

# ***How do foreigners and natives make the transition from school to work?***

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## 1. Introduction



Previous research made clear that educational attainment has a strong impact on labour market opportunities and that the educational careers are of crucial importance with regard to successful labour market integration. Migrant youth are, however, more characterised by problematic school careers than their Flemish peers. Compared to their native peers, migrants enter the educational system at a later age; they repeat their year more often, are overrepresented in the vocational educational tracks and leave school more frequently without a real qualification. This could endanger a smooth transition to the labour market and mortgage their future prospects.

## 2. Data

In 1999 the interuniversity research group SONAR (Dutch acronym for Study Group on the Transition from Education to the Labour Market) conducted a survey among a random sample of 3,000 Flemish 23-year-olds born in 1976 [C76(23)]. This survey was designed to study the transition from school to work in detail. The questionnaires included an extensive registration of the educational and professional career of the respondents. This data collection in 1999 was the first in a longitudinal project in which several cohorts of young people were interviewed at different ages. In 2001 and 2003 two new cohorts, born in 1978 and 1980, have been interviewed at the age of 23 [C78(23) and C80(23)]. In the mean time both the 1976-cohort as well as the 1978-cohort were re-interviewed at the age of 26 (in 2002 [C76(26)] and in 2004 [C78(26)] respectively). The final stage in the data collection – the interviewing of the 1976-cohort at the age of 29 [C76(29)] – has been completed in the fall of 2005.

## Overview of SONAR-surveys

	Survey age at 23	Survey age at 26	Survey at age 29
<b>Year of birth 1976</b>	C76 (23) 1999 (N=3015)	C76 (26) 2002 (N=2060)	C76 (29) 2005 (N=1657)
<b>Year of birth 1978</b>	C78 (23) 2001 (N=3002)	C78 (26) 2004 (N=2102)	
<b>Year of birth 1980</b>	C80 (23) 2003 (N=2993)		

### 3. Natives and non-natives

Criteria:

- Nationality of the respondent
- Country of one's birth
- Nationality of the grandmother (mother's side)
- Country of origin of the grandmother (mother's side)

Respondents who have the Belgian nationality, who are born in Belgium, whose grandmother has the Belgian nationality and is born in Belgium, and who use Dutch as the most important (or only) language at home, are considered to be native. When one of the previous named criteria is not met, the respondents are considered to be non-native or foreigners.

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% in population</i>	<i>% of non-natives</i>
Native	3930	3752	7682	85,5	
Non-native	557	597	1154	14,5	
Turk	93	98	191	2,6	17,9
N.African/Magreb	85	104	189	2,6	17,9
South European	88	88	176	2,2	15,0
Other	291	307	598	7,1	49,2

### 4. Research question

How do foreigners and natives make the transition from school to the labour market in Flanders?

- What is the likelihood of being at work one year after schoolleaving?
- What are the chances of having a challenging first job?

## 5. Position on the labour market

### *Situation one year after schoolleaving*

- Men (86%) more often are at work one year after schoolleaving than women (80%).
- Foreigners (67%) are less often at work than natives (87%).
- The probability of being non-active for foreigners with a Turkish background (47%) and of North-African/Magreb origin (49%) is two times as big as that of South-Europeans (25%) and other migrants (24%) and more than three times as high as that of natives (14%).

Duration of job search for first job (only for those who ever found a job) N=7656

	<b>&lt;6m</b>	<b>6m tot 12m</b>	<b>12m tot 18m</b>	<b>18m tot 24m</b>	<b>&gt;24m</b>
Native	91.1	4.6	2.0	0.8	1.5
Non-native	82.0	7.5	3.4	2.1	5.0
Turk	63.0	9.9	8.3	6.3	12.5
N.African/Magreb	75.4	11.2	1.1	2.8	9.5
South European	87.5	6.3	3.8	0.6	1.9
Other	89.7	5.6	2.3	0.8	1.6

Contingency coefficient; 0,116; (p=0,000), Contingency coefficient; 0,199; (p=0,000)

- 91% of all natives find their first job in less than 6 months, compared with only 63% of those with a Turkish and 75% of the North-African background.
- The group South-European (88%) and other migrants (90%) take a position in between the natives and those with a Turkish and North-African origin.
- 13% of the Turkish and 10% of the North-African migrants are unemployed for more than 2 years before finding their first job compared with only 2% of the natives.
- Especially non-native women have difficulty in finding a job; 9% of them searches for a job more than 2 years (compared with 2% of the native women and the non-native men).

### *Characteristics of the first job*

For 95% of our respondents we have information of a first job.

**Employment status:** blue-collar, white-collar, self-employed

**Type of contract:** interim, temporary or permanent contract

**Vertical mismatch or overeducation** (refers to the match between the perceived complexity of the job and the level of competence): attained educational level too high, too low, just right to perform the job adequately

**Horizontal mismatch** (refers to the the lack of correspondence between the subject matter of the education acquired and the content of the job): content of education fits perfect, fits more or less, doesn't fit at all

First job employment characteristics

	<i>Non-native</i>	<i>Native</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Cc.</i>
<b>Employment status</b>				
Blue-collar	55.8	40.2	3215	0,109; (p=0,000)
White-collar	40.2	55.8	4075	
Self-employed	4.0	4.0	304	
<b>Type of contract</b>				
Interim contract	26.2	18.6	1416	0,066; (p=0,000)
Permanent/temporary contract	73.8	81.4	5793	
<b>Vertical mismatch</b>				
Education too high	30.0	25.8	1764	0,040; (p=0,005)
Education too low	6.3	5.1	349	
Education just right	63.8	69.1	4575	
<b>Horizontal mismatch</b>				
Education fits perfect	30.8	43.6	2858	0,106; (p=0,000)
Education fits more or less	18.2	19.9	1344	
Education doesn't fit at all	51.1	36.5	2629	

**Some qualitative characteristics of the first job ...**

Self-realization:

- work in which you could see results
- work where you could show what you're worth for
- work in which you could do your own thing

Autonomy:

- you could decide on your own how much work you did in one day
- you could decide which work you did in one day

Mental effort:

- work in which you invested a lot of mental effort
- work in which you used a lot of creative ideas
- work with a lot of responsibilities

Variation:

- work with a lot of variation
- work in which you had to do the same things over and over again

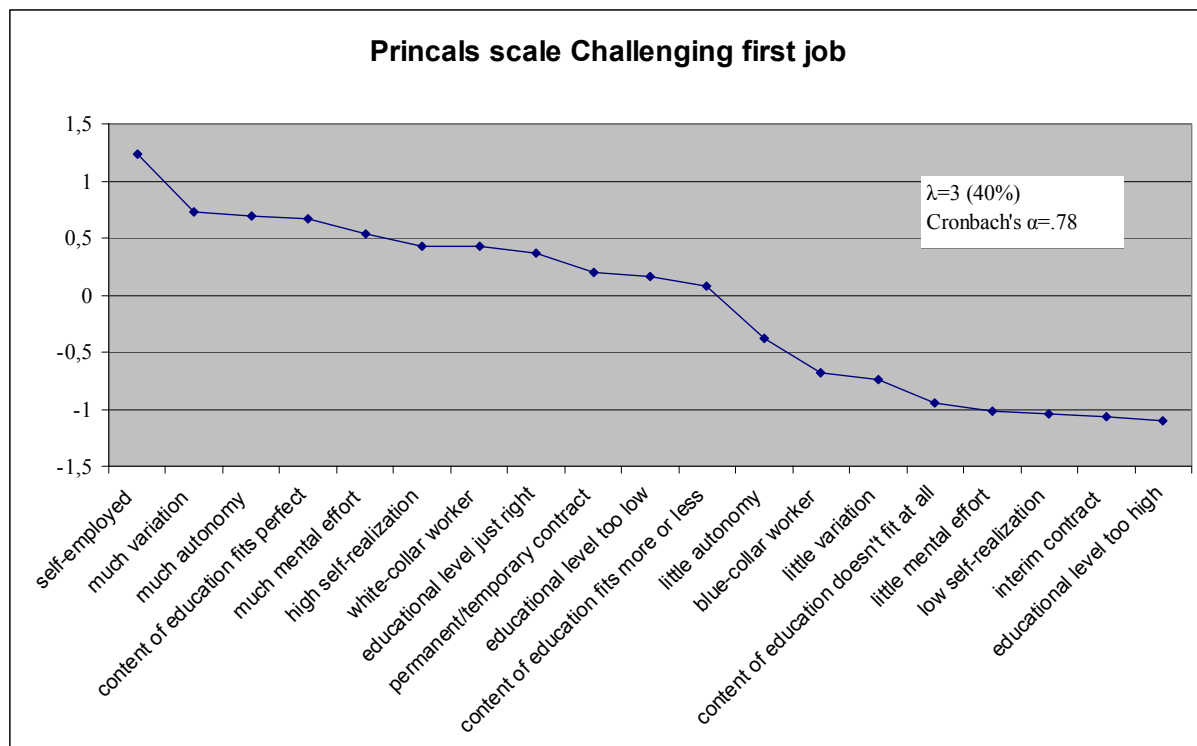
Mean sum scores on qualitative first job characteristics of (scales from 1 to 10)

	<i>Non-native</i>	<i>Native</i>	<i>N</i>
Self-realization	6,42	6,8	7623
Autonomy	4,05	4,71	7622
Mental effort	5,89	6,37	7628
Variation	3,93	4,83	7626

Note: all differences significant at the 0.001 level

### *Princals scale 'Challenging first job'*

Next we constructed a composite measure that combines the job characteristics:



## 6. Explanations for labour market position

- Ascribed characteristics: social background, gender
- Meritocracy: attained competences; educational level
- Cultural background
- Or discrimination?

## 7. Results MCA models

Model 1: Scores for 'Challenging first job' controlled for cohort, gender, ethnic and social background (activity father and educational level father)

Model 2: model 1 additionally controlled for school results and educational level

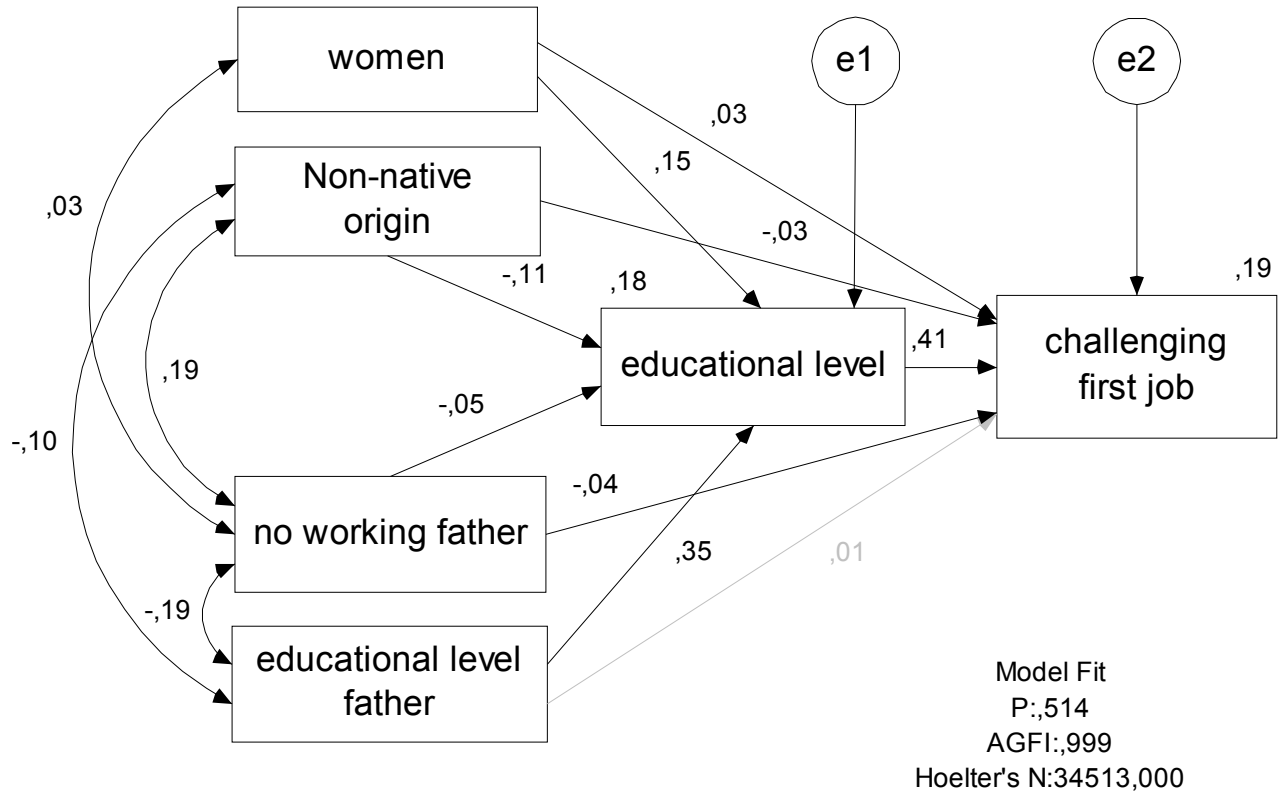
Predicted means of 'Challenging first job' (N=7531)

	<b>Uncontrolled</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>
<b><i>Ethnic background</i></b>	$\eta=0,118$ ***	$\beta=0,078$ ***	$\beta=0,031$ °
native	0,06	0,05	0,03
turkish	-0,56	-0,33	-0,10
north-african/magreb	-0,47	-0,30	-0,15
south-european	-0,27	-0,16	-0,01
other	-0,09	-0,10	-0,01
<b><i>Cohort</i></b>	$\eta=0,046$ ***	$\beta=0,040$ **	$\beta=0,016$
cohort 76	0,07	0,07	0,04
cohort 78	0,04	0,02	-0,00
cohort 80	-0,05	-0,03	0,03
<b><i>Gender</i></b>	$\eta=0,095$ ***	$\beta=0,094$ ***	$\beta=0,004$
men	-0,07	-0,07	0,02
woman	0,12	0,12	0,03
<b><i>Activity father</i></b>	$\eta=0,101$ ***	$\beta=0,053$ ***	$\beta=0,034$ **
no working father	-0,24	-0,12	-0,07
working father	0,06	0,04	0,04
<b><i>Educational level father</i></b>	$\eta=0,179$ ***	$\beta=0,154$ ***	$\beta=0,018$
father max lower sec edu	-0,16	-0,13	0,00
father max higher sec edu	0,06	0,04	0,03
father higher edu	0,30	0,27	0,05
<b><i>School results (sec.ed.)</i></b>	$\eta=0,165$ ***		$\beta=0,066$ ***
highest quarter	0,17		0,0944
second quarter	0,02		0,0062
third quarter	-0,18		-0,0545
lowest quarter	-0,48		-0,1471
<b><i>Educational level</i></b>	$\eta=0,454$ ***		$\beta=0,423$ ***
unqualified	-0,68		-0,57
secondary educ.	-0,33		-0,32
non academic higher educ.	0,51		0,49
academic higher educ.	0,59		0,55
		$R^2=0,053$	$R^2=0,213$

Note: \*\*\*  $p<001$  ; \*\*  $p<0.01$  ; \*  $p<0.05$  ; °  $p<0.1$

## 8. Results Path-models

Global model (standardized coefficients)



Explanation of challenging first jobs (standardized effects)

<i>Decomposing effects:</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Direct</i>	<i>Indirect</i>
Gender (ref: men)	0,09	0,03	0,06
Ethnicity (ref: natives)	-0,07	-0,03	-0,05
Activity father (ref: working)	-0,06	-0,04	-0,02
Educational level father	0,16	0,01	0,14
Educational level	0,41	0,41	-

Turks / Moroccans as the most vulnerable group of foreigners (unstandardized coefficients)

