

National origin and family trajectories before and after migration in Quebec

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Extended abstract

Background: Immigrant family trajectories have been the subject of several studies examining the relationship between the timing of migration and the occurrence of certain life-course events such as births, union formation or dissolution. Most of these studies focus on Europe and analyze individuals' post-migration family paths (Kulu and González-Ferrer 2014), while others explore family trajectories before and after migration (Castro Torres, 2022; Kraus 2019). This previous research has shown the great diversity and complexity of family formation trajectories in the context of international migration. In Quebec, most existing studies analyze a single area of family formation among first-generation immigrants. The latter generally explore transitions at first birth or at different parities, the total fertility of first-generation immigrants, and sometimes compare them, with certain fertility indicators of non-immigrants or natives (Maria Constanza Street, 2015; María Constanza Street and Laplante 2014; Adsera and Ferrer 2014 and 2016). They are unanimous in recognizing that the transition to first birth for first-generation immigrants varies according to the region of birth (Adsera and Ferrer 2016; Street, 2015).

Research objectives and questions: This study aims to better understand the relationship between national origin of birth and family trajectories before and after migration to Quebec. The hypotheses of disruption and interrelation of events are retained as a theoretical frame of reference (Kraus 2019). Specifically, we seek to answer the following research questions: What types of family life trajectories can be distinguished among immigrants before and after migration to Quebec? To what extent are the different types of trajectories linked to immigrants' national origin?

Data and methods: We use data from the 2020 survey on individual trajectories of participation in Quebec society (TRAJIPAQ) (Lardoux et al., 2021; St-Preux et al., 2024).

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This survey provides information on the employment, educational, union and reproductive trajectories of immigrants living in the Canadian province of Quebec. Questions are retrospective, and events are dated to the nearest year. The analysis covers 801 individuals, including 424 women and 377 men, observed over a 9-year period (4 years before and 4 years after settling in Quebec). Age at immigration ranges from 18 to 45 for women and 18 to 56 for men. Sequence analysis using the Optimal Matching method is used to measure dissimilarities between individual family trajectories. Next, we apply unordered multinomial logistic regression models to understand how emerging typologies are influenced by immigrants' regions of origin.

Results: Preliminary results (Figure 1) reveal four distinct typologies of family trajectories among first-generation immigrants in Quebec: stable union without children (typology 1), postponement of union and births after migration (typology 2), dissolution of union before migration and family formation after settlement (typology 3) and remaining single without children (typology 4). These typologies show significant differences according to the immigrants' regions of origin at the 5% threshold (Figure 2). A higher proportion of immigrants from the Maghreb and Middle East fall into the category of union dissolution before migration and family formation after settlement (30%) compared to other trajectories. Conversely, immigrants from the most industrialized regions (Europe, USA, and Oceania) predominantly belong to the stable union without children (51%) and postponement of union and births after migration (50%) trajectories. Controlling for variables such as gender, pre-migration work experience, region of residence, highest level of education, immigration status at arrival, age at settlement, and employment status at arrival, the findings indicate that immigrants from less industrialized regions (Maghreb and Middle East; Central and South America and the Caribbean; Sub-Saharan Africa) are more likely to experience union dissolution before migration and subsequent family formation after settlement (typology 3) rather than remain single without children (typology 4), compared to those from the most industrialized regions (Europe, USA, and Oceania). This trend is particularly significant for immigrants from the Maghreb and Middle East.

Additionally, Figure 2 shows that immigrants who had undesired paid jobs upon arrival were more likely to postpone union and births after migration (typology 2) compared to remaining single and childless (typology 4), in contrast to those who had desired paid jobs

upon arrival. Across all family trajectories examined, differences by gender are not statistically significant at the 5% threshold (Figure 2).

Conclusion: This study identifies typologies of first-generation immigrant family trajectories and highlights the influence of national origin on immigrant family trajectories in the Quebec context. However, the premigratory family trajectories analyzed are not representative of the regions of birth. Immigrants generally represent a selected group that does not necessarily share similar socioeconomic characteristics with the group remaining in the countries of origin (Kraus 2019). Immigration category could also play a role in defining family trajectories in Quebec. However, the available data don't allow us to take this aspect into account in our analysis. The relatively small sample size limits our ability to conduct separate analyses by gender.

Figure 1: Sequence chart of immigrant trajectories before and after migration to Quebec (year of settlement corresponds to 5th year).

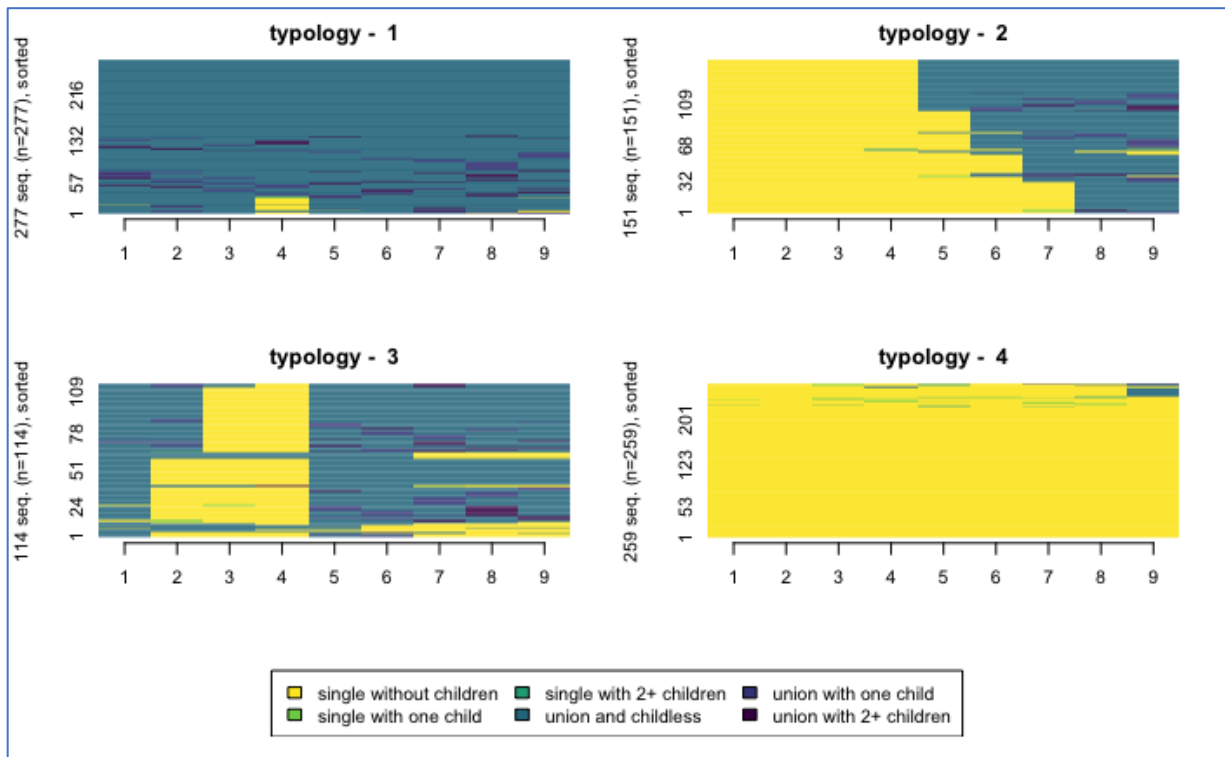
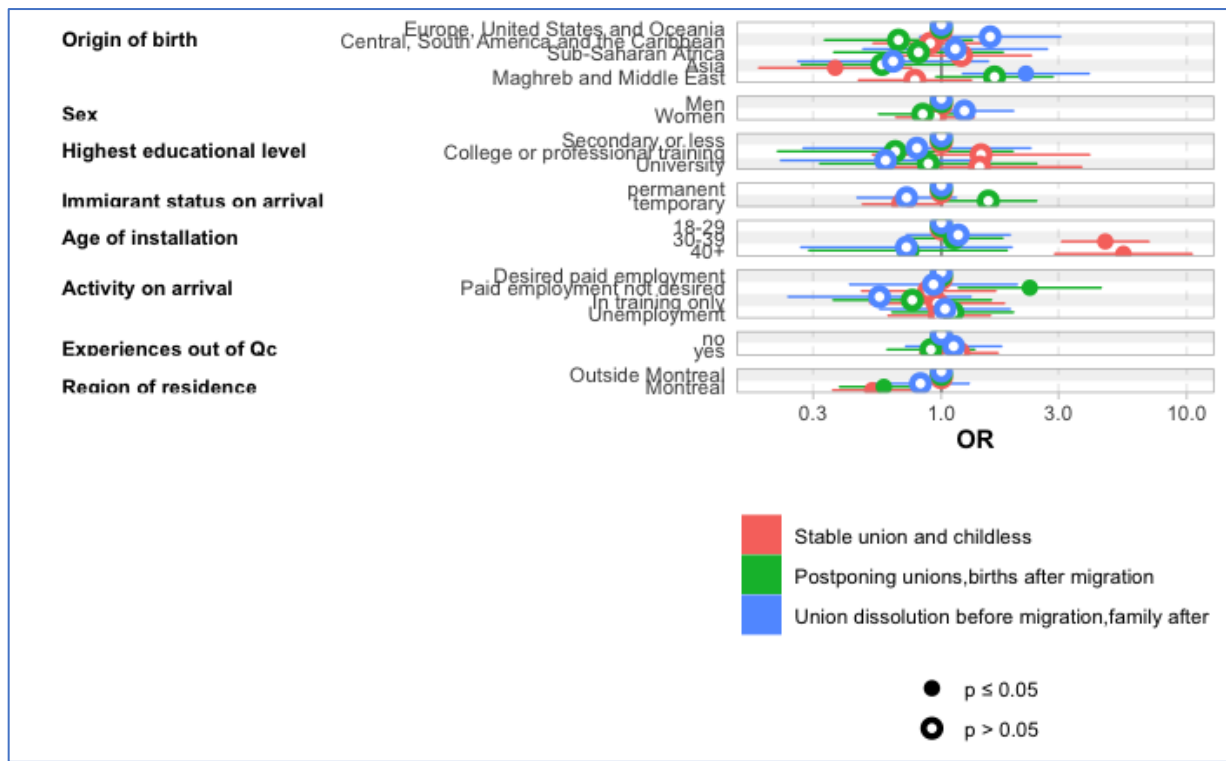


Figure 2: Relative risk ratios for following a typology of family trajectories of first-generation immigrants settled in Quebec between 2005 and 2016.



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