008; Algan et al. 2010). An ethnic labour force participation gap for the children of immigrants (including those of Turkish origin) is found in many European countries, including the Netherlands, France, and Germany (Heath et al. 2008). Differences in parental socio-economic background as well as individual characteristics, such as educational attainment, are found to be important for determining participation in the labour market (De Wachter et al. 2016). Structural factors, including discrimination and the integration between educational systems and labour markets, are also important and may facilitate or discourage young women's entry into the labour market after completing education (Hermansen 2013). Overall, second-generation Turkish young adults have poorer educational attainment and qualifications than their majority counterparts (Heath et al. 2008; Crul et al. 2012). The lower socio-economic position

of first-generation Turkish parents has also been shown to be associated with a lack of familiarity with educational and labour market structures in their European countries of residence, with implications for the second generation's employment-related social capital and social networks, relative to their majority-background peers (Verhaeghe et al. 2013).

### Women and work across the life course

Labour force participation of women in Europe has increased dramatically in the past half century (Fagan et al. 2004). Currently, aggregate participation rates are high and increasingly similar among men and women, particularly in the Northern and Western European countries that were part of our study (Misra et al. 2011; OECD 2017). However, while men's labour force participation tends to be stable across the life course, women's labour force participation varies at different life stages, with lower or non-participation often corresponding to periods when (young) children are present in the household (Drobnič et al. 1999; Aassve et al. 2007). Although large proportions of women do not fully leave the labour market while they have children in the household, many reduce their working hours or shift into family-friendly jobs while their children are young, with lifelong consequences for their economic position within families and societies (Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Sigle-Rushton and Waldfogel 2007; Gangl and Ziefle 2009).

The negative association between labour force participation and motherhood may be driven by causal influences in either direction, or by spurious, exogenous factors, such as wages or social norms (Engelhardt et al. 2004). Evidence for each of these explanations has been well documented (Spitze 1988; Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Engelhardt et al. 2004), and scholars have identified motherhood gaps (i.e., differences between mothers and non-mothers) in wages, income, hours worked, and labour force participation, particularly between the mothers of young children and non-mothers (Budig and England 2001; Morgan 2006; Misra, Budig, et al. 2007; Sigle-Rushton and Waldfogel 2007; Gangl and Ziefle 2009). The magnitude of these gaps varies by individuals' characteristics. There is a negative association between the number of children in the household and women's labour force participation, with larger families associated with lower employment (Andersson 2000). In contrast, the

association between union status and women's labour force participation, particularly in the context of motherhood, is unclear. On the one hand, the presence of a partner may allow for more flexibility in economic activity and, to the extent that the partner is employed, women may have the opportunity to drop out of the labour force while their children are young. On the other hand, a partner may share in the care of the children, allowing women to maintain links to the labour market. While the direction of the influence has not been established for women's labour force participation, Budig and England (2001) demonstrated higher wage penalties for married women and argued these women might invest less in market work since they had an additional source of financial support beyond their own earnings. Women's educational attainment is negatively associated with motherhood gaps in the labour market (Euwals et al. 2011), which may be the result of the higher opportunity costs of dropping out of the labour market for the highly educated (Becker 1991) or different preferences for market work (Hakim 2002).

Families of origin may also shape how women negotiate the competing demands of work and family. While much of the intergenerational economic mobility literature focuses on the links between fathers and sons, there is also a clear link between the economic behaviour of mothers and daughters: women whose mothers worked are more likely to be in the labour force and to work more hours themselves (Stevens and Boyd 1980). Socialization and social control mechanisms positively link a woman's early transition to parenthood to her mother's fertility timing, family size, and stay-at-home preferences (Barber 2000). Religiosity may indirectly influence work and family life. Views on the roles of women inside and outside the home, as well as on combining care and market work, are often related to religious ideology and may operate via parental socialization and background (Fortin 2005).

### The intersection of migrant background, motherhood, and employment

While the association between motherhood status and labour force participation, and the mechanisms underlying this association, are well established for majority-background women, little is known about how the adult children of immigrants negotiate work and family life. The experience of second-generation Turkish women in Europe may differ from

that of their majority-group peers, in that their experience of motherhood and its implications for employment while children are young intersect with their position in the socio-cultural middle ground between their parents' country of origin and their own country of birth (Foner 1997; Choo and Ferree 2010; Holland and De Valk 2013).

Differential norms and values predominant in (rural) Turkey at the time the parents of these second-generation women migrated to Europe may favour separate gender spheres, with men taking on breadwinning roles and women focusing on household tasks (Idema and Phalet 2007; Copur et al. 2010). These norms and values shaped the economic experiences of the mothers of the Turkish second generation: first-generation women were less likely to have held paid jobs in Turkey before migrating or in their European countries of destination than the mothers of European majority women (Euwals et al. 2007; Huschek et al. 2011; Kok et al. 2011). Given the importance of parental socialization and the intergenerational transmission of economic behaviours, the daughters of Turkish immigrants are less likely to have had a maternal role model engaged in paid work than their majority counterparts.

To the extent that gendered norms and values of the first generation persist and influence the values and behaviour of the second generation, we may expect that, on average, the children of Turkish immigrants will hold different preferences from the majority group about the timing of family formation (Holland and De Valk 2013) and different expectations regarding the division of paid and unpaid work and filial responsibilities (Foner 1997; Idema and Phalet 2007). Second-generation Turkish women are more likely to enter a (married) union and have their first child at younger ages than their majority-background counterparts (Huschek et al. 2010; Milewski and Hamel 2010). Consequently, their labour market trajectories during the transition to adulthood may be influenced more greatly by family life course events than those of majority women because they have had less time to establish themselves on the labour market before starting a family. The importance of attitudes towards the gendered division of paid and unpaid work may be amplified once women begin to form families (Idema and Phalet 2007), resulting in greater differentiation in labour force participation between mothers and non-mothers among the Turkish second generation. Consequently, the motherhood gap in labour force participation may be larger among Turkish-origin women than majority women (Foner 1997; Bernhardt and Goldscheider 2007;

Diehl et al. 2009). By accounting for differences in the characteristics of these two groups, we expect to explain some of the differences in economic outcomes, both in general and in the context of parenthood.

### Contextual influences

Cross-national differences exist in the proportions of women and mothers engaged in the labour force. These are influenced by different normative, cultural, and political approaches to facilitating the balance between work and family demands, and by different institutional structures, particularly with respect to labour markets and their segmentation, which may facilitate or hinder women's entry and exit from the labour market (Ulrich Mayer 2004). It is likely that these contextual factors will shape the employment behaviour of women of both immigrant and majority backgrounds over their (family) life courses. In this paper, we focus on women living in four countries: Sweden, the Netherlands, France, and Germany.

When comparing women's labour force participation across these four contexts, the highest aggregate rates of participation are observed in Sweden, a country where men and women are expected to be actively engaged in market and non-market work across the life course and this expectation is reinforced with policies and norms emphasizing individual (economic) autonomy (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Misra, Moller, et al. 2007; Misra et al. 2011; Ciccia and Verloo 2012). In addition to generous parental leave wage replacement, mothers' market re-entry is facilitated through job protection schemes, allowing women to return to the same position, or a similar position within a firm, after a lengthy statutory maternal leave period. Part-time work is also widespread, with more than one-third of women employed part-time (Eurostat 2016). We would, therefore, expect the difference in labour force participation between mothers and non-mothers to be smallest in Sweden.

High rates of women's labour force participation are also evident in the Netherlands. Here, the share of part-time employment is by far the highest in Europe: around 70 per cent of all women work for 28 hours or less per week, with those who have had at least one child particularly likely to work part-time (Morgan 2006; Bierings and Souren 2011; Eurostat 2016). In the Netherlands, maternal care for young children is emphasized (Morgan 2006), but labour force attachment may be maintained or

re-entry more easily achieved through part-time work.

This is in contrast with the French situation, where women's employment follows a pluralist model. For women in France, and mothers in particular, there is no explicit encouragement of labour force participation as in Sweden (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Misra, Moller, et al. 2007; Misra et al. 2011). Although, there is widespread public provision of childcare, women may opt to reduce working hours to care for children in the home. A high degree of labour market segmentation has produced a two-tier system: one segment characterized by permanent contracts with a high degree of regulation and protection, and a segment with shorter-term contracts, with little or no protection (Le Barbanchon and Malherbet 2013). Re-entry into higher-tier jobs may be difficult or impossible for women returning after a period of care; these women may be relegated to lower-tier positions (in different sectors of the labour market, offering a lower likelihood of career mobility and wage growth) (European Commission 2013). We expect this hybrid model to produce mixed results for women's employment, with greater inconsistency in labour force attachment over the life course for French women.

Finally, of the four countries studied here, the lowest rates of women's labour force participation are observed in Germany. A host of policy and labour market mechanisms favouring a gendered division of labour in the market and household endure, even after the introduction of new parental leave policies in 2007 (Dearing et al. 2007; Spiess and Wrohlich 2008). There continues to be a socio-cultural and socio-historical privileging of the 'male breadwinner-female caregiver' model (Leitner 2010; Ciccia and Verloo 2012), even though German men have increased their participation in care in recent decades (Geisler and Kreyenfeld 2011, 2012). As with France, a high degree of labour market segmentation may make returning to the labour force after a period of care more difficult or less attractive (Ulrich Mayer and Hillmert 2003). As such, within the German context we would expect to see the greatest divergence in labour force participation between mothers and non-mothers.

Taken together, the varying socio-normative, social policy, and labour market regimes across the four countries are likely to influence the choices all women face when navigating labour force participation in the context of parenthood. Earlier studies confirm that shared institutional contexts influence those with and without an immigrant background in a similar way. For instance, in Sweden Andersson

and Scott (2005) and Lundström and Andersson (2012) demonstrated that the relationship between labour market status and fertility was largely similar for first-generation migrant and majority populations. One of the explanations provided by these authors is the shared Swedish policy context. Since both majority and second-generation women are exposed to the same institutional contexts during their youth and the transition to adulthood (Crul et al. 2012), we would expect similar cross-country variation in labour force outcomes in the context of motherhood for both groups.

## Data and method

### *Data and sample*

Data for these analyses came from the Integration of the European Second Generation survey (TIES, 2007/08), which was carried out in 15 cities in eight European countries. TIES was the first cross-national survey specifically designed for comparative studies of the lives of young adults (aged 18–35) of second-generation Turkish, Moroccan, and former-Yugoslavian origin, compared with majority-group young adults. Second-generation respondents were defined as individuals born in the survey country with at least one parent born abroad in one of the three focal countries. About 90 per cent of second-generation respondents had two immigrant parents. The majority population was characterized as those born in the survey country with both parents born in the survey country.

An urban sampling frame was used because migration is primarily an urban phenomenon in Europe and a large proportion of migrants and their descendants live in cities (De Valk, Huisman, et al. 2011). While the urban sampling frame was ideal for surveying the second generation across country contexts, it had implications for the sample of majority respondents. The majority subsample was not necessarily nationally representative. Rather this subsample may have come to the city for employment or education purposes and may, therefore, be more (socio-)economically advantaged, on average. We gave particular attention to the potential compositional differences of the two subsamples in our analyses and we reflect on implications of these differences for the interpretation of our results in the 'Discussion and conclusion' section.

The survey instrument covered a wide range of topics including: family background; education, employment, and labour market experiences;

partnership and childbearing; housing and neighbourhood characteristics; social relations; identity, language, and religion. Although response rates were comparable to other surveys of ethnic minorities in Western Europe (Feskens et al. 2006), they were relatively low on the whole, varying between 25 and 50 per cent in each city (Groenewold and Lessard-Phillips 2012).

We limited our analysis to women in four different countries where the Turkish second generation was interviewed and full information on labour force participation and family life course histories were available. The cities and countries included were: Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany ( $n = 524$ ); Paris and Strasbourg, France ( $n = 465$ ); Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the Netherlands ( $n = 519$ ); and Stockholm, Sweden ( $n = 254$ ). Sample sizes were evenly balanced across cities and by migrant background status. We were particularly interested in the economic activity of women who had completed their education. As such, we excluded women who reported that their main economic activity was education or who were combining education and employment ( $n = 395$ ). Pursuing education beyond the compulsory level may be part of a more general and complex life course strategy, linked to labour market participation decisions in later life (Becker 1991; Hakim 2002), and women may transition in and out of education, re-enrolling later in life to gain additional training. Even so, previous research has consistently demonstrated a negative association between educational enrolment and childbearing. Enrolment has a strong suppression effect on childbearing and has been shown to be a key factor driving fertility postponement (e.g., Skirbekk et al. 2004; Ní Bhrolcháin and Beaujouan 2012), while at the same time early childbearing is strongly associated with leaving education (e.g., Cohen et al. 2011). This negative association was clearly evident in the TIES sample: among women aged 18–35 who had finished education, 37.2 per cent were mothers, while among those who were still enrolled (either full-time or combining education and employment) only 5.6 per cent were mothers (22 mothers out of 395 women still in education). Among students, decisions regarding labour force activity and the types of jobs held may differ from those of women who have left education and begun their careers. Moreover, students were not asked whether they were actively looking for work in the survey, and so we could not determine whether unemployed students were economically active or out of the labour force. Taken together, the lack of suitable measures of labour market activity and insufficient variation in motherhood status among

those in education (particularly in Germany where no women enrolled in education were mothers) limited our ability to investigate the motherhood employment gap among students.

We further restricted our sample to those respondents with full information on employment history, thereby excluding 13 individuals. Our analysis sample consisted of 1,354 individuals, of whom 51.0 per cent were of Turkish descent.

### *Method and variables*

We estimated a logistic regression model, predicting the log of the odds of participating in the labour force at the time of the survey. Because of the small number of higher-order units (seven cities; four countries) we were unable to estimate multilevel models. We used the standard definition of labour force participation (economic activity), including those in both full- and part-time paid work, those who owned their own businesses, were self-employed or were working in a family business, those engaged in an apprenticeship, and those who were unemployed but were actively looking for work. The economically inactive included those who were unemployed and not looking for work, those who were looking after children or family members, and those who were sick or disabled. The largest share of the economically inactive reported that they were looking after children or family members (80.6 per cent).

In order to examine the associations between motherhood and labour force participation for second-generation Turkish and majority women across the four countries, we used interacted categorical variables capturing migrant background status, motherhood status, and country context as the key independent variables. For ease of interpretation we constructed a four-category variable indicating majority-background non-mothers (the reference category), majority-background mothers, Turkish-background non-mothers, and Turkish-background mothers. We defined mothers as those women who reported an 'own' child, child-in-law (stepchild), or adopted child in the household. Although we could identify whether the respondent had 'own' children living outside the household, we did not have additional information about these children (e.g., their ages). Two respondents reported non-resident children; of these, one had other co-resident children, and was therefore already classified as a mother, and one did not. Classifying this woman as either a 'non-mother' or 'mother' did not influence our findings. In order to be consistent in our definition of mothers as

those women with co-resident children, we classified this woman as a non-mother.

In order to study the influence of country of residence, we allowed the association between migrant background status and motherhood status and the log of the odds of labour force participation to vary across countries, by interacting the four-category variable identifying migrant background status and motherhood status with a set of categorical variables corresponding to Germany (the reference category), France, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Because interpreting this interaction and comparing the log of the odds of labour force participation relative to a single comparison category (i.e., majority-background non-mothers living in Germany) was conceptually complex, we calculated predicted probabilities of labour force participation for Turkish- and majority-background non-mothers and mothers living in each of the four countries.

First, we evaluated the bivariate associations between labour force participation and motherhood status, migrant background status, and country context using two-tailed *t*-tests. Then we modelled the associations between the key interactions and labour force participation, net of covariates accounting for differences between the subsamples of mothers and non-mothers, and those of Turkish and majority-group descent, in line with our theoretical expectations. We accounted for women's age continuously with a second-degree polynomial specification (age and age squared). To account for differences in family structure, we included respondents' co-residential partnership status, differentiating those with no co-residential partner (the reference category) and those in either a non-marital or marital co-residential union. Women with more children may face greater constraints on their ability to be economically active. Therefore, we incorporated an indicator distinguishing women with two or more children, conditional on motherhood status. This variable could be interpreted as the average association between larger families and women's labour force participation. Balancing work and motherhood is most challenging when children are young, so we also accounted for the age of youngest child: under five years old (the reference category) vs. five years and older.

We included the respondent's highest level of education completed: secondary education or less (the reference category) vs. tertiary education. Ideally, we would specify each educational group separately, however, the group with less than secondary education constituted less than 4 per cent of the total sample. Finally, a woman's decisions about labour

force participation may be influenced by exposure to her mother's own employment and values regarding women's roles. Therefore, we accounted for whether the respondent's mother was employed when the respondent was 15 years old and whether the respondent reported that she was raised in a religious family.

## Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for our dependent and independent variables for majority-group and second-generation Turkish women. There are some important differences between the two subsamples. Second-generation Turkish women are less likely to participate in the labour force: 89 per cent of women from the majority group were economically active at the time of the survey compared with 74 per cent of Turkish-background women. This pattern is likely to be related (in part) to other differences between the two groups. Majority-group women are, on average, two-and-a-half years older than second-generation Turkish women. More than half of Turkish- and majority-background women reported that they were in a co-residential relationship at the time of the survey. Second-generation women are more likely to have started childbearing (45 per cent vs. 29 per cent), are more likely to have two or more children (26 per cent vs. 13 per cent), and are more likely to have a youngest child under five (33 per cent vs. 23 per cent) or a youngest child aged five or above (13 per cent vs. 7 per cent).

Majority-background women are more highly educated: 47 per cent have completed tertiary education vs. only 17 per cent of Turkish-background women. With respect to background characteristics, the mothers of majority-group women are about twice as likely to have been working when their daughters were 15 than the mothers of second-generation Turkish women (62 and 30 per cent, respectively). Finally, Turkish-background women are more likely than their majority-background counterparts to report that they were raised religious: 83 and 44 per cent, respectively.

The majority and second-generation subsample sizes are evenly balanced in the full sample and across the survey-country subsamples. Slightly more than one-third of second-generation and majority-background respondents reside in Germany; nearly 30 per cent of both subsamples live in the Netherlands; 19 and 24 per cent of majority-group and second-generation women, respectively, live in



**Table 1** Descriptive statistics for variables used in a logistic regression model of labour force participation: majority-background and second-generation Turkish women in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden, 2007–08

	Majority-background women		Second-generation Turkish women	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Labour force participation	593	89.4	509	73.7
Key covariates				
Parity				
0	468	70.6	377	54.6
1	110	16.6	133	19.2
2+	85	12.8	181	26.2
Country				
Germany	242	36.5	243	35.2
France	124	18.7	164	23.7
The Netherlands	193	29.1	189	27.4
Sweden	104	15.7	95	13.7
Additional covariates				
Age				
Mean (years)	28.6		26.1	
Standard deviation (years)	4.7		4.6	
In a partnership (cohabiting or married)	353	53.2	380	55.0
Age of youngest child				
Under age five	150	22.6	226	32.7
Age five or older	45	6.8	88	12.7
Respondent's highest education completed				
Less than secondary	12	1.8	39	5.6
Secondary	337	50.8	537	77.7
Tertiary	314	47.4	115	16.6
Mother employed when respondent aged 15	412	62.1	205	29.7
Raised religious	293	44.2	576	83.4
<i>N</i>	663		691	

Source: The Integration of the European Second Generation survey (2007/08).

France; and around 15 per cent of women in the sample reside in Sweden.

Table 2 presents the percentage of women in the labour force by motherhood status across countries

for second-generation Turkish and majority-group women. In Germany, the Netherlands, and France, mothers are less likely to be in the labour force than non-mothers. For example, in Germany

**Table 2** Labour force participation of majority-background and second-generation Turkish women by motherhood status in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden (*N* = 1,354; standard deviations in parentheses)

	Majority-background women		Second-generation Turkish women	
	Non-mother (%)	Mother (%)	Non-mother (%)	Mother (%)
Germany	95.77 (0.20)	45.28 <sup>1</sup> (0.50)	85.81 <sup>2</sup> (0.35)	34.09 <sup>1</sup> (0.48)
France	97.56 (0.16)	85.71 <sup>1</sup> (0.35)	96.20 (0.19)	63.53 <sup>1, 2</sup> (0.48)
The Netherlands	96.32 (0.19)	77.19 <sup>1</sup> (0.42)	90.00 (0.30)	53.54 <sup>1, 2</sup> (0.50)
Sweden	96.72 (0.18)	88.37 (0.32)	88.68 (0.32)	83.33 (0.38)

<sup>1</sup>Difference between mothers and non-mothers statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level, two-tailed *t*-test.

<sup>2</sup>Difference between second-generation Turkish and majority-background women statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level, two-tailed *t*-test.

Source: As for Table 1.

mothers are less than half as likely to be in the labour force as non-mothers, regardless of migrant background status. In France and the Netherlands, on the other hand, the motherhood gap in labour force participation is larger for the second generation than for majority-background women: a gap of 33 percentage points for the second generation vs. 12 percentage points for majority women in France, and a gap of 36 percentage points for the second generation vs. 19 percentage points for majority women in the Netherlands. In Sweden, while the percentage

of mothers in the labour force is smaller than the percentage of non-mothers, the difference is not statistically significant for either second-generation or majority-background women.

When comparing second-generation Turkish women with their majority counterparts by motherhood status, two different patterns emerge across the countries. On the one hand, a large and statistically significant gap in labour force participation by migrant background status is only evident among mothers in the Netherlands and France, while the

**Table 3** Regression coefficients from logistic regression of labour force participation of majority-background and second-generation Turkish women in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden, 2007–08

	$\beta$	SE	$e^\beta$
Constant	-1.38	2.90	0.25
Migrant background $\times$ motherhood status (main effect)			
Majority-background non-mother (ref)	0.00		1.00
Majority-background mother	-3.55	0.50****	0.03
Second-generation Turkish non-mother	-0.92	0.45**	0.40
Second-generation Turkish mother	-3.54	0.49****	0.03
Country of residence (main effect)			
Germany (ref)	0.00		1.00
France	0.14	0.82	1.15
The Netherlands	-0.08	0.60	0.93
Sweden	-0.05	0.83	0.95
Migrant background $\times$ motherhood status $\times$ country of residence			
France			
Majority-background non-mother (ref)	0.00		1.00
Majority-background mother	1.85	0.97*	6.35
Second-generation Turkish non-mother	1.15	1.03	3.17
Second-generation Turkish mother	1.19	0.88	3.28
The Netherlands			
Majority-background non-mother (ref)	0.00		1.00
Majority-background mother	1.69	0.74**	5.43
Second-generation Turkish non-mother	0.46	0.73	1.58
Second-generation Turkish mother	0.93	0.67	2.53
Sweden			
Majority-background non-mother (ref)	0.00		1.00
Majority-background mother	1.69	0.74**	5.43
Second-generation Turkish non-mother	0.46	0.73	1.58
Second-generation Turkish mother	0.93	0.67**	2.53
Age	0.25	0.22	1.29
Age squared	0.00	0.00	1.00
In a partnership (cohabiting or married)	-0.30	0.24	0.74
Parity 2+	-0.66	0.22***	0.52
Youngest child under age five	-0.62	0.25**	0.54
Respondent completed tertiary education	0.46	0.25*	1.58
Mother employed when respondent aged 15	0.53	0.19***	1.70
Raised religious	0.03	0.21	1.03
<i>N</i>		1,354	
Pseudo $R^2$		0.27	
Log-likelihood (null model)		-650.65	
Log-likelihood (model)		-475.07	
df (degrees of freedom)		24	

Notes: Ref denotes the reference category. SE denotes the standard error. \* $p < 0.10$ ; \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Source: As for Table 1.

differences in labour force participation among non-mothers are much smaller and not statistically significant. On the other hand, the reverse pattern is found in Germany. Here there is evidence of differential labour force attachment between second-generation and majority non-mothers; however, this gap is narrower and non-significant among mothers. While this pattern of a larger 'second-generation' gap in participation among non-mothers is also evident in Sweden, the difference is not statistically significant.

These patterns may stem from differences in the individual and background characteristics of the majority- and Turkish-background samples in each country. We present a model of women's labour force participation net of demographic, educational, and background characteristics in Table 3. Looking first at these characteristics, we find no statistically significant association between age at interview and the log of the odds of labour force participation, net of other characteristics. With respect to family situation, we find no evidence of a statistically significant association between living in a marital or non-marital co-residential partnership and labour force participation; however, on average, having a larger family (two or more co-resident children) and having young children (at least one under the age of five) are both associated with lower odds of labour force participation. Tertiary-educated women have higher odds of labour force participation than women without a degree (but only reaching marginal statistical significance at the 10 per cent level); this finding is consistent with theories suggesting higher opportunity costs to inactivity or greater preferences for market work among the highly educated. Intergenerational influences are

also evident. Women whose mothers were employed when they were aged 15 have 53 per cent higher odds of labour force participation than those whose mothers were not employed. However, being raised religious is not associated with labour force participation, net of other individual and background characteristics.

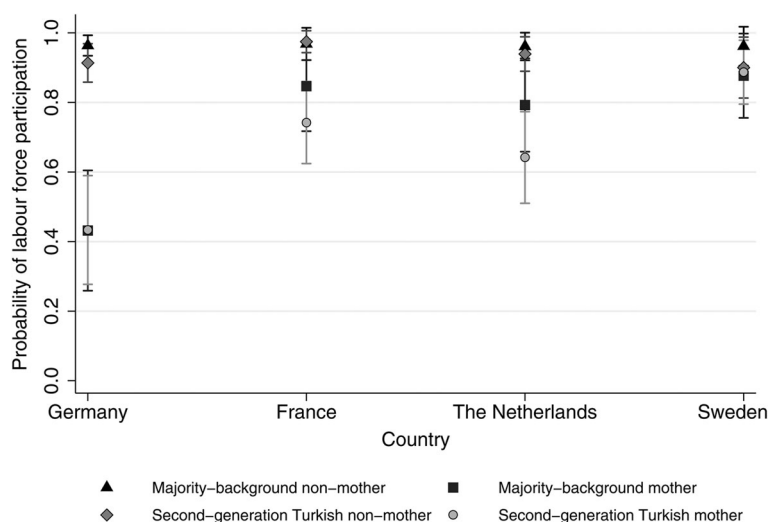
Because of the complexity of interpretation of the three-way interactions, we present predicted probabilities of labour force participation (with 95 per cent confidence intervals) for women by migrant background status and motherhood status across country contexts in Table 4 and Figure 1. In general, accounting for individual and background characteristics reduces differences in predicted labour force participation between Turkish- and majority-background women, between mothers and non-mothers, and between Turkish- and majority-background women by motherhood status. Compared with the descriptive results in Table 2, the model results in Table 4 show that the motherhood gaps for majority-background women are only marginally reduced, while the reduction in the motherhood gaps are more marked for Turkish-background women. Figure 1 shows clearly that women still face the most sizeable motherhood differential in labour force participation in Germany; this gap is estimated to be five percentage points smaller for second-generation Turkish women than for their majority peers. In Sweden, the difference in labour force participation by motherhood status among Turkish-background women is negligible (one percentage point), whereas majority women face an eight percentage point gap in their labour force participation (although the difference is not

**Table 4** Predicted probabilities and 95 per cent confidence intervals (in parentheses) from logistic regression of labour force participation of majority-background and second-generation Turkish women by motherhood status in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden, 2007–08 ( $N = 1,354$ )

	Majority-background women		Second-generation Turkish women	
	Non-mother	Mother	Non-mother	Mother
Germany	0.96 (0.93–0.99)	0.43 (0.26–0.60)	0.91 (0.86–0.97)	0.43 (0.28–0.59)
France	0.97 (0.92–1.01)	0.85 (0.72–0.98)	0.97 (0.94–1.01)	0.74 (0.62–0.86)
The Netherlands	0.96 (0.92–1.00)	0.79 (0.66–0.93)	0.94 (0.89–0.99)	0.64 (0.51–0.77)
Sweden	0.96 (0.91–1.02)	0.88 (0.76–1.00)	0.90 (0.81–0.99)	0.89 (0.80–0.98)

*Note:* Additional covariates set to age 27, secondary education or less, parity less than two, in a partnership, mother employed at age 15, and raised religious.

*Source:* As for Table 1.



**Figure 1** Predicted probabilities and 95 per cent confidence intervals from logistic regression of labour force participation of majority-background and second-generation Turkish women by motherhood status in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden, 2007–08 ( $N = 1,354$ )

Source: The Integration of the European Second Generation survey (2007/08).

statistically significant). Differential motherhood gaps remain for Turkish- and majority-background mothers in the Netherlands (30 and 17 percentage points, respectively) and France (23 and 12 percentage points, respectively); however, they do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) net of individual demographic, educational, and family background characteristics.

## Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we have investigated differences in labour force participation among second-generation Turkish and majority-background women by motherhood status across four European country contexts. We have provided new insights into how family context is linked to labour force attachment among women of migrant origin.

Observed differences in the labour force participation of mothers and non-mothers across countries are, overall, as expected. In Germany, we find the largest motherhood gaps, whereas in Sweden the difference in labour force participation between mothers and non-mothers is the smallest, with France and the Netherlands falling in between. An interesting pattern of cross-country variation in women's labour force participation by motherhood and migrant background status is evident. Our trivariate analysis revealed that the sizes of motherhood gaps in labour force participation are similar for Turkish- and majority-background women in Germany and in Sweden.

However, an additional gap for second-generation Turkish mothers is evident in the Netherlands and France.

Some of this additional disadvantage could be attributed to compositional differences across sub-populations. From our model, we found parity and age of the youngest child to be strong predictors of labour force participation: mothers of two or more children and mothers with young children (aged under five) are more likely to be out of the labour force. Education is positively associated with labour force participation, and socialization, through women's experience of their own mother's employment, plays a role in determining women's labour market activity. We did not find evidence that being raised in a religious household is associated with labour force participation. It may be that household religiosity in childhood is only a weak proxy for gender role values or that the measure in our study was too limited to capture the diversity of religious upbringing and related values.

After taking individual and background characteristics into account, the differences in predicted labour force participation between second-generation Turkish and majority-background mothers in France and the Netherlands are attenuated (from 22 to 11 percentage points, and from 24 to 13 percentage points, respectively) and are no longer statistically significant. Our ability to make precise point estimates may be limited by our small sample sizes. Still, if there is a residual disadvantage among Turkish-background mothers in the Netherlands and France, but not in Germany and Sweden, it

may be that this pattern is related to the degree to which there are clear normative patterns regarding women's labour force participation before and after childbearing. In Germany, the tendency towards separate spheres for men and women may dominate among both majority-group and Turkish-origin families, resulting in similar economic behaviour within the context of childbearing for both groups. In Sweden, the pervasive policy and normative emphasis on individualization and independence, and support for men's and women's continued economic activity through the provision of parental leave and high-quality childcare for preschool-aged children, may influence the behaviour of both Swedish- and Turkish-background women. Even if second-generation Turkish women were more likely to experience parental socialization favouring strongly gendered division of paid and unpaid work, the strong normative influence and the equalizing influence of the Swedish welfare state regime would likely play a role in shaping women's economic behaviour within the context of childbearing and childrearing (Lundström and Andersson 2012). On the other hand, the institutional and normative contexts in the Netherlands and France afford women a choice between remaining (marginally) attached to the labour market or withdrawing fully when children are small. It may be that in these more fluid normative contexts, where the emphasis does not fall strongly on the side of labour force attachment (e.g., in Sweden) or labour force withdrawal (e.g., in Germany), individual preferences for labour market withdrawal are more easily exercised. If Turkish-background women with young children disproportionately favour economic inactivity compared with their majority counterparts in the Netherlands and France (Idema and Phaet 2007; Copur et al. 2010), we would indeed expect a larger motherhood gap in labour force participation in these countries.

In the analysis reported in this paper, we focused on the labour force participation of women who had left education. It is likely that pursuing education beyond the compulsory level is a strategy for improving one's position in the labour market, and thus pursuing higher education may predict higher levels of labour force attachment over the life course. Indeed, we find higher levels of attachment among the highly educated, consistent with higher opportunity costs of exiting the labour force or different preferences for market work. Moreover, different degrees of market segmentation across these coordinated market economies may have implications for the labour market returns to educational investment

and the related opportunity costs of labour market withdrawal. Extending this analysis to consider how the association between labour market dynamics and childbearing may vary by level of education among majority- and immigrant-background women across Europe could be a fruitful avenue for future research.

The cross-sectional nature of the TIES data precluded us from exploring the causal impact of motherhood on labour force participation. The development of high-quality longitudinal data is essential to deepen our understanding of the interrelationship between labour market and family dynamics, and the balance of work and family life among the European second generation. While such cross-national comparative data are not yet available, they would allow for a better understanding of how and to what extent potential ethnic differentials are actually a reflection of the differential (causal) impact of motherhood on labour force participation or a differential selection into work and family among European women of diverse origins.

While the TIES survey is a unique resource for insights into the experiences of the second-generation young adults of Turkish origin living in several European cities, our results cannot be extrapolated to broader national or other European populations. As noted, the majority subsample included in the survey is (socio-)economically advantaged relative to the second generation: majority respondents are more likely to be highly educated and older, more likely to have a mother who worked when they were 15 years old, and they may also differ on other unobserved dimensions. If majority populations are more likely to have come to cities for employment or education, or have more progressive orientations towards women's labour force participation, combining work and family, and gender role ideologies, we may overestimate the negative association between Turkish background and labour force participation. Bearing this potential selection in mind, our finding of only small differentials in labour force participation and in the motherhood gap between Turkish- and majority-background women is even more striking. Second-generation Turkish and majority-group women may, in fact, be more similar in their labour force participation (all else being equal) than we have estimated here.

Even though our data do not allow for an investigation of the unique mechanisms shaping labour force participation or the institutional barriers to work for second-generation Turkish women within individual countries, our analyses point to the

importance of national context for the labour force participation of Turkish-origin women. In addition to differing normative and policy contexts underlying our findings, there may also be differing levels of ethnic discrimination in the labour force or in education (Hermansen 2013) or differences in employment-related social capital (Verhaeghe et al. 2013) across and within countries. While variation in labour market outcomes do not necessarily indicate the presence of discrimination or social capital deficits, we cannot rule out the possibility that they underlie part of the differences observed between second-generation Turkish and majority women in this study.

To highlight the importance of institutional factors in shaping work and family outcomes further, future research must be broadened to include the experiences of women of other second-generation origins. Taking into account the experience of more diverse subpopulations would illuminate how specific cultural, socio-economic, and labour market mechanisms operate differently by migrant origin and improve our understanding of the economic position of the second generation and gender equity among diverse European populations. So too would the inclusion of more country contexts and time periods, allowing for more sophisticated multilevel analyses, in order to explore the possible mechanisms driving these cross-country differences. Another fruitful avenue of research would be to investigate heterogeneity in the uptake and effects of specific family policies, such as formal or informal childcare or parental leave, on women's labour force activity (Lundström and Andersson 2012; Kil et al. 2015), in order to disentangle the role of policy vs. cultural norms in shaping women's labour market behaviour over the life course.

Taken together, it is clear from these findings that individuals' employment decisions are not made in a vacuum. Institutional and socio-normative contexts matter for the economic activity of second-generation Turkish women and their majority counterparts. These are essential insights, not only for scholars but also for policymakers. For example, by 2020 the European Union intends to reach 75 per cent employment levels among the working-age population (European Commission 2011). These findings suggest that broad-based policy interventions, focusing on gender equity and improving work/family balance, may improve the employment circumstances and economic position of all women, regardless of immigrant background, in increasingly diverse European labour markets.

## Notes

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