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Transnationalism and Ethnic Identification among Adolescent Children of Immigrants in the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Sweden

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Inspired by the emerging literature on transnationalism in the United States, this paper studies the return visits of adolescent children of immigrants in four European countries. Using data from the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study, cross-classified multilevel analyses indicate that parental economic resources, ethnic motivations, and political suppression are related to adolescent children of immigrants' return visits. Furthermore, return visits are positively related to adolescents' identification with the origin country and negatively to adolescents' identification with the host country.

INTRODUCTION

In light of today's development of travel technology and communication, the lives of contemporary immigrants are increasingly characterized by links that cut across national borders (Levitt, 2001; Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008). Social scientists have been looking for ways to conceptualize the contemporary connections between 'here' and 'there' (Faist, 2000; Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 2004), so-called *transnationalism* (*see* Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Portes, 1999; Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, 1999). The emergence of the concept of transnationalism is partly the result of anthropological groundbreaking work (Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton,

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1992; Levitt, 2001; Smith, 2006) which confirms that involvement with the country of origin is a common pattern among immigrants.

Prior research has studied individual differences in transnationalism. Immigrants with higher educational attainment, higher income and more attachment to their country of origin have been found more likely to engage in transnational activities (Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002; Portes, Haller, and Guarnizo, 2002; Tamaki, 2011). Besides that, origin characteristics influence immigrants' involvement with the country of origin, for example a greater distance to that country (Schans, 2009) and more conflicts in the country of origin (Al-Ali, Black, and Koser, 2001) are seen as negative factors related to immigrants' transnationalism such as return visits. At the same time, previous research has provided evidence that the second generation (*i.e.*, children of immigrants) also engages in transnational activities (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton, 1994; Levitt and Waters, 2002; Smith, 2002; Boehm, 2008; Levitt, 2009). Moreover, a study among second-generation immigrants in New York shows that the frequency of return visits depends on the geographical distance between the country of origin and the host country and homeland politics (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008).

Although these studies add significant knowledge to the field of transnationalism, it is notably adult immigrants and their adult immigrant children whose determinants of transnationalism have been examined in a large body of sociological and anthropological literature. Little research has been done on transnational activities among *adolescent children of immigrants*. The current study analyzes one particular type of transnationalism among adolescent children of immigrants, namely return visits. Return visits imply a physical movement between the host country and the country of origin (Tamaki, 2011).

For investigating return visits of adolescent children of immigrants, one recent study has focused on parents' resources and ethnic motivations (Waldinger and Luthra, 2009). Using information from the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey (CILS), the results show a significant and positive relation between socio-economic status (SES) of immigrant parents and return visits of their adolescent children. Moreover, Waldinger and Luthra (2009) found that the frequency of return visits of the second generation decreases compared to the first generation. Finally, although the causal direction could not be assessed, the results show a significant relationship between children of immigrants' return visits and knowledge of the country of origin.

The current study builds on the scarce literature on return visits of adolescent children of immigrants in three ways.

First, we study both old and new conditions (which have not been studied before) that promote or hamper return visits. We theorize and examine whether *economic resources* and *ethnic motivations*[1] of immigrant parents are related to return visits of their adolescent children. We thereby assume that a great majority of adolescents cannot be perceived to be independent from their parents as most adolescents do not earn enough money to pay for return visits. This implies that it is important to take characteristics of the parents into account by investigating adolescents' return visits. Moreover, this study contributes to the current literature on transnationalism by examining the role of suppression in the origin country, geographical distance, and parents' ethnic identification, to name a few. This unique combination of characteristics, both on the individual level as well as national level, leads to increased understanding of return visits.

Second, we study the potential importance of transnational activities by assessing the relationship between adolescent return visits and their ethnic identification, which has received little attention in literature. Specifically, we focus on adolescent children of immigrants' identification with the origin country and with the host country. Origin and host identities among today's children of immigrants are not just a continuation of that of their parents (Rumbaut and Portes, 2001; Levitt, 2009). Identification processes "will vary situational and depend on many circumstances, such as the situation in the country of origin and the opportunity structure in the host country" (Verkuyten, 2006). Previous studies argued that return visits are a way for children of immigrants to maintain cross-border connections with people in the country of origin (Smith, 2006; Tamaki, 2011). By examining identification processes, this study aims to enrich our understanding of the relation between return visits and ethnic identification of adolescent children of immigrants.

Third, we broaden the empirical scope of research on transnationalism. Previous research predominantly focused on immigrants and their children in the United States, which leaves us uncertain about the generalizability of existing findings. We extend the literature to the context of

[1]Ethnic motivation includes the (parental) identification with origin country and (parental) identification with host country.

Europe, which has witnessed a strong increase in ethnic diversity in the past decades. Moreover, with regard to the countries of origin, we were able to investigate general patterns, as our study includes many different national origin groups,

We make use of the first wave of the *Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study in 4 European Countries* (CILS4EU) (Kalter *et al.*, 2013), which contains information on return visits of adolescent immigrant children. Data were collected in the year 2010–2011 among more than 6,000 adolescent immigrant children aged 14–15 in the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Sweden at approximately 100 high schools in each host country.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In an attempt to provide an elaborate framework of adolescent children of immigrants' return visits to the country of origin, the theories can first be summarized along three mechanisms, namely *economic resources*, *ethnic motivations* and *political restrictions.* From these mechanisms, we derive testable hypotheses. Subsequently, we focus on the relationship between adolescents' return visits and *adolescents' ethnic identification.*

Economic Resources, Ethnic Motivations, Political Restriction and Return Visits

Economic Resources. The first mechanism is *economic resources* of the parents that enable immigrants and their adolescent children to return to the country of origin. As the resource theory suggests, having a stable job and a sufficient income may allow people to pay the travel costs and increases the chance to visit the country of origin (Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002; Schans, 2009; Tamaki, 2011). The results from the study of Portes, Haller, and Guarnizo (2002) showed a positive relation between human capital and transnationalism among Latino immigrant adults. In the case of adolescent children of immigrants, to return to the country of origin, they are financially restricted by the economic status of their parents. It can thus be expected that adolescents are more likely to visit the country of origin if their parents have more economic resources. It is therefore hypothesized that *higher parental economic resources are positively related to return visits of adolescents to the country of origin* (H1).

Following the resources mechanism, scholars have argued that opportunities for return visits differ in the geographical distance from the host country to the country of origin. The greater the distance between both countries, the less likely immigrants are to visit the country of origin because higher distances imply more travel costs and therefore mean a financial restriction for return visits. Tamaki (2011) has found that, in America, Latino immigrants return more often to the country of origin compared to Asian immigrants. The author argues that Asian immigrants have to travel a greater distance to the country of origin compared to Latino immigrants and that greater distance implies higher travel costs. These higher travel costs hamper Asian immigrants from returning to the origin country. This explains the different return rate compared to Latino immigrants. Schans (2009) found in her study that Antillean and Surinamese living in the Netherlands were less likely to return to their country of origin, compared to Turks and Moroccans. Schans (2009) argued that as Suriname and the Antilles, unlike Turkey and Morocco, can be reached more easily by air, the costs of traveling home are too high for some immigrants. Although these studies did not include a direct measurement of geographical distance and travel costs, the findings suggest that longer distances are a restriction for return visits. We therefore hypothesize that *the greater the distance between the host country and the country of origin, the fewer return visits of adolescents* (H2).

Ethnic Motivations. The second mechanism of adolescents' visits to the country of origin is *ethnic motivation.* It is argued that immigrants engage in return visits as a result of the continuation of the social ties with families, friends, and places they left behind (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton, 1994). Immigrants with stronger social ties with people in the country of origin are more willing to visit this country. Tamaki (2011) has found that attachment to the country of origin has a positive relation with immigrants' return visits; Spanish and Asian language proficiency increases the probability of return visits. With respect to adolescents, the closer the ties immigrant parents have with the origin country which keep them firmly connected to that country, the more parents involve their offspring in activities with and in the country of origin (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1998; Levitt, 1998; Smith, 1998). It is therefore hypothesized that *stronger parental identification with the origin country is positively related to return visits of adolescents to the country of origin* (H3).

Furthermore, attachment to the host country indicates immigrants' and their offspring's affinity with groups in the host country. By interacting with natives of the host country through everyday life, schooling and other institutional settings, immigrants and their children learn the host country's culture and how to live in the host country (Tamaki, 2011). Higher level of identification to the host country will reduce the motivation of immigrants to engage in transnational activities (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller, 2003; Tamaki, 2011). With regard to adolescents, the more their immigrant parents attach to the host country, the less likely they are to undertake visits to the country of origin. It is therefore expected that *parental identification with the host country is negatively related to return visits of adolescents to the country of origin* (H4).

The motivation to visit the country of origin also depends on immigrant generation. Empirical studies leave researchers divided in their conclusions about transnational activities among second-generation immigrants (Somerville, 2008). On one side of the debate, scholars argue that transnational activities are predominantly first-generation phenomena (*e.g.* Rumbaut and Portes, 2001). In contrast, other researchers argue that children of immigrants remain connected to the parents' country of origin by maintaining some knowledge of their parents' mother tongue and by visiting that country (Basch *et al.*, 1994; Levitt and Waters, 2002; Smith, 2002; Tamaki, 2011). Although adolescent children of immigrants can still have a particular knowledge of the parents' mother tongue, it is reasoned that the frequency of transnational activities declines after the second generation due to language barriers between adolescent children of immigrants and their relatives in the country of origin (Alba and Nee, 2003). This argument would suggest a reduction of return visits over time (Alba and Nee, 2003; Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller, 2003). Specifically, it is expected that the *generation of adolescents is negatively related to return visits of adolescents to the country of origin* (H5).

Finally, we consider ethnic endogamy and inter-marriage. Whether adolescents maintain some kind of connection with the country of origin largely depends on the extent to which they are brought up in cross-border circumstances (Abelman, 2002). When adolescents grow up in a situation in which both parents come from the same country of origin, their parents will strengthen the identification with their origin country, its culture and traditions, and it is more likely that as a consequence they visit their origin country more often. That is to say, ethnic endogamy will increase the motivation for parents to visit the country of origin. It is

therefore expected that *parental ethnic endogamy is positively related to return visits of adolescents to the country of origin.* (H6).

Political Restrictions. The third mechanism is *political restrictions* in the country of origin. Immigrants can be willing to visit their country of origin, but are restricted by the political situation of that country. Refugees, for instance, often involuntarily immigrate to the host country. The sense of insecurity or anxiety which arises due to the political situation of the country of origin plays a large role in the question whether or not to visit the country of origin. Restrictions (*e.g.*, war and lack of safety) in the country of origin decrease the chance that immigrants are able and willing to return (Al-Ali, Black, and Koser, 2001). Political suppression thus hampers immigrants' return visits and that of their children as a consequence. Following this argumentation, it is hypothesized that *more political suppression in the country of origin is related to less return visits of adolescents to that country* (H7).

Return Visits and Ethnic Identification

Previous studies have indicated a relationship between transnational activities and immigrants' assimilation (Portes, Haller, and Guarnizo, 2002; Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller, 2003; Tamaki, 2011). However, it remains unclear how transnational activities of adolescents, such as return visits, are related to adolescent children of immigrants' ethnic identification. This study specifically focuses on adolescents' return visits to the country of origin in relation to their identification with the origin country and to their identification with the host country.

First, visits to the country of origin often provide children of immigrants with an open door into their parents' background (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008). Depth and intensity of adolescents involvement in return visits will keep them more oriented toward the country of origin (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Previous studies on return visits show that returning to a country of origin is important for identifying with it (Smith, 2006). Besides that, return visits to a country of origin increase the opportunity for adolescents to strengthen bonds with their original ethnic group (Rumbaut and Portes, 2001). Following this argument, it is hypothesized that *the more often adolescents visit the country of origin, the more they identify with the origin country* (H8).

Second, return visits may negatively influence adolescent children of immigrants' identification with the host country. Children of immigrants, who visited the country of origin and experienced that they can contribute to

their place of origin, enjoy a higher level of prestige in the country of origin than in the host country (Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, 1999; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001). As a result, these children "are more likely to adapt a 'reactive ethnicity'" (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008: 9). It is therefore expected that *the more often adolescents visit the country of origin, the less they identify with the host country* (H9a). Additionally, it can be argued that return visits strengthen identification with the host country, as the adolescents find the origin country foreign and strange (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008). In the country of origin, adolescents can be confronted with situations that are characterized by corruption, less welfare and more poverty. Following this idea, the relation between return visits and identification with the host country is conditional upon economic circumstances in the country of origin. It is therefore expected that *for adolescents from countries of origin with low economic circumstances, the negative relation between return visits and identification with the host country will be weaker compared to adolescents from more highly economically developed countries of origin* (H9b).

DATA AND METHODS

Data

The hypotheses will be tested using data from the first wave of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study in four European Countries (CILS4EU) (Kalter *et al.*, 2013). Data were collected between October 2010 and June 2011 among adolescents and their parents in the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Sweden at approximately 100 secondary schools in each country. The CILS4EU data cover multiple aspects of adolescents' school, home, friends and personal situations.

The survey was conducted using a sample of adolescents aged around 14–15 who were in the third grade of secondary school. The nation-wide sample frame was stratified by education level and the percentage of non-Western immigrant adolescents in schools. With the intention to achieve the desired number of immigrants and native adolescents, the researchers employed a probability-proportional to size (PPS) procedure, in which schools with a higher percentage of non-Western immigrants were oversampled (Kalter *et al.*, 2013).

Prior to the final data collection, the survey was tested using cognitive pre-tests and pilot testing. The data collection took place at high schools. Adolescents completed the survey in classrooms under supervision of research assistants. Absent adolescents received a questionnaire at home.

Parents of the participating adolescents were also asked to participate in the study. The parent questionnaire and letter available were translated into six other commonly spoken languages for respondents who preferred to answer in these languages. The sampling frame, the sampling design, and the questionnaire were to a large extent identical across the four countries (Kalter *et al.*, 2013).

Participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. The overall response rate of schools was 59.1 percent. Moreover, 84.7 percent of the adolescents in the sampled schools and classes were willing to participate in the study. The total response rate of the parents was 59.5 percent.[2] For the parent questionnaire, the participating students were asked to provide one of their parents with a self-completion questionnaire. However, it was not specified whether the parental interview should be completed by the mother or the father, but this was totally left to the students and their families. The researchers included information in the questionnaire to identify ex post facto whether the mother, the father or some-body else completed the interview (Kalter *et al.*, 2013).

In total, 18,751 adolescents completed the survey. For this study, the analysis was limited to first and second generation with the additional requirement that their country of origin should be present in the data. Other reasons to exclude adolescents from the data were: children who had missing on too many crucial variables for this study (*e.g.*, return visits, origin country and identification ($N = 586$)). Furthermore, we excluded native majority children ($N = 11{,}022$) and children for which the parent who completed the questionnaire was not the one with the ethnic background ($N = 467$). Adolescents in this study have their origin in 155 different countries, both EU countries and non-EU countries. This study does not investigate differences across specific countries, groups, or combinations thereof, as there are simply too many and we are interested in studying theoretically informed patterns (*e.g.*, geographical distance, political suppression, and GDP). Every country of origin and the corresponding immigrant group is therefore of interest and will be included into the analysis. Altogether, the total sample size for this study results in 6,625 adolescent children of immigrants.

[2]Response rates by host country: *Schools*: Netherlands: 34.9 percent, Germany: 52.7 percent, England: 65.6 percent, Sweden: 83.2 percent. *Adolescents*: Netherlands: 91.1 percent, Germany: 80.9 percent, England: 80.5 percent, Sweden: 86.1 percent. *Parents*: Netherlands: 74.4 percent, Germany: 78.0 percent, England: 36.8 percent, Sweden: 48.9 percent.

Return Visits

To assess the number of return visits to the country of origin, adolescents were asked "How often do you visit the country of your biological mother?" and "How often do you visit the country of your biological father?" Whether we analyzed, for a given respondent, return visits to the country of origin of the mother or of the father depended on which of the parents had filled in the parent questionnaire.[3] Answers were rated on a four-point scale, specifically 0 (twice a year or more), 1 (twice a year), 2 (less than once a year), and 3 (never). To handle this interval-censored variable, we used the intreg command in Stata 12, which is implemented in the ice procedure for multiple imputation. Effectively, what it does is to create and impute missing values for the latent (non-censored) interval variable "frequency of return visits." To construct such a latent and imputed variable, one needs to define upper and lower boundaries for each category (similar to variables on income: $0–$5,000, $5,001–$10,000). In our case, we defined the boundaries as follows: "never" (0–0.25), "less than once a year" (0.25–1), "twice a year" (1–2), and "twice a year or more" (>2). The boundaries have a certain face value, and further inspections with alternate boundaries show that results are robust for such changes. In sum, it is with respect to the (non-truncated) latent variable "frequency of return visits" (which is based on the original, censored variable) that one should interpret the coefficients that we report in the text. The metric of the dependent variable is clearly understandable (frequency of return visits), and the methodology preserves all the information that we have (instead of throwing away information in case of dichotomization). The methodology of interval censoring combined with multiple imputation is described by Royston (2007), and implemented in Stata12 (StataCorp, 2011). Answers were recoded in such way that a high score on return visits corresponds to higher frequency of return visits. To increase interpretability of the results, the variable of return visit was included as continuous in the analysis.

Ethnic Identification

Adolescents' Identification with Host Country. Adolescents were asked "How strongly do you feel host country member?" The answers ranged from 0

[3]In case this information was missing in the parental data, we used information from the student data.

(very strongly), 1 (fairly strongly), 2 (not very strongly) to 3 (not at all strongly).

Adolescents' Identification with Origin Country. Adolescents had to indicate whether they feel they belong to a group different from the native group in the host country. Subsequently, adolescents were asked "How strongly do you feel that you belong to this group?" We used the second item for the analyses. Possible responses ranged from 0 (very strongly) to 3 (not at all strongly). Immigrant adolescents who indicated not to belong to a group other than the host country (23 percent) received score 0 on the identification scale.[4]

Both identification items were not normally distributed. We therefore collapsed the categories of "not at all strongly" (0) and "not very strongly" (1) to create three categories. Furthermore, for purposes of interpretation, both identification items were recoded such that a high score on identification with the origin country/host country corresponds to stronger identification. Both variables were treated as continuous scales in the analyses.

Independent Variables

Economic Resources. Economic resources are captured by measures of employment status, occupational status, and household size. Employment is measured with two dummy variables, *employment mother* and *employment father*. For measuring occupational status, we included the International Socio-Economic Index of occupational status (ISEI) scores (Ganzeboom, De Graaf, and Treiman, 1992), both for the mother and the father reported by the adolescent. Parents who had never worked before received ISEI score 0. *Household size* was analyzed as a continuous variable. The needs of a household grow with each additional member, but not in a proportional way. We used the OECD equivalent scale (OECD, 1982) to assign each household a value in proportion to its needs (based on the number of adults and children).[5]

[4]To assess whether our imputation routine affects the results, we conducted an additional analysis, in which we treat as missing the group of respondents who indicate that they do not identify with another group besides the host country. The results are the same, which validates our imputation assumption.

[5]Effective household size is computed with the formula: 0.3 + 0.7#adults + 0.5#children

Geographical Distance. The geographical distance between the origin and receiving country, measured in 1,000 kilometers, was computed for every origin country by host country combination, using the "great circle distances method" (Byers, 2002). The capital cities of countries were used as reference points. We included the logarithm (with base 2) of the variable geographical distance in the analyses to account for the influence of extremely large and extremely small distances.

Parental Identification with the Host Country. Parents were asked "How strongly do you feel a host country member?" Answers were rated on a scale ranging from 0 (very strongly), 1 (fairly strongly), 2 (not very strongly) to 3 (not at all strongly). Again, we recoded the variable so that high scores on a continuous scale reflected stronger identification. Because the distribution was skewed, we collapsed the categories "not very strongly" and "not at all strongly".

Parental Identification with the Origin Country. Parents had to indicate whether they feel they belong to a group different from the native group in their host country. Additionally, parents were asked "How strongly do you feel that you belong to this group?" This item was used for the analyses. Answering categories ranged from 0 (very strongly), 1 (fairly strongly), 2 (not very strongly) to 3 (not at all strongly). Parents who indicated not to belong to a group other than the native group in the host country (27 percent) received score 3 on the identification scale.[6] Again, answering categories were recoded; high scores on the continuous scale correspond to stronger identification. For normal distribution of the item, we collapsed the categories "not very strongly" and "not at all strongly."

Generation. The analyses incorporated two mutually exclusive categories of generation, distinguishing between 1st (parents and adolescents born abroad) and 2nd (either one or both parents born abroad and adolescent is born in the host country).

Parental Ethnic Endogamy. Parents were asked about the country of birth of their partner. Moreover, adolescents had to fill in the country of birth of their parents. On the basis of these two sources of information, we

[6]To assess whether our imputation routine affects the results, we conducted an additional analysis, in which we treat as missing the group of respondents who indicate that they do not identify with another group besides the host country. The results are the same, which validates our imputation assumption. Besides that, correlation analyses have indicated that parents who did not fill in this variable scored low on attachment to the origin group variables.

constructed a dummy variable for parental ethnic endogamy of adolescents' parents (1 if same ethnic background).

Political Suppression. Information on political suppression in origin countries was obtained from the Freedom House, 2011 survey, which includes a combined measurement of political rights and civil liberties in the country of origin (Freedom House, 2011). Categories of political suppression ranged from 1 (most free) to 7 (least free).

Economic Development Country of Origin. The economic situation of the country of origin is represented by the gross domestic product (GDP) in constant dollars per capita, obtained from the Penn World Table version 7.0 (Heston, Summers, and Aten, 2011). The distribution of GDP was skewed, with many respondents coming from a country with lower-middle GDP ($3,238 to $9,265) (World Bank, 2012). Therefore, the continuous variable was recoded into a dummy (1 is high GDP), with $9,265 as cutoff point. The variable referred to the situation in the year 2009.

Control Variables

Besides the above-mentioned variables, the following background variables are included in the analyses as control variables: *age,* measured in years (for interpretation purposes, age is mean-centered), a dummy variable for gender, namely *female* (1 if female), *living with both biological parents* (1 if adolescent lives with both biological parents), and dummy variables for *country,* indicating the host country where the adolescent filled in the questionnaire.

Unfortunately, no data were available on the year of immigration of the parents. Descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables are presented in Table 1.

Missing Values

Missing observations were present in both the adolescent and the parent data in all four countries. The high percentages of missing values in the parent data were partly a result of complete missing cases of parents. In these cases of completely non-response of the parent, we used the information from the adolescents. The variables parental identification with the origin country and with the host country were completely missing in the

TABLE 1
MEAN AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES[a]

	Range	Mean/ Percent	SD	% Missing
Dependent variables				
Return visits to country of origin	0–3	1.34	1.01	6.19
Adolescents' identification with origin country	0–2	0.75	0.82	9.11
Adolescents' identification with host country	0–2	0.87	0.72	5.82
Independent variables				
Employed mother	0/1	61.22		5.60
Employed father	0/1	76.55		12.76
ISEI mother	0–89	35.07	20.00	24.29
ISEI father	0–89	43.37	17.82	25.75
Effective household size	1.5–6.7	4.69	1.72	1.61
Geographical distance (in 1000 km)[b]	0.17–18.80	3.76	3.04	0
Parental identification with origin country[c]	0–3	0.89	0.82	50.64
Parental identification with host country[c]	0–3	0.75	0.74	40.74
Parental ethnic endogamy	0/1	62.23		0.36
Second-generation adolescent	0/1	74.03		3.25
Political suppression	1–7	3.21	1.73	0
High GDP per capita	0/1	75.86		0
Control variables				
Age[d]	13–18	15.04	0.73	0.97
Female	0/1	51.61		0.13
Biological parents	0/1	68.29		0.94
Country				0
The Netherlands	0/1	17.54		
Germany	0/1	31.44		
England	0/1	21.65		
Sweden	0/1	29.37		

Notes: [a]Weighted figures.
[b]Logarithm (with base 2) of variable in the analysis.
[c]Descriptives are given for data on the Netherlands and Germany.
[d]Variable mean-centered in the analysis.

English and for a large part in the Swedish data. Therefore, these variables were imputed only for the Dutch and German data.

Furthermore, missing values were dealt with in three ways. First, missing values on the variable "country of origin" were manually imputed. Second, if the country of origin could not be traced back from either the student data or the parent data, cases were deleted. Third, missing values on other variables in the data were imputed using multiple imputation (MI) techniques in STATA12 (Schafer and Graham, 2002). To improve power and to obtain more precise imputations, we used variables in the imputation models that are not in the planned analyses, so-called auxiliary variables (*e.g.* Collins, Schafer, and Kam, 2001). Taking into account the recommendations of Graham, Allison, and Gilreath (2007) in combination with the duration of the analyses in STATA12, twenty imputations

were performed. For imputation, we used the methods such as interval regression, predictive mean matching, ordinal logit, and logit. The mutual variation between these twenty data sets represented the uncertainty of the imputed values (van Buuren, 2011).

Analytic Strategy

The data are structured within two levels of analysis, namely school classes and country of origin by country of destination combinations. Different from hierarchical models, where units are nested in clusters, crossed-models reflect units which are related by more than one classification. The sampling design of the CILS4EU data set was such that adolescents were nested in classes and classes nested in schools. At the same time, adolescents are nested in their origin country, so that we have a combined school*origin country level, and separate random components for schools and origin countries. Because the complete school class is interviewed, observations between individuals in the same class are dependent. Although school effects are not the focus of this study, we need to control the clustering of observations (Hox and Roberts, 2011). Ignoring the structure of the data would disregard the cross-classification of adolescents and lead to unjustified support for the hypotheses. This cross-classified structure thus necessitates the use of cross-classified multilevel regression techniques. We therefore estimate cross-effect models using multilevel mixed-effects linear regression techniques in STATA12 (StataCorp, 2011). This study includes adolescent children of immigrants in 901 school classes and 412 origin–host country combinations.

The analytic approach consists of several steps. First, we estimate intercept-only models for exploration of the relative contribution of the school classes and country of origin–host combination on adolescents' return visits and adolescents' identification. Second, to study *return visits,* we estimate a full model (Model 1) with economic resources, ethnic motivations and political restriction variables, fitted for adolescents in the Netherlands and Germany. Third, we estimate an incomplete model for adolescents in the Netherlands and Germany (Model 2a), excluding parental identification with the origin country and parental identification with host country, which were missing to a high extent in England and Sweden. In the third model (Model 2b), we repeat the second model but this time for adolescents from all four host countries. By estimating model 2a and 2b, we verify the robustness of the results of the first model. For the *relation between return*

TABLE 2
RETURN VISITS BY HOST COUNTRY AND BY THE THREE LARGEST ORIGIN GROUPS (%)[a]

Group	Never	Less than once a year	Once a year	Twice a year or more
Total (N = 6625)[b]	24	28	29	14
Netherlands (N = 1162)	28	25	32	13
Turks[c]	8	16	65	10
Moroccans	9	7	68	10
Surinamese	45	27	20	7
Germany (N = 2083)	22	26	34	11
Turks[d]	7	25	51	8
Russians	50	28	20	1
Poles	21	21	19	5
England (N = 1434)	25	33	19	18
Pakistani	14	50	23	7
Indians	25	42	20	9
Jamaicans	40	32	15	7
Sweden (N = 1946)	26	26	32	13
Bosnian and Herzegovinian	6	7	65	17
Turks	7	25	51	8
Iraqi[e]	42	43	11	1

Notes: [a]Weighted figures.
[b]Differs significantly across host countries (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[c]Differs significantly from Turks and Moroccans (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[d]Differs significantly from Russians and Poles (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[e]Differs significantly from Syrians and Serbians (p-$2s$ < 0.001).

visits and adolescents' ethnic identity, we estimate two models for each dependent variable. The first analyzes adolescents' identification with the origin country/host country with data from all four host countries. In the second model, we redo model 1 on the data set with only Dutch and German adolescents, so that we can add extra control variables, namely parental identification with the origin country, parental identification with the host country, second-generation adolescent, and parental ethnic endogamy.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

With the purpose of the exploration of adolescents' return visits to their parents' country of origin, we present descriptive figures separately for the four receiving countries. Table 2 shows the distribution of return visits for adolescents. Bivariate results show that around 29 percent of the total sample has visited the country of origin once a year and only 14 percent has visited more than twice. Looking at the four host countries individually, immigrant adolescents living in the Netherlands indicate the highest

percentage of "never" returning to the country of origin (28 percent), compared to 22 percent in Germany, 25 percent in England, and 26 percent in Sweden. In the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden, 45 percent of immigrant adolescents returned once a year or more to the country of origin. This percentage is somewhat lower for immigrant adolescents in England, namely 37 percent.

The three largest origin groups, which vary for each host country, show large variations on the frequency of return visits. With respect to the Netherlands, Turks (91 percent) and Moroccans (85 percent) visit their origin country more frequently than Surinamese (54 percent). Turks (84 percent) in Germany return significantly more often to the country of origin compared to Russians (29 percent) and Poles (45 percent). The three largest origin groups in England (*i.e.* Pakistani, Indians, and Jamaicans) show also different distributions of return visits, with Jamaicans having the highest percentages of "never" visiting the country of origin (40 percent). In Sweden, Bosnian and Herzegovinian visit the country of origin most often (89 percent), followed by Turks (84 percent) and Iraqi (55 percent).

Table 3 shows the return visits of adolescents to the country of origin by gender, second generation, and western–non-western background. On average, girls return less often to the country of origin compared to boys. Furthermore, second-generation adolescents living in Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden return to the country of origin more often compared to the first-generation adolescents. In England however, first-generation

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ADOLESCENTS' RETURN VISITS BY GENDER, GENERATION, AND ORIGIN FOR EACH HOST COUNTRY (%)[a]

	Netherlands (N = 1162)	Germany (N = 2083)	England (N = 1434)	Sweden (N = 1947)
Gender				
Girl[b]	41	43	35	42
Boy	48	47	39	47
Generation				
1st[c]	34	33	52	37
2nd	48	52	28	47
Background				
Western[d]	55	48	56	63
Non-western	40	45	32	28

Notes: [a]Weighted figures; The percentages reflect the proportion of adolescents who have indicated to return to the country of origin at least once a year compared to less than once a year and never.
[b]Differs significantly from boys (p-$2s < 0.001$).
[c]Differs significantly from 2nd generation (p-$2s < 0.001$).
[d]Differs significantly from non-western (p-$2s < 0.001$).

TABLE 4
MEAN (SD) OF ADOLESCENTS' IDENTIFICATION WITH THE ORIGIN COUNTRY AND HOST COUNTRY[a]

	Netherlands (N = 1162)	Germany (N = 2083)	England (N = 1434)	Sweden (N = 1947)
Adolescents' identification with origin country	0.73 (0.80)[b]	0.91 (0.83)[c]	0.95 (0.82)[d]	0.70 (0.80)
Adolescents' identification with host country	1.09 (0.71)[e]	0.70 (0.73)[f]	1.04 (0.77)[g]	1.05 (0.80)

Notes: [a]Weighted figures.
[b]Differs significantly from Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.05), Germany and England (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[c]Differs significantly from the Netherlands and Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[d]Differs significantly from the Netherlands and Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[e]Differs significantly from Germany and Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[f]Differs significantly from the Netherlands, England and Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.001).
[g]Differs significantly from Germany and Sweden (p-$2s$ < 0.001).

adolescents return to the country of origin more often compared to second-generation adolescents. In all countries, adolescents with a western background return to the country of origin more often than non-western adolescents.

Table 4 reports descriptive statistics of adolescents' identification with the origin country and adolescents' identification with the host country. Bivariate results indicate that immigrant adolescents in Germany identify stronger with the origin country compared to adolescents in the Netherlands, England, and Sweden. Moreover, immigrant adolescents in the Netherlands and England identify stronger with either the Dutch or the English national group compared to adolescents from the other host countries. Besides that, adolescent children of immigrants in Germany identify less with Germans compared to identification with the Swedish group among immigrant adolescents in Sweden.

Variance Components

Table 5 sheds light on the relative contribution of the school classes and origin–host combination in adolescents' return visits to the country of origin. Intercept-only models were estimated to assess the variance at each level. We calculated the intra-class correlations based on the variance components of the different levels to reveal the percentage of variance on each level.[7] The

[7]For instance, the intra-class correlation for the origin–host combination level is computed with the following formula: $\rho_{or} = \sigma^2_{0or}/(\sigma^2_{0or} + \sigma^2_{0class}) + \sigma^2_{0e}$, where $\sigma^2{}_{0or}$, and $\sigma^2{}_{0class}$ refer to variance components of origin–host combination and school class, $\sigma^2{}_{0e}$ refers to the variance component of the individual level (Hox, 2010).

TABLE 5
VARIANCE COMPONENTS OF ADOLESCENTS' RETURN VISITS, IDENTIFICATION WITH THE ORIGIN COUNTRY AND HOST COUNTRY (INTERCEPT-ONLY MODELS)

	Individual	School classes	Origin–host
Return visits			
Full model: Netherlands + Germany	0.409	0.017	0.164
Incomplete model: Netherlands + Germany	0.413	0.015	0.161
Incomplete model: All four countries	0.448	0.022	0.166
Adolescents' identification with origin country	0.624	0.026	0.049
Adolescents identification with host country	0.452	0.019	0.030

Notes: Standard errors between parentheses. For full model with the Netherlands and Germany: $N_i = 3245$, $N_s = 471$, $N_o = 193$. For incomplete model with all four host countries: $N_i = 6624$, $N_s = 901$, $N_o = 412$.

percentages of variance reflect the correlation between return visits of two randomly chosen adolescents of the same school class or the same origin–host combination. Regarding the relation between the *economic, ethnic and political* variables and *return visits* in the complete model, adolescents' return visits seem to vary slightly more among countries of origin–host combinations (on average 22.1 percent) than among school classes (on average 19.5 percent). As for the second part of the study, the relation between *return visits* and *adolescents' ethnic identification*, adolescents' identification with the origin country varies among school classes (39.3 percent) and among origin–host combination (39.4 percent). Adolescents' identification with the host country also varies across school classes (20.5 percent) and origin–host combinations (20.6 percent).

In sum, the intra-class correlations show that, at each level, there is a particular proportion of variance. This indicates the need for a multilevel model (Hox and Roberts, 2011). Therefore, as a next step, the following models will be fitted in a cross-classified multilevel framework.

Economic Resources, Ethnic Motivations and Political Restriction

Results in Table 6 show no substantive differences across the three analyses (model 1, 2a and 2b) for the relation between the independent variables and adolescents' return visits to the country of origin. The results are therefore discussed in reference to the full model (model 1). It will be mentioned in text once the results refer to another model.

Cross-classified multilevel analysis indicates that the *first hypothesis* with respect to parental economic resources is (partly) confirmed. As can be seen in Table 6, the results show a positive and significant relation between employment status of the mother and adolescents' return visits. Moreover, employment of the father is positively and significantly

TABLE 6
MULTILEVEL MIXED-EFFECTS LINEAR REGRESSION OF ADOLESCENTS' RETURN VISITS TO THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

	Netherlands + Germany Model 1	Netherlands + Germany Model 2a	Four countries Model 2b
Employment mother	0.072*	0.056*	0.029
Employment father	0.113**	0.109**	0.105***
ISEI mother	−0.000	−0.000	0.002*
ISEI father	0.002*	0.002*	0.000
Effective household size	−0.065***	−0.064***	−0.029*
^{2}Log distance (in 1000 km)	−0.300***	−0.201***	−0.262***
Parental identification with origin country	0.028*	–	–
Parental identification with host country	−0.069***	–	–
Second-generation adolescent	0.021	0.002	−0.050*
Parental ethnic endogamy	0.159***	0.175***	0.216***
Political suppression[a]	−0.056***	−0.057***	−0.056***
Age[a]	0.019	0.016	0.015
Female	−0.079***	−0.080***	−0.072***
Biological parents	0.137***	0.144***	0.139***
Country (ref = The Netherlands)			
Germany	−0.131*	−0.106*	−0.100
England	–	–	0.010
Sweden	–	–	−0.036
Individual variance	0.394	0.400	0.433
School class variance	0.013	0.010	0.020
Origin–host variance	0.049	0.049	0.071
Constant	1.325***	1.301***	1.183***

Notes: ref, reference category.
[a]Variable mean-centered in the analysis.
*$p \leq 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

related to adolescents' return visits. Adolescents with an employed mother return an additional 0.07 times more often to the country of origin compared to adolescents with un unemployed mother. For adolescence with an employed father, the additional frequency is 0.11 times compared to adolescents with an unemployed father (Model 1). The ISEI score of the mother is not significantly related to frequency of return visits. Nonetheless, ISEI score of the father is positively and significantly related to return visits. With each increase in ISEI score of the father, adolescents return 0.002 times more often to the country of origin. Moreover, effective household size has a negative and significant relation with return visits of adolescents. The results show that with each increase in effective household size, adolescents return 0.07 times a year less often to the country of origin (model 1). Additionally, the

results of model 1 show support for *hypothesis 2*. Geographical distance has a strong and negative relationship with return visits. When the geographical distance to the country of origin is doubled, for instance from 1000 km to 2000 km, the frequency of return visits decreases with 0.30 times a year.

With respect to the relation between parental ethnic identification and return visits, we derived two hypotheses. The results show a significant and positive relation between parental identification with the origin country and return visits (*hypothesis 3*). The more parents identify with the country of origin, the more frequent they return to the country of origin (0.028 times more). Moreover, the more parents identify the host country (either Dutch or German), the less often they return to the country of origin (Model 1, *hypothesis 4*). Adolescents in the Netherlands and Germany return per year 0.07 times less to the country of origin for each point of increase in parental identification with the native group (Model 1). Additional analysis shows that the relation between parental identification with the origin country/identification with the host country and return visits remains stable when either parental identification with the origin country or parental identification with the host country is excluded from the model.

Furthermore, the results do not confirm *hypothesis 5*. Although generation of adolescents appears to influence the frequency of return visits in model 2b, model 1 and model 2a show that this relation is absent. Additional analysis reveals that excluding parental identification with the host country from model 1, the significant relation between second-generation adolescent and return visits remains absent, indicating that the relation between second-generation adolescent and return visits is mediated by parental identification with the host country. Moreover, parents of second-generation adolescents identify significantly more strongly with the host country compared to parents from first-generation adolescents, $F(1, 1850) = 10.51$, $p\text{-}2s < 0.001$.

We further argued that ethnic endogamy of both parents will increase visits to the country of origin (*hypothesis 6*). This hypothesis is supported. The results of model 1 show that parental ethnic endogamy is strongly and positively related to the frequency of adolescents' return visits. Adolescents with two parents from the same country of origin return an additional 0.16 times a year more to the country of origin compared to adolescents with one native parent.

In line with *hypothesis 7,* political suppression has a negative and significant relation with adolescents' return visits. One-point increase on the combined average rating of political rights and civil liberties of the country of origin decreases the frequency of return visits with 0.06 times a year.

Including the ethnic motivations variables (parental ethnic identification, 2nd generation, and parental ethnic homogeneity) in the full model (model 1) does not substantially change the relations between the other two hypothesized mechanism (economic resources and political suppression) and adolescents' return visits (*see* model 1 compared to model 2a and 2b). Moreover, exploration of correlations between economic resources and ethnic motivations variables yields very low associations (results not reported here). The relations between ethnic motivations variables and return visits are thus largely independent of the relations between economic resources or political suppression and return visits.

The variances of the different levels are presented in the lower part of Table 6. We estimated the reduction in variance in adolescents' return visits for the full model. For the relation between economic resources, ethnic motivations and political suppression with return visits, especially the reduction in variance on the origin–host level in all three analyses is worth mentioning, namely 70.1 percent (from 0.164 to 0.049). School class variance in adolescent' return visits decreases with 23.5 percent after including the explanatory variables in the model (from 0.017 to 0.013). Moreover, on the individual level, the variance dropped with 3.7 percent (from 0.409 to 0.394). Apparently, the origin–host characteristics in our model are to a large extent responsible for the variation in adolescents' return visits.

Ethnic Identification

Results relating to the second part of the analysis are shown in Table 7. The results for adolescents' identification with the origin country are in line with *hypothesis 8* (model 1). Return visits to the country of origin are significantly and positively related to adolescents' identification with the origin country.

TABLE 7
MULTILEVEL MIXED-EFFECTS LINEAR REGRESSION OF ADOLESCENTS' IDENTIFICATION WITH THE ORIGIN COUNTRY AND WITH THE HOST COUNTRY

	Adolescents' identification with origin country		Adolescents' identification with host country	
	Model 1[b] ALL	Model 2 GE + NE	Model 1 ALL	Model 2 GE + NE
Return visits	0.161***	0.188***	−0.113***	−0.111***
High GDP	–		0.198***	0.108*
Return visits*High GDP	–		−0.056*	−0.004
Age[a]	0.026*	0.021	−0.011	0.016
Female	0.051**	0.012	0.026	0.012
Biological parents	0.076***	0.047	0.002	0.033
Country (ref = The Netherlands)				
Germany	−0.137	−0.121*	−0.267***	0.203
England	−0.102*	–	−0.103*	–
Sweden	−0.178**	–	−0.173***	–
Parental identification with origin country	–	0.161***	–	−0.025
Parental identification with host country	–	−0.013	–	0.194***
Second-generation adolescent	–	−0.152***	–	0.173***
Parental ethnic endogamy	–	0.118***	–	−0.100***
Individual variance	0.606	0.617	0.446	0.442
School class variance	0.024	0.010	0.016	0.013
Origin–host variance	0.037	0.035	0.023	0.015
Constant	0.556***	0.526***	1.012***	0.573***

Notes: ref, reference category; gen, generation.
[a]Variable mean-centered in the analysis.
[b]Adding an interaction effect between return visits and high GDP did not reveal a significant relation with identification with the origin country.
*$p \leq 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p \leq 0.001$.

With respect to adolescents' identification with the host country, the results show support for *hypothesis 9a.* Adolescents, who return more often to the country of origin, identify less strongly with the host country.[8] This relation remains stable after controlling for parental identification with the origin country, parental identification with the host country, second-generation adolescent and parental ethnic endogamy (model 2). In *hypothesis 9b*, it was expected that the negative association between return visits and identification with the host country will be weaker for adolescents from less economically developed countries of origin. Our results do not

[8]To check the robustness of this relationship, the same model was analyzed with the German and Dutch data so that the identification and family variables could be included. Controlling for parental identification with origin country, parental identification with host country, parental ethnic endogamy and second generation did not change the relationship between return visits and immigrant adolescents' identification with the host/origin country.

support this notion. Although the interaction effect appears to influence adolescents' identification with the host country in model 1, this relation is absent in model 2. It seems that the relation is mediated by the parental identification with the host country, second-generation adolescent, and parental ethnic endogamy. However, omitting either parental ethnic identification, 2nd generation, or parental ethnic homogeneity in additional analyses, did not result in the presence of a significant interaction effect. Furthermore, the results indicate a significant positive relation between high GDP and adolescents' identification with the host country. Although somewhat less strong, the relation remains present in model 2. Adolescent children of immigrants from a country of origin with a high GDP identify more strongly with the host country compared to adolescent children of immigrants from a country with low GDP. Moreover, the results show a significant and positive main relation between high GDP and adolescents' identification with the host country. Adolescents from countries with a high GDP identify 0.198 point more strongly on the identification scale (model 1). Inspecting GDP of the country of origin in combination with the western and non-western categorization reveals that a relatively higher proportion of western countries of origin has a high GDP (85.5 percent, Mean = $20,880). In addition, a substantially lower number of non-western origin countries have a high GDP, namely 42.4 percent (Mean GDP = $7,483). Lastly, the results of model 1 show significant and negative relations between the host country control variables (Germany, England, and Sweden) and adolescents' identification with the host country. Adolescent children of immigrants living in Germany, England, or Sweden identify less strongly with the host country compared to adolescent children of immigrants living in the Netherlands.

The variances on the different levels are presented in the lower part of Table 6. With respect to adolescents' identification with the origin country, our model (model 2) explains 62.5 percent of the variation across school classes (from 0.026 to 0.010). Individual level variance dropped by 1.1 percent (from 0.624 to 0.617). The model explains 28.6 percent of origin–host variance (from 0.049 to 0.035). For identification with the host country, our model (model 2) explains 50.0 percent of the variation across origin–host combinations (reduction from 0.030 to 0.015). The decrease in variance regarding the school class level is somewhat smaller. That is, our model explains 31.6 percent of variance on the school class level (from 0.019 to 0.013). On the individual level, variance has hardly decreased, namely 2.2 percent (from 0.452 to 0.442).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Despite that adolescent children of immigrants take part in transnational activities, the literature has predominantly focused on transnationalism among adult immigrants. This paper represents an attempt to fill this gap by investigating adolescent children of immigrants' return visits to the country of origin. Recent cross-national data from the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Sweden were used. Five major conclusions can be drawn from the findings of our study.

First, about 40–50 percent of the adolescents visits the country of origin once a year or more; about a 20–25 percent visits the home country less often, and around a quarter never. These figures are remarkably robust cross-nationally and found in Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and England. There are strong differences across origin groups, however. Among Turks in the Netherlands, for example, 75 percent visits the home nation every year or more, as against only 27 percent among the Surinamese in Holland.

Second, our study provides evidence that parental economic resources are related to the frequency of return visits among adolescent children of immigrants. Specifically, we find that when parents are employed, have high-status jobs, and when the household is small, their adolescent children return more often to visit their country of origin. In a similar way, we find that geographical distance (implying increased travel costs) is strongly and negatively associated with adolescents' return visits. This finding of the direct measurement of geographical distance confirms results from earlier studies, which were however based on speculations regarding differences between origin groups (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008; Schans, 2009; Tamaki, 2011). Greater distances to the country of origin and thereby expected higher travel costs thus make return visits a financially costly activity and will lead to less visits. All in all, our findings shed new light on the role of economic opportunities and constraints as an important determinant for transnational activities (Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002; Portes, Haller, and Guarnizo, 2002; Schans, 2009; Waldinger and Luthra, 2009; Tamaki, 2011).

Third, our findings support the argument that ethnic motivations explain the frequency of adolescents' return visits. The analysis of the full model reveals the expected positive relation between parental identification with the origin country and adolescents' return visits. This confirms the

idea that the strength of parents' ethnic identification with the origin country is related to activities in the country of origin, for instance return visits (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1998; Levitt, 1998; Smith, 1998). Besides that, we find evidence for the expected negative relation between parental identification with the host country and the frequency of adolescent children of immigrants' return visits. This indicates that if parents identify stronger with the host country, they are less inclined to return to the country of origin with their children. The positive relation between parental ethnic endogamy also underlines the role of parents' ethnic identity in explaining adolescent children of immigrants' return visits. Growing up with parents coming from the same origin country presumably implies stronger identification with their origin country, and more emphasis on cultural maintenance and ethnic traditions, as compared to being socialized by parents who were born in different countries.

Fourth, our study provides evidence for the relation between political suppression in the country of origin and the frequency of return visits: higher political suppression in the country of origin decreases the frequency of return visits of adolescent children of immigrants. This means that adolescent immigrant children whose parents are refugees are less likely to visit their origin countries than parents who migrated for economic or family reasons. For refugee groups, such visits might involve too much risk. Thus, in addition to economic forces and the role of ethnic attachment, we find evidence to suggest that also political conditions and safety in the origin country determine transnational relations – at least in terms of return visits. This is not to say that other forms of transnational connections are equally affected by such political conditions. Contact with relatives in the home country via email or phone, for example, do not involve the same risk as do face-to-face contacts. Future research is therefore encouraged to study other forms of transnational activities besides return visits.

Fifth, the study confirms that return visits among adolescent children of immigrants are related to their ethnic identification. We find that the frequency of return visits is strongly and positively related to identification with the *origin* country. This suggests that returning to the country of origin is related to, and possibly leads to, higher identification with the origin country (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007; Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, this study shows that return visits are negatively related to immigrant adolescents' identification with the *host* country.

We would like to emphasize that our comparative approach on transitional activities of immigrant adolescents in England, Sweden, Germany, and the Netherlands allows us to draw these conclusions. Quite many studies on transnational activities have adopted a case-study design. Such studies lead to rich descriptions of specific groups, such as the Pakistani in England or the Turks in Germany. With such a case-study approach, however, general patterns are rather difficult to establish. Our study thereby supplements prior work by adopting a comparative approach and studying these general patterns. Only when many groups at the same time are compared, one can see the role of factors such as the degree of political suppression in the origin country, or the geographic distance between origin and host country. As a result of the use of so many different national origin groups, studied in four different European countries, we were able to investigate these general patterns.

We see several ways in which future research could elaborate on our comparative study on transnational activities. First, cross-sectional studies need to be supplemented with longitudinal work. As the data we use are cross-sectional, no firm conclusions can be drawn. Potentially, however, our findings suggest a process whereby structural forces such as geographic distance between origin and destination countries, economic resources in the family, and political restrictions in the origin country affect the frequency of return visits of the family to this country, which in turn promotes the ethnic identification of the children with that country and reduces identification with the host society. To bring the dynamics to light, it is a challenge for future research to study return visits over time.

Furthermore, the study of return visits needs to be enriched with studies on other aspects of transnationalism. For instance, the ever growing use of the internet and increasing opportunities of impersonal communication allows adolescents to have contact more easily with people in the country of origin. Migrants can maintain connections with people in the country of origin by phone, email, social network sides, et cetera. These connections are often easier to make and less costly than traveling to the home country, which implies that economic opportunities and safety considerations play less of a role for these kind of transnational activities. Such a study would be supplemental to our study on transnationalism, in which we showed that traditional face-to-face contacts with members in the origin country are still important to many immigrant adolescents.

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