

Marriage Stories : The Role of Exogamy in the Residential Mobility of Migrants and their Descendants in France

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1 Introduction

The integration of immigrant populations into French society is progressing, as shown by the growth in the number of mixed marriages. However, since the 1990s, economically and socially vulnerable urban areas have emerged around large agglomerations, in which these populations, including immigrants and descendants of immigrants, may find themselves trapped (Maurin, 2004). This article analyses the possibilities of leaving these difficult territories through geographic and residential mobility. While having the same characteristics in terms of income and education, for example, immigrants or their descendants probably do not have the same chances of choosing their initial geographical location as non-migrant residents. This situation is related to the representations of ethnic minorities held both by individuals who make up the majority population of the host country, as well as by immigrants or their descendants themselves. Access to residential property ownership is one means for escaping such destinies of territorial enclosure faced by ethnic minorities. However, as Solignac and Gobillon (2019) have shown, immigrants from Morocco, Tunisia or Algeria living in France have much less chance than persons born in France of becoming homeowners.

In this article we explore the probabilities of immigrants and descendants of immigrants leaving urban areas facing social difficulties, in particular following access to homeownership. We also ask whether certain factors, such as exogamy or mixed marriage, facilitate residential mobility and access to property for immigrants and their descendants.