

# THE PATTERNS OF UNION FORMATION AMONG CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS IN SWEDEN

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# Introduction

Research on the family dynamics of children of immigrants somewhat neglected, although not entirely absent (e.g. Bernhardt and Goldscheider in Sweden).

Social researchers agree that demographic behavior of immigrants and other minorities is an important indicator of social integration in the host societies (Kalmijn, 1998; Kulu and Gonzalez-Ferrer, 2014). In the previous literature, most focus on partner choice.

Childbearing and marriage are considered indicators of a committed union. This study aims to analyze the union formation among children of immigrants by simultaneously looking at the partner's origin and living arrangement (family forming marriage and cohabitation with common children, henceforth simply referred to as cohabitation). How does education shape the process of union formation?

# Theoretical background (1)

Marriage vs. cohabitation: Marriage requires more traditional underpinnings, such as completed education, income, stable employment (Kravdal, 1999; Thomson and Berhnardt, 2010)

This is also the case in the “stronghold of cohabitation” – Sweden:

Duvander (1999) finds that marriage in Sweden usually takes place when union stability is prioritized over other aspects of life. The incentives for marriage are higher for better educated couples and couples with more resources.

Holland (2013) finds that family forming marriages in Sweden are clearly most common among highly educated women.

# Theoretical background (2)

Partner's origin:

Previous research -> higher education increases immigrant's chances of forming a union with a native partner (see reviews in Kulu and González-Ferrer, 2014; Adserà and Ferrer, 2014).

Possible pathways:

- ◆ Opportunity
- ◆ Attractiveness
- ◆ Ethnic identification

# Hypotheses

The study assumes that the general and immigrant-specific mechanisms will simultaneously shape the patterns of union formation among children of immigrants. Therefore:

*H1: Education will be most positively associated with marriage with a native.*

*H2: Education will be least positively (most negatively) associated with cohabitation with co-ethnic.*

However, counterbalancing factors may also be at work.

# Data and methodology

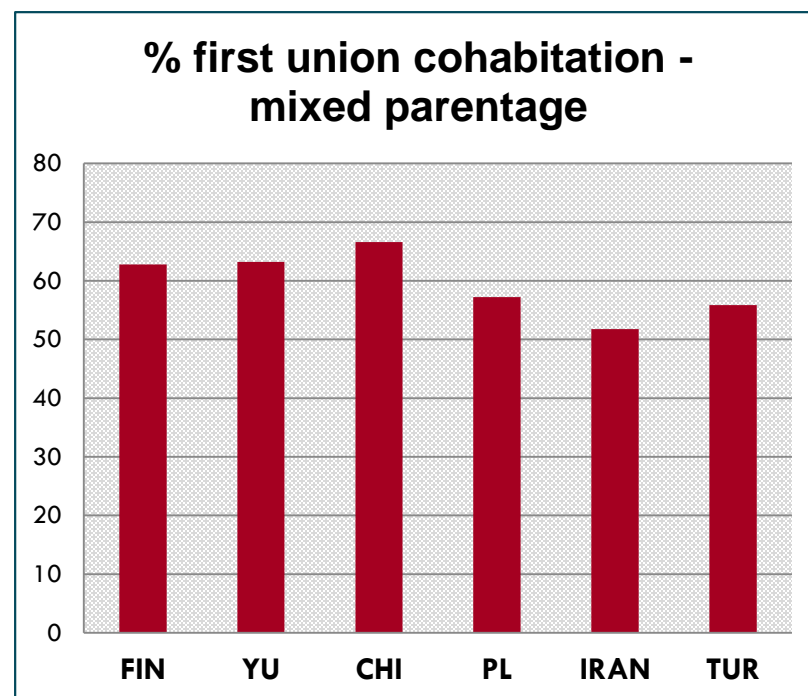
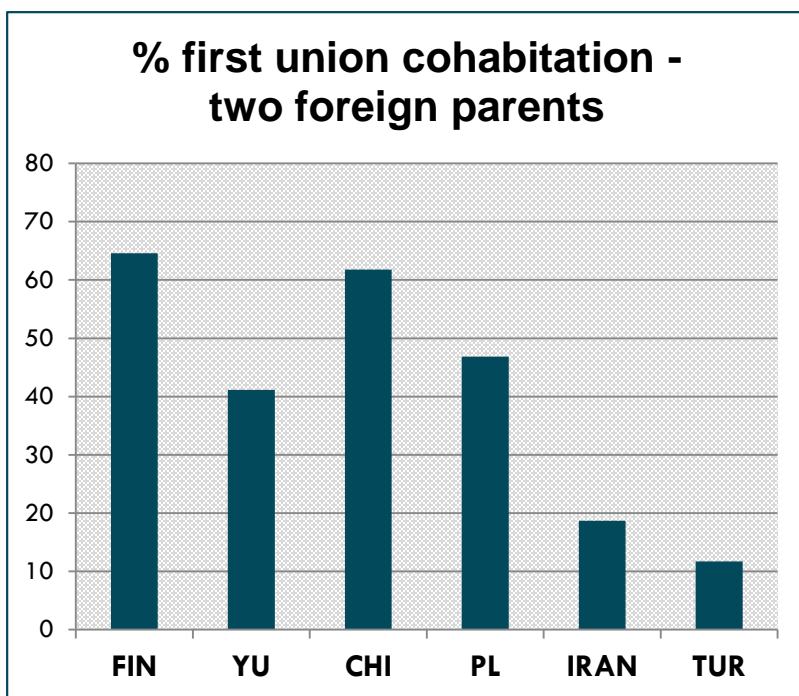
Data are drawn from STAR, a compilation of Swedish register data. Time span: 1990 – 2012. Study includes Swedish-born individuals with two foreign-parents (men and women analyzed separately).

Multivariate analysis is based on discrete-time multinomial logit model with six(!) competing risks, each denoting the type of the first union with respect to living arrangement AND origin of the partner:

1) cohabitation with native, 2) marriage with native, 3) cohabitation with partner of the same origin, 4) marriage with partner of the same origin, 5) cohabitation with partner of other immigrant background, 6) marriage with partner of other immigrant background.

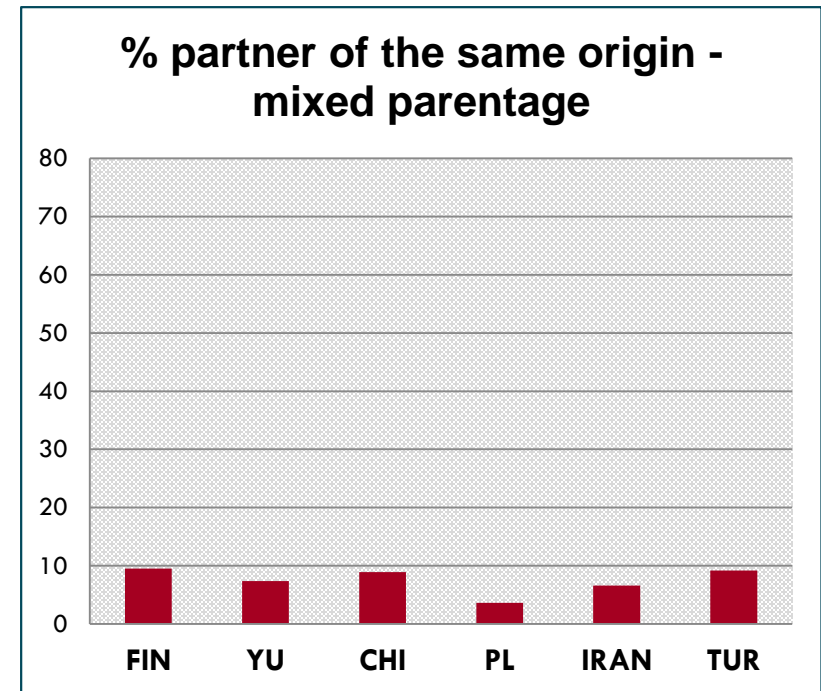
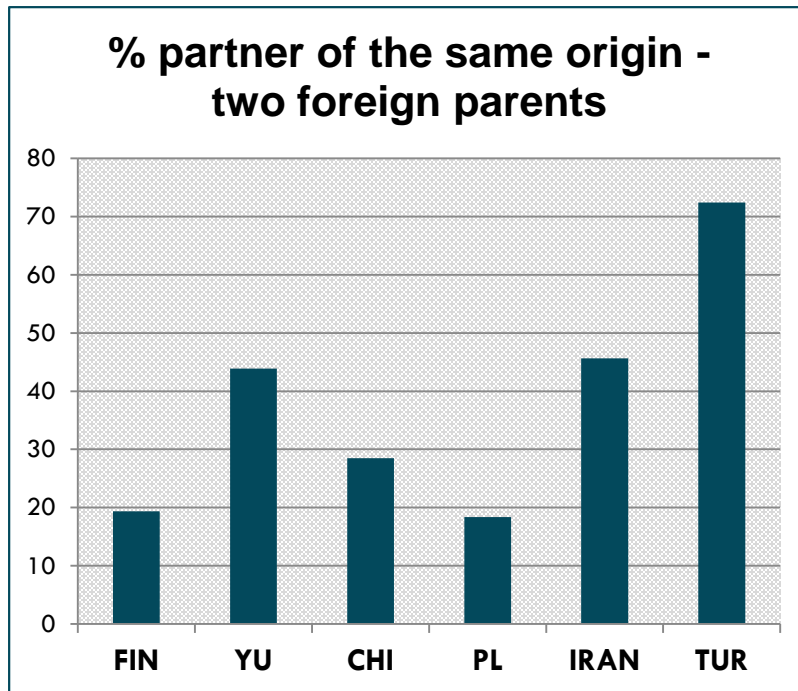
Controls: educational attainment, enrollment in education, age, age<sup>2</sup>, labor market attachment, disposable income, group size in the municipality, immigrant group.

# Some descriptives (1)



Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

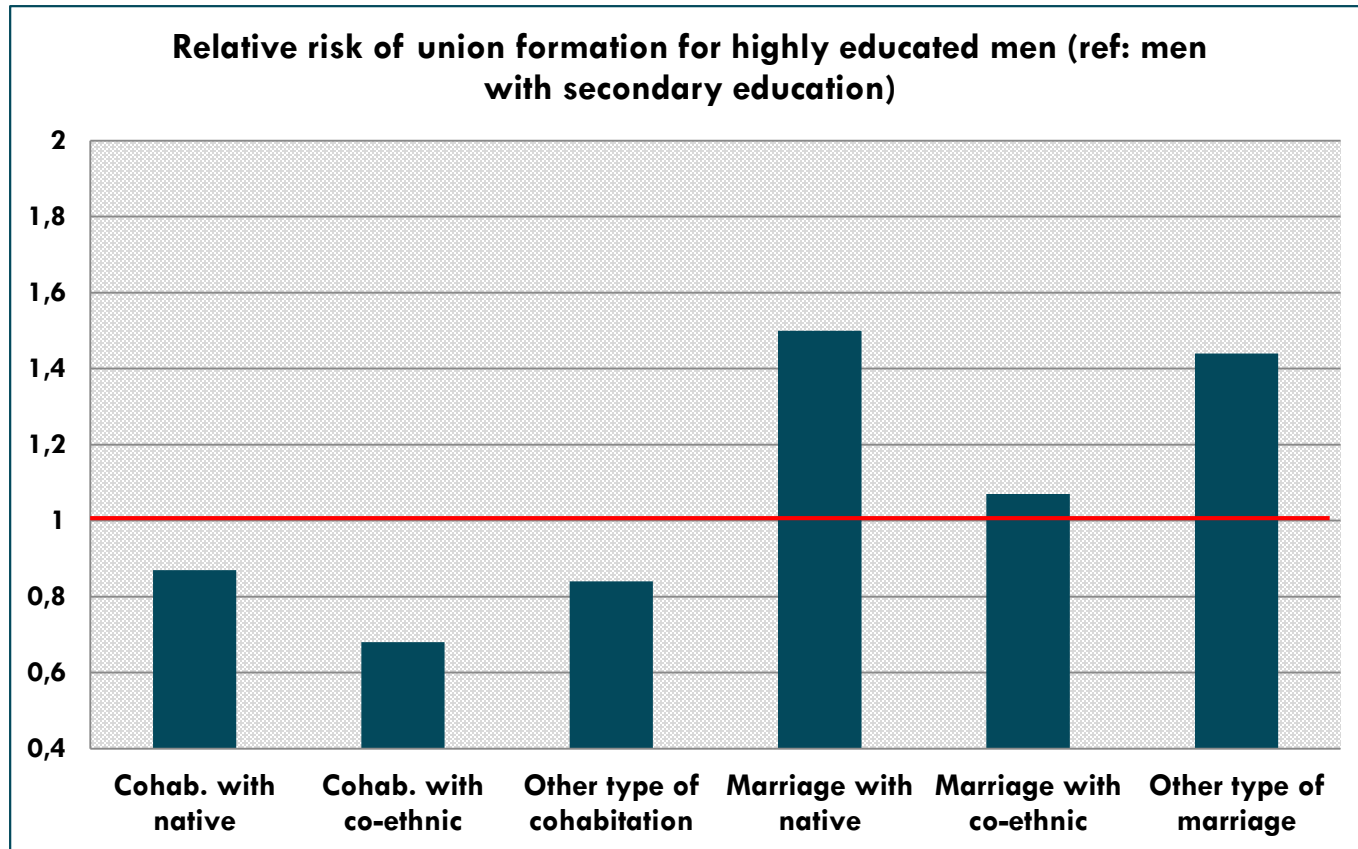
# Some descriptives (2)



Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

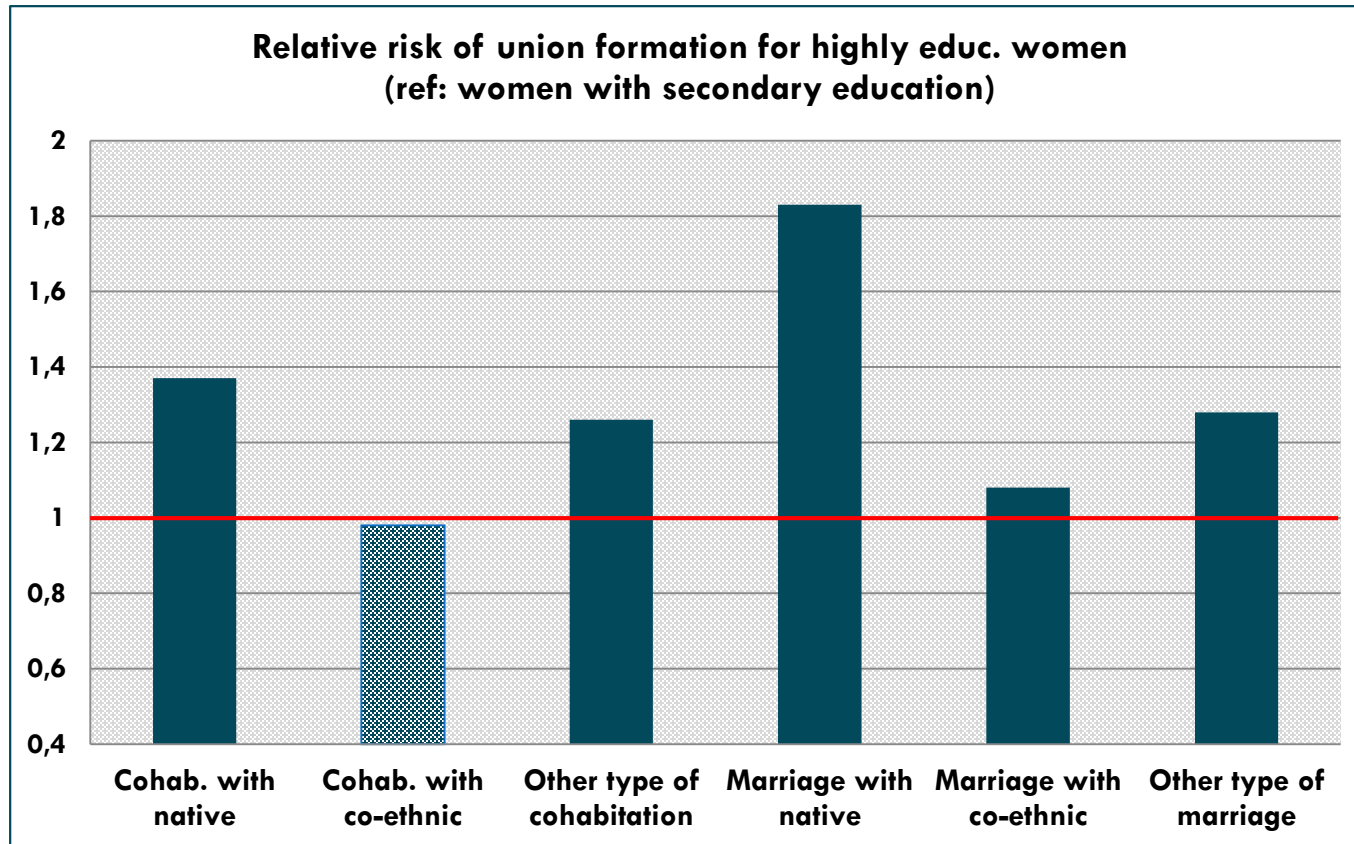


# Education and union formation, men



Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

# Education and union formation, women



Source: Swedish register data, own calculations

# Other results

In line with the previous literature on the macrosociological determinants of intermarriage -> a higher share of co-ethnic in the municipality increases the risk of endogamous union (and decreases that of exogamous union).

The higher social distance between natives and immigrant groups the lower risk of union with a native (and the higher risk of endogamous union)

Employment and income more important for marriage, especially marriage with a native.

In general similar patterns for men and women.

# Thank you!



Comments, suggestions?

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