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# **Immigrant families in Germany. Family change between situational adaptation, acculturation, segregation and remigration**

Migrantenfamilien in Deutschland. Familiärer Wandel zwischen  
Situationsanpassung, Akkulturation, Segregation und Remigration

## **Abstract**

Based on available register data and social surveys, an overview on changes in migrant families in Germany during the last 40 years is provided. Three major issues are selected, namely marriage behavior, fertility behavior and intergenerational relations. With regard to marriage, special emphasis is given to bi-national marriages, for which the typical U-curve shape is observed for Germany, too. Major changes have occurred in the nationalities of foreign marriage partners and in the willingness of immigrants to accept bi-national marriages. The fertility behavior is characterized by a fast decline of births of higher parity, depending in its speed on the migration career and formal education. Intergenerational comparisons show high level differences in acculturation between first and second generation immigrants. However, these generations are linked and pass the acculturation process as a convoy, thus maintaining intergenerational bonds.

*Key words:* migrant families, acculturation, bi-national marriages, segregation, fertility, family language, ethnic identification, intergenerational transmission

## **Zusammenfassung**

Der Beitrag basiert auf amtlichen Statistiken und Ergebnissen sozialwissenschaftlicher Umfragedaten und gibt einen Überblick über den Wandel in Migrantenfamilien in den letzten 40 Jahren. Dabei werden drei Themen herausgegriffen: Heiraten, generatives Verhalten und Generationenbeziehungen. Bezüglich der Heirat wird der Wandel in den bi-nationalen Ehen nachgezeichnet, für die sich auch für Deutschland der typische U-kurvenförmige Verlauf zeigt. Das generative Verhalten ist durch einen starken Rückgang der Geburten höherer Parität gekennzeichnet, wobei die Geschwindigkeit von der Migrationskarriere und dem Bildungsniveau der Migrantinnen abhängt. Vergleiche zwischen den Generationen zeigen starke Niveauunterschiede in der Akkulturation der ersten und zweiten Migrantengeneration. Jedoch sind diese Generationen stark miteinander verbunden, durchlaufen den Akkulturationsprozess als Konvoi und erhalten sich so ihre intergenerationalen Bindungen.

*Schlagworte:* Migrantenfamilien, Akkulturation, bi-nationale Ehen, Segregation, Fertilität, Familiensprache, ethnische Identifikation, intergenerationale Transmission

Since the first analyses of migration and family (B. Nauck 1985) and the first summarizing descriptions of social, inter- and intragenerational change in these families in Germany (B. Nauck 1988; 1988a), the situation has changed in many ways: Not only has the picture of migrant families changed – the labor migrants, who were, at that time, by far the predominant group, have since been complemented by a greater quota of German repatriates and asylum seekers – but the families of labor migrants have changed as well. The children of these migrant families have also created families themselves, resulting in a “third generation” of immigrants and an ongoing supplementation of the immigrant groups through marriage migration. As a result, an increasing heterogeneity in region and society of origin, legal status, stage in the integration process, and social and economic status, are characteristics of present day immigrant families in Germany. At the same time, the political framework of the living conditions of these families has been changed by the sustainably reshaped migration, integration and naturalization policy in the politically reunified Germany. This is not only apparent in changed legislation, but in an explicit consideration of the special concerns for these families in the youth and family reports (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend 1998; 2000). Finally, the research situation has changed fundamentally inasmuch as persons of foreign origin not only became part of the systematic, long-term observation in several larger social surveys, but were also targeted by a number of special surveys, with families of foreign origin as a subject.

## 1. Socio-structural change of migrant families

### 1.1 Marriages

The ‘normalization’ of the age distribution after the arrival of women and children and by family formation caused significant changes in marital status of the foreign population in Germany. In 1961, men between 20 and 40 years old (the classical “guest workers”) made up 60% of the foreign population. 20 to 30 years old men made up the bulk of this figure – a proportion that was higher than the proportion of *all* foreign women at that time. Although the surplus of men in all age groups up to the age of 70 is still higher than in the German population, it decreased steadily since the beginning of the labor migration.

In 1961, the proportion of the married males was 85% between the age of 30 to 35 years. In 1976, this proportion was not reached before the age of 40 to 45 years, and in 1985 even between the age of 50 to 55 years. In 2004, 49.8% of foreign males in the age group of 30 to 35 are married (German males: 39.3%). Foreign females still marry at an earlier age than German females: 35.9% are married in the age group of 20 to 25 years (Germans: 11.6%), 68,6% in the age group of 30 to 35 years (Germans: 53.7%), the maximum is achieved by the 45 to 50 year-old foreign women with 79.4% (Germans: 73.1%).

As the place of partner selection and the place of marriage do not necessarily coincide for immigrants, the marriage process can only be observed by the respective

marital status in the residents' register, but not by the registration of marriages. In fact, it can be assumed that the majority of foreigners get married in their country of origin, even if the selection of the spouse takes place in the receiving society.

An indication is that the number of registered marriages between foreigners in Germany has not increase in the last 20 years, and that more foreigners get married to Germans each year at German registry offices than foreigners among each other, i.e. at best marriages with mixed nationalities take place in the receiving society (G. Straßburger 2000): In 2003, 35 thousand female foreigners and German males, and 25 thousand male foreigners and German females got married in a registry office, i.e. one in six marriages in Germany is bi-national, whereas only 11 thousand marriages took place between foreigners (2.8% of all marriages in Germany). A major shift has taken place with regard to the bi-national marriages of males and females: Whereas marriages between German women and foreign men dominate until the 1990s, the trend has reversed since then, due to changes in the gender proportions on the marriage market. From World War II until the 1990s, Germany had more unmarried women than men, which resulted first in high numbers of marriages of German women to allied troops, and later on resulted in frequent marriages with foreign workers (also enforced by the strongly unequal gender-ratios within these foreign worker populations). In more recent times, the gender-ratio in Germany in the marriageable age has reversed, resulting in more frequent marriages of German males with foreign females and in a new type of individual "marriage"-migration, which is rather different from the "chain"-migration within the migrant minorities.

Partner selection and marriage belong – besides intergenerational transmission in the parent-child-relationship – to the "strategic" decisions of members of migrant minorities with regard to integration behavior in intergenerational continuity. In principle, three marriage markets can be distinguished for migrant minorities: (1) members of the receiving society, (2) of their own migrant minority and (3) the respective society of origin or herein a rather specifically ethnic, regional or a kinship community. Choosing the spouse among the members of one of these three groups has major consequences both for the personal integration process and further mobility options and for the socialization and acculturation process of the children resulting from this marriage.

As empirical results on social distance repeatedly show, family relationships are the ones for which inter-ethnic relationships are welcome "at latest" (A. Steinbach 2004). Hence, inter-ethnic and bi-national marriages are often used as an especially "strong" indicator for the state of inter-ethnic relationships in a society and for the degree of assimilation of immigrant minorities. Empirical investigations in marriage relationships between ethnic minorities and the population majority have therefore a long tradition in classical immigration countries, especially in the United States (M.M. Gordon 1964, 1975; G. Crester & J.J. Leon 1982; D.M. Heer 1985). However, appropriate surveys in Germany are still very scarce (B. Müller-Dincu 1981; H.P. Buba, W. Ueltzen, L.A. Vaskovics & W. Müller 1984; T.T. Kane & E.H. Stephen 1988; P. Scheibler 1992; T. Klein 2000; G. Straßburger 2000; S. Vetter 2001). Most analyses are only based on time series of register data of bi-national marriages in *German* registry offices, whereas (also bi-national) marriages in the countries of

origin or in third party countries are not taken into consideration. But even if this is disregarded, marriage registers cannot be interpreted as a clear “yardstick” of social distance or of assimilation, respectively. Moreover, they are the aggregate result of diverse, overlapping processes which require a differentiated analysis to avoid misleading conclusions.

In order to understand migrant marriages, it is necessary to make a distinction between ethnically endogamous and exogamous marriages, i.e. whether marriages take place among the own ethnic-cultural group or not on one hand, and whether they take place between national-internal and external marriages on the other. This distinction is necessary because nationality and ethnic origin do not often match in the immigration situation. Increasing naturalizations of foreigners in Germany will frequently result in a falling apart of national and ethnic affiliation. Thus, an increase of German-Turkish marriages does not necessarily have to be an indication of assimilation between the Turkish minority and the German population majority. The extent of marriages in which partners have different passports but the same ethnic-cultural origin, increases as well as the number of marriages in which a naturalization caused the nationality of the partners to be identical even if their ethnic-cultural background differs.

Bi-national partner selection, as spouse selection in general, depends on two factors: (a) the respective opportunity structure to find a partner, and (b) the preferences of the individual searching for a partner. Consequently, the opportunity structures for intra-ethnic partner selection depend considerably on the group size of the respective ethnicity, which generally changes during the immigration process. In addition, there is a considerable imbalance in the gender-ratio, i.e. due to the higher proportion of men, there is a greater demand for women in the pioneer-migration-situation than the intra-ethnic marriage market in the receiving society can offer. In Germany, this concerns the labor migrants as well as deployed forces and asylum seekers. Because it is not always possible to make use of the marriage market in the society of origin, this results in many male migrants getting married into the local population, especially in pioneer-migration-situations. As there is also a surplus of German men in the marriageable age, this results in considerable competition on the marriage market.

Accordingly, in such a situation, there is no other choice for the migrant males than either to marry a woman in the society of origin or a member of the population majority. As the marriages with women of the society of origin take place almost exclusively in the woman’s home country (and are not separately registered, therefore they do not appear anywhere as “migrant”-marriages), comparatively many bi-national marriages are recorded in the German receiving society which can be attributed to this special opportunity structure. So it is not surprising that with increasing family unification (“chain migration”) and resulting changes on the intra-ethnic marriage market (increased “supply”, adjustment of gender proportions), bi-national weddings decrease. As opportunity structures depend especially on the living conditions in the immediate environment, the concentration of foreigners in certain regions and residential environments accelerates this process, as too does their concentration in certain employment branches and work relationships. Nation-

ally homogeneous employment and housing conditions therefore increase the probability to meet a partner of the same origin and decrease the probability of bi-national mate selection.

These development tendencies have in many respects been misinterpreted as an alarming sign of “increasing ethnic closure”, of “segregation” and of increasing inter-ethnic conflict, because this development was not attributed to changed opportunity structures but to changing preferences. Such changes in preferences only occur on a long-term basis, consequently, under no circumstances can they explain why in the beginning of an immigration process bi-national marriages are particularly frequent. However, these changes in preferences can be assumed, if either the ethnic affiliation as a criterion of selection has lost its importance, or even a conscious dissociation from the culture of origin has taken place. This can occur because of an assimilation process of the first migrant generation, or if an increasing number of members of the second migrant generation enters into the marriage market in the course of time. The two processes, which overlap, lead to the typically U-shaped curve of the development of bi-national marriages for immigrant nationalities. This U-curve can be noticed not only for many other immigrant societies, but also for the development of the intermarriage rates of many nationalities of labor migrants in Germany (T.T. Kane & E.H. Stephen 1988; T. Klein 2000): Since 1990, marriages of foreigners in German registry offices have increased for the first time since the 1960s.

Interethnic partner selection is not only dominated by opportunity structures of the partnership market, but is also related to cultural factors which imply important selection rules. The respective social prestige of the ethnic groups also has consequences for interethnic partner selection, as has the perceived cultural proximity or distance to the own culture (D.M. Heer 1985: 180; B. Müller-Dincu 1981: 69; D. Pagnini & S.P. Morgan 1990). However, such selection rules are modified gender-specifically: an empirical regularity from results available worldwide is that men from minorities have a higher marriage rate into the majority population than women, or rather that women from the majority society are more willing to marry minority members than men are. This regularity is valid even if there are no imbalances on the partnership market.

*Table 1:* The ten most frequent nationalities of German-foreign weddings in 2004

German male marries a female from ...	Number	German female marries a male from ...	Number
Poland	4948	Turkey	4938
Thailand	2263	Italy	1777
Russian Federation	2190	Serbia and Montenegro	1532
Romania	2162	United States	1246
Turkey	1789	Great Britain	881
Ukraine	1709	Morocco	873
Croatia	944	Austria	861
Italy	942	Poland	842
Austria	852	Netherlands	720
Brazil	738	Croatia	594

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt 2005

The different nationalities marry into the German population on a different scale. Polish women are the most chosen foreigners by German men by a long way, followed by women from Thailand, Russia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine. For German women men from Turkey, Italy and Yugoslavia are chosen most frequently, followed by men from the USA and Great Britain. But this rank order of nationalities is certainly burdened by the problem that the various nationalities possibly marry in German registry offices in different proportions and are thereby recorded in the German marriage statistics. The willingness to marry in Germany probably also depends on whether the man or woman is German. In these statistics no information is given to which proportion these marriages are "chain migration" to naturalized immigrants, who have married a partner from their region of origin. This will certainly be the case for many German repatriates, who have married a partner from Russia, Romania and possibly Poland. Also, an unknown proportion of former labor migrant minorities, originating from Turkey and former Yugoslavia and meanwhile having become naturalized Germans may have chosen a partner from the society of origin (of their parents).

Population surveys give information to which extent social distance between immigrant groups and the native population influences interethnic marriages. The Federal Ministry for Labor and Social Order commissioned two representative surveys in 1985 and 1995 (P. König, G. Schultze & R. Wessel 1986; U. Mehrländer, C. Ascheberg & J. Ueltzhöffer 1996), in which foreign parents were asked, whether they would agree if their child married a German (Table 2).

*Table 2:* Attitudes of foreign parents to marriages of their children with Germans, according to nationality and gender in 1985 and 1995 (percentages)

		Turks		Italians		Greeks	
		1995	1985	1995	1985	1995	1985
<b>Agree</b>	Mothers	50.0	31.2	84.8	61.0	88.6	44.8
	Fathers	55.9	35.3	93.0	72.0	89.9	50.7
<b>Disagree</b>	Mothers	46.3	68.8	7.1	39.0	9.5	55.2
	Fathers	38.1	64.7	3.8	28.0	8.5	49.3
<b>No response</b>	Mothers	3.7	–	8.1	–	1.9	–
	Fathers	6.0	–	3.2	–	1.5	–

Source: U. Mehrländer, C. Ascheberg & J. Ueltzhöffer 1996: 227

In 1995 slightly more than 50% of the Turkish and about 90% of the Italian and Greek parents said that they would agree to a marriage of their children with a German partner. The comparison with the survey results 10 years before especially shows that in this comparatively short period of time the acceptance of inter-ethnic marriages in families of foreign origin of all three nationalities increased considerably: the proportions of those who would accept bi-national marriages of their children increased by 20%. The differences between the Turks on the one hand and the Italians and Greeks on the other hand may be attributed mainly to the longer duration of stay of these population groups in Germany: with increasing age of the surveyed parents their willingness to accept a bi-national marriage increased considerably (U. Mehrländer, C. Ascheberg & J. Ueltzhöffer 1996: 224).

In the same survey foreign workers who have as yet not been married but want to get married were asked whether they would choose a German partner (Table 3).

Table 3: Willingness of unmarried foreign women and men to marry a German (percentages)

		Turks		Italians		Greeks	
		1995	1985	1995	1985	1995	1985
<b>Positive attitude</b>	F	44.3	13.8	73.8	50.6	70.6	27.5
	M	42.8	49.1	63.4	58.3	71.9	31.7
<b>Negative attitude</b>	F	38.3	63.1	18.7	31	7.3	43.1
	M	34.3	35.2	26.9	20.5	18.8	33.3
<b>Undecided</b>	F	17.4	23.1	7.6	18.4	22.1	29.4
	M	22.9	15.7	9.7	21.2	9.3	34.9

Source: U. Mehrländer, C. Ascheberg & J. Ueltzhöffer 1996: 243

The willingness to marry German partners varies according to nationality and gender. In 1995 more than 70% of Greek women and men were willing to marry Germans. This is highest proportion altogether as well as the highest rate of increase in comparison to 1985. However, the willingness of Italian women and men was also relatively high in 1985. For Turkish men the lowest willingness to marry a female German partner can be noticed with about 43%; in comparison to 1985 the proportion even decreased about 6%. But at the same time the attitude of Turkish women changed considerably with regard to mixed-national marriages and increased from 14% to 44%.

Marriage migration will increase in its quantitative importance in future. This is especially the case as long as a restrictive immigration policy does not allow any other immigration possibilities and thus will especially be an option for those groups of persons whose countries of origin are affected by restrictive immigration measures. Under those conditions marriage migration may contribute to the realization and consolidation of the residential status. Restrictive immigration policy thus provides strong incentives for members of the first and second immigrant generation not to look for a spouse in the receiving society but in the society of origin (B. Nauck 2001c): a person's own consolidated residential status is useful as an additional offer/bonus on the marriage market in the *society of origin*, which can be used to get a spouse with a higher social status there – an advantage which would not show up on the marriage market in the receiving society – neither regarding the locals nor the members of a person's own immigration minority: “marrying into a Turkish family in Germany is an added attraction for young men in Turkey and raises the bride-price and bargaining power of a young girl's family inasmuch as they can offer a future son-in-law prospects of a residence permit and access to the German labour market” (C. Wilpert 1992: 183f).

## 1.2 Generational behavior

The change of generational behavior of foreigners can be followed just as difficultly as the marriage patterns on the basis of register data, because only the newborn in Germany are registered. Statistics on households cannot solve this problem because they are dominated even more by selective migration, and because – especially in case of high numbers of children – the generational phase may last longer than the duration of stay of the children in the parental household. All these factors contribute to a systematic underestimation of the fertility of foreigners, however to a different degree at different times of the migration process and different for the respective nationalities. This is the real problem, and as a consequence, the Federal Statistical Office stopped calculating fertility rates for immigrants.

A look at the development of the birth rates for foreign women in Germany shows that they do not make an exception from the general decline in the birth rate in affluent societies (Table 4).

*Table 4:* Total fertility rates for West Germans and foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany 1975-1993

	Female migrants						Natives in the country of origin			
	1975	1980	1985	1987	1990	1993	1975	1985	1990	1993
West-Germans							1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3
Turks	4.3	3.6	2.4	2.9	3.0	2.5	5.1	4.1	3.0	2.8
Italians	2.3	2.0	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.3	2.2	1.5	1.4	1.3
Greeks	2.8	1.8	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	2.3	1.7	1.4	1.4
Portuguese	2.2	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.6	1.7	1.5	1.5
Spaniards	2.0	1.7	1.2	1.3	0.7	0.6	2.8	1.8	1.3	1.2

Source: B. Nauck 1997a.

For the observed time span, the birth rates of the female migrants are generally lower than those of the local reference population, i.e. migration is connected to a birth reduction. Additionally, the total fertility rates of women of all labor migrant nationalities decrease drastically in the observed period, and since 1980 the fertility rates are above replacement level only for the Turkish women. For all other nationalities, the total fertility rates are even lower than those of the German women in 1993. The largest decreases are recorded for the beginning of the observed period, i.e. immediately after the beginning of the family reunion process after the recruiting stop in 1973. Even more remarkable is that the fertility of the Turkish female migrants approximately halved over 10 years, since the official statistics rather underestimate the factual behavior changes: At the beginning of the observation period, a greater proportion of births may have taken place in the country of origin rather than at the end of the observation period. Therefore, the migration-induced birth reduction is higher than indicated by the recorded figures.

Analyses on changes in the formation process of families of foreign origin are until now only available for Turkish migrant families (B. Nauck 1997a). As migrated families ('movers') were compared with non-migrant families ('stayers') in this study, the consequences of migration on the family formation process become

immediately apparent. Two overlapping trends can be observed: Firstly, there is (for birth cohorts between 1940 and 1960) a continuous *shift towards younger ages in the family formation process* during the course of life; the median of the marriage age decreases from 20.8 years to 18.0 years, the birth of the first child from 24.6 to 19.4 years, which is in line with the historical trend reflected in demographic time series for Turkey (B. Nauck & D. Klaus 2005). As the intervals between further births decrease, this results in a *shrinking of the family creation process*. Secondly, the secular drop in the birth rate between the cohorts attracts attention. But this affects exclusively the births of higher parity (from the 4<sup>th</sup> child onwards). However, basically all women create a family so that no change can be seen in that respect: unmarried women are as rare as childless ones. Differences in the family formation process of the ‘movers’ and ‘stayers’ are displayed in table 5, in which the family formation process of both groups of Turkish women are compared, differentiated according to their belonging to the generation born before 1945 or later.

Table 5: Family formation process of female Turkish ‘movers’ and ‘stayers’

Birth cohort	Stayers		Movers	
	until 1945	since 1946	until 1945	since 1946
Marriage until the age of 35	99.0%	100.0%	91.5%	99.5%
Median marriage	20.1	18.8	28.2	20.1
1 <sup>st</sup> birth until the age of 35	97.8%	99.5%	89.5%	98.8%
Median 1 <sup>st</sup> birth	22.8	20.5	28.9	21.8
2 <sup>nd</sup> birth until the age of 35	82.5%	92.0%	71.0%	92.2%
Median 2 <sup>nd</sup> birth	30.9	24.9	32.5	25.3
3 <sup>rd</sup> birth until the age of 35	54.9%	71.1%	40.8%	58.3%
Median 3 <sup>rd</sup> birth	35.3	28.8	40.0	32.8
4 <sup>th</sup> birth until the age of 35	26.6%	44.4%	13.2%	19.8%
5 <sup>th</sup> birth until the age of 35	13.2%	23.7%	3.9%	5.7%
6 <sup>th</sup> birth until the age of 35	5.9%	8.4%	3.9%	2.3%
7 <sup>th</sup> birth until the age of 35	1.5%	2.8%	1.3%	1.0%

Source: B. Nauck 1997a

The results for the ‘stayers’ confirm the trend to an acceleration of the family formation, which is especially apparent in the reduced age medians and the higher number of occurring family formation events until the age of 35. However, for the female migrants there are two additional special developments: for the (few) women of the older cohort, who migrated before the birth of their first child, the (for Turkish standards) extraordinary high marriage age stands out; accordingly, their comparatively few children are born late. One may conclude that the pioneer migration situation with comparatively few members of a person’s own minority in the receiving society results in remarkable delays of the family formation process of the female migrants. However, for the following cohorts of female Turkish migrants an extensive “normalization” takes place: although the family formation process is slightly later than for the ‘stayers’, and the births of higher parity are clearly decreasing, the family formation process of the ‘movers’ resembles much more that of the members of the same cohort in the society of origin than that of the elderly

Turkish women, who had been (unmarried or childless) in the exceptional situation of pioneer migration.

From the birth of the third child onwards, clear differences in the family formation process of 'movers' and 'stayers' can be seen: 76% of the 'stayers' have a third child (but only 69% of women who had been in Germany before the birth of their first child), 51% a fourth child (21%), 34% a fifth child (5%), 18% a sixth child (6%) and 13% a seventh child (3%). In general, under the migration circumstances, the birth of four and more children is rather seldom for Turkish women; just as infrequent is the birth of less than 2 children. Thus, a "typical" migrant family created in the receiving society has two or three children. Therefore, higher numbers of children are primarily the result of child-"import" related to chain migrations.

Hence, within one generation, migration results in a quick and clear standardization of the life course of Turkish women to the typical form of the family cycle of members of the lower class in industrial nations. (B. Nauck 1997a). How quickly this reorganization of the female life course takes place, depends especially on the *formal education of the women*. Low or rather missing schooling has a double effect on the life course of the female migrant: it tends to result in high numbers of children and longer residence in the society of origin; the number of children who have to be cared for decreases at the same rate as the opportunities for integration into the receiving society by gainful employment, which is already decreased because of the lack of education. On the other hand, in the case of well educated women these effects tend to lead to a quicker reorganization of the life course. The differences between the women can be seen in the following comparison: In Turkey, 50% of the women without a primary school degree get married at the age of 18.6 years and will have their first birth at the age of 21.1; 50% of women with a primary school degree get married at the age of 19.6 and will have their first birth at the age of 21.6. Although, amongst the female migrants there are no differences in the average age at marriage (20.6 and 20.7, respectively), amongst the more educated women the timing of the first and the second child is closer to the age at marriage (median: 22.3 and 26.5 in comparison with 23.6 and 27.7). From the third child onwards, not only the differences in the timing of the family formation process become significant, but also those in the probability of future births: 99% of women without a school degree (but only 56% with a school degree) have a third baby in Turkey, 88% (26%) a fourth child, 66% (12%) a fifth child, 33% (12%) a sixth child and 23% (10%) a seventh child. In contrast, educational differences between migrants diminish at a low level: 77% of women without a school degree (in contrast to 64% of women with a school degree) have a third child, 21% (22%) a fourth child, 5% (5%) a fifth child, 7% (5%) a sixth child and 0% (4%) a seventh child.

Consequently, the country of residence and the education level have an effect on the family formation process, based on three independent mechanisms. Firstly, after migration the family formation process starts later, secondly, migration reduces the number of children born, and thirdly, school education leads to the fact that despite the later, or rather roughly the same timing of marriage the family formation process is reduced in total, i.e. the (few) births follow directly after marriage which shrinks the generational phase on the whole: For the female Turkish 'stayers' without a

school degree the average time span between marriage and the birth of her last (fifth) child is 21 years; for Turkish female ‘movers’ with a school degree the average span until the birth of the last (third) child is only 12 years. However, the immediate living environment in the receiving society has *no* further influence on these processes (B. Nauck 1987): families in residential areas with a high concentration of foreigners do not differ from families in residential areas with a low concentration of foreigners with regard to fertility or family formation process.

Altogether, the proportion of children with foreign mothers of all children born in Germany did not increase between 1975 and 2004, it is about 20%. But the proportions among these children have shifted: the proportion of foreign children born outside of wedlock was only 0.7% in 1975, but increased to 9.2% in 2004. Births from foreign marriages with husbands of the same nationality decreased from 14.5% to 10.5% in this period; whereas births from marriages with husbands of different foreign nationalities increased from 0.8% to 8.5%, and births from marriages with a German husband increased from 3.7% to 9.0% of all births within wedlock.

## 2. Intergenerational change in migrant families

In migration sociology, intergenerational change has always played an important role in the exploration of integration processes since the conceptualization of “race-relations-cycles” in the 1930s (H. Esser 1980; R.D. Alba 1990), when the behavior of migrants of the first, the second and the third generation were compared with each other. An important result of these analyses is the amazing range of variability between the integration behavior of immigrants and of generation-chains of immigrants on the individual level as well as between different immigration nationalities on the collective level. Assimilation does not have to be an “inevitable” result of culture contact in the immigrant situation (H. Esser 1990a; B. Nauck, A. Kohlmann & H. Diefenbach 1997). Especially with regards to the collective differences, hardly any conclusive scientific explanations could be offered until now: Any available studies of integration behavior of different immigrant nationalities of labor migrants in Germany suggest that assimilation differences are the result of differences in individual resources (especially of the schooling) and of historically different integration opportunities as a result of the migration-succession of the individual nationalities (H. Esser 1982; P.B. Hill 1984).

Relatively early, considerations about the intergenerational change were applied to the integration behavior of labor migrants and their descendants in Germany. In the context of socialization theory, it was frequently presupposed that changed cultural conditions for primary socialization and their lifelong significance for the internalization of values would “inevitably” result in a higher level of acculturation of the second generation (A. Schrader, B.W. Nikles & H.M. Griese 1979) and hence in considerable value differences between the migrant and the successor generation.

Empirical analyses of the direction and intensity of intergenerational changes in the integration behavior of immigrants in Germany has hardly been possible until now (H.

Esser 1990; 1990a; P.B. Hill 1990; I. Kurosch 1990). That is not because empirical scientific research has not paid attention to this phenomenon, but for “historical” reasons: The second immigration generation in Germany has at present just reached the age which their parents were at the time of immigration. Consequently, all generation-sequence analyses have to operate with (sometimes problematic) additional assumptions about the stability of attitudes and behavior in the life course. Therefore, it is currently more productive not to investigate the generation differences by comparisons of cohorts, but to investigate directly the dyadic relationships in migrant families, as it was carried out in the survey “Intergenerational relationships in migrant families”, in which the attitudes, perception, and behavior of adolescents was compared to the parent of the same sex (S. Krentz 2002; B. Nauck 1995; 1997; 2000; 2001a; 2001b; B. Nauck, H. Diefenbach & K. Petri 1998; B. Nauck & A. Kohlmann 1999; B. Nauck, A. Kohlmann & H. Diefenbach 1997; B. Nauck & Y. Niephaus 2006; A. Steinbach 2001; A. Steinbach & B. Nauck 2000; 2005). Additional results are available from the foreigner survey of the German Youth Institute, which collected comparable data for young adults (A. WEIDACHER 2000). Data for Italians, being the immigrants with the longest immigration history and with EU-citizenship, and for Turks being immigrants with a shorter immigration history, non-EU-membership, and higher social distance can illustrate the generation differences in the cognitive (table 6: language usage), identification (Table 7: ethnic preference in the marriage and naming) and structural (table 8: educational level) assimilation.

*Table 6:* Language usage of Italians and Turks in Germany (percentages)

	Nationality					
	Italians			Turks		
	Parents	Young adults	Adolescents	Parents	Young adults	Adolescents
<i>Language between parents and their children</i>						
– predominantly language of origin	57.9	76.9	62.1	81.7	88.3	80.4
– predominantly German	42.1	23.1	37.9	17.8	11.7	19.6
<i>Language between siblings</i>						
– predominantly language of origin	47.3	56.5	41.6	46.4	68.5	47.2
– predominantly German	52.7	43.2	58.4	53.6	31.5	52.8
<i>Language at the working place. at school</i>						
– predominantly language of origin	24.0	13.1	4.5	*	20.0	*
– predominantly German	76.0	86.9	95.5	*	80.0	*

Data base: Survey “Intergenerational relationships in migrant families”; DJI Youth Survey 1997; \* = not asked

Both parents and children report that they predominantly communicate in the language of origin. The differences between Italians and Turks refer to a clearer distinction in language use with parents and with siblings in the case of the Turks: while they still predominantly speak Turkish with their parents, half of them prefer, as do the Italians, to speak in German with their siblings. At work and at school the use of the German language has become inevitable for Italians and Turks. Hence already more than 80% of young adults and more than 95% of children communicate in the German language at the workplace or at school during break-time.

Table 7: Ethnic identification (percentages)

Question	Nationality					
	Italians			Turks		
	Parents	Young adults	Adolescents	Parents	Young adults	Adolescents
<i>Could you imagine that your child/you will marry a German?</i>						
– definitively/possibly	76.6	71.4	84.2	33.8	49.8	30.8
– possibly not/in no case	23.5	24.2	13.6	66.2	47.0	69.1
<i>Which kind of a first name would you prefer for your grandchild/child?</i>						
– an Italian/Turkish name	72.1	75.2	73.8	93.1	77.6	86.4
– a German/international name	17.8	24.9	26.2	6.9	22.4	13.6

Data base: Survey “Intergenerational relationships in migrant families”; DJI Youth Survey 1997

The predominant part of Italians is in favor of a marriage of members of the second generation to Germans. In contrast, the majority of Turks cannot imagine that a German marries into their family. There is a tendency towards the younger generations showing a higher approval of interethnic marriages, but these differences are not great. Very few of the surveyed foreigners would like their child to have a German first name, but rather tend to give a name related to the own ethnic group. Turks, again, show a more distinct identification with their ethnic background; however the second generation shows the tendency to be more open for German first names. Similar tendencies can be seen for the media consumption, i.e. the consumption of German as compared to Italian or Turkish books, newspapers, video films and television programs. Both generations and both nationalities possess books in their language of origin as well as German books, but the second generation has more German books than members of the first generation, and the Italian adolescents and young adults again have more than the Turkish ones. Parents, young adults and adolescents read German newspapers and magazines more often than Italian or Turkish ones. Nevertheless, about 60% of parents and young adults regularly read newspapers from their country of origin. Of the two thirds of the persons surveyed who watch video films at all, the majority reported that they prefer German language videos, although one fourth regularly watches Italian/Turkish videos, too.

The enormous extent of intergenerational change becomes apparent in the level of formal education: As the parents were also asked about the educational qualifications of their own parents (who remained predominantly in the society of origin), comparisons can be made between three generations. The comparison shows that the second immigration generation have grandmothers without any educational degree, to more than one third for the Italian and to more than two thirds for the Turkish (and 23% and 47%, respectively, have grandfathers without an educational degree). In the parent-generation, these proportions have already decreased for the mothers to 17% in the Italian and to 34% in the Turkish case, and for the fathers to 12% and 8%, respectively.

*Table 8:* Highest educational degree of Italians and Turks in intergenerational comparison (percentages)

<b>Italians</b>	<b>Grand-father</b>	<b>Grand-mother</b>	<b>Father</b>	<b>Mother</b>	<b>Young male</b>	<b>Young female</b>
– no degree	22.7	34.7	12.1	17.0	–	–
– primary school degree	49.3	47.8	67.5	59.5	43.5	37.9
– secondary school	15.8	6.9	17.0	20.5	23.5	27.7
– A-level	0.7	0.5	1.9	3.0	11.3	11.4
– university	1.5	–	1.5	–		
– still in education					21.6	22.7
<b>Turks</b>	<b>Grand-father</b>	<b>Grand-mother</b>	<b>Father</b>	<b>Mother</b>	<b>Young male</b>	<b>Young female</b>
– no degree	49.2	70.2	8.3	34.0	–	–
– primary school degree	40.0	25.8	58.5	46.0	50.5	46.8
– secondary school	5.1	2.5	11.7	12.0	17.8	19.6
– A-level	4.6	1.5	17.6	5.0	11.6	8.6
– university	2.1	–	3.9	3.0		
– still in education					19.9	25.0

Database: Survey on Intergenerational Relationships in Migrant Families; DJI-Youth Survey 1997

This remarkably strong intergenerational educational mobility remains in sharp contrast to the existing disadvantage as compared to children of German parents, and to the relatively slow improvement of educational success of children from immigrant families in the German educational system. (R.D. Alba, J. Handl & W. Müller 1994; B. Nauck & H. Diefenbach 1997; F. Kalter & N. Granato 2002; C. Kristen 2002; C. Kristen & N. Granato 2004; H. Diefenbach 2004; A. Steinbach & B. Nauck 2004).

For two reasons generational relationships are of specific importance for the understanding of families of foreign origin and for the functioning of solidarity potentials under migration conditions. (1) Most families of foreign origin come from societies without a fully developed welfare state system. Therefore, social services and all protection against the risks of life are predominantly provided between the generations. These functions of mutual insurance by generation relationships have far-reaching implications for their cultural definition, i.e. what parents and children mean for each other, what they expect from each other and how much they “value” each other (B. Nauck 2000; 2001). (2) The migration situation itself has direct consequences for the intergenerational relationships as many migration goals can only be legitimized and realized as a project, in which more than one generation is involved. Of specific importance are the intergenerational relationships in the case of an unsecured residential status. A voluntary or forced return into the society of origin implies falling back on social security systems, which are not based on insurance benefits, but on intergenerational relationships. Thus, intergenerational transmission of values is emphasized in migrant families more than in non-migrant families.

The transmission of culture from one generation to the next is an essential condition for the sharing of a common culture and intergenerational continuity. However, the transmission of culture is never complete, but the culture is produced and con-

stantly changed in the continuous interaction between persons and groups. So the process of cultural transmission does not lead to a perfect reproduction of culture in the next generations, but may range between an exact transmission (and accordingly no noticeable difference between the generations) and a complete lack of any cultural transmission (and accordingly no noticeable similarities between the generations). Both extremes are equally problematic: Perfect transmission would not allow any change and would not provide any capacity to adapt to a new situation. On the other hand a lacking transmission would make coordination between generations impossible and destroy any intergenerational solidarity potentials (K. Phalet & U. Schönpflug 2001).

If only a few new members enter into social group, the transmission of culture can take place slowly and diffusely. But if many new members enter a social group, then the culture has to be passed on quickly and intensively, if it is to be maintained. If migration takes place to a noticeable extent, then migration situations are typically marked by social change in the receiving society, and, anyway, they reflect a situation of rapid cultural change for the migrants themselves. Migration situations thus result in a higher level of accentuation of the respective culture of the members of the receiving society as well as of the migrants. In this situation, intergenerational transmission is in many cases the only possibility to maintain the cultural inheritance from the society of origin or a minority subculture. The paradox of the migration situation is that the parent-generation is facing greater difficulty and greater necessity of intergenerational transmission of culture at the same time. On the one hand, parental models have lost their adaptive value in the receiving context. On the other hand, the migrant-parents can feel obliged to pass on their culture of origin to their children with even greater efforts, especially if this task is not supported by the culture-transmitting institutions of the receiving society (e.g. if minority culture issues are excluded in the curricula of kindergartens and schools). If, in addition, the often low degree of formal schooling of migrant parents is considered, it becomes obvious that the urgent task of cultural transmission stays in sharp contrast to their underdeveloped cognitive competencies to cope with this challenging task.

For these reasons it is hardly surprising that intergenerational relationships are especially highly motivated in migrant families, and that intergenerational relationships are coordinated more strongly than in non-migrant families in the society of origin or in the receiving society. A comparison of Turkish migrant families with those who remained in the society of origin shows that the intergenerational transmission is stronger in migrant families: the attitudes of parents and children are more similar, and the co-orientation and the synchronicity of beliefs and action is higher than in the families in Turkey (B. Nauck 1995). High intergenerational transmission is by no means limited to Turkish migrant families. A comparison with Italian and Greek families shows that an equally high degree of agreement in situation perception and in attitudes also exists here. Children of foreign families anticipate and internalize the expectations of their parents to a high extent and show a high willingness to comply with the solidarity expectations with no gender-specific differentiation.

The strategic importance of family resources and their intergenerational transmission is emphasized in comparative studies of different immigrant nationalities

(Turks, Italians, Greeks, and Repatriates), using path models for the interpretation of multiple stepwise regression analysis (B. Nauck, A. Kohlmann & H. Diefenbach 1997; B. Nauck 2001a; A. Steinbach 2001). As economic capital is (contrary to the "classical" immigrant societies, such as the United States, Canada, or Australia) of no importance for the integration process in Germany, (as practically all immigrants enter without any economic resources,) cultural capital is the most crucial determinant of pace and direction in the integration process.

Whether the parental cultural capital is transmitted effectively to the second generation in securing their educational success depends on the length of stay of the parents and the migrant succession: Italian parents are quite effective in transmitting cultural capital, Greek parents are moderately effective, whereas for Turkish families in Germany, there is no relationship between the parents' and the children's formal education. Within the three migrant worker nationalities, the level of education is negatively related to the ethnic identification of the parents. Family language retention is highest in those families with low cultural resources. The institutional effect of schooling on the children's language acquisition is much higher than the (negative) effect of the family's language retention, but language retention has a direct positive effect on the child's ethnic identification.

Perceived discrimination has a weak, yet positive effect on language retention in migrant families, which, in turn, significantly decreases the child's acquisition of the language of the receiving society; the child's school career has the expected positive effect on language learning. The higher the educational level of the parents, the lower the proportion of intra-ethnic members in their network; family language retention instead increases the proportion of intra-ethnic network members. The results clearly show the strategic effect of family language retention on the acculturation process, as it is strongly related to the parents' ethnic identification. The acquisition of the language of the receiving society increases, and perceived discrimination decreases the proportion of interethnic members in the network of migrant youth. The proportion of intra-ethnic network members has a positive effect on the ethnic identification, both for parents and their adolescent children.

The results for the German repatriate families differ from those of the migrant families in some respects. Most importantly, there is a significant *positive* relationship between the parents' education and the retention of the Russian language in the family, which, in turn, decreases the child's language acquisition quite strongly. On the other hand, the educational level has only an indirect effect on the parents' ethnic identification via family language retention; it is also influenced by the parents' feelings of discrimination but not by the ethnic composition of the parents' network.

Intergenerational transmission has a massive effect on the acculturation process in *all* migrant families. The more parents feel discriminated against in the receiving society, the more their children of the same gender do; the higher the proportion of intra-ethnic members in the networks of the parents, the higher it is in the networks of their children. Especially strong is the transmission of ethnic identification between parents and children of the same gender ( $b = .74$ ).

This consolidation of intergenerational relationships in immigrant families is a consequence of adaptation to the minority situation. Stable intergenerational rela-

tionships in migrant families are the most important protective factor against a possible marginalization of young persons of the second generation. Despite all synchronicity and coordination, there are clear differences between the generations according to the state of the integration process. In comparison to their parents the second immigration generation is clearly more strongly assimilated, they perceive discrimination less than their parents, have a lower social distance to members of the receiving society, and at the same time, feel a greater estrangement to the society of origin and less often have concrete re-migration intentions (B. Nauck 2000).

### 3. Outlook

The overview of essential research results on socio-structural and inner-familial changes for labor migrants in Germany tried to outline some central dimensions of family change. The available results have shown that the change of the social-ecological context resulting from the migration decision causes diverse forms of restructuring in family interaction without necessarily changing the basic family values. This also sheds light on the high adaptation capacity and structure flexibility of family groups in general and on the interdependence of family structure and social context, i.e. some general issues of family sociology become especially salient for the special case of migrant families and may be studied in higher variability in this “natural experiment” of context change.

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