

Privatization in the family sphere: longitudinal and comparative analyses in four European countries

VANDECASTEELE LEEN & BILLIET JAAK

K.U. LEUVEN

This is a pre-copyedited, author-produced version of the following book chapter: Vandecasteele, L. & Billiet, J. (2004). Privatization in the Family Sphere: Longitudinal and Comparative Analyses in Four European Countries (pp. 205-229), In W. Arts & L. Halman (Eds.), European Values at the Turn of the Millennium. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers Please refer to the published version when citing this book chapter.

1. Introduction

Individualization is a process of cultural change that has been flooding across Western societies since the mid-20th century. Many sociologists have studied this basic process in our changing society, a process which, in the first place, is a symptom of the diminishing impact of traditional institutions, norms and values. Church, marriage, political parties, government, etc.... all have become less important. The impact of belonging to traditional social categories such as a particular social class, gender, family or neighbourhood is beginning to fade (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996, pp. 24). When traditional frames of reference disappear, individuals are forced to rely on their own frames of reference. This can be seen as a shift from standardized biographies to do-it-yourself biographies (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996, p. 25). In every domain of life, the authority of traditional institutions is being replaced by individual autonomy. Another aspect of the individualization process is the emphasis on self-realization (van den Elzen, 1996, p. 30). When physical needs and the need for security are fulfilled, as is the case in more industrialized welfare states, people's needs shift more toward the psychological necessities of recognition and self-realization. This theory of Maslow was the basis for Inglehart's materialism-postmaterialism scale (Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1987, p.141).

The individualization process is having an impact on various spheres of life. Among others, the area of family and primary relations is being hit by the process of change. Think, for

example, of the growing equality between man and woman, the changing attitudes toward sexuality, and the changing attitudes toward marriage. Here we are especially interested in certain aspects of a successful marriage. With reference to aspects considered crucial for the success of a marriage, the traditional family ethos puts a strong emphasis on homogamy. It requires that partner relationships be formed within the person's own ethnic, social, religious and/or age group. In the traditional ethos, homogamy means higher marriage satisfaction (Van den Troost, 2000, p. 136). With individualization, quality becomes an important determinant for a successful marriage. When traditional reference points disappear, human beings focus their attention on those who are closest to them, i.e. those with whom they have emotional ties. The immediate vicinity is indispensable in helping people to find their place in the world and to maintain their physical and mental well-being (Beck-Gernsheim, 1995, pp. 49-50). In short, quality within the relationship is becoming an emotional necessity.

In this paper, we are principally interested in a specific aspect of the individualization process, which we call the *privatization of value orientations*. Privatization refers to the declining impact of collectivities and traditional institutions on personal value orientations. To understand this evolution, we turn back to the basic principles of individualization: the declining influence of traditional institutions and the growing importance of personal autonomy and self-realization. With the growing emphasis on individual autonomy, values and norms are also becoming more and more personal. The impact of traditional institutions such as the church and of social categories such as generation and social class will gradually disappear. In a time where every aspect of life is subject to personal choice, the impact of traditional social collectivities and institutions on personal value orientations are diminishing. The main aim of our analyses is to elaborate on the impact of social background variables on marriage success factors. First of all, theoretical arguments can be given to hypothesize that some social background variables will be predictors of what people think is important for success in marriage. So we can expect that young people, highly educated persons and persons of the higher social classes are more inclined to support quality aspects of marriage than older people, people with less education and lower class people. On the other hand we expect that, with the ongoing privatization of value orientations, these effects will diminish. With the help of longitudinal and comparative analyses of the European Values Studies datasets, we can empirically test these propositions in four west European countries. In such a test, we expect to find different European countries to be in different stages of the privatization process.

2. Research questions and hypotheses

In this paper we want to test certain hypotheses about the impact of social background variables on marriage success factors.

In the European Values Studies, a variable is included relating to what respondents think is important for success in marriage. In what follows we speak of marriage success factors. We have seen that due to the individualization process there is a growing emphasis on quality within the relationship and less emphasis on the traditional homogamy values. Within the marriage success factors, the emphasis on quality within the relationship and the diminishing homogamy norm are considered to be signs of the individualization process.

When speaking about individualization in the family sphere, we must definitely be aware that not all groups in society are equally sensitive to the new values of marriage quality and intimacy. Beck asserts that "it is necessary, therefore, to check each group, milieu and region, to determine how far individualization processes - overt or covert - have advanced within it" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996, p. 28). Most authors in the debate argue that individualization emerges first within the higher social classes and among highly educated people (Laermans, 1992, pp. 67-69; Felling, Peeters & Scheepers, 2000, pp. 39-40; Lesthaeghe & Surkeyn, 1988, p. 17). The material prerequisites that make an individual life course possible are particularly present in the higher social classes. They can afford the luxury to leave traditional paths. More highly educated people have the necessary cultural capital to live an individualized life. Their stronger skills give them more opportunities, for example, in the labour market, where they can more easily make their own way. Next to the effects of class and educational level, there is the effect of belonging to the younger generation, in the sense that young people are more inclined toward the individualized value orientations. Young people have been socialized within a society that is already characterized by modernity. In this respect there is a clear difference between the pre-war and the post-war generations. Finally, we expect that persons with a stronger church commitment will be less individualized, because of the dominance of traditional values in the churches. Concerning the effects of education level, age and church commitment,¹ we can formulate the following four hypotheses:

- H1: Education level has an effect on quality of marriage and on marriage homogeneity. More highly educated people will put more emphasis on the quality aspects of marriage and will be less inclined to support the homogeneity aspects.
- H2: We expect to find an age effect on the variables quality of marriage and marriage homogeneity. Younger people will be more interested in the quality of marriage, and less in homogeneity aspects.
- H3: The stronger the church commitment, the more a person emphasizes the homogeneity aspects of marriage, and the less attention he or she pays to quality of marriage.

In a second step, we plan to empirically test the privatization hypothesis. We expect individuals to be responsible for their own values, and we expect the social collectivities to lose their impact. The effect of social variables such as generation, social class, education level, etc. will decrease as the individualization process goes on. This process can also be understood by the trendsetter and diffusion theory of Middendorp (Middendorp, 1979, pp. 170-171). Some social groups are trendsetters with the breakthrough of new developments. These groups are most committed to new developments. In a later stage, the trend will disperse among the other groups as well. It is time to formulate the privatization hypothesis:

- H4: The impact of social background variables on marriage success factors will decrease over time.

We may wonder whether the privatization process proceeds in the same way all over Europe. To answer this question, reference is made to the embeddedness of individualization processes in the modernization theory. Privatization and the declining impact of collectivities and traditional institutions on individual values are conceived as part of a wider modernization process that has shaped society since the end of the Middle Ages. This process consists of interrelated transformations in the field of economics (e.g. industrialism and capitalism), in the social and political field (e.g. mass education, democratization, urbanism, etc.) and in the cultural field (e.g. individualization and secularization) (Felling e.a., 2000, p.31). As these changes are interrelated, we can expect that value changes go hand in hand with structural changes in society. Countries characterized by a high level of structural modernization will also be characterized by a higher level of cultural modernization. Thus privatization processes will be clearer in countries where structural modernization has already reached a higher level.

Several researchers tried to classify countries according to their rate of structural modernization (Halman, 1991, p. 9-10). Usually several indicators are used: number of people working in farming, number of telephones, education participation, etc. Within Western Europe, there is a rough distinction between Northern and Southern countries with respect to structural modernization. Overall, northern European countries are thought to be more modern than southern European countries. Ireland is an exception since, structurally speaking, it belongs to the southern European group of countries (Halman, 1991, p. 8-11). In our analyses, we use data from Belgium, Denmark, Ireland and Spain. The last two countries are characterized by less structural modernization. With regard to the privatization process, we expect a difference between Belgium and Denmark, on the one hand, and Spain and Ireland, on the other. We can thus formulate the following hypothesis:

- H5: Privatization processes will be clearer in Belgium and Denmark compared to the situation in Spain and Ireland, because of the higher level of structural modernization in Belgium and Denmark.

3. Data, constructs and method

The hypotheses are tested with the surveys from the European Values Studies. The EVS project consists of an international, comparative and longitudinal study concerning values in different spheres of life. With its three cross-sectional surveys in a number of European countries, the EVS data make comparison possible among countries and over time. Surveys were taken in 1981, 1990 and 1999. For our analyses we will use the data of Belgium, Denmark, Spain and Ireland, and we will work with the three waves. Most analyses are conducted on weighted data,ⁱⁱ except for the multi-group comparisons in LISREL.ⁱⁱⁱ

In the domain of family values, we focus on the aspects of a successful marriage. In the EVS questionnaire, the following question is included:

| |
|---|
| Here is a list of things which some people think make for a successful marriage. Please tell me, for each one, whether you think it is very important, rather important, or not very important: Faithfulness An adequate income Being of the same social background Mutual respect and appreciation Shared religious beliefs Good housing Agreement on politics Understanding and tolerance |
|---|

| |
|--|
| Living apart from in-laws Happy sexual relationship Sharing household chores Children Tastes and interests in common (not in 1999) Willingness to talk about problems arising between man and wife (only in 1999) Spending as much time as possible together (only in 1999) Talking a lot about common interests (only in 1999) |
|--|

On theoretical grounds and on the basis of other research, we expect to find three dimensions: material aspects, homogamy and quality aspects (Van den Troost, 2000; van den Elzen, 1998; Dobbelaere e.a., 2000, pp. 225-230).

Before testing the hypotheses, we set up a measurement model for these three expected marriage success factors. We also investigate the construct equivalence of the latent variables in the three waves and the four countries. Are we really measuring the same constructs in the twelve groups? Rensvold and Cheung (1998) define construct equivalence operationally as factorial invariance. This means that a construct is equivalent across two or more cultural groups if the loadings of a certain indicator on that construct in one group can be set equal to the corresponding loadings in the other groups. This condition applies to all indicators of the construct. The test starts with a model of complete invariance across the groups of the measurements and with complete invariance of the relationships between the concepts. We then move step by step to an acceptable model.

On the basis of factor analyses in the separate datasets we decide to test a model with three correlated factors. Of the twelve marriage success aspects apparent in the three datasets, nine items are included in the model: mutual respect and appreciation, understanding and tolerance, happy sexual relationship, sharing household chores, good housing, adequate income, same social background, shared religious beliefs and agreement on politics. Three of the other items, faithfulness, living apart from in-laws and having children, did not have strong loadings on one of the extent factors. And other items are excluded because they are not repeated in all three waves. A completely invariant model is tested for twelve groups: four countries (Belgium, Denmark, Spain and Ireland) and three waves (1981, 1990, 1999). Figure 1 shows the tested model.

Figure 1. Multi-group comparison for marriage success factors: path diagram of the model.

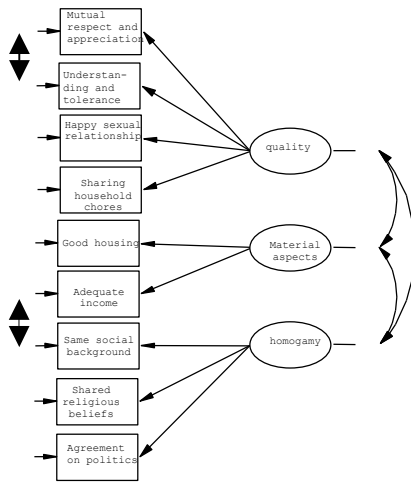


Table 1 shows statistics of the successive tested models. The models are cumulative, which means that parameters that are unconstrained in a given model x will be unconstrained in the following models $x + 1, x + 2 \dots$ as well. Model 1 accepts covariance between the residuals of ‘adequate income’ and ‘same social background’. Model 2 accepts covariance between the residuals of ‘understanding and tolerance’ and ‘mutual respect and appreciation’. Both sets of indicators have something in common, apart from the common latent variable.^{iv}

Table 1. Summary of the tested measurement models (Multi-group comparisons)

| Model | Chi-square | Df | RMSEA | P (close fit) | NIF |
|--|------------|-----|-------|---------------|------|
| Model 0: completely constrained | 3065,4 | 519 | 0,058 | 1 | 0,85 |
| Model 1: TD (7,5) free, completely constrained | 2711,99 | 518 | 0,054 | 1 | 0,87 |
| Model 2: TD (1,2) free, completely constrained | 2247,82 | 517 | 0,048 | 1 | 0,89 |

For the evaluation of the models, we use several criteria. First of all, we use the drop in the chi-square value for one degree of freedom. As long as the drop in value is substantially more than three units, one can conclude that there is an improvement. Furthermore, the p-value of close fit should be near to 1.0 and the Normed Fit indices (NFI) should be close to 1. Ideally, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) should be lower than 0.05 (Bollen & Long, 1992). In the Bollen & Long model, this value is almost obtained. It is possible to decrease this value (and improve the model fit) if some error covariances are accepted, but we decided not to do so when there were no theoretically meaningful arguments for taking such a course of action. Theoretical considerations should also be taken into account in the decision

about the acceptance of a model (Sarlis & Satorra, 1987). However, it is difficult to use this criterion for the structural relations in situations with several cultural groups, since we can never exclude non predicted differences in relationships between substantive variables across the cultural groups. Actually, in this respect we expect invariance.

The chosen model 2 shows a good fit. The RMSEA falls under 0.05 and moving from model 1 to model 2 shows a considerable decrease of chi-square for the loss of only one degree of freedom. We can conclude that it is possible to find a factor model that holds for the four countries studied and the three waves of the EVS. The standardized factor loadings can be found in the appendix.

Likert scales are constructed for further analysis. On the basis of the results, a material scale, a homogamy scale and a quality scale are constructed.

For determining the effect of social background variables, a multivariate linear regression model^v is built for the four countries. The model estimates the effect of some social background variables on the marriage success factors. The independent variables are age, education level, church commitment, gender and legal marital status.^{vi} Education level, operationalized as "age when education completed", and age are considered metric variables. Church commitment is a quasi-metric construct with scores from 1 to 6. It is based on four observed indicators: belonging to a religious denomination, attending religious services, membership in a religious organization and doing voluntary work for a religious organization. Gender and legal marital status are nominal variables.

We are interested in the net effect of these social variables. The variables are correlated, for example, education level is higher among the younger age groups and church commitment increases with age. So we are looking for the partial influence of each background variable.

For each marriage success scale, our aim is to find the best fitting model. The starting model consists of the five social background variables. Then, one by one, we drop those variables that have a non-significant partial sum of squares (= type 3 SS). In each step, the variable that shows the highest p-value is left out of the model. Only those variables with a type 3 SS significant at level 0.05 are included in the final model. On the basis of these regression models, we can draw conclusions about trendsetters for the more modern values.

To acquire a view of privatization processes we need a model with a period variable. In this way we can compare the effect of the main background variables over time. For each country, the three waves are now included as a categorized variable ‘period’ in the regression model, together with relevant social background variables.^{vii} The interaction term of each social background variable with period is included as well. Analysis of the VIF’s^{viii} in our regression models shows that the introduction of interaction terms creates a high multicollinearity between the variables. To mitigate this factor, for the quasi-metric variables age, education level and church commitment, we work with variables that are centered around the mean. Once again, only significant effects are included in the final model. Non-significant interaction terms with the highest p-value, and the corresponding principal effect, are removed first.^{ix}

4. Results

First of all, we are interested in the effect of certain background variables on the marriage success factors. The aim is to trace trendsetters and to observe whether younger people, people who are more highly educated and people who are less religiously involved are indeed more inclined to value the quality aspects of marriage rather than the homogamy aspects. Furthermore we want to see whether there are differences between the countries in this respect. Tables 2, 3 and 4 report the regression parameters for the best fitting models.

Concerning the material marriage aspects, in Table 2 we find the overall effects of age, education level, church commitment and marital status. Older people are more inclined to stress the material marriage aspects. More highly educated people show less interest in the material aspects. The effects of age and education level are present in all four countries. We find some effects of church commitment in Belgium and Ireland, in the sense that people who are more committed are also more interested in the material marriage aspects. In Denmark in 1981 we find an opposite effect: church commitment is negatively related to interest in the material marriage aspects. In Belgium, Denmark and Spain, the analyses indicate that unmarried people are less materially oriented with respect to marriage success aspects. As can be seen with type 3 SS,^x generally speaking, the effect of marital status is not very strong. It does not appear in all the waves, and in Spain it is even absent.

Table 2. Regression parameters for the dependent variable ‘material marriage aspects’ (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, 1981-1990-1999, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | Df | Belgium | | | Denmark | | | Ireland | | | Spain | | |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) |
| Intercept | | 4,46 *** | 5,24 *** | 4,73 *** | 4,13 *** | 3,21 *** | 3,05 *** | 4,34 *** | 4,96 *** | 4,19 *** | 4,55 *** | 4,31 *** | 3,95 *** |
| Age | 1 | | | 0,01 *** | 0,01 *** | 0,01 *** | 0,01 *** | 0,00 ** | 0,01 *** | 0,01 *** | | 0,01 *** | 0,01 *** |
| Education level | 1 | | -0,07 *** | -0,07 *** | -0,03 ** | | -0,03 * | | -0,08 *** | -0,07 *** | -0,04 *** | -0,03 *** | |
| Church commitment | 1 | 0,05 * | 91,38 *** | 44,72 *** | 8,55 ** | | 3,50 * | | 24,31 *** | 22,76 *** | 31,82 *** | 19,02 *** | |
| Marital status | 2 | 6,06 * | | | -0,10 ** | | | 0,09 ** | | 0,10 *** | | | |
| unmarried | | -0,23 ** | -0,25 *** | | -0,22 ** | 0,08 | | 10,81 ** | | 16,09 *** | -0,17 ** | | |
| divorced | | 0,31 | -0,21 ** | | 0,01 | -0,34 ** | | | | | 0,62 ** | | |
| ref cat: married/widowed | | 10,97 ** | 30,13 *** | | 8,67 * | 9,87 ** | | | | | 22,26 *** | | |
| R ² | | 0,02 | 0,05 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,02 | 0,06 | 0,11 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,02 |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

Table 3. Regression parameters for the dependent variable ‘homogamy’ (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, 1981-1990-1999, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | Df | Belgium | | | Denmark | | | Ireland | | | Spain | | |
|--|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) |
| Intercept | | 3,68 *** | 3,48 *** | 3,22 *** | 3,56 *** | 3,03 *** | 3,03 *** | 3,18 *** | 2,95 *** | 3,09 *** | 4,06 *** | 3,56 *** | 3,72 *** |
| Age | 1 | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,03 *** | 0,03 *** | 0,03 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** | 0,02 *** |
| Education level | 1 | 86,00 *** | 286,99 *** | 130,23 *** | 127,29 *** | 115,89 *** | 79,54 *** | 245,22 *** | 203,21 *** | 157,69 *** | 142,66 *** | 217,25 *** | 47,05 *** |
| | | | | | -0,04 * | -0,04 * | | -0,06 ** | | -0,04 * | | | -0,06 *** |
| | | | | | 12,78 * | 7,87 * | | 18,29 ** | | 9,21 * | | | 28,61 *** |
| Church commitment | 1 | 0,30 *** | 0,23 *** | 0,28 *** | 0,21 *** | 0,19 *** | 0,15 *** | 0,28 *** | 0,22 *** | 0,18 *** | 0,21 *** | 0,23 *** | 0,27 *** |
| | | 231,82 *** | 384,68 *** | 358,10 *** | 37,12 *** | 27,64 *** | 17,45 *** | 113,12 *** | 57,35 *** | 55,14 *** | 217,88 *** | 283,25 *** | 140,06 *** |
| Gender female ref.cat. male | 1 | | | 0,14 * | 0,19 * | 0,28 ** | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 9,03 * | 9,66 * | 18,37 ** | | | | | | | |
| Marital status unmarried divorced ref cat: married/widowed | 2 | | | | | 0,24 * | | | | | 0,03 | -0,19 * | |
| | | | | | | -0,19 | | | | | 1,10 ** | -0,50 * | |
| | | | | | | 13,11 * | | | | | 29,08 ** | 22,55 * | |
| R ² | | 0,12 | 0,13 | 0,14 | 0,11 | 0,13 | 0,08 | 0,18 | 0,13 | 0,18 | 0,09 | 0,14 | 0,15 |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

Concerning the homogam marriage aspects, Table 3 indicates an obvious effect of age and church commitment. In line with our hypothesis (H2), older people are still more inclined to homogam marriage aspects. This trend is present in all four countries and over all the waves. As can be seen with the type 3 SS, the effects are rather strong. For the effect of church commitment, it is clear that higher church commitment leads to a stronger emphasis on the homogamy aspects of marriage. This effect is also apparent in every country and every wave. It is in line with the stated hypothesis (H3). As can be seen with the type 3 SS, the effect of church commitment is high in Belgium and Spain. It is an important variable in explaining the homogam marriage orientation. Next to the effect of age and church commitment, there are indications of the effect of education level, gender and marital status. In Denmark, Ireland and Spain, the regression parameters show us that more highly educated people are less homogamy oriented. This effect is not clear in every wave. For the effect of gender, there are indications that women in Belgium and Denmark are more inclined to the homogamy aspects of marriage. The direction of the effect of marital status is not clear.

Table 4 shows the parameters for the quality aspects of marriage. The most important effects are again in support of our hypotheses. In Belgium and Spain, and also in Ireland in 1981, there are indications that more highly educated people are more quality-oriented. The parameters in Denmark and Ireland indicate that younger people are more interested in quality aspects. And the parameters in Spain favour the hypothesis that the more religiously committed people are less interested in the newer quality values. As for the effect of gender there are indications that women support the quality aspects more than men do.

Table 4. Regression parameters for the dependent variable ‘quality aspects of marriage’ (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, 1981-1990-1999, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | Df | Belgium | | | Denmark | | | Ireland | | | Spain | | |
|--|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1981 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1990 Estimate (Type 3 SS) | 1999 Estimate (Type 3 SS) |
| Intercept | | 9,54 *** | 10,38 *** | 10,44 *** | 10,90 *** | 10,81 *** | 10,75 *** | 10,27 *** | 10,35 *** | 11,02 *** | 9,75 *** | 9,97 *** | 10,07 *** |
| Age | 1 | | 0,00 ** | | -0,01 *** | -0,01 ** | -0,01 *** | -0,01 ** | | -0,01 * | | | |
| | | | 14,38 ** | | 32,66 *** | 15,22 ** | 23,93 *** | 23,50 ** | | 7,29 * | | | |
| Education level | 1 | 0,11 *** | 0,04 ** | 0,03 * | | | | 0,05 ** | | | 0,06 *** | 0,05 *** | 0,07 *** |
| | | 82,33 *** | 21,70 ** | 8,37 * | | | | 16,29 ** | | | 95,41 *** | 68,77 *** | 51,16 *** |
| Church commitment | 1 | | | | | | | | | | -0,13 *** | | -0,09 ** |
| | | | | | | | | | | | 90,15 *** | | 18,96 ** |
| Gender female ref.cat. male | 1 | 0,26 ** | | | | 0,21 * | 0,25 ** | | 0,30 *** | | 0,27 *** | | 0,26 ** |
| | | 16,90 ** | | | | 11,23 * | 15,65 ** | | 22,01 *** | | 37,92 *** | | 16,91 ** |
| Marital status unmarried divorced ref cat: married/widowed | 2 | | | | -0,10 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 0,42 * | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 12,56 * | | | | | | | | |
| R ² | | 0,04 | 0,01 | 0,00 | 0,02 | 0,01 | 0,02 | 0,02 | 0,01 | 0,00 | 0,03 | 0,01 | 0,04 |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

As for the effects of the background variables, in general the findings go in the direction of the formulated hypotheses. In comparison to less highly educated people, more highly educated people put more stress on the quality aspects of marriage and are less interested in the material and homogamy aspects. Younger people are more interested in the quality of marriage, and less in the material and homogamy aspects. And those who are more committed to the church still have a more traditional view with respect to marriage success factors. The effects of gender and marital status are not clearly interpretable. There are indications that women are more homogamy oriented than men, and women are also more inclined to favour the quality aspects of marriage. Also, the effects of marital status are not going in the same direction.

One indicator of the strength of the effects found is the R^2 statistic. This is a measure of the variance explained by all of the dependent variables included. In the above tables, we can see that this statistic generally takes on a very low value, especially for regressions on the quality scale and the material marriage aspects. These findings necessitate us to be very careful when interpreting the results. The low R^2 is an indication of the small effect of social background variables. One possible explanation could be that in the period studied, the privatization processes had nearly come to an end. Before reaching this conclusion, further analyses must be carried out, because even at the end of the privatization process we expect to find a further decline in the effect of background effects over time.

For what concerns the privatization process, we hypothesized that this process will be clearer in countries where structural modernization has reached a higher level. Accordingly, we could expect the effect of background variables to be greater in Spain and Ireland, as compared to Belgium and Denmark. As for the effects that have been discussed, our analyses show no clear differences between the countries. The effects of age, education level and church commitment on material marriage aspects reappear in the four countries under consideration. For the homogam marriage orientation it is the same, except that the education level does not play a role in Belgium. The regressions for the quality marriage aspects also show no clear distinction between Belgium and Denmark, on the one hand, and Spain and Ireland, on the other.

In the next step, our goal is to evaluate the effect of background variables over time. In line with the privatization hypothesis, we want to know whether the effect of social background variables is indeed decreasing over time in the four European countries we have studied.

The privatization hypothesis is tested in a regression model with inclusion of the interaction between the social background variables and the period variable. Considering the effect of social background variables over time enables us to handle certain questions about the effect of age/generation. From Tables 2, 3 and 4 we find that younger people are more interested in the quality aspects of marriage, and older people are drawn more to the homogamy and material marriage orientations. This fact may be due either to an age effect or a generation effect (Kerkhofs e.a., 1992, p. 35; Dobbelaere e.a., 2000, pp. 222-223; Hagenaaers, 1998, pp. 211-215; Becker, 1991b; Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988, pp. 17-23). The term 'generation effect' refers to the fact that people who are born and socialized in a certain time period will have the same value orientations, which do not change over time. 'Age effect', then, refers more to the life cycle. As people get older, their value orientations change. As we have seen earlier, many authors expect a difference between pre-war and post-war generations with respect to the new values. The post-war generation has been socialized primarily within an individualizing society, so we expect this generation to have internalized the new values better than the pre-war generation. In the next regression models, we try to detect age and/or generation effects. Technically, this is done by introducing an age as well as a generation variable into the basic model. Strictly speaking, a period of 20 years is rather short for distinguishing between age and generation effects. However, the EVS data are better suited for studying shifts in value orientations because they cover a longer period than most other studies. For the generation variable, we use the four-generation model of Becker,^{xi} who distinguishes between the 'pre-war generation' (born between 1910 and 1930), the 'silent generation' (born between 1930 and 1940), the 'protest generation' (born between 1940 and 1955) and the 'lost generation' (born after 1955) (Becker, 1991a, pp. 25-33). As explained earlier, the non-significant effects^{xii} are removed step by step.

Table 5 gives the regression equations for Belgium. As can be seen, for the material marriage aspects, a generation effect is detected. For the homogamy marriage orientations, both an age effect and a generation effect are found. The quality aspects of marriage are only affected by age. Concerning the privatization hypothesis, there are some indications in the regression model for the quality aspects of marriage.

Table 5. Regression parameters for the dependent variables ‘material marriage aspects’, ‘homogamy’ and ‘quality aspects of marriage’ (Belgium, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | MATERIAL MARRIAGE ASPECTS | | | | HOMOLOGY | | | | QUALITY ASPECTS MARRIAGE | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|----|---------|
| | Reference period 1981 | | Reference period 1999 | | Reference period 1981 | | Reference period 1999 | | Reference period 1981 | | Reference period 1999 | | | |
| | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | | |
| Intercept | | 4,53 *** | | 4,47 *** | | 5,03 *** | | 4,59 *** | | 10,21 *** | | 10,65 *** | | |
| Period | 90 | 0,21 | 81 | 0,06 | 90 | -0,24 *** | 81 | 0,43 *** | 90 | 0,19 * | 81 | -0,44 *** | | |
| | 99 | -0,06 | 90 | 0,27 *** | 99 | -0,43 *** | 90 | 0,20 *** | 99 | 0,44 *** | 90 | -0,25 *** | | |
| Age | | | | | | 0,02 *** | | 0,02 *** | | 0,00 | | 0,00 | | |
| Age*Period | | | | | | | | | 90 | 0,00 | 81 | -0,01 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 99 | 0,01 | 90 | -0,01 * | | |
| Generation | pre-war | 0,05 | pre-war | 0,41 *** | born before '45 | 0,33 *** | born before '45 | 0,33 *** | | | | | | |
| | silent | 0,16 | silent | 0,27 *** | | | | | | | | | | |
| | protest | -0,09 | protest | 0,03 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Generation*Period | pre-war | 90 | -0,06 | pre-war | 81 | -0,35 * | | | | | | | | |
| | silent | 90 | 0,03 | silent | 81 | -0,11 | | | | | | | | |
| | protest | 90 | 0,00 | protest | 81 | -0,12 | | | | | | | | |
| | pre-war | 99 | 0,35 * | pre-war | 90 | -0,41 *** | | | | | | | | |
| | silent | 99 | 0,11 | silent | 90 | -0,08 | | | | | | | | |
| protest | 99 | 0,12 | protest | 90 | -0,12 | | | | | | | | | |
| Education level | | -0,01 | | -0,07 *** | | | | | | 0,09 *** | | 0,03 * | | |
| Education level*Period | 90 | -0,06 *** | 81 | 0,06 *** | | | | | 90 | -0,05 * | 81 | 0,06 ** | | |
| | 99 | -0,06 *** | 90 | 0,00 | | | | | 99 | -0,06 ** | 90 | 0,01 | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | | female | 0,26 ** | female | -0,06 | | |
| Gender*Period | | | | | | | | | female | 90 | -0,22 * | female | 81 | 0,32 ** |
| | | | | | | | | | female | 99 | -0,32 ** | female | 90 | 0,10 |
| Marital status | unmarried | -0,14 | unmarried | 0,11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | divorced | 0,31 | divorced | -0,02 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Marital status*Period | unmarried | 90 | -0,09 | unmarried | 81 | -0,25 * | | | | | | | | |
| | Divorced | 90 | -0,53 * | divorced | 81 | 0,33 | | | | | | | | |
| | unmarried | 99 | 0,25 * | unmarried | 90 | -0,34 *** | | | | | | | | |
| | Divorced | 99 | -0,33 | divorced | 90 | -0,20 | | | | | | | | |
| R ² | | 0,05 | | | | 0,08 | | | | 0,03 | | | | |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

The effects of education level and gender decrease over time. For the other marriage aspects, we find no clear indication of privatization. In the regression model for material marriage aspects, the effect of education level even increases over time.

In Denmark, there are also indications of the privatization effect. As can be seen in the table below, between 1981 and 1990 the effect of marital status on material marriage success factors disappears. In 1981, unmarried people were inclined to support the material aspects less, but by 1990 the effect had disappeared. As for the homogamy marriage aspects, between 1990 and 1999 the effect of age decreased. Between 1990 and 1999 the effect of gender also disappeared. For the other background variables, the effect is not changing over time. For the quality aspects of marriage, there are no interaction effects whatsoever according to period. The fact that older people think more traditionally is generally due to the combined effect of age and generation. Only regression for the quality aspects of marriage indicates a pure age effect.^{xiii}

Table 6. Regression parameters for the dependent variables ‘material marriage aspects’, ‘homogamy’ and ‘quality aspects of marriage’ (Denmark, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | MATERIAL MARRIAGE ASPECTS | | | | HOMOLOGY | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----|---------|
| | Reference period 1981 | | Reference period 1999 | | Reference period 1981 | | Reference period 1999 | | | | | |
| | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | | | | |
| Intercept | | 3,88 *** | | 3,36 *** | | 4,44 *** | | 4,19 *** | | | | |
| Period | 90 | -0,52 *** | 81 | 0,52 *** | 90 | -0,33 ** | 81 | 0,25 * | | | | |
| | 99 | -0,18 ** | 90 | 0,33 *** | 99 | -0,25 * | 90 | -0,07 | | | | |
| Age | | 0,01 *** | | 0,01 *** | | 0,02 *** | | 0,01 ** | | | | |
| Age*Period | | | | | 90 | 0,00 | 81 | 0,01 * | | | | |
| | | | | | 99 | -0,01 * | 90 | 0,01 ** | | | | |
| Generation | born before '45 | 0,23 *** | born before '45 | 0,23 *** | born before '45 | 0,21 * | born before '45 | 0,21 * | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | female | 0,27 ** | female | 0,04 | | | | |
| Gender*Period | | | | | female | 90 | 0,08 | female | 81 | 0,23 | | |
| | | | | | female | 99 | -0,23 | female | 90 | 0,31 * | | |
| Marital status | unmarried | -0,16 * | unmarried | -0,01 | unmarried | 0,09 | unmarried | -0,19 | | | | |
| | divorced | 0,02 | divorced | -0,17 | divorced | 0,14 | divorced | -0,24 | | | | |
| Marital status**Period | unmarried | 90 | 0,23 * | unmarried | 81 | -0,15 | unmarried | 90 | 0,15 | unmarried | 81 | 0,28 |
| | divorced | 90 | -0,37 * | divorced | 81 | 0,19 | divorced | 90 | -0,38 | divorced | 81 | 0,38 |
| | unmarried | 99 | 0,15 | unmarried | 90 | 0,08 | unmarried | 99 | -0,28 | unmarried | 90 | 0,43 ** |
| | divorced | 99 | -0,19 | divorced | 90 | -0,18 | divorced | 99 | -0,38 | divorced | 90 | 0,00 |
| R ² | 0,11 | | | | 0,13 | | | | | | | |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

In Ireland, we observe interactions with period only for the material marriage aspects. For the homogamy marriage aspects and the quality aspects of marriage, the effect of background variables has not been changing over time. The effects that we observed in Table 7 are clearly not in favour of the privatisation hypothesis. Between 1990 and 1999, the effect of age even increased. Between 1981 and 1990, the effect of education level increased as well. For the three marriage scales, there is a pure age effect.

Table 7. Regression parameters for the dependent variables ‘material marriage aspects’, ‘homogamy’ and ‘quality aspects of marriage’ (Ireland, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | MATERIAL MARRIAGE ASPECTS | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | reference period 1981 | | reference period 1999 | |
| | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate |
| Intercept | | 4,94 *** | | 4,65 *** |
| Period | 90 | -0,15 ** | 81 | 0,29 *** |
| | 99 | -0,29 *** | 90 | 0,14 ** |
| Age | | 0,00 ** | | 0,02 *** |
| Age*Period | 90 | 0,00 | 81 | -0,01 *** |
| | 99 | 0,01 *** | 90 | -0,01 ** |
| Education level | | -0,02 | | -0,06 *** |
| Education level*Period | 90 | -0,05 * | 81 | 0,04 |
| | 99 | -0,04 | 90 | -0,02 |
| R ² | | 0,07 | | |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

From the regression analyses for Spain we learn that, for the material marriage aspects, there is a stable and pure age effect. For the homogamy marriage orientation, we find a combined effect of age and generation. Generally, there are not many interaction effects between period and the social background variables. With respect to marital status, in 1981 divorced people were more materially oriented and also more inclined to the homogamy marriage aspect. By 1990 these effects had changed significantly. We understand this as evidence for the privatization process. The impact of church commitment on marriage quality aspects decreased from 1981 to 1990, but then increased from 1990 to 1999.

Table 8. Regression parameters for the dependent variables ‘material marriage aspects’, ‘homogamy’ and ‘quality aspects of marriage’ (Spain, multiple linear regression, weighted data).

| Parameter | MATERIAL MARRIAGE ASPECTS | | | | HOMOGAMY | | | | QUALITY ASPECTS MARRIAGE | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | reference period 1981 | | reference period 1999 | | reference period 1981 | | reference period 1999 | | reference period 1981 | | reference period 1999 | |
| | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate | Cat. | Estimate |
| Intercept | | 4,40 *** | | 4,43 *** | | 5,42 *** | | 4,91 *** | | 9,75 *** | | 10,27 *** |
| Period | 90 | 0,18 *** | 81 | -0,04 | 90 | -0,36 *** | 81 | 0,51 *** | 90 | 0,45 *** | 81 | -0,51 *** |
| | 99 | 0,04 | 90 | 0,14 ** | 99 | -0,51 *** | 90 | 0,15 * | 99 | 0,51 *** | 90 | -0,06 |
| Age | | | | | | 0,02 *** | | 0,02 *** | | | | |
| Generation | | | | | born before '45 | 0,22 ** | | 0,22 ** | | | | |
| Church commitment | | | | | | | | | | -0,12 *** | | -0,11 *** |
| Church commitment*Period | | | | | | | | | 90 | 0,12 *** | 81 | -0,01 |
| | | | | | | | | | 99 | 0,01 | 90 | 0,11 ** |
| Marital status | unmarried | -0,28 *** | unmarried | -0,32 *** | unmarried | 0,06 | unmarried | -0,21 | | | | |
| | divorced | 0,54 * | divorced | 0,07 | divorced | 0,82 * | divorced | -0,17 | | | | |
| Marital status*Period | unmarried | 90 | 0,00 | unmarried | 81 | 0,04 | unmarried | 90 | -0,30 ** | unmarried | 81 | 0,26 |
| | divorced | 90 | -1,02 *** | divorced | 81 | 0,48 | divorced | 90 | -1,52 *** | divorced | 81 | 0,99 * |
| | unmarried | 99 | -0,04 | unmarried | 90 | 0,03 | unmarried | 99 | -0,26 | unmarried | 90 | -0,04 |
| | divorced | 99 | -0,48 | divorced | 90 | -0,54 * | divorced | 99 | -0,99 * | divorced | 90 | -0,53 |
| R ² | 0,02 | | | | 0,11 | | | | 0,03 | | | |

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,01; *** p < 0,001

5. Discussion

At the end of the 20th century, social background variables are still playing a role in explaining value orientations with respect to marriage success factors. The more highly educated people are, the more they support the quality aspects of marriage and the less they are interested in the material and homogamy aspects. The higher the church commitment, the more a person will be attached to homogamy and the material marriage aspects and the less they will support the quality aspects. Younger people are more adherent to the quality aspects of marriage and less to the material and homogamy marriage aspects. This fact is due either to an age effect, or else to a combined age-generation effect. Only for the material marriage aspects in Belgium, there is a pure generation effect at work. Therefore the idea that the new values are being introduced by the younger generations and that certain generations do not change their values over time cannot be confirmed by our analyses. It is better to accept the view that all generations are prone to the new value orientations, but that younger people are more susceptible. For gender and marital status, the effects are not clear. In general, the results of our analyses support the hypotheses with respect to social background variables. For the more individualized value orientations, young people, more highly educated people and more secularized people are the trendsetters. In this respect there is no clear difference between the countries.

As for the strength of these effects, we must be aware that the overall R^2 values are rather low. We already suggested above that this could be an indication of the end of the privatization processes. Now we can reject this hypothesis since, even if the privatization process were drawing to an end, a further decline in background effects should be clearly noticeable over time. A comparison over 20 years should reveal this trend. In our analyses, we cannot find convincing evidence for this evolution. In addition, the fact that most regression models come up with significant effects for the relevant social background variables is a sign of the non-negligible effect of social background variables on the marriage success factors.

Nevertheless, there are some indications of the increasing privatization of marriage values. Mainly in Denmark and Belgium, there are traces of the diminishing effect of marital status, gender, education level and age. In Ireland and Spain, there is hardly any evolution in this respect. These findings can be interpreted as support for the claim that privatization processes have further progressed in the more structurally modernized countries Belgium and Denmark.

We must be very careful, however, in drawing conclusions. The effects of most social background variables are remaining stable over time in every country. Even in Belgium and Denmark, the indications of the privatization process are not really convincing. We must admit that even in the structurally more modern countries, the effects of social background variables are still larger than would be expected on the basis of the individualization literature. In the age of reflexive modernization, social collectivities have lost little of their power. Sociologists talking about a “general” phenomenon must be convinced that the new individualized value orientations are restricted to small segments of society: the highly educated, the young and those who are less religious.

Appendix

Table 9. Standardized factor loadings for marriage success factors.

| | Quality aspects | Material aspects | Homogamy aspects |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mutual respect and appreciation | 0.58 | | |
| Understanding and tolerance | 0.57 | | |
| Happy sexual relationship | 0.74 | | |
| Sharing household chores | 0.57 | | |
| Good housing | | 0.63 | |
| Adequate income | | 0.9 | |
| Same social background | | | 0.66 |
| Shared religious beliefs | | | 0.74 |
| Agreement on politics | | | 0.7 |

Bibliography

- Ashford, S. & Timms, N. (1992). *What Europe Thinks. A study of Western European Values*. Hants: Dartmouth Publishing Company
- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society. Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.
- Beck, U. (1995). Love or freedom. Living together, apart or at war. In U. Beck, E. Beck-Gernsheim (Eds.), *The Normal Chaos of Love* (pp. 11-44). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Beck-Gernsheim, E. (1995). From love to liaison. Changing relationships in an individualized society. In U. Beck, E. Beck-Gernsheim (Eds.), *The Normal Chaos of Love* (pp. 45-77). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Beck, U. & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (1996), Individualization and precarious freedoms: perspectives and controversies of a subject-oriented sociology. In P. Heelas, S. Lash & P. Morris (Eds.), *Detraditionalization*. (pp. 23-48). Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Beck, U. (1997), The age of side-effects: on the politicization of modernity. In U. Beck, *The reinvention of politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Beck, U. (1998). The democratization of the family, or the unknown art of free association. In U. Beck, *Democracy without enemies* (pp. 65-83). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Becker, H. A. (1991a). Dynamics of life histories and generations research. In H.A. Becker (Ed.), *Life histories and generations* pp. 1-55. Utrecht: ISOR.
- Becker, H. A. (1991b). *Life histories and generations* . Utrecht: ISOR
- Bollen, K.A. and Long, J.S. (1992), "Tests for Structural Equation Models", *Sociological Methods and Research*, 2: 123-131.
- de Moor, R. (1995). *Values in Western society*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press
- Dobbelaere, K., Elchardus, M., Kerkhofs, J., Voyé, L. & Bawin-Legros, B. (2000). *Verloren zekerheid. De Belgen en hun waarden, overtuigingen en houdingen*. Tiel: Lannoo.
- Dobbelaere, K.; Gevers, J. & Halman, L. (1999). Religion and the family. In Halman, L. & Riis, O. (Eds.), *Religion in secularizing society. The Europeans' religion at the end of the 20th century*. pp. 67-81. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press

- Ester, P., Halman, L. & de Moor, R. (1993). *The Individualizing Society. Value Change in Europe and North America*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Felling, A., Peters, J. & Scheepers, P. (2000). *Individualisering in Nederland aan het einde van de twintigste eeuw. Empirisch onderzoek naar omstreden hypotheses*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- Hagenaars, J.A., (1998). De onzichtbare kleren van de generaties. *Mens en maatschappij*, 73 (2), pp. 211-215
- Halman, L. (1991). *Waarden in de westerse wereld. Een internationale exploratie van de waarden in de westerse samenleving*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Halman, L. (1996). Individualism in individualized society? Results from the European Values Surveys. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 12, pp. 195-214.
- Halman, L.; Heunks, F.; de Moor, R.; Zanders, H. (1987). *Traditie, secularisatie en individualisering. Een studie naar de waarden van de Nederlanders in een Europese context*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Halman, L.; Petersson, T. & Verweij, J. (1999). The religious factor in contemporary society. The differential impact of religion on the private and public sphere in comparative perspective. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 40 (1), pp. 141-160.
- Harding, S. & Phillips, D. (1986). *Contrasting values in Western Europe. Unity, diversity and change*. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Kerkhofs, J., Dobbelaere, K., Voyé, L. & Bawin-Legros, B. (1992). *De versnelde ommekeer. De waarden van Vlamingen, Walen en Brusselaars in de jaren negentig*. Tiel: Lannoo.
- Laermans, R. (1992). *In de greep van De Moderne Tijd: modernisering en verzuiling. Evoluties binnen de ACW-vormingsorganisaties*. Leuven: Garant.
- Lesthaeghe, R. & Meekers, R. (1987). Demografische verschuivingen en de evolutie van waardenpatronen in de Europese gemeenschap. *Tijdschrift voor sociologie*, 8 (2-3), pp. 131-200.
- Lesthaeghe, R. & Surkeyn, J. (1988). Cultural Dynamics and Economic Theories of Fertility Change. *Population and Development Review*, 14 (1), pp. 1-45.
- Middendorp, C.P. (1979). *Ontzuiling, politisering en restauratie in Nederland: progressiviteit en conservatisme in de jaren 60 en 70*. Meppel: Boom.

- Rensvold, R.B. and Cheung, G.W. (1998), "Testing measurement models for factorial invariance: a systematic approach". *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 58: 1017-1034.
- Saris, W.E., Satorra, A., & Sörbom, D. (1987). The detection and correction of specification errors in structural models. Pp. 105-129 in: Clogg, C.C. (Ed.), *Sociological Methodology*, 1987 (pp. 105-129). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Sharma, S. (1996). *Applied Multivariate Techniques*. New York: Wiley & Sons.
- van den Elzen, A. (1996). Gezinsoriëntaties in de Westerse wereld: een benadering met latente klasse-analyse. *Tijdschrift voor sociologie*, 17 (1), pp. 29-49.
- van den Elzen, A. (1998). Culturele ontwikkelingen rondom het Westerse gezin. *Sociale wetenschappen*, 40 (2), pp. 47-65.
- Van den Troost, A. (2000). De relationele markt anno 2000. Een exploratie van waardeoriëntaties en vormgeving. *Tijdschrift voor sociologie*, 21 (2), pp. 131-158.

ⁱ It would be interesting to test the effect of social background as well, but since the SES variable is not available for all the waves of the data in Ireland and Denmark, this cannot be done.

ⁱⁱ The weighting variable for age and gender in the individual countries is used.

ⁱⁱⁱ For the factor analyses in LISREL, we work with unweighted data. A correction for the data in Belgium in 1990 was necessary because there is an overrepresentation of some regions in the original dataset. Therefore we take a random sample of the original dataset in which we take a correct representation of the regions.

^{iv} ‘Adequate income’ and ‘same social background’ both refer to an aspect of social status. ‘Understanding and tolerance’ and ‘mutual respect and appreciation’ both refer to the aspect tolerance.

^v The Likert scales are considered to be quasi-metric variables.

^{vi} The variable ‘legal marital status’ is not present in the dataset of Ireland for 1999. Therefore we will not use that variable for the analyses of the Irish data.

^{vii} Social background variables that show no significant effect for regressions in the datasets of 1981, 1990 and 1990 (see tables 2, 3 and 4) are kept out of this analysis.

^{viii} The Variance Inflation Factors (=VIF’s) indicate the impact of multicollinearity between the independent variables on the estimate.

^{ix} The principal effect period will be restrained in any way.

^x The Type 3 SS measures the total effect of the considered variable. In that way we can compare how much the different social background variables contribute tot the explained variance of the model.

^{xi} A model with generation as well as age, may cause problems with respect to multicollinearity. Therefore, in the regression models where age and generation both are included, we dichotomise the generation variable (born before 1945 / born after 1945). As soon as the age-variable is dropped out, we switch to the four-generation-model. Inspection of the VIF shows that this method of working is not problematic with respect to multicollinearity.

^{xii} For the effect of age and generation, therefore we are looking to head-effect, as well as interaction-effect. For the other background variables, only interaction-effects are point of interest.

^{xiii} Not in the table.