

The School-to-Work Transitions of Second Generation Immigrants in France

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Abstract

Research on the second generation – the children of immigrants – in the European context is relatively recent, particularly so in France, where its republican model of integration refuses to acknowledge any ethnic differences between its citizens. While most scholars focus on the educational difficulties experienced by second generation youth, their labour market outcomes have been less investigated. Furthermore, studies taking up this challenge are, with few exceptions, based on cross-sectional evidence. Using a cohort study of school leavers which records a (retrospective) calendar of the individuals' monthly labour force situation, this paper investigates the dynamic and longitudinal aspects of early labour market transitions. The experiences of second generation youth, originating from various immigrant groups, are compared to those of the native French and to each other. Aspects of their school-to-work transitions such as the incidence and duration of employment and joblessness spells as well as the duration until the first permanent full-time job, are investigated using several methods, among which event-history models. In a second time, the relative power of several mechanisms in explaining the observed ethnic disparities is tested.

1 Introduction

There has been a great amount of research on the economic integration of immigrants in advanced societies, revealing substantive disadvantages. While these can be attributed to the immigrants' lack of linguistic fluency or of educational qualifications valued by the country of destination, there are fewer reasons to expect that their children, born and socialized in the country of immigration, will display different outcomes than their peers with native-born parents. Research on this issue in the European context is relatively recent; nevertheless, it has quite consistently revealed significant and sometimes large inequalities in the educational and occupational achievements of the second-generation¹. It has also revealed important differences in the extent and forms of the disadvantage across different countries as well as between the various ethnic groups.

This thesis aims to contribute to this line of research by examining ethnic differences in a particular and crucial moment of an individual's life history: the transition from school to work. More precisely, it will concentrate on early labour market outcomes of the second-generation youth in France.

The transition into the labor force is an important nexus in the socioeconomic life course, worthy of the academic attention it has received. Studies have revealed considerable stability in occupational prestige between the jobs held early and late in the life course (Duncan and Duncan, 1968), with events in the early stage of careers substantially influencing socio-economic status attainments in subsequent phases (Shavit, Matras and Featherman, 1990). While the first couple of years of the working career are

¹ The immigration literature refers to children of immigrants as "second-generation" while immigrants themselves are the first generation.

normally years of intense mobility, considerable differences in the “smoothness” of the process have been brought to light between the sexes, or between the countries. France in particular, as reflected also in one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Europe, confronts its young members with a highly problematic process of entry into the labour market.

Less attention has been given to the particular situation of the children of immigrants in this transition. Not many are the studies which look at ethnic disadvantage from a dynamic and diachronic perspective, following individuals in their labor market trajectories. The present study aims at filling this gap in several ways

First, in a more descriptive manner, it identifies the specific forms of disadvantage experienced by the second-generation at early career stages. In doing so, this research goes past the usual static measures used for comparing outcomes across ethnic groups, such as the unemployment rate, occupational attainment and wage gaps, to reveal more dynamic and diverse patterns of disadvantage. The data used for this research – a cohort study of school leavers as of 1998 – allows for a longitudinal perspective on individual’s labour market entry, by offering measures of the incidence and duration of employment spells as well as of unemployment and inactivity periods. This is of special relevance in the study of young adults since, due to the prevalence of youth unemployment, testing its incidence at a given time may mask the extent of the unemployment experience by under-representing the experience of those with more persistent or frequent unemployment spells (Maani,1993).

Second, an attempt will be made to disentangle the various mechanisms potentially accounting for these ethnic differences. I will investigate the extent to which human capital endowments, social reproduction mechanisms, family formation patterns and

neighborhood effects are responsible for the ethnic penalties in the transition to the first significant employment.

The paper is organized as follows: a first section reviews the existing theoretical and empirical literature in this field of enquiry. I will then report on the methodology adopted and the data used. A third section presents the main findings and a final one provides some discussion and conclusion. Rather than drawing definite conclusions about ethnic inequalities in the school-to-work transition, the present work is more exploratory, aiming to identify fruitful directions for future research.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Previous studies on second-generation immigrants

2.1.1 The paradigm change: from “classical” to “segmented assimilation”

The traditional theory of assimilation, developed in the United States, argues that while the “first generation” immigrants do experience disadvantages in the destination countries, their offspring are socially, economically and culturally assimilated in the host society. According to Portes and Zhou (1993) a different framework is needed to account for the diverse and sometimes poor outcomes of this “new second-generation”, coming from a more diverse cultural and racial background. Segmented assimilation theory predicts different paths for children of immigrants in respect to the segment of the host society in which they assimilate and to the resources of their ethnic community. This theoretical account makes a double claim: first, that a significant part of the second-generation displays outcomes indicating a downward mobility. Second, that these differences in *individual* outcomes between nationalities can, at least partly, be explained

by differences in collective human capital and modes of incorporation of the immigrant *communities* in the host society.

The present research asks whether and to what extent(s) the second-generation immigrants in France are disadvantaged in their school-to-work transitions compared to the charter population: are they converging with “native French” of the same age-group according to the theory of assimilation, or do they experience a “segmented assimilation” as described by Portes and Zhou? Thus it constitutes an empirical test for the first claim of the segmented assimilation theory, albeit focusing on a limited aspect of their integration process (the early integration in the labour market). We investigate whether significant gaps in the outcomes of the different second-generation groups persist after accounting for differences in human capital and social background – what Heath and MacMahon (1999) have termed “ethnic penalties”.

2.1.2 Ethnic differences in educational and labour market outcomes: European and French findings

Despite a much longer immigration history² than its neighbours, paralleled by an intense debate on the “immigration question”, the “second-generation issue” was never raised in France until recently (Simon, 2000). The explanation lies in the republican and highly normative French model of integration, whose main goal is to make French citizens out of immigrants within one generation³ (HCI, 1991). It also implies that the government data contain no questions about ethnic or racial origin, as is the case for most countries.

This model was however challenged by the emergence of the second-generation as a collective protagonist in urban riots that first shook the French suburbs at the end of the

² For a more detailed description of the main immigrant waves from which the contemporary second generation is descending, see Silberman and Fournier (2006)

³The French law automatically grants citizenship to the children of foreigners when they become 18, provided they ask for it

1980s. These events and the release of new variables allowing to identify this population, prompted a surge in research on this topic in recent years. Most of the studies analyzed the educational outcomes of the second-generation youth (Tribalat, 1996; Vallet et Caille, 1999; Brinbaum et Kieffer, 2005; Brinbaum and Boado, 2007), both in terms of primary and secondary effects (Boudon, 1974). Recently, some have looked at the labour market outcomes of this population in comparison to their native⁴ peers (Richard, 1997; Simon, 2003; Silberman and Fournier, 2007; Lefranc, 2007). What they reveal is a significant disparity in rates of unemployment - with Maghrebin and Turkish youth faring worst. Some ethnic penalties are also apparent in the levels of prestige and earnings of the jobs held, but the results are less definite since they differ between the studies. At equal level of qualifications, the most striking ethnic inequalities are thus located at the level of access to the labour market.

2.1.3 Early labour market trajectories

Despite increases in the availability of longitudinal data, the vast majority of studies on labour market inequality are based on cross-sectional data (Tienda and Hsueh, 1996). However, to better understand the mechanisms that exclude from or penalize second-generations in access to the labour market, and which seem to be at work in France, it would be very useful to replace these disadvantages in a longitudinal perspective. Hence, this paper focuses on *trajectories* of labour market insertion. More precisely, the previous literature is extended by analyzing disparities in the dynamics of the school-to-work transition, with the help of indicators such as duration and frequency of spells of employment versus joblessness as well as transitions into stable employment.

⁴ Both populations are actually “native” in the sense of being born in the nation; when it is employed here, we refer however only to those whose parents are also born in the country. Thus, of “native ancestry” as opposed to “immigrant ancestry”.

It is important to consider the early histories of new entrants into the labour market since they often turn out to be decisive for subsequent experiences. Although it is very difficult to distinguish their effects from other unobservable personal characteristics causing both, authors seem to agree that poor employment records in the early years leave “permanent scars” on labour market careers (Ellwood, 1983; OECD, 1998; Scherer, 2004). Spending time out of work in one year seems to lead to spending less time working in the next, as well as to receiving lower wages than one’s peers. The argument is that longer unemployment durations decrease the arrival rate of job offers, since they could be interpreted as an adverse productivity signal, or as a signal of low human capital.

There are very few studies that look at ethnic differences in trajectories and school-to-work transitions. Kogan and Kalter (2002) compared school-to-work transitions of immigrants and their children in Belgium and Spain. Their small samples yield results which are not very convincing in what concerns the second-generation (within which they can only distinguish between EU and non-EU origins) but show nevertheless some interesting disparities in the duration of job search and time of access to the first job. An innovative research is also that of Tasiran and Tezic (2007) on the early labour market experiences of second-generation immigrants in Sweden. Using event-history techniques they model different transitions –first transitions after compulsory education, transitions after continued education to work and nonemployment, and from nonemployment to work – and show that while education and parental resources account for some disparities, African, Middle-Eastern and Latin-American geographical origins were still a major labour market hindrance.

Finally, Nielsen et al (2001) focused on three aspects of the early labour market experiences of second-generation immigrants in Denmark: time from leaving school until the first ordinary job, duration of the first unemployment spell and hourly wages. They

found that parental capital had strong effects on entry in to the labour market for females, whereas ethnic capital and neighbourhood variables were also important for males. However, they too do not distinguish between the different ethnic origins of the second-generation. In the French case, some attention has been given to early labour market outcomes by Roxane Silberman (with Fournier,2006; and Alba, 2007) who used the same data that will be mobilized here. However, the authors have not truly exploited the monthly labour force history module and limited themselves to a cross-sectional treatment of the data⁵.

More useful here are the insights of several qualitative studies. Amongst the most comprehensive is the ethnographic research of Beaud and Pialoux (2004), which followed over more than ten years young people from “difficult neighbourhoods” in their professional trajectories, having also dedicated a great amount of attention to the particular situation of the youth of immigrant origin⁶. The latter are the first to be hit by a “dynamic of exclusion which strengthened its grip” during the 1990s (p.399), despite the brief period of economic growth around the year 2000. Their insertion in the labour market appears as a sequence of periods of unemployment, interspersed by short, temporary jobs, internships and returns to short-term education. The impossibility of “landing the mythical open-ended contract” (p. 270) and accessing stable employment gradually builds up into deep feelings of frustration and discouragement, leading to micro-strategies of resistance which consist in working just enough to receive the welfare allocations and building one’s life around non-work related interests. While these effects are particularly pronounced for youth with low levels of qualifications living in the poor *banlieues*, ethnic origin is found to have a ceiling effect even among those with higher degrees. Beaud and Pialoux’s conclude that

⁵ For example unemployment rate and occupational destination three years after entry in the labour market

⁶ Which represented a big share of the inhabitants in the respective neighborhoods

they have witnessed, during the ten years covered by their study, the emergence of a “dual system characterized by such symptoms as the dazzling development of job insecurity and of temporary work⁷” (p. 398), system whose first victims are the second-generation immigrant youth.

The facts described in much detail and in a most comprehensive manner by the two French sociologists could usefully be conceptualized with the help of the distinction advanced by Spilerman (1977) between two (ideal) types of labor market trajectories⁸. On the one hand, “orderly” careers involve few and short spells of unemployment or inactivity, while job changes, if they occur, manifest an upward path of mobility and ultimately of stabilization. At the other end, the “chaotic” careers are marred by frequent and long joblessness spells and job changes that lack a unilineal process.

This research follows these qualitative insights and explores, this time in a quantitative manner, whether second-generation youth experience more “chaotic” trajectories. It also investigates the relative importance of some of the mechanisms that may account for ethnic inequalities, mechanisms which the following section discusses in more detail.

2.2 Mechanisms of ethnic inequality

There is a vast literature on potential explanations for ethnic inequalities, both in what concerns the immigrants and their children. An exhaustive review is beyond the scope of this paper, which will limit itself to a very brief presentation of those theories that can be empirically evaluated with the data we dispose of. According to Bradley and Healy (2008), determinants of ethnic inequality in status attainment can be classified in two major

⁷ Le développement de la précarité et de l'intérim sont les symptômes forts d'un système dualiste émergent » (p. 398)

⁸ Although the concepts describe long term “career lines”, the distinction could reveal useful also with respect to early processes

categories: inequalities in *resources* and in *returns* to resources. Underlying both dimensions, one can also add the importance of the *structural context* – such as place of living or time of entry to the labour market, which shape the opportunity structure.

- Human capital and socioeconomic background

First, in terms of resources, it is one of the most established sociological facts that disadvantaged class origins in the parents' generation lead to poorer educational achievements and, both directly and indirectly, to lower occupational attainment in children's generation (Duncan, 1968; Bourdieu, 1970). Since immigrant parents of the current second-generations tend to be concentrated in less-skilled jobs, some continuity in patterns of disadvantage can be expected through processes of social reproduction.

In France, Brinbaum and Boado (2007) find significant educational disadvantages for youth of Maghrebin and Turkish origin; however, these are almost completely explained by disparities in socio-economic background. In their turn, differences in educational capital, generally explain the poorer outcomes of some second generation youth. However, Silberman and Fournier's (2006) analysis shows the unemployment and occupational disparities to be *only partially* accounted for by education. Fewer studies have tested whether, at equal educational qualifications, socioeconomic background still influences labor market outcomes for ethnic minorities. One such study is that of Jonsson (2007) who looked at the impact of parental resources on employment probabilities of minorities in Sweden and found that disparities in social origin account for around 20% of the ethnic penalties suffered by non-Nordic groups. Furthermore, recent work encourages one to ask whether social reproduction works in the same way for ethnic minorities as for natives, or whether the former have differential returns to their educational resources (Heath and Cheung, 2007) or social origin.

- Social context , neighborhood effects and structure of unemployment

As in the United States, though not at the same extent, ethnic minorities in Europe tend to be concentrated geographically in areas of relatively high social deprivation (Heath, Rothon, Kilpi, 2008) which can be an extra source of disadvantage in their professional trajectories. These “neighborhood effects” can be mediated through normative influences – a different context of values and norms characterizes these neighborhoods - or structural channels - a “spatial mismatch” (Kain, 1968) has appeared between jobs and the inhabitants of areas due to the departure of industries and lack of public transportation from these areas. Most of the studies fail, however, to disentangle, neighborhood effects from selection effects, since the spatial pattern of residential segregation is just as much a consequence as it is a cause of socioeconomic outcomes.

- Family formation and intermarriage

Ethnic minority groups may have family structures and patterns of family formation different than those of the majority population and sometimes even more different from each other. For France, Tribalat’s (1996) research has shown that Maghrebin men take longer to establish themselves with a spouse (either legally married or just cohabiting) than the native French, while Turkish and Maghrebin women get married earlier. Considering that having a spouse has been found to be positively associated with employment for men, and negatively for women, the different rhythms of couple formation displayed by some minorities can, in their turn, account for some of the ethnic disadvantage.

- The Dual Labour Market Theory

Doeringer and Piore (1971) were the first to argue that Western labour markets are divided into two segments: the first, capital intensive or primary, is characterized by stable

and skilled jobs, while the second, labour-intensive, offers little employment stability to workers and unskilled, low-paid jobs. Due to several reasons, immigrants and ethnic minorities tend to be concentrated in the secondary sector, where there is limited opportunity for promotion or otherwise for mobility to the primary segment. According to the ethnographic accounts of Beaud and Pialoux (2004) described previously, this process might be at work in France, with a central distinction between stable and unstable employment.

- Discrimination

One may well find ethnic minorities to be disadvantaged even after controlling for the above mentioned mechanisms. The next obvious explanation is that they are treated differently: i.e. that they face some form of discrimination by the employers, either based on “taste” – a hidden preference of employers – or, what has been termed “statistical discrimination” (Arrow, 1972) – where employers infer an applicant’s potential skills based on the average level of skills of his or her ethnic group. While survey based data can hardly test for discrimination, an array of field experiments has brought quite convincing evidence of its existence (Areijn et al,1998; Amadiou, 1994).

2.3 The school-to-work transition in France

After having presented the *general* mechanisms that may account for ethnic inequalities in labor market transitions, a very brief overview of the *specific* context of the study is necessary. First, the main feature of schooling in France is the separation between academic and vocational tracks. The latter branch starts from lower secondary school with the degrees of CAP (*Certificat d’aptitudes professionnelles*) and BEP (*Brevet d’études professionnelles*). To facilitate access to tertiary education, two-year scientific and technological vocational degrees (BTS – Brevet de technicien supérieur ; and DUT –

Diplome universitaire de technologie) were created. While holding upper secondary degrees (the baccalaureate) automatically entitles students to a tertiary education increasing thus the numbers of admissions to university, there is also a very high drop-out rate after the first and second year of university. This is especially the case for students from working class backgrounds and second-generation Maghrebins (Silberman and Fournier, 2007)

According to Goux and Maurin (1998), since the French labour market is experiencing selective, mass unemployment, education qualifications have no longer a strong and hierarchical association with social status, at least for men. For example, while the vocational track is a low prestige track intended for less able students, it is now more efficient in securing employment than the equivalent academic tracks (especially the BTS and DUT). Among women one can observe a more regular increase of employment chances with education, which can partly be explained by their concentration in the public sector where formal educational background is the single most important characteristic.

As for the youth labour market, the persistence of unemployment has led firms and policy-makers to encourage the introduction and widespread use of short-term and part-time contracts⁹. Goux and Maurin report that, in 1998, nearly two-thirds of hirings were for these types of contracts, lasting on average three to four months. The most insecure and “dead-end” type of contracts are the state subsidized-contracts and the *interim* missions. In the same time, the share of part time jobs has more than doubled, most of the rise corresponding to involuntary part-time.

One of the direct consequences of these transformations of the labour market in France is that the transition from school-to-work has become a longer and more uncertain

⁹ French analysts mostly use the term « précarité » and refer to the process as « précarisation de l’emploi ». The term has no direct correspondent in English; it will be referred here as insecurity of work

process. However, the uncertainty linked to these form of “underemployment’ seems to be unequally distributed among the different categories of workers. Goux and Maurin analyse the differences across sexes, but only hint to possible inequalities across ethnic groups. It is thus the purpose of this paper to explore in more detail whether second-generations are more at risk of “long and uncertain” transitions, marked by insecure forms of employment, than the native French.

3 Data and methodology

3.1 *Générations 1998*, a cohort study of school leavers

The most appropriate data for answering such questions is a longitudinal panel survey conducted by Cereq¹⁰ on the labour market outcomes of a cohort of young people who all left school in 1998. The youth are interviewed three times: first in 2001, 3 years after their school exit, then again in 2003 and 2005. Unfortunately, due to a very high attrition rate (little more than a third of the initial 55 000 sample survived until the last survey), the present paper is based only on the first wave thus being restricted to the first 3 years of their labour market transition. Given more time, an interesting analysis which takes into account the selectivity issues engendered by such attrition, could be however carried further.

In a retrospective manner, the youth are questioned about their labour market situation in each of the 36 months since they have ended their educational careers. In addition, for each spell of employment they are asked to give information both on their job and on their employer. Some information is also collected on each of their spells of

¹⁰ Centre d'étude et de recherche sur les qualifications

unemployment, inactivity or training. These are complemented by a whole array of socio-demographic information.

3.1.1 Identifying the second-generation

No French survey ever includes self-reported measures of ethnic origin, as has already been discussed. However, one can rely on other -some would argue more solid - indicators to identify the second-generation, which is also the approach of this paper. Several criteria have been crossed to obtain our population: the country of birth of the subject in addition to his or her location at the beginning of the secondary school, the country of birth of parents and sometimes their citizenship status. A less restrictive definition is adopted here: a member of the second generation is someone who has either entered the country before the secondary school (around 10- 11 years) or was born in France of foreign-born aliens, and has at least one immigrant parent. As Silberman and Fournier (2006) note, this has the advantages of providing sufficient samples for more advanced quantitative analysis with yet a fine regional distinction.

A distinction, which few studies make, will be done here between the children of Maghrebin immigrants and those of Repatriates, French colonists from the former North African colonies, who returned in France after the independence (known as *les pieds-noirs*) and are expected to have different outcomes. The distinctive criterion is the citizenship status of the parents: whether French by birth or, if not still foreigners, than French by acquisition. Finally, based on similar national origins and socio-cultural backgrounds of their parents, the diversity of origins of the young people in the sample is reduced to 6 groups: the Maghrebins, the North African Repatriates, the South Europeans, the Turkish, the Sub Saharans and the South East Asians, plus the reference group: the youth born from

French-born parents (to whom it will be referred, as a shortcut, “native French” or “French by ancestry”).

3.2 Dependent and independent variables

Several aspects of young people’s labour market trajectories will be considered

1. The number and duration of spells of unemployment and of inactivity

It is important to consider the two since young people who face employment difficulties may be inactive instead of unemployed. The line is fuzzy and wherever it is drawn, frequently crossed (Rees, 1986) Thus, “joblessness” seems a more adequate indicator.

2. The number and duration of spells of employment
3. The type of contract : open-ended versus short-term (state-subsidized or *interim*)
4. Part-time versus full-time employment
5. Access to the first significant job

A “significant job” is considered to be any job which lasts at least 6 months and is performed under an open-ended contract (either from the beginning or achieved at any time before the end). It is, in Beaud and Pialoux’s terms, “the mythical indefinite-term job” that everyone strives to get and which they argue, is far less within the reach of the second-generation immigrants.

Table 1 presents the independent variables which will be used to test the several potential explanatory mechanisms.

Table 1: Description of the independent variables in the multivariate analysis

Mechanisms explaining ethnic inequalities in labour market	Independent variables	Description
Human capital	Level of education when leaving school in 1998	A recode of the original variables in 5 levels 1. No qualifications 2. CAP and BEP (short vocational credentials) 3. Baccalaureat (general, technological, professional) 4. Bac+2 Two-years higher education courses (academic and vocational) 5. Higher tertiary education (from 3 years of higher education upwards)
	Age at leaving education	Age – continuous variable (range: 13 to 32)
Control	Labour force Experience	Two time-varying covariates : 1. Number of months of employment previous to the first significant job, divided by the duration elapsed till first significant job 2. Number of different employment spells, divided by the duration
Socio-economic background and family mobilisation	Parental occupation (both father and mother)	5 social classes: 1. Petty Bourgeoisie (farmers included) 2. Managers and Professionals, 3. Middle level professions 4. Clerical and Service Class, 5. Blue Collar workers
	Parental employment situation	Dummy variables for Father unemployed (1) Mother never worked (1)
Family formation	Living in couple	1: Subject is living in couple
	Children	1: Subject has at least one child
Structural context	Region of residence	1: Rural
	Unemployment rate in the employment area in 1999	Continuous variable imported from a different INSEE datafile and matched to the code of the employment area where the subject was situated in 1998, when leaving school. 3 Dummies for levels of unemployment 1. Low (between 3.7 and 8) 2. Moderate (8.1 to 12) 3. High (12.1 to 19)

3.3 Socio demographic characteristics of the different second-generations

Table 2 presents some of the socio-demographic characteristics of the population. Overall, a fifth of the youth in this cohort of school leavers are of immigrant ancestry¹¹. One should not forget that our sample is not a birth cohort, but a cohort of school leavers. If the Turkish and Maghrebin second-generations in this cohort are slightly younger than the French it is because they seem to quit school earlier, while the Repatriates' children will stay on longer. One can note a puzzling gender imbalance for most groups, especially the South-East Asian one. The social background of the youth¹² confirms the general conclusions of Tribalat (1991) about the immigrant communities from which they descend, briefly summarized in a previous section. A further element could be added: the degree of ethnic intermarriage in the parent generation is very different between the groups. Turkish immigrants are almost exclusively marrying within their group, while the Repatriates and the South Europeans are at the opposite pole. It is important to note the very low percentage of Maghrebin youth who have started their couple life (19.1 compared to 38 for native French) which cannot be explained by their slightly lower age. Repatriates followed by the Maghrebin second-generation have the highest shares living in high unemployment areas.

¹¹ Have been excluded from the analysis the first generation migrants (N= 258) and second-generation youth from other nationalities (N=1450).

¹² only the father's occupation was reported here but the degree of social homogamy is quite high

Table 2 : Socio- demographic characteristics of young people who left continuous education in 1998

	Native French	Maghrebin	Repatriate	South European	Turkish	Sub-Saharan	SE Asian
Percent of total population	80,4	6,6	2,9	5,5	1,0	1,1	0,8
Mean age in 1998	21,8	20,9	22,5	21,3	19,1	21,5	21,9
Percent male	50,9	52,6	46,0	53,8	53,6	53,1	58,0
Percent mixed unions ^a	0	22,0	77,2	46,6	3,4	41,7	29,7
Father's occupation							
Petty bourgeoisie	17,8	10,5	15,3	16,6	15,2	11,3	13,4
Managers and Professionals	20,7	5,5	31,1	7,7	2,1	20,2	19,6
Intermediary	10,1	4,3	9,6	7,4	0,6	5,2	8,4
White collar	30,1	24,9	28,1	24,2	19,5	34,7	32,5
Blue collar	21,4	54,8	15,8	44,1	62,6	28,6	26,2
Percent in couple	38,1	19,1	37,9	30,9	20,5	27,1	29,9
Percent with children	13,2	11,7	14,5	11,2	14,7	17,6	12,8
Percent in area of high unemployment	18,4	29,8	35,6	20,7	12,6	24,6	22,7
N	43,903	3,577	1,564	3,012	532	597	452

^a Mixed union with one immigrant parent and a French born parent

It is also important to consider the educational attainments¹³ of our population. Table 2 (in Appendix) thus displays, this time separately by gender, the highest level of education attained before exiting the education system by each ethnic group. Children of Repatriates have the highest educational achievements, overtaking the native French, while the Turkish are at the other extreme, followed by the Maghrebins. The South Europeans are more oriented towards short vocational tracks.

3.4 Analysis and models

Several methods of analysis will be used. In a more descriptive section, I will resort to simple comparisons of percentages by gender and ethnic origin. A multinomial regression will be used to obtain the ethnic effects net of education on the probability of holding the various types of contracts described above. This descriptive part prepares the

¹³ the second-generations studied here have, by definition, frequented the French educational system from at least the secondary school

ground for a more in-depth analysis of *transitions* into first stable employment. To that purpose, an event-history modelling technique has been used, since this allows us to examine both if and when something happens (Box-Seffenmeier and Jones, 2004). A Cox proportional hazards model was chosen, which leaves unspecified the form of the duration dependency; also, our data were only fit for a continuous-time model.

4 Results: A cumulative pattern of disadvantage

4.1 “Chaotic” trajectories marked by unemployment and instability

The incidence of unemployment or of employment is the product of two factors: the frequency of spells and their duration (Rees, 1986). Breaking out the cross-sectional indicators in these two factors, the insertion process of these youth can be described more precisely (see Tables 3 and 4)

Table 3: Number and duration of spells of employment, unemployment and inactivity in the first three years since leaving education, by ethnic origin, MEN

ETHNIC ORIGIN	Total number months			Total number sequences			Mean duration of sequence		
	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity
French	26,12	3,30	1,56	1,86	0,53	0,42	18,25	6,20	3,75
Maghrebin	23,31	6,52	2,45	1,83	0,76	0,53	16,75	8,57	4,65
Repatriates	24,73	3,98	2,14	1,83	0,62	0,50	17,21	6,45	4,28
SouthEurop	26,19	3,75	1,85	1,96	0,58	0,48	17,46	6,43	3,82
Turkish	27,00	5,23	1,94	1,92	0,67	0,45	18,61	7,80	4,10
SubSaharan	23,56	5,18	2,37	1,75	0,68	0,49	17,40	7,57	4,87
SE Asian	24,47	4,44	2,55	1,74	0,57	0,53	18,76	7,81	4,78
Total	25,84	3,62	1,69	1,85	0,56	0,43	18,08	6,50	3,90

It becomes apparent that young men of Maghrebin origin have a difficult insertion process, characterized by more frequent and longer spells of unemployment as well as of

inactivity. On average, during the first three years, they are employed 23 months and are jobless (without being in training or in education) for 9 months, compared to the native French who have a mean of 26 months of employment and only 5 months of joblessness¹⁴. Sub Saharan youth's transitions are similar, but less extreme. OLS regressions show that these ethnic penalties are still very substantial net of education and age¹⁵; due to space constraints the models are not shown here.

It is difficult to interpret the rate of job shifts for young populations. A high rate can be either beneficial or detrimental. Movement is necessary if upward mobility is to take place but, on the other hand, frequent shifts may reflect inability to accumulate on the job training and experience (Spilerman, 1977; Shavit et al, 1989). One could speculate that when associated with few and short periods of unemployment, a high rate of job change reflects a voluntary process of job selection, where the subject is quitting previous jobs for ones with better opportunities. When longer periods of joblessness are interposed, frequent job turnover could betray difficulty in holding a job and higher frequency of layoffs. The South European and the Turkish origin populations seem to illustrate these two types of experiences: while both enjoy the highest number of months of employment amongst the total population as well of number of jobs held in the period, they diverge on their experience with joblessness, where the Turkish second-generation scores quite high.

Ethnic differences appear larger for women. The most difficult transition is experienced this time by those of Turkish origin, with the lowest number of jobs and total duration in employment, and the highest frequency and duration of unemployment. It is however the "record" duration of inactivity which is the most striking aspect of their progression compared to the other groups (6.3 months compared to only 2.3 for the native

¹⁴ All the means compared here are significantly different from each other at $p < 0.05$

¹⁵ To cite just one example, Male Maghreb youth are employed 2.4 months less than the French native of the same age and education,

French). Maghrebin girls are not far behind the Turkish in their joblessness experience, while South Europeans and the Repatriates have similar trajectories to those of the native French.

Table 4: Number and duration of spells of employment, unemployment and inactivity by ethnic origin, women

ETHNIC ORIGIN	Total number months			Total number sequences			Mean duration of sequence		
	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity
French	25,71	4,77	2,35	1,84	0,71	0,43	18,46	6,73	5,46
Maghrebin	20,91	8,23	3,59	1,58	0,85	0,53	16,93	9,73	6,80
Repatriates	25,20	5,17	2,40	1,85	0,74	0,51	18,03	6,96	4,74
SouthEurop	25,37	5,27	2,56	1,79	0,72	0,47	18,40	7,30	5,48
Turkish	18,06	9,11	6,27	1,37	0,86	0,59	17,00	10,62	10,68
SubSaharan	22,44	6,35	3,72	1,63	0,71	0,54	17,90	8,93	6,95
SE Asian	22,89	5,28	4,37	1,64	0,75	0,52	17,36	7,07	8,47
Total	25,23	5,09	2,51	1,81	0,72	0,45	18,32	7,07	5,63

In their analysis of duration of spells of non-employment amongst American youth, Clark and Summers (1982) conclude that “most of the youth joblessness problem is attributable to a small group of young people who remain out of work a large portion of the time” (p. 200). It is thus worth investigating within group differences for those second-generation displaying high levels and frequencies of joblessness. This seems to be indeed the case for Maghrebin and Sub Saharan youth: for 27% and 26% respectively of each group the first spell of unemployment or inactivity lasted ten or more months (as opposed to only 16% for native French). While 40% of native French do not experience any sequence of joblessness, the same can be said about only 29% of the Maghrebins). At the other extreme, the transitions of 35 % of Maghrebins are interrupted by 3 or more sequences of joblessness, compared to only 24% of the native French.

4.2 “Institutionalized job insecurity”

We turn now to the question of whether second-generation are more affected by the progression of short-term and part-time jobs and thus experience to a greater extent a situation of “institutionalized job insecurity” as hypothesized by Beaud and Pialoux (2004)

4.2.1 Type of contract

A simple comparison of the distributions of the various groups between the different types of contracts - held in the first job - shows that those groups who were disadvantaged in terms of duration and frequency of spells cumulate an extra disadvantage: that of the insecurity of employment (Table 5).

Table 5: Type of contract at the beginning of the first job, by ethnic origin and gender (in row %)

Type of Contract	MEN			WOMEN		
	Open-ended	State-Subsidized	Intérim	Open Ended	State-Subsidized	Intérim
French	38.34	8.52	20.98	34.03	12.20	10.14
Maghrebin	25.59	13.08	34.33	26.29	19.58	14.34
Repatriate	38.68	10.53	16.82	37.55	14.86	8.25
South European	37.22	8.20	23.53	34.79	12.25	13.65
Turkish	27.20	7.28	34.48	19.89	11.36	27.84
Sub Saharan	30.91	14.18	26.55	31.98	18.02	9.01
SE Asian	40.71	9.73	18.14	42.77	6.92	10.69
Total	37.30	8.90	22.05	33.67	12.73	10.64

Maghrebin youth seem indeed to be the most likely to enter the labour market through “insecure” employment forms: the interim and the state-subsidized contracts, while they are the least likely to obtain open-ended contracts. This time the Turkish young men appear equally disadvantaged as regards the permanent contracts. Also worth noting is the sizable proportion among this group who are taking the route of entrepreneuriat, either in their own business or helping a member of the family (7.7% compared to only 3.37 for native French). Entrepreneurship has been shown to be a strategy followed by ethnic

minorities to avoid unemployment and discrimination (Berthoud, 2000; Heath and Cheung, 2007). Among women, the most difficult and insecure situation is, again, that of the Turkish second-generation, followed by the Maghrebin one.

Not only are Maghrebin- and Turkish-origin youth less likely to be hired on permanent contract in their first significant job, but they are also less likely to have their contract changed into one during the job: 17% only get to upgrade their contract compared to 27% for the native French. One explanation would be discriminative behaviour by employers, but one cannot dismiss an alternative explanation: that Maghrebin, Turkish and Subsaharan youth find employment in certain sectors and industries of the labour market where it is more difficult to obtain an open-ended contract. A multinomial logistic regression has also been conducted (table upon request) to obtain the effects of ethnicity net of education and of the class of the occupation, and it showed the Maghrebin to be almost *2 times less likely* to hold a permanent contract than the French, while the Sub Saharan male youth is 1.7 times less likely (compared to working as *intérimaire*).

4.2.2 Part-time work, another form of underemployment

Finally, another aspect of the underemployment of ethnic minorities is their more limited access to full time employment (table upon request). Again, the Maghrebin young men but also the Sub Saharan ones, have the highest proportions of part time work. Amongst the women, while the absolute numbers are, as expected, significantly larger, the situation is even more drastic amongst the above mentioned minorities. One can hardly invoke choice as an explanation since it is the same groups which have the highest proportions of declaring they that they would wish to work full time : 75% of the Maghrebin men working part time compared to only 55% of the native French; 70% of the Turkish women compared to only half of the native French.

4.3 Disentangling the mechanisms: differences in access to the first significant job

The focus of this section will be on assessing the relative importance of the several factors discussed previously in accounting for the patterns of ethnic inequalities brought to light. Given space constraints, the analysis will be limited to a single outcome. I have chosen “access to first significant job” as most able to subsume the multifarious nature of ethnic disadvantage showed above.

4.3.1 Determinants of access into the first significant job

After having left the educational system with or without a qualifying education, the question is how long the different ethnic groups have to wait until finding their first significant job. The duration (in months) until securing this job is estimated using a proportional hazard model with a piecewise constant baseline hazard. The results are presented under the form of hazard rates (HR): if they are high, then transitions occur quickly and survival times are short. Six nested models were estimated, separately by gender, by successively adding more explanatory variables:

- 1) A model with ethnic origin only, to obtain the raw differences
- 2) To this, human capital variables (age, education) are added
- 3) Social background measures are introduced next, with variables on the parents’ respective social class and employment situation at the moment of survey
- 4) Next, family formation variables are added (spouse and children)
- 5) The structure of unemployment is taken into account in a fifth model
- 6) Finally, interactions between education, social background and ethnicity are explored. Only the significant ones are reported.

All models control for previous labour force experience. The first purpose of the analysis is to show how far the inclusion of each factor reduces the gap between groups. A minority group will be judged to suffer an “ethnic penalty” to the extent that it remains disadvantaged after taking such factors into account. Gender and ethnic differences in the relative impact of the factors will also be analyzed.

First, looking at absolute ethnic differences (Table 6, Model 1 – “Raw Ethnic Differences”) between young men, one can see that the Maghrebin youth have by far the longest transition in the first significant job, being least likely to secure a stable employment in the first three years since leaving school (their hazard rate is 54% of that of the native French), followed by the Sub Saharan males. Belonging to any of the other second-generations also lengthens the transition but with a more moderate effect. The exception is constituted by the South European males, who actually seem to fare slightly better than native French.

Previous labor force experience (both in number of months and of jobs held) seems to have a small negative effect; which is slightly puzzling. This could, however, illustrate the existence of two parallel types of trajectories: one of a direct and steady access to stable employment, and the other characterized by a succession of temporary jobs and intermittent unemployment, which do not increase the chances of securing an open-ended contract, on the contrary. However, considering that the endogeneity issues affecting these variables have not received a proper treatment, no further interpretation of their effect is possible – they will strictly be treated as controls.

The second model illustrates the effect of human capital endowments: for most of the ethnic groups, hazard rates increase substantially. When compared at the same educational levels and ages, the HR for Maghrebins is now only 1.6 times lower than the one for French natives. The Turkish and the South East Asian disadvantage seem to be

entirely explained by these two factors, since their HR become insignificant. An unexpected effect of education and age is exerted on the children of North-African Repatriates: the ethnic penalty for this group is actually slightly increased¹⁶ when its human capital endowments are taken into account. We have shown that this group is actually overtaking the native French in their educational achievements: thus, their situation is all the more disadvantaged in comparison to what their endowments would have entitled them.

Confirming Goux and Maurin's findings, education does not have a linear and hierarchical relationship with the transition into the first significant job. While leaving school with no qualification is indeed associated with the longest transition in such a job, the lower prestige vocational tracks of CAP and BEP ensure a quicker way to stable employment than the baccalaureate degree (reference category). As for age, it has a predictable positive effect.

Turning now to the model examining the social reproduction mechanism, one observes yet again a decrease in the ethnic penalty. The lower social background of Maghrebin youth partly explains their longer transition in the first significant job: thus, at the same level of parental social class the Maghrebin male second-generation has a HR which is now only 25% lower than that of the native French¹⁷. A similar decrease can be attributed to intergenerational transmission for the Sub Saharan ethnic group; their HR however, is now only significant at $p < 0.10$ (also due to the smaller samples in this group).

As for the channels of intergenerational transmission, it is only the father's economic situation that impacts upon their sons' chances of securing their first long-term contract. None of the coefficients pertaining to their mothers' occupational achievements

¹⁶ The HR decreases

¹⁷ An increase of 7% compared to the previous model

is significant –they have not been reported here. Having a working class father lengthens the sons' transition to their first important job, compared to having a father in the petty bourgeoisie or the salariat. The effect is comparable to that of having an unemployed father, which also lowers the HR

The next model takes into account the differences in family situations between the ethnic groups. As expected, having a spouse and children is associated with a quicker transition into stable employment (although no direction of causality between the two events can be established – most probably they are interdependent). Some of the ethnic penalty for Maghrebin young males seems to be thus mediated through their family situation, since the ethnic penalty decreases (their HR slightly approach the ones of the native French). The HR of Sub Saharan youth are no longer significant, although still below 1. By this point, it is only the Maghrebins and the Repatriates young males who are still significantly disadvantaged in their transitions. Living in areas of high unemployment further explains why Maghrebin young males take longer to find stable employment, but we cannot say more about how this happens. Living in rural areas however does not constitute a labour market hindrance.

Table 6: Hazards rates of access to the first significant job (Cox proportional hazards models), men

	Raw Ethnic differences	Human Capital	Social background	Family formation	Structure of unemployment
Hazard Rates					
Ethnic Origin					
<i>French</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Maghrebin</i>	0.549	0.672	0.747	0.768	0.781
<i>Repatriate</i>	0.874	0.847	0.839	0.841	0.859
<i>South European</i>	0.986	1.110	1.103	1.115	1.126
<i>Turkish</i>	0.790	0.970	0.859	0.869	0.851
<i>Sub Saharan</i>	0.644	0.737	0.812	0.842	0.838
<i>South East Asian</i>	0.843	0.884	<i>0.829</i>	0.850	0.853
Human Capital					
Age at exit from school		1.046	1.046	1.026	1.027
Education					
<i>No qualification</i>		0.709	0.771	0.758	0.763
<i>CAP-BEP</i>		1.214	1.198	1.198	1.192
<i>Baccalaureate</i>		0	0	0	0
<i>Bac + 2</i>		1.288	1.285	1.263	1.264
<i>Higher Tertiary</i>		1.303	1.323	1.274	1.270
Social origin					
Father's occupation					
<i>Petty bourgeoisie</i>			0	0	0
<i>Managers & Prof.</i>			0.995	0.920	0.930
<i>Intermediate Prof.</i>			0.915	0.922	0.938
<i>White Collar</i>			0.854	0.859	0.870
<i>Blue Collar</i>			0.871	0.874	0.886
Father unemployed			0.895	0.877	0.892
Family Formation					
Spouse				1.490	1.496
Children				1.082	1.092
Structure of unemployment					
Rural					0.999
Area unemployment : Low					0
Moderate					0.832
High					0.694
Labour force exp (control)					
Previous months employment	0.965	0.973	0.966	0.967	0.965
Previous number jobs	0.870	0.860	0.861	0.864	0.862
N Observations	28300	28300	28294	28294	27932

Emboldened coefficients are significant at $p < 0.05$; Italics are significant at $p < 0.10$

Before discussing the last model which comprises the significant interactions, I will briefly point out some differences in the patterns of ethnic inequalities between men and women. First, the same groups appear disadvantaged in raw terms, but the Turkish origin women experience the higher penalties. Accounting for age and education decreases this disadvantage, most notably among the Turkish girls. As for the South-European young women, just like their male counterparts, they have outpaced their French peers in the process of securing stable employment, experiencing transition rates higher with 11% than those of the latter. It is also worth noting that education has a more linear and hierarchic effect among women, with a unique “spike” in this relationship produced by the higher return to short tertiary education tracks (Bac+2). Differences in social background, however, account for all of the Turkish otherwise important delay, the Sub-Saharan penalty and partly for that suffered by Maghrebin girls. Again in this case, social reproduction seems to work only along gender lines: fathers’ occupation appears to have no influence on the transition to employment. Having a mother in the working classes induces only a slight decrease in the hazard rate (of 12% and 8% respectively, compared to the mothers in the petty bourgeoisie class hazard rate). Quite predictably, family status has a larger effect on women’s transitions into stable employment than on men’s. Having a spouse increases the hazard rate by 40% while having children decreases it by almost 30%. Differences in family situations account for 4% of the ethnic penalty for Maghrebins, who approach thus the native French hazard rate once accounting for these factors. The rate of unemployment in the area, while lengthening the transition as it rises, does not seem to account for any of the Maghrebin remaining ethnic penalty.

Table 7: Hazard rates of access to the first significant job (Cox proportional hazards models), women

	Raw Ethnic differences	Human Capital	Social background	Family formation	Structure of unemployment
Ethnic Origin	Hazard Rates				
<i>French</i>					
<i>Maghrebin</i>	0.574	0.726	0.782	0.820	0.821
<i>Repatriate</i>	0.930	0.898	0.907	0.919	0.948
<i>South European</i>	1.021	1.115	1.154	1.172	1.168
<i>Turkish</i>	0.421	0.749	0.943	1.067	1.008
<i>Sub Saharan</i>	0.741	0.900	0.922	0.967	0.959
<i>South East Asian</i>	0.957	1.014	0.971	1.011	0.965
Human Capital					
Age at exit from school		1.044	1.040	1.042	1.042
Education					
<i>No qualification</i>		0.479	0.539	0.574	0.573
<i>CAP-BEP</i>		0.832	0.863	0.883	0.883
<i>Baccalaureate</i>		0	0	0	0
<i>Bac + 2</i>		1.565	1.556	1.496	1.474
<i>Higher Tertiary</i>		1.289	1.318	1.262	1.251
Social origin					
Mother's occupation					
<i>Petty bourgeoisie</i>					
<i>Managers & Prof.</i>			0.964	0.970	0.956
<i>Intermediate Prof.</i>			0.922	0.927	0.914
<i>White Collar</i>			0.925	0.924	0.914
<i>Blue Collar</i>			0.882	0.876	0.871
Mother unemployed			0.859	0.864	0.884
Family Formation					
Spouse				1.402	1.390
Children				0.772	0.778
Structure of unemployment					
Rural					0.857
Area unemployment : Low					
Moderate					0.835
High					0.744
Labour force experience					
Previous months employment	0.977	0.975	0.976	0.974	0.973
Previous number jobs	0.886	0.865	0.865	0.858	0.856
N Observations	26687	26687	26683	26683	26683

Emboldened coefficients are significant at $p < 0.05$; Italics means $p < 0.10$

Finally, several interactions were tested in order to see whether there are differential returns to education and social background for second-generation immigrants. Table 8 reports those which were found significant; the fact that there are few of them¹⁸ suggests that processes of social reproduction act in similar ways for these populations and that their investment in education is equally profitable. There are however some exceptions to this general conclusion. First, amongst Maghrebin men, there is an extra penalty at the lowest levels of education of another 20% in addition to the corresponding penalties for the Maghrebin second-generation and the level of “no qualifications” in general. As for the women, we have found an extra penalty amongst the educated Maghrebin women but an ethnic “premium” of 17% of the hazard rate for South European women with a similar education level. Finally, a quite large extra disadvantage seems to be experienced by Turkish women whose mother never worked, illustrating most likely a process of cultural reproduction of gender roles (however, given small N-s, the standard error is quite big). More investigation is needed on processes of differential returns.

Table 8: Hazard rates of access to first significant job : Interaction effects

	Men	Change in main effects ¹⁹	Women	Change in main effects
Main effects				
Maghrebin	0.846	+0.065	0.852	+0.031
Turkish	0.898	No change	1.013	+0.047
South European	1.053	No change	1.228	+0.06
Interactions				
Maghrebin Low Qualifications (level 1)	0.801		not signif	
Maghrebin High Qualification (level 4)	not signif.		0.835	
Maghrebin, father manual worker	not signif.		1.204	
Turkish, mother never worked	Not sign		0.667	
South European, high qualifications	not signif.		1.175	

¹⁸ Of course, some might have been left out, but the most possible ones have been introduced

¹⁹ Once taking into account interactions

5 Discussion and conclusion

This analysis has chosen to explore an understudied dimension of ethnic inequalities in labour market: the school-to-work transitions of youth of second-generation origin. While most studies focus on cross-sectional measures of labor market outcomes, the present paper brings a dynamic, longitudinal perspective in the analysis.

A first series of findings points to a difference in the trajectories followed by youth of different ethnic origins. Young men of Maghrebin and Sub Saharan origins as well as young women of Turkish and Maghrebin origins appear to experience more sinuous transitions in the labour market, characterized by more frequent spells of joblessness and longer durations in that state, as well as shorter durations in employment – which could be signs of a downward assimilation path, as hypothesized by Portes and Zhou. These ethnic disparities persist even after controlling for education and age. To use the terminology put forward by Spilerman (1977), these second-generation members appear to experience more “chaotic” labor market trajectories, in comparison to those of the native French, but also of South Europeans and South East Asians second generations. To the extent that such trajectories are in themselves a source of disadvantage for later labour market success, as many authors argue, one can expect ethnic penalties to be accentuated along the life course. It would be, in our view, an interesting direction for further research

One of the mechanisms of exclusion of second-generation youth from full employment seems to be their relegation to the more insecure and temporary jobs – state subsidized employment contracts and temporary work in the form of “interim” as well as part-time employment. A dual labour market can be said to have evolved in France along the distinction between stable and unstable employment, and Maghrebin, Sub Saharan and

Turkish second-generations tend to be concentrated in its “secondary” sector. The qualitative insights of Beaud and Pialoux are thus confirmed quantitatively.

The second part of this present analysis has attempted to disentangle among several potential mechanisms accounting for the ethnic disparities, as theorized in the literature. Differences in educational qualifications explain, most predictably, much of the disadvantages of some groups, differences which themselves have been related to different social backgrounds. However, it is very important to recognize that ethnic minorities’ difficulties in obtaining employment are not restricted to those with low levels of education and training (who have usually been the focus of active labour market policies) (Cheung and Heath, 2007; Heath *et al*, 2000). There seem to be however some extra penalties for the Maghrebin and Turkish young males with the lowest qualifications. Among women, on the other hand, a slight extra penalty is experienced by those attaining higher levels of education. All this is proof that there are some differences in the returns to educational investments made by Maghrebin youth as compared to those of the native French. The same diplomas don’t get them in the same places, at least not as fast.

Social background was also found to have a direct effect on the labour market situations of the second-generation youth. The channels of transmission are however gendered, fathers’ situations affecting only those of their sons, respectively mothers’ that of their daughters’. A more advantaged social background and an employed parent mean shorter transitions to one’s first significant employment. Rather than a direct cause, family situations – married, with children - are also symptoms and consequences of the disadvantages experienced by some ethnic groups in the labour market. A lesser propensity of living in a couple at this moment in life for Maghrebin youth does explain part of their longer transition in the stable labour market, as it was found. However, the inverse is most surely true as well. With adequate treatments, one might be able to isolate this feedback

mechanism more precisely. This was however beyond the reach of the present work and we can only say it is yet another direction worth further exploration. As for the spatial incorporation of second generation and potential neighborhood effects in their labour market transitions, the unemployment rate of the subjects' area of residence at school departure did indeed explain some of the ethnic penalty of Maghrebin and Repatriate second generation. Besides the endogeneity problem mentioned before, our variable also suffers from being a rather big territorial unit (bigger than a neighborhood). Thus, its effects probably reveal a spatial mismatch mechanism rather than a cultural and social influence of one's neighbors'.

Overall, the findings prove that considering the dynamic and longitudinal aspects of the labour market transitions of second-generation immigrants leads to a better understanding of the actual experiences of disadvantage suffered by some of these youths. While these findings do not go against (and could not indeed) those of cross-sectional studies, they allow one to grasp the specificity and the manifestation of the ethnic penalty within this population. Long, unstable transitions, with constant balancing in and out of employment and a highly difficult access to permanent, full-time jobs, are the common experience of some second generations.

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APPENDICES

Table 9: Educational attainments at exit from school for the cohort of 1998

Highest Educational level	French	Maghrebin	Repatriates	South European	Turkish	Sub Saharan	SE Asian
MEN							
No qualifications	15,2	42,8	12,8	21,5	53,0	35,7	22,9
CAP-BEP	19,8	19,1	14,1	25,1	28,8	9,5	8,4
Baccalaureate	25,4	22,2	26,3	24,9	13,7	26,8	28,2
Bac+2	17,6	7,7	16,4	13,8	1,1	15,5	19,1
Higher tertiary	22,1	8,2	30,5	14,7	3,6	12,6	21,2
N	22,332	1,883	719	1,621	285	317	262
WOMEN							
No qualifications	8,9	29,0	7,6	12,1	52,2	21,1	16,8
CAP-BEP	12,1	15,9	8,9	17,3	21,9	19,6	9,0
BacProTech	26,2	29,5	29,9	30,4	17,4	28,2	26,8
Bac+2	24,5	13,6	19,8	17,8	4,5	13,2	18,4
Higher tertiary	28,3	12	33,9	22,5	4	17,9	28,9
N	21,571	1,694	845	1,391	247	280	190