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► **To cite this version:**

| Ognjen Obućina. Marriage migration and divorce risk in Sweden. 2015. hal-04650942

HAL Id: hal-04650942

<https://hal.science/hal-04650942>

Preprint submitted on 17 Jul 2024

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**Stockholm
Research Reports
in Demography
2015: 25**

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Marriage Migration and Divorce Risk in Sweden

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze whether immigrant couples in which one partner is marriage migrant (transnational endogamous couples) differ from immigrant couples who met locally (local endogamous couples) with respect to divorce risk. The data are drawn from the STAR compilation of Swedish registers and cover the time period between 1990 and 2012. The unit of the analysis is the married couple. Eight immigrant groups are included into the analysis, i.e. the foreign-born originating from the former Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Middle East, Southeast Asia, Poland and Chile. Separate multivariate analyses are carried out for each of these groups. Multivariate analysis is based on piecewise constant exponential model. In order to remove a possible effect of convenience marriages on divorce risk in transnational couples, having common children is considered an indicator of a committed relationship. The results of the main model show that, as compared to local endogamous couples, transnational couples have an elevated divorce risk in all eight groups if the importer is a woman. The patterns are more complex when looking at transnational couples with a male importer.

1. Introduction

Transnational marriage markets and the “import” of partners from the country of origin have long been an important chapter in the story on migration and family. The importance of marriage migrations for social researchers is at least twofold. First of all, the share of family-formation migration in the total migratory movements in Europe is considerable. After labor migration decreased due to the structural changes in the Western economies in mid-1970s, migratory processes in Europe over the last decades have been largely fueled by family reunification (Kofman, 2004; Castles et al., 2014) which, in many countries, is the single most important reason for granting residence permits. It has been estimated that out of three residence permits issued on the grounds of family reunification in Sweden in the period 2002-2006, two were given to “newly established couples” (Parusel, 2009). It is likely that these figures are to a certain degree a result of Sweden’s relatively liberal policy towards marriage migrants. Due to universalism being one of the principal features of Sweden’s social policy, there are no special age restrictions for transnational couples in Sweden, which is not the case in Denmark or the Netherlands (Rytter, 2012; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Second, apart from the prominent role in total migration inflows, the importance of marriage migration is also reflected in a considerable contribution of marriage migrants to the cultural heterogeneity and heteropraxis within immigrant groups. Lesthaghae and Surkyn (1995) show that Turkish imported wives in Belgium tend to have more traditional views than other Turkish-born women with respect to marriage, fertility or employment. These findings have given rise to some researchers to emphasize the importance of intra-ethnic cultural differences in explaining the marital patterns among immigrants. For instance, another Belgian study (Eeckhaut et al., 2011) finds that immigrant couples in which one partner is marriage migrant (referred to as transnational endogamous couples or simply as transnational couples in the remainder of the text) have a higher divorce risk than immigrant couples who met locally (from here on denoted as local endogamous couples).

This study, focusing on eight immigrant groups in Sweden, aims to analyze the divorce risk of endogamous transnational couples using register data. These immigrant groups differ on socio-economic indicators, cultural proximity to native population, and propensity for marriage migration. In this way the heterogeneity of immigrant population in Sweden is incorporated into the research design, which should ensure more precision when answering the research question. The study is motivated by intra-community differences and divorce risk

of transnational couples will be analyzed primarily with respect to local immigrant endogamous couples. Therefore, hypotheses tested in this study focus on differences within immigrant groups. However, in order to obtain an additional perspective, the divorce risk of transnational marriages will be compared to that of mixed nativity marriages. Most previous studies have demonstrated that intermarriages in general and mixed nativity marriages in particular are characterized by an elevated divorce risk (see Dribe and Lundh, 2012 for Sweden, and Smith et al., 2012, Milewski and Kulu, 2014, and Kulu and Gonzalez-Ferrer, 2014 for other countries).

Marriages of convenience, i.e. marriages formed with the aim of helping a person living abroad to obtain a residence permit, are one of the most controversial issues associated with marriage migration (Timmerman, 2006; Eggebø, 2013). Although marriages of convenience are outside the interest of this study, this practice, even if not very common, can bias the results. This is the main reason why this study only considers marriages that with a high degree of certainty can be considered committed marriages. It is assumed that, even if two individuals start a marriage with a sole motivation to facilitate the migration and improve the legal status of one of them at the desired destination, they will refrain from having children together. This is the main reason why this study only takes into account childbearing marriages.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

2.1. The mechanisms of marriage migration

The principal factors contributing to marriage-related migration can be grouped into pull and push factors, i.e. those operating at destination and those operating at origin (Lievens, 1999). This study departs from the belief that transnational couples, in some aspects, resemble native-immigrant or other exogamous couples and therefore it is no surprise that the classification of both pull- and push factors is similar to the main determinants of intermarriage discussed in Kalmijn (1998).

Starting from pull factors, *preferences of immigrants* are often regarded as one of the crucial mechanisms of marriage-related migration. According to this view, the co-ethnic marriage candidates who live in the country of origin are perceived by some immigrants as the most

typical representative of their home culture and are thus considered desirable partners within immigrants groups with a high propensity for endogamy. This perspective may lead to a view that intermarriage and partner import are two opposite strategies, almost antonyms. If intermarriage is celebrated as an indicator of social integration (Coleman, 1994), marriage migration may be seen as an indicator that the importer (or even his or her group as a whole) is not integrated into the host society. However, just as marrying a native does not necessarily imply a successful social integration (Song, 2009), finding a partner in the country of origin does not always mean that an immigrant fails to integrate into the host society. It is namely possible that preferences for a partner from the country of origin also emerge as a result of immigrant's transnational lifestyle, which in itself is not necessarily incompatible with integration (Levitt and Schiller, 2004). Indeed, leading a "bifocal life" (Duany, 2011) may be easier with an imported spouse. Also, importing a partner may give more flexibility to the migrant with regard to his or her future plans. Many immigrants plan or are at least willing to return to their country of origin, or to undertake an onward migration, and eventually many do so (OECD, 2008). There are good reasons to believe that a return migration is more likely if a person is married with an imported partner than with a co-ethnic who already is an established immigrant, and much more likely than if a person enters a native-immigrant marriage. Apart from one's own preferences, the activities on transnational marriage markets can also be fueled by the *preferences of third parties* (most often immigrant's parents and other family members), especially in the communities in which marriage is understood as a family matter rather than as a union of two independent individuals. The role of third parties may not always be direct: even in the absence of a direct parental influence, a desire to satisfy parents' assumed preferences may prompt immigrants to search for a partner in the country origin. The finding by Çelikaksoy et al. (2003) that immigrants who have no conflicts with parents are more likely to import a partner corroborates this view. Finally, conditions on the *marriage market at destination* may also be responsible for the patterns of marriage migration. To illustrate, in a number of immigrant groups in Sweden a share of those who marry natives is substantially higher among women (Dribe and Lundh, 2008). This implies a scarcity of potential partners for men from these immigrant groups in Sweden with a preference for endogamy. Consequently, searching for a partner in the country of origin seems a viable alternative.

Turning to push factors, as it takes two to marry, it follows that the *preferences of marriage candidates at origin* are an important factor shaping the patterns of marriage migration.

Marriage candidates in the country of origin may be attracted by the lifestyle of a co-ethnic living abroad. In the contexts with a pronounced migration culture, the fact that a potential partner lives abroad may be seen as an indicator of his or her maturity, hard work or resourcefulness (Kandel and Massey, 2002; Heering et al., 2004; de Haas, 2010). Also, the very possibility of one's own migration to another country through marriage may add to the appeal of a co-ethnic living abroad. The *expectations in the home community* are the nearest equivalent to third parties when it comes to the push factors. These expectations can be a result of informal contractual arrangements between individuals or families at origin and destination (Lievens, 1999). For example, think of a situation where an established migrant feels obliged to marry a person from the country of origin as a return for the help he or she may have received from the future partner's family when leaving the country. Finally, conditions at the *marriage market at origin* may also increase or decrease the likelihood of marriage-related migration. Sex imbalances and marriage market squeeze can also emerge in the country of origin, especially in the regions characterized by intense and gendered patterns of emigration.

2.3. How different are transnational couples?

There are a number of characteristics which distinguish transnational couples from local endogamous couples. First, in the light of assimilation perspective (Gordon, 1964), and as discussed in Eeckhaut et al. (2010), a difference in the length of exposure to destination country culture may result in more pronounced cultural differences between partners, although they originate from the same country of origin. Second, most transnational couples are characterized by a shorter average time between acquaintance and the wedding, as compared to the local endogamous couples. Third, as discussed previously, it may be that the very possibility of migration additionally contributes to the appeal of potential importer. However, it is also possible that the imported partner is less attracted to the importer once migration takes place, even if a committed and serious union (rather than marriage of convenience) was the original motivation for marriage for both partners. Fourth, the very act of migration can affect the dynamics between two partners in transnational couples. Social scientists agree that migration is a stressful life event (Sluzki, 1979; Davis, 2011) and it is therefore possible that migration-induced stress reflects on the relationship between the marriage migrant and the importing partner. Although these four characteristics are not necessarily present in all transnational couples, they are mutually non-exclusive and work in

the same direction: they make the marriage more vulnerable. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 predicts that divorce risk will be higher for transnational couples than for local immigrant endogamous couples with the same observable characteristics.

An alternative view would emphasize the possibility that the immigrants who bring in partners from the country of origin differ with respect to values and attitudes from their co-ethnics who marry locally. This can imply that the hypothesized intra-group cultural differences in transnational couples are of a small magnitude, if present at all. Moreover, immigrants who import partners may have a more negative attitude towards divorce in general, which would also decrease the divorce propensity of transnational couples.

2.2. Marriage migration and gender

Gender relations evolve during the migration process, also in a way that can affect the quality of relationship and divorce risk (Darvishpour, 2002; Parrado and Flippen, 2005). For instance, if a couple moves together from a less to a more gender-equal country (which is the case for all immigrant groups in this study), an increase in divorce risk takes place also as a result of an increase in woman's bargaining power (Darvishpour, 2002). Therefore, what is the role of gender relations when looking specifically at transnational couples? The view of partner import as a manifestation of traditional behavior is not only challenged by the transnational nature of immigrants' lives, but also by the possible impact of migration on gender roles within household. In particular, some authors have suggested that, unlike men, immigrant women of first and second generation often bring in partners from the countries of origin in order to achieve modern goals, such as escaping the patrilocal tradition or gaining more independence from her own parents (Lievens, 1999). According to this perspective, an immigrant woman who brings in a partner from abroad will in most cases possess more country-specific skills (including language skills) than her husband. On a similar note, she will have more social capital and will in general be more familiar with local circumstances than her partner. As a consequence, a decision to import a partner may result in more bargaining power within household for a female importer, if a comparison is made to a scenario in which she marries a co-ethnic already living in the destination country. In other words, when the marriage migrant is a man, the gendered distribution of power within the households is undermined (Liversage, 2011). However, the stability of marriage may be endangered if we assume that imported men are not prepared or willing to accept this shift in

power relations within the household. Furthermore, possible gender patterns in divorce risk in transnational couples may not only have to do with intra-household bargaining power. Charsley (2005) analyzes male marriage migrants in the UK and argues that they often feel frustrated in the destination country because the very act of moving to the wife's community goes against the tradition in the community of origin. For a male marriage migrant, this move often entails a weak social capital at destination and the culturally uncommon proximity to the wife's family, which may have an adverse effect on the quality of marriage. However, it may not be exclusively the factors operating within the (extended) family that shape gendered patterns of divorce in transnational couples. The possible role of migration stress on the stability of transnational couples may also be gendered. Lewin (2001) argues that, as compared to immigrant women, and due to differences in gender norms between origin and destination, male immigrants in Sweden are less enthusiastic about social integration in general. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that a possibly lower average level of dissatisfaction with the migration outcome among immigrant men may also generate differences in divorce risk between couples with female importers and those with male importers.

Although the motivation for importing a partner cannot be observed in this study, this paper is, however, based on the assumption that at least for some women the motivation consists of the desire for more autonomy. Keeping this in mind, and given that most migrant husbands come from countries with more traditional views on gender roles, we should expect the intra-ethnic cultural differences in transnational couples to be more pronounced if the importer is a woman. These considerations set the stage for Hypothesis 2, which predicts that divorce risk in transnational couples will be higher if the importer is female.

3. Data and methodology

The data are drawn from the STAR compilation of Swedish registers and cover the time period between 1990 and 2012. The unit of the analysis is the married couple. In the lack of information on ethnicity, the affiliation to an immigrant group is determined based on the country of birth or the region of birth. This study focuses on marital choices of established immigrants. This means that a couple is only included into the analysis if at least one marriage partner is foreign-born and had spent at least 5 years (60 months) in Sweden before getting married. Every foreign-born person who marries 12 months following the arrival to Sweden is

considered a marriage migrant. However, although it is not a necessary condition for obtaining a residence permit, many immigrants marry in their home countries, prior to applying for a residence permit in a Swedish embassy or consulate. Since waiting times until obtaining a residence permit can be considerable (up to 16 months according to the Swedish Migration Board), a person is also considered a marriage migrant if he or she married a Sweden-based co-ethnic 24 months or less before migrating to Sweden. The analysis only includes childbearing marriages formed 1990 or after and only one marriage spell per person is observed. Individuals who emigrate from Sweden as well as those whose union is dissolved due to their partner's or their own death are right-censored at the time of the event. The principal independent variable is the type of marriage with respect to partner's origin. The variable includes five categories: 1) local endogamous immigrant couples (both partners are established immigrants at the time of marriage, reference category), 2) endogamous transnational couples, female importer, 3) endogamous transnational couples, male importer, 4) immigrant woman – native man couples, and 5) immigrant man – native woman couples. A partner is considered native if he or she was born in Sweden to two Swedish-born parents. All other marriages are classified into the residual category “other marriages.” They are included in the descriptive statistics, but not in the multivariate model because the heterogeneity of this group within and across immigrant groups complicates the interpretation of the coefficients.

As shown in an extensive review by Lyngstad and Jalovaara (2010), a number of socio-demographic individual characteristics can affect the likelihood of divorce. In order to separate the impact of marriage type from the impact of other factors, the multivariate analysis includes the following characteristics of each partner: 1) age at the start of marriage (as well as its squared term), 2) education level (primary or less, secondary, some post-secondary, tertiary), 3) activity (employed, unemployed, in education, other), and marriage order¹ (a dummy for second or higher order marriage). A decision to divorce may also be influenced by the characteristics of the local community (Lyngstad, 2011). Therefore, the presence of the co-ethnic immigrant group in the municipality is introduced as another control variable, categorized as follows: weak presence (less than 1% of the total population in the municipality), moderate presence (more than 1%, up to 2%), and strong presence (more than 2% in the municipality). The model also controls for time period (before 1999, 2000-2005, and 2006 or after). Multivariate analysis is based on piecewise constant exponential model.

¹ This variable is based on individual's marital history in Sweden. It is likely that some immigrants already experienced a divorce before migrating to Sweden.

As explained earlier, in order to minimize a possible effect of convenience marriages on divorce risk in transnational couples, having common children is considered an indicator of a committed marriage. Therefore, time at risk is calculated starting from the birth of the first common child. Only those immigrant groups are included in which, for each of five types of marriage, at least one hundred marriages with common children are observed. Eight immigrant groups were identified to satisfy this condition, i.e. the foreign-born originating from the former Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Middle East, Southeast Asia, Poland and Chile. On the other hand, some large immigrant groups (e.g., Finns and other Nordics) are omitted from the analysis due to a very low prevalence of partner import. Separate multivariate analyses are carried out for each of these groups.

4. Descriptive findings

Before turning our attention to the patterns of divorce, let us first have a look at the prevalence of each type of marriage. The third column of Table 1 shows the distribution of marriages by type for each immigrant group, considering only couples who had their first child after getting married. Transnational marriages constitute more than a half of all marriages among Yugoslav, Turkish, Middle Eastern and Iraqi immigrants. On the other hand, the practice of importing partners is less prominent among Chilean and Polish immigrants, who also show the highest rates of marriage with natives and with partners classified as others. Men act as importers more often than women, and this is the case for all immigrant groups under study. However, gender patterns are far from being equally pronounced. While the ratio of male importers to female importers among Chileans is close to one, male importers outnumber the female ones by seven to one among Iranian immigrants. Importing a partner is more common choice than marrying locally among men from all groups as well as for most groups among women (Iranian and Southeast Asian women being an exception). We should, however, bear in mind that the share of local endogamous couples and native-immigrant couples increases once we take into account all married couples, i.e. also those who had a child before marriage (see Table A1 in Appendix).

Looking at general divorce propensity across immigrant groups, Kaplan-Meier analysis presented in Table 1 reveals that Chileans are most likely to divorce – in four out of six types of marriage, more than a half of couples will have divorced within fifteen years since the first

childbirth. On average, Turkish immigrants divorce less than others, but a relatively low propensity to divorce is also observed in some other groups, most notably among former Yugoslav and Middle Eastern immigrants. When it comes to differences by marriage type within immigrant groups, transnational marriages with a female importer are characterized by the highest divorce risk among immigrants from Iran, Poland, Chile and Southeast Asia. Moreover, this is the case regardless of which of three points (5, 10 or 15 years since childbirth) is considered. More than forty percent of Polish and Iranian transnational couples with a female importer, and more than a half of their Southeast Asian and Chilean counterparts divorce within the first fifteen years after the birth of the first common child. In other immigrant groups, native-immigrant marriages are the most prone to divorce. Local endogamous couples divorce less than other couples in four groups – immigrants from former Yugoslavia, Middle East, Southeast Asia and Turkey. Only around 16 percent of local Turkish couples divorce within the first 15 years since childbirth, which is the lowest divorce rate of all groups as defined by country of birth and marriage type in this study. Interestingly, and possibly somewhat unexpectedly given the previous research, in some groups it is the native-immigrant marriages showing the lowest divorce rates. This is especially the case for Chilean women – native man marriages.

But what is the initial evidence in terms of the two principal hypotheses? Hypothesis 1 predicts that transnational couples have a higher divorce risk relative to immigrant couples who meet locally. Kaplan-Meier analysis in Table 1 reveals that transnational couples with a female importer divorce more than local endogamous couples. This is the case in all immigrant groups, and at all three points after the birth of the first common child. The only exception are Iraqi immigrants when looking at the percentage of divorced after fifteen years. When comparing transnational marriages with a male importer and local endogamous couples, the divorce rate is higher among the latter at all three points in four groups: former Yugoslav, Polish, Southeast Asian and Turkish immigrants. In summary, descriptive analysis lends a partial initial support to Hypothesis 1.

The second hypothesis predicted that transnational couples would be more prone to divorce if the importer is a woman. The analysis shows that this is indeed the case in all immigrant groups and at all three points after childbirth. This result suggests that there is initial support for Hypothesis 2. It should also be noted that the magnitude of difference in divorce rates between two types of transnational marriages varies considerably across immigrant groups: it

is marginal among Poles and very pronounced among Chileans. However, transnational couples differ from other couples with respect to labor market attachment, education and a number of other socio-demographic characteristics. Therefore, it is necessary to perform a multivariate analysis in order to separate the effect of marriage type on divorce risk from the effects of other relevant characteristics.

Table 1 about here

5. Multivariate analysis

The association between marriage type and divorce risk that emerges after controlling for observable characteristics is shown in Figure 1.² Local endogamous couples constitute the reference group and are indicated with a white bar. The analysis shows that the importance of marriage type for divorce risk differs across groups. The magnitude of differences in divorce risk varies little among Polish and Iranian immigrants. The differences are somewhat more pronounced among Chileans, and much more pronounced in other five immigrant groups.

Beginning with transnational couples with a female importer, the results in Figure 1 show that, relative to local endogamous couples, these couples are in general exposed to an elevated divorce risk. This result is found in all eight groups under study, although the association is not statistically significant for Polish and Iranian couples. The relative divorce risk is also least pronounced in these groups, as these couples are around 30% more likely to divorce than couples in which both spouses are established immigrants. The divorce risk for this marriage type is most pronounced among Southeast Asian couples – women who import their partner are twice more likely to divorce than women from this group who marry a local co-ethnic. Women from other five immigrant groups who import a husband from the country of origin are between 47% and 64% more likely to divorce than women who marry a local co-ethnic.

Turning to transnational couples with a male importer, the patterns are somewhat more complex. The highest relative divorce risk is found among Southeast Asian couples, their risk of divorce is 40% higher than that of Southeast Asian local couples. There is an increased

² In this section, only the results concerning the main variable of interest are reported and discussed. For more detailed results of the multivariate analysis see Table A1 in the Appendix.

divorce risk among former Yugoslav, Turkish, Polish and Chilean couples, but the relative divorce risks in these groups are smaller and the coefficients are not statistically significant. Interestingly, Iranian men who import wives are actually exposed to a somewhat lower divorce risk as compared to their co-ethnics who marry Iranian women already based in Sweden. This suggests that there is partial support for Hypothesis 1 (i.e. the initial conclusions from the previous section also hold in the multivariate setting). Figure 1 also demonstrates that the support for Hypothesis 2 observed in the Kaplan-Meier analysis is still present once observable characteristics are controlled for. Even in groups in which transnational couples with a male importer are exposed to an elevated divorce risk, that risk is smaller in magnitude than the risk in transnational couples with a female importer.

How does divorce risk in different types of endogamous marriages compare to the divorce propensity in native-immigrant marriages? The picture obtained here is somewhat more complex than would be expected based on the previous research. Among former Yugoslav, Turkish, Middle Eastern and Iraqi immigrants mixed nativity marriages are indeed clearly less stable than transnational marriages. This is especially the case with immigrant man – native woman marriages in the first three groups – these marriages are almost three times more likely to break up than local endogamous marriages in each group. Yet, in the other four groups, transnational couples with a female importer constitute the group with the highest divorce risk (i.e. these couples are more likely to break up also when a comparison is made to mixed nativity marriages). Moreover, Polish and Iranian immigrants who marry a native spouse are not at all more likely to experience divorce than Poles or Iranians who marry a co-ethnic already established in Sweden.

Figure 1 about here

6. Selection issues

As marriage is a preferred form of living arrangement for an overwhelming majority of transnational couples, this paper looks at marital unions only. However, an increased level of family complexity in contemporary societies also implies that drawing a clear line between cohabitation and marriage is not always simple, especially when using the event history analysis, and especially when the main focus is on married couples with common children. A

substantial share of cohabitations in Sweden evolves into marital unions and, given that cohabitation is a widespread practice in this country, a considerable share of marriages started as cohabitations, with or without common children. The empirical analysis in the previous section only looks at couples who have the first common child after getting married. Indeed, this is a typical sequence of events for a huge majority of transnational couples in Sweden, as within this group less than five percent of couples who have a common child do so before the formation of marriage. In contrast, among local immigrant couples, the share of those who had the first child at least one month before the start of marriage ranges from 21% to 33% (depending on immigrant group), while this was the case for as much as 40% of observed mixed nativity couples. This means that many married couples with at least one common child have been left out of the analysis. What is potentially even a greater problem is the possibility that the sequence of two events (marriage and childbirth) depends on the same unobservable factors which may affect the likelihood of divorce. Research has demonstrated that the couples who accept cohabitation and non-marital childbearing differ from those who do not in terms of attitudes and values (Clarkberg et al., 1995; Berrington and Diamond, 2000). Moreover, it is highly possible that the same values and other unobservable characteristics that determine the acceptance of cohabitation also affect attitudes towards divorce and family stability in general (Axinn and Thornton, 1992; Hall and Zhao, 1995).

Additional analyses were performed in order to address this problem. The alternative approach also includes the married couples who experienced the birth of a common child before entering marital union. As was the case in the previous sections, in the additional analyses the clock starts at childbirth for the couples who had a child when already married. On the other hand, the act of marriage is the event that triggers the clock for couples who had a child before getting married. As shown in Figure A1 in the Appendix, the results obtained in this way differ very little with respect to those reported in the previous section. Also, the conclusions concerning two principal hypotheses are not affected by whether couples who start marriage after the birth of a common child are included into the analysis or not.

7. Conclusion

The goal of this study was to address intra-community differences in immigrant groups by analyzing the link between marriage migration and divorce. Descriptive analysis showed that importing a partner is an important (and in some immigrant groups dominant) partner search

strategy. Considering the differences between transnational couples and local endogamous couples, Hypothesis 1 predicted that the former would have a higher divorce risk than the latter. The analysis lends a partial support to this hypothesis. In particular, the results of the multivariate analysis suggest that, all else equal, transnational couples in all eight groups indeed are more likely to divorce if the importer is a woman. At least slightly elevated divorce risk in transnational couples with a male importer can be observed in five out of eight groups. However, even in these five groups divorce risk is more pronounced if the importer is female. In other words, the analysis supports Hypothesis 2. The main analysis only looks at the couples for whom marriage precedes the birth of the first common child. However, the same conclusions arise if couples who have a child before getting married are also included into the analysis.

The main hypotheses concerned the comparison between transnational and local endogamous marriages. However, additional perspective is obtained if divorce risks of transnational couples are also compared to those of mixed nativity marriages. For some immigrant groups, mixed nativity marriages indeed show a considerable elevated divorce risk, but for others less so, or not at all. Transnational couples of former Yugoslav, Turkish, Iraqi and Middle Eastern origin have a lower divorce risk than their co-ethnics who marry a native Swede. However, in other four groups the groups with the most pronounced divorce risk are transnational marriages with a female importer. These results lead to two important conclusions. First, it can be argued that there are different degrees of endogamy. We should thus be aware that using simple endogamy-exogamy dichotomies may lead to oversimplification and, in worse cases, misleading results when studying family formation among immigrants. Second, some results contribute to our existing knowledge about divorce in mixed marriages in Sweden. Dribe and Lundh (2012) found that the dissimilarity in values between destination and origin is an important predictor of divorce risk in mixed nativity marriages. The results in this study indicate that, apart from the cultural factors, additional important determinants of stability of intermarriages may be at work. Immigrant groups who show a high divorce risk in intermarriages indeed originate from the countries that are positioned fairly far from Sweden on the Inglehart-Welzel cultural map (Inglehart, 2006). However, the same map demonstrates that Poland, Iran and Chile also are characterized by a different value context, yet immigrants from these countries (especially the first two) are not exposed to an elevated divorce risk if they marry a native Swede. This suggests that, similar to the findings in Andersson et al. (2015), selection into migration also should be taken into account as an additional important

factor when discussing family dynamics in general, and the stability of intermarriages in Sweden in particular.

The access to register data made it possible to obtain a more fine-grained picture of the research problem by looking at the patterns of family stability separately for eight immigrant groups. However, it is difficult to entirely disentangle the actual causal mechanisms behind the main results. The study shows that transnational marriages are especially prone to divorce if the importer is a woman. It is possible that the intra-household distribution of power is the main trigger of marital couples among these couples. Yet, one cannot rule out that the actual trigger is a less positive attitude to the host society among imported men. Furthermore, it is possible that the factors that increase divorce risk of transnational couples act simultaneously with those that decrease it. For instance, if there is no evidence of an increased divorce risk associated with marriage migration, it may suggest that intra-community cultural differences are marginal, but it may also mean that the effect of these differences is weakened by a negative general attitude to divorce in the given immigrant group. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, future research should enhance our understanding of the relative importance of the causal mechanisms shaping the results presented in this study.

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful for financial support from the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) via the Linnaeus Center for Social Policy and Family Dynamics in Europe (SPaDE), grant registration number 349-2007-8701, and the Swedish Initiative for research on Microdata in the Social and Medical Sciences (SIMSAM): Register-based Research in Nordic Demography, grant 839-2008-7495. This paper benefited greatly from the comments provided by the participants at the BSPS Conference in Swansea (September 2014) and the SPaDE Workshop (October 2014).

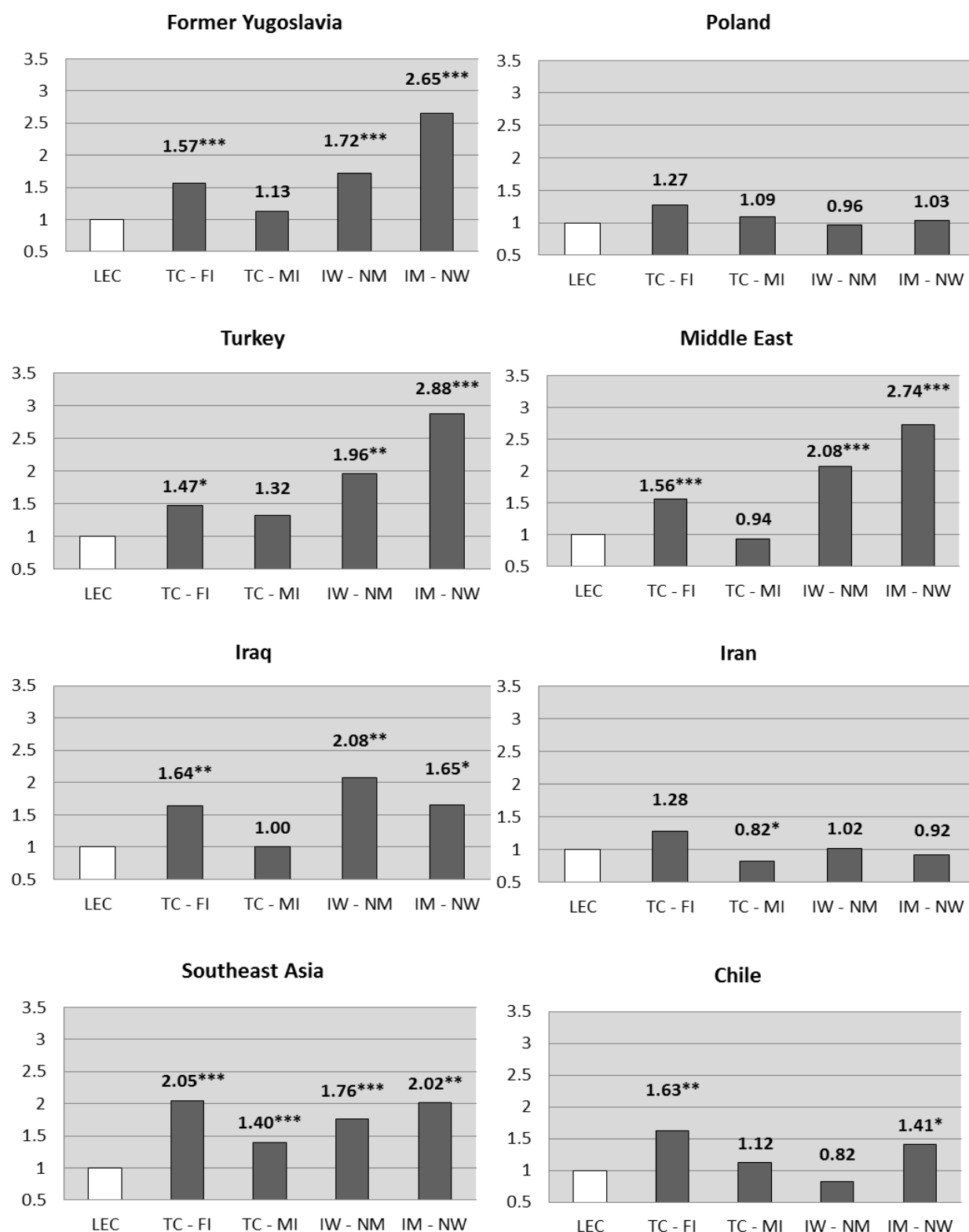
TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Share of marriage types by immigrant group; Cumulative percentage of divorced marriages, at durations of 5, 10 and 15 years after the birth of the first child, by marriage type and country of origin

| Origin | Type of marriage | Share (%) | 5 years | 10 years | 15 years |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| Former Yugoslavia | Local endogamous couple | 17.9 | 6 | 12 | 23 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 22.2 | 13 | 26 | 32 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 34.5 | 11 | 19 | 24 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 4.2 | 8 | 19 | 29 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 3.9 | 13 | 30 | 37 |
| | Other | 17.3 | 9 | 22 | 28 |
| Iran | Local endogamous couple | 12.0 | 14 | 27 | 36 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 5.4 | 21 | 39 | 46 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 39.7 | 14 | 27 | 34 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 9.4 | 9 | 22 | 34 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 9.1 | 10 | 24 | 32 |
| | Other couples | 24.3 | 17 | 32 | 40 |
| Iraq | Local endogamous couple | 6.5 | 10 | 22 | 38 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 15.3 | 15 | 28 | 36 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 47.9 | 9 | 19 | 28 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 1.8 | 15 | 34 | 40 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 2.6 | 15 | 23 | 39 |
| | Other couples | 25.9 | 15 | 26 | 36 |
| Poland | Local endogamous couple | 6.2 | 12 | 28 | 33 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 7.4 | 21 | 32 | 40 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 21.6 | 16 | 32 | 39 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 22.8 | 7 | 22 | 34 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 12.0 | 12 | 23 | 31 |
| | Other couples | 30.1 | 15 | 28 | 37 |
| Chile | Local endogamous couple | 6.6 | 24 | 37 | 51 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 9.4 | 33 | 51 | 71 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 10.4 | 24 | 37 | 44 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 21.1 | 7 | 24 | 36 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 14.9 | 21 | 39 | 58 |
| | Other couples | 37.6 | 21 | 39 | 51 |
| Middle East | Local endogamous couple | 7.7 | 4 | 15 | 20 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 19.7 | 11 | 24 | 32 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 38.3 | 7 | 14 | 21 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 3.6 | 7 | 22 | 36 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 4.9 | 13 | 29 | 37 |
| | Other couples | 25.7 | 11 | 22 | 28 |
| Southeast Asia | Local endogamous couple | 9.9 | 7 | 16 | 25 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 7.8 | 35 | 46 | 51 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 30.6 | 23 | 34 | 41 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 22.7 | 13 | 28 | 35 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 6.1 | 9 | 29 | 40 |
| | Other couples | 22.9 | 16 | 31 | 42 |
| Turkey | Local endogamous couple | 6.6 | 7 | 12 | 16 |
| | Transnational couple, female importer | 19.9 | 10 | 20 | 27 |
| | Transnational couple, male importer | 37.1 | 9 | 17 | 24 |
| | Immigrant woman / native man | 3.7 | 10 | 19 | 30 |
| | Immigrant man / native woman | 3.4 | 17 | 31 | 35 |
| | Other couples | 29.8 | 10 | 21 | 27 |

Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

Figure 1: Divorce risk by marriage type and immigrant group



*Note: * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$; LEC - local endogamous couples; TC - FI - transnational couples, female importer; TC - MI - transnational couples, male importer; IW - NM - immigrant woman, native man; IM - NW - immigrant man, native woman; Source: Swedish register data, own calculations*

APPENDIX

TABLE A1: DIVORCE RISK FOR EIGHT IMMIGRANT GROUPS IN SWEDEN, CONSTANT PIECEWISE MODEL

| | Former Yugosl. | Poland | Turkey | Middle East | Iraq | Iran | SE Asia | Chile |
|--|----------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Marriage type (ref.: local endogamous couples) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Transnational, female importer | 1.57*** | 1.27 | 1.46* | 1.56*** | 1.64** | 1.28 | 2.05*** | 1.63** |
| Transnational, male importer | 1.13 | 1.09 | 1.33 | 0.94 | 1.00 | 0.82* | 1.40* | 1.12 |
| Immigrant woman – native man | 1.72*** | 0.96 | 1.96** | 2.08*** | 2.08** | 1.02 | 1.76*** | 0.82 |
| Immigrant man – native woman | 2.65*** | 1.03 | 2.88*** | 2.74*** | 1.65* | 0.92 | 2.02** | 1.41* |
| Husband's age at marriage | 0.95* | 1.07 | 1.00 | 0.95 | 1.00 | 0.98 | 0.95 | 1.03 |
| Husband's age at marriage squared / 100 | 1.08* | 0.91 | 1.00 | 1.06 | 1.01 | 1.06 | 1.06 | 0.94 |
| Wife's age at marriage | 1.04 | 0.96 | 1.01 | 0.91 | 1.00 | 0.97 | 0.89 | 0.87 |
| Wife's age at marriage squared / 100 | 0.92 | 1.05 | 0.99 | 1.18 | 0.95 | 1.00 | 1.18 | 1.20 |
| Time since childbirth (ref.: up to 3 years) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4-5 years | 1.85*** | 2.15*** | 1.69*** | 1.70*** | 2.11*** | 1.65*** | 1.81*** | 2.55*** |
| 6-8 years | 1.84*** | 2.30*** | 1.55** | 1.84*** | 1.96*** | 1.72*** | 1.36** | 2.27*** |
| 9-11 years | 1.46*** | 1.92*** | 1.14 | 1.77*** | 2.26*** | 1.36** | 1.02 | 2.06*** |
| More than 11 years | 1.14 | 1.69** | 1.00 | 1.36** | 1.84*** | 1.48*** | 0.59** | 2.58*** |
| Husband's education (ref.: Primary or less) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Secondary education | 0.78*** | 0.61*** | 1.16 | 1.05 | 0.92 | 0.87 | 0.76** | 0.92 |
| Some post-secondary education | 0.79 | 0.44*** | 0.71 | 1.16 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.67* | 0.51** |
| Tertiary education | 0.71*** | 0.40*** | 1.08 | 0.77** | 0.79* | 0.61*** | 0.60*** | 0.62** |
| Unknown | 1.10 | 0.52 | 1.78*** | 1.19 | 1.34 | 1.04 | 0.98 | 0.51 |
| Wife's education (ref.: Primary or less) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Secondary education | 0.68*** | 0.68* | 1.10 | 0.71*** | 0.91 | 0.78** | 0.78** | 0.48*** |
| Some post-secondary education | 0.71** | 0.50** | 1.20 | 0.91 | 1.14 | 0.89 | 0.50* | 0.35*** |
| Tertiary education | 0.55*** | 0.61** | 1.10 | 0.78** | 0.71*** | 0.64*** | 0.58*** | 0.34*** |
| Unknown | 0.94 | 1.07 | 0.78 | 1.14 | 0.95 | 0.69 | 1.15 | 0.65 |

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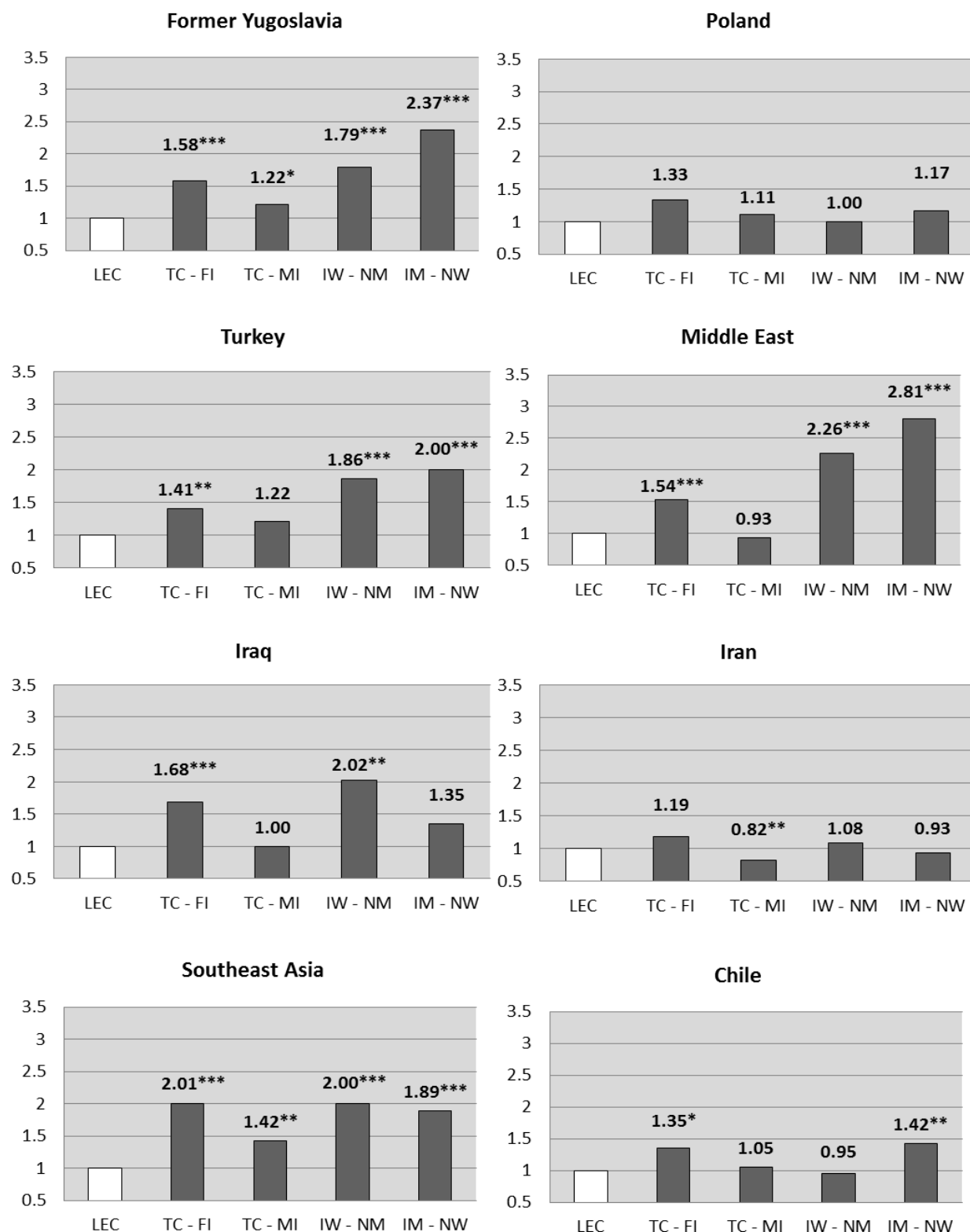
TABLE A1, CONTINUATION FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE

| | Former Yugosl. | Poland | Turkey | Middle East | Iraq | Iran | SE Asia | Chile |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Husband's activity (ref.: employed) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Unemployed | 2.24*** | 1.64* | 1.76*** | 1.80*** | 1.75*** | 1.59*** | 2.43*** | 1.66** |
| In education | 1.63* | 1.55 | 1.54 | 2.03*** | 1.19 | 1.29 | 1.25 | 1.71** |
| Other | 2.69*** | 1.68*** | 2.37*** | 2.15*** | 1.44*** | 1.50*** | 2.34*** | 1.63*** |
| Wife's activity (ref.: employed) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Unemployed | 1.67*** | 0.90 | 1.13 | 1.40** | 1.25 | 1.11 | 1.39 | 1.06 |
| In education | 1.83*** | 0.96 | 0.80 | 1.37** | 0.75 | 1.04 | 1.17 | 1.05 |
| Other | 1.43*** | 1.19 | 1.21* | 1.21* | 1.34*** | 1.24** | 1.27** | 0.92 |
| YSM at the start of marriage | 1.05** | 1.03 | 1.01 | 1.09** | 1.11** | 1.04 | 0.95 | 0.99 |
| YSM sq at the start of marriage / 100 | 0.88* | 0.94 | 0.89 | 0.75** | 0.74 | 0.86 | 1.16 | 1.07 |
| Husband's higher order marriage | 1.29** | 1.08 | 1.41** | 1.35** | 1.61*** | 1.40*** | 1.17 | 1.26 |
| Wife's higher order marriage | 1.70*** | 1.20 | 1.26 | 1.37** | 1.24 | 1.48*** | 1.34 | 1.54** |
| Immigrant group presence (ref.: weak) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| moderate | 0.93 | 0.99 | 0.89 | 1.03 | 0.99 | 1.01 | 1.15 | 0.92 |
| high | 1.01 | 1.23 | 0.90 | 1.00 | 0.86 | 1.05 | 0.90 | 0.88 |
| Period (ref.: 1999 or before) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2000 - 2005 | 0.98 | 0.99 | 1.12 | 1.75*** | 1.11 | 1.15 | | 0.90 |
| 2006 or after | 1.05 | 1.04 | 1.39** | 2.08*** | 1.09 | 1.04 | | 0.69* |
| Couples | 7,320 | 1,335 | 2,836 | 4,467 | 4,248 | 3,791 | 1,822 | 1,089 |
| Couple-years | 60,079 | 14,077 | 32,764 | 48,998 | 34,330 | 38,357 | 17,734 | 10,238 |

* $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Standard errors are not reported for the sake of space.

Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

Figure A1: Divorce risk by marriage type and immigrant group, including couples who have a child before marriage



Note: * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$; LEC - local endogamous couples; TC - FI - transnational couples, female importer; TC - MI - transnational couples, male importer; IW - NM - immigrant woman, native man; IM - NW - immigrant man, native woman; Source: Swedish register data, own calculations