

FAMILY FORMATION, GENDER AND LABOUR DURING THE FIRST  
GLOBALIZATION IN MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

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Documento On Line Nº 50

Marzo, 2018

# documentos de trabajo

ISSN: 1688-90



ISSN:

TÍTULO-CLAVE: DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO (Programa de Historia Económica y Social, Montevideo)

TÍTULO-CLAVE ABREVIADO: DOC. TRAB. (PHES, MONTEV)

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Documento On Line Nº 50 Marzo de 2018

ISSN: 1688-9037

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Montevideo, Uruguay**

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## Abstract

The aim in this research is to analyse the impact of institutions such as the family for a better comprehension of the status of women in the formation of Uruguayan society. Uruguay was a country with a large contingent of European immigrants who came mainly from Spain, followed by Italy. Although these two countries are not representative of the Western European Marriage Pattern, it will be argued that the immigration process caused a disruption of the original family patterns and led to more unstructured family formation and to weaker family ties and greater predominance of the nuclear family. Weaker family ties characterized by more egalitarian gender and intergenerational relations are supposed to allow for women to take on a less traditional role and stimulate higher female labour force participation.

Our results show that the effects of migration cannot only be derived from the specific demographic, cultural and human capital profile of the immigrants, but also indirectly from the consequences of their decision to immigrate in their life courses and labour options.

## Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el impacto de instituciones como la familia para una mejor comprensión del estatus de la mujer en la formación de la sociedad uruguaya. Uruguay era un país con un gran contingente de inmigrantes europeos provenientes principalmente de España, seguidos por Italia. Aunque estos dos países no eran representativos del patrón matrimonial de Europa occidental, se argumentará que el proceso de inmigración causó una interrupción de los patrones familiares originales y condujo a una formación familiar desestructurada y a lazos familiares débiles y un fuerte predominio de la familia nuclear. Se supone que los lazos familiares más débiles, caracterizados por relaciones de género e intergeneracionales más igualitarias, les permiten a las mujeres asumir un papel menos tradicional y estimula una mayor participación femenina en la fuerza de trabajo.

Nuestros resultados muestran que los efectos de la migración no sólo dependieron del perfil demográfico, cultural y de capital humano específico de los inmigrantes, sino también indirectamente de las consecuencias de su decisión de inmigrar en sus cursos de vida y opciones laborales.

Key words: Uruguay, Family Structure, Labour, Gender, Immigration

JEL Codes: N36, B54, J21, F66, J12, N96

## **Introduction**

In 2000 Uruguayan gender indicators were at the top level among Latin American countries in terms of female life expectancy, education, labour market participation rate and narrower gender wage gap (Camou and Maubrigades 2013, Camou and Maubrigades 2015). The relation between economic growth and the reduction of gender inequality is a well-documented one, but part of the variation remains unexplained. So in this research the aim is to analyse the impact of institutions such as the family for a better comprehension of the status of women in the formation of Uruguayan society. Uruguay was a country with a large contingent of European immigrants who came mainly from Spain, followed by Italy. Although these two countries are not representative of the Western European Marriage Pattern system ([De Moor and Van Zanden](#)), it will be argued that the immigration process caused a disruption of the original family patterns and led to more unstructured family formation and to weaker family ties and greater predominance of the nuclear family. Weaker family ties characterized by more egalitarian gender and intergenerational relations are supposed to allow for women to take on a less traditional role and stimulate higher female labour force participation.

Our results show that the effects of migration cannot only be derived from the specific demographic, cultural and human capital profile of the immigrants, but also indirectly from the consequences of their decision to immigrate in their life courses and labour options. At the same time the native society was also transformed by the arrivals as a result of the changes to the population's demographic, social and educational profile. To test this hypothesis the Uruguayan family structure will be analyzed taking account of the changes during the period 1858-1908, comparing immigrants and the settled Uruguayan population in Montevideo. Then we test the evolution of the family status of women, taking into account migrants and Uruguayan behavior regarding family role, age at marriage and labour force participation.

In the first section we will define the main questions within the context of our theoretical approach. Data and methodology will be presented in the second section. This will be followed by a review of the population structure and its changes during that period. The fourth section will focus on the family formation process in Uruguay. In the fifth section we analyze the position of women and its links to immigration behavior, while the sixth section will discuss the performance of the Uruguayan population by comparing the different groups in terms of labour force participation. Finally, we will present the main results of our research.

### **1. Theoretical approach and main questions**

The relationship between institutions, like the family, and development is subject to debate in social science and has been dealt with in a number of disciplines such as demography, economics, history and sociology. Family structures endure over time, more than other institutions, and this is one of the reasons for their powerful influence on society. At the same time, they constitute characteristic features, which enable us to follow their footprints up to the present day ([Todd 1991](#), [Gilles Duranton](#), [Rodríguez-Pose et al. 2009](#)).

Family structures have more than one impact on the way a society is organized. Early research in this area has come to the conclusion that there is a strong link between the nuclear family and the Industrial Revolution and subsequent economic growth. Children in nuclear families become independent and leave home early, thereby creating a stimulus to search for economic opportunities and strengthening a society's education and entrepreneurial capacity (Laslett 1972, Hajnal 1982).

Research into the family's role in European development has emphasized that regions differs in the strength of their family ties. According to Reher (1998:203), "The strength and resilience of family loyalties, allegiances and authority can be seen most clearly within the co-residential domestic group and among persons from the same conjugal

family". Family formation has many implications for society. One of the main features is the timing of the move of young people from their parents' house to setting up their own home. This is the most important step in how individuals define their education and labour options. Besides this, regions with weak family structures tend to witness the emergence of efficient group organizations and corporations that contribute to economic growth. Corporations of this kind evolve better and faster in regions where individuals are less protected by groups, tribes or families (Greif 2006).

The present research focuses on Uruguay during the First Globalization, when successive waves of immigrants contributed to building up the society. The impact of migration on the family system has been discussed in literature, mainly by historians. Does migration make for a breakdown of traditional kinship systems? Some authors argue that it does not and that migrants – both from rural to urban areas and between countries – tend to recreate the family patterns of their land of origin(Alesina 2010). The chain migrations<sup>1</sup> feature contributes to reconstructing kinship. Kin networks provide migrants with mutual assistance and are indispensable during the first steps of the settlement process (Hareven 1976).

Although this may have happened in European rural-urban migration or in migration from the Old World to the USA, it is difficult to accept global explanations without considering the specificities of regional contexts. As Williamson and Hatton (1994) point out, the first migration flows to America were at the beginning of the 19th century and consisted of farmers and artisans travelling in family groups. However, migrations later in the 19th century were dominated by young, single, unskilled males. The largest migration flows to the River Plate and Uruguay belong to this stage and share these characteristics.

In our case study, Montevideo, with half of the population made up by migrants and newcomers, the household formation process was distorted, for both newcomers and nationals. The first because immigration implies a separation of the family of origin, for the latter by the massive arrival of immigrants with a demographic profile unbalanced in terms of sex and age and a cultural diversity of their own. Because of this we argue that this particular configuration of the population implies loosening family ties during the first Globalization, particularly among immigrants.

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<sup>1</sup> Chain migration refers to a social process by which new migrants are more attracted by places with people of the same origin. They benefited from the information, access to jobs, assistance and help with travel costs.

The evolution of family patterns is closely related to the social and cultural changes societies undergo. Strong family ties require a member of the family (typically the wife) to stay at home to take care of the family organization, which means that women have a more "traditional" role (Alesina and Giuliano 2010). Consequently, family ties will impact on the role of women in the family and in society. As noted by Van Zanden (2011), in a number of societies women are increasingly participating in decision-making at the family level and beyond, and this seems to be an indicator of progress in economic development. Our hypothesis is that if family ties were weaker among the immigrants, the position of the immigrant woman would have to be more independent.

More independent women are supposed to marry later, have a better status on the family and higher labour force participation. One indicator of women's status is the timing of the decision about when to marry and form a new family, that reflects the level of independence achieved by women and the position they occupy in the societies studied (Carmichael 2011) (Carmichael, De Moor et al. 2011). As another aspect to analyze the position of women in the family, we want to introduce the proportion of female household heads. Following Kuznesof (1980), this was a dominant characteristic in the process of early modernization in many Latin America countries, especially where the production system tended to exclude women from rural areas, like Uruguay.

The implication of strong family ties for society and specifically for the distribution of family work was highlighted by Esping-Andersen (1999: 53). The pre-industrial society was built on a "...labour intensive, three-generational social contract. Families were large and their members worked literally non-stop".

In this research we want to test if status in the family, age of marriage and higher labour participation rate reflects differences between immigrant and Uruguayan women, thus reconstructing the gender relations at that time.

## **2. Methodology and data**

Family history research in Uruguay, but also in Latin America in general, is still quite limited. The characteristics of the settlement process lead us to think that family structures were weaker than in other parts of the continent. In this research, based on census data, the family structure of Montevideo as observed in the year 1908 will be reconstructed and results will be compared with an earlier, previously studied benchmark (1860) (Camou and Pellegrino 1992). On the basis of the demographic characteristics of Uruguayan<sup>2</sup> foreign populations we construct indicators to describe family ties and the position of women within the families.

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<sup>2</sup> For the Uruguayan population, we considered individuals classified by nationality as "oriental" in the data records we reviewed. This is a reference to the official name of the country, i.e. República Oriental del Uruguay. Obviously, this population is also the product of several components: the indigenous population living in the territory prior to colonization, the predominantly Spanish and Portuguese immigrant population who inhabited the territory during the colonial period, the population of African origin that was introduced as slaves and the different waves of American indigenous populations, mainly of Guarani origin, that according to several authors moved to Uruguayan territory after the dissolution of the Jesuit Missions. Data records also include as "Oriental" the Uruguayan-born children of immigrants who came to the country in the post-independence period.

Although the unit of analysis is the city of Montevideo, we show data about the population characteristics of the rest of the country to clarify the specificity of Montevideo as main receptor of migrants.

For the first year (1860) the sources are the survey sheets raised to prepare the census. Collected data included age, sex, civil status, and birth place. The way the enumerators registered the data allows inferring kinship among people living in the same house.

Information on the second period is based on the General Census of the Republic (Censo General de la República) in 1908, which was the first Uruguayan census with reliable data at a national level. The population census covered the entire country.

Considering the characteristics of the censuses we used, we focus on some important shortcomings that may affect the results. Firstly, the number of people occupied is probably overestimated. The censuses record an individual's profession or job position without regard to whether or not they were employed at the time. The present day concept of "unemployed" does not seem to be directly applicable to this earlier stage, in which wage labour was the exception rather than the rule. However, this was a period of rapid economic growth with increasing demand for labour and very low unemployment.

Second, female participation in the labour market is difficult to reconstruct and it was probably underestimated in the surveys and the census due to the registration techniques used and to prejudice. Nevertheless in Uruguay due to the productive characteristics of rural work, women were excluded and female labour was mainly urban, encompassing the secondary and tertiary sector, which were better registered (Rodríguez Villamil 1983).

### **3. The composition of the Uruguayan population between 1858 and 1908**

Since its establishment as an independent State (1825) Uruguay had a delimited territory controlled by a central government. At that time the population of the country was estimated at 74,000 inhabitants on an 187,000 km<sup>2</sup> area (Pollero 2013). The country was sparsely inhabited and a large part of the population concentrated in the capital Montevideo. In 1908 30% of the population lived in Montevideo. The information from previous censuses although not considered totally reliable, gives as a proxy of 27% for Montevideo in 1852 and 26% in 1860.

During the second half of the 19th century the population increased due to a reduction of the number of civil wars, improved living conditions and a large inflow of immigrants. Development of Uruguayan society relied heavily on successive waves of immigrants, mainly from Spain and Italy, who arrived in the context of a mass migration process. Among the Latin American countries, Uruguay was the one with the highest proportion of immigrants at that time. The newcomers were unequally distributed across the territory: their impact on the total population was greater in the south-west and around the city of Montevideo than in the rest of the country.

**Table1. Percentage of foreigners in the total population**

	TOTAL URUGUAY	OUTSKIRTS	MONTE VIDEO
<b>1860</b>	33.5		44.7
<b>1889</b>			46.8
<b>1908</b>	17.4	11.9	30.4

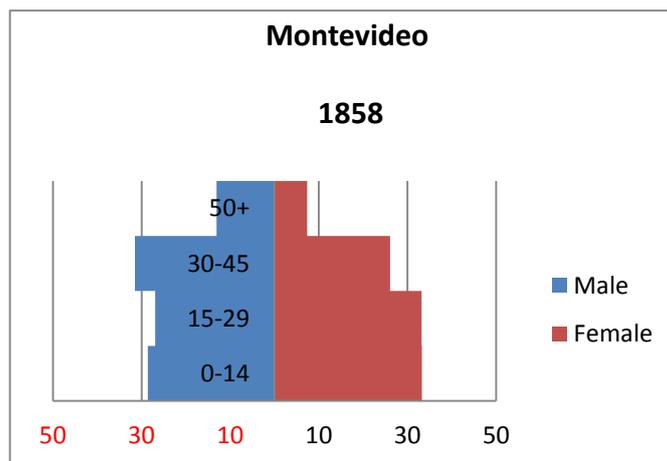
Sources: Censos nacionales 1860 and 1908, and Censo del Departamento de Montevideo 1889.

Note: According to Uruguayan law, the children of immigrants who are born in the country are Uruguayan citizens.

Outskirts: Total excluded Montevideo. At that time it was mostly rural population.

According to this settlement process, in 1858, Montevideo's population had a low proportion of children and an overly high proportion of men under 45 years old.

**Figure 1. Population pyramid of Montevideo, 1858**



Source: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59

The foreign population of the time was made up of the following origins (in decreasing order of magnitude): Italians, Spanish, French, Argentines, Africans and others, and had a very different profile. In 1858, unlike

the first flows of immigrants that arrived at the beginning of the 19th century, which were mainly composed of family groups of farmers and artisans, we find a preponderance of young males of active age in the immigrant population. In addition, most of them were single and unskilled. This trend was similar across the American continent, although the timing differed and the Latin American countries were latecomers to this process (Hatton and Williamson 1994).

In the city's native Uruguayan population we observe a young age structure as a result of the recently finished civil war (1851). Also a yellow fever epidemic (1857) registered a high mortality of young men (Camou and Pellegrino 1992). The female over-representation among Uruguayans between 15 and 50 years old may be explained by the wars impacting more on men than on women and by the Uruguayan agrarian productive structure, which tended to exclude female labour and increase female migration from rural to urban areas.

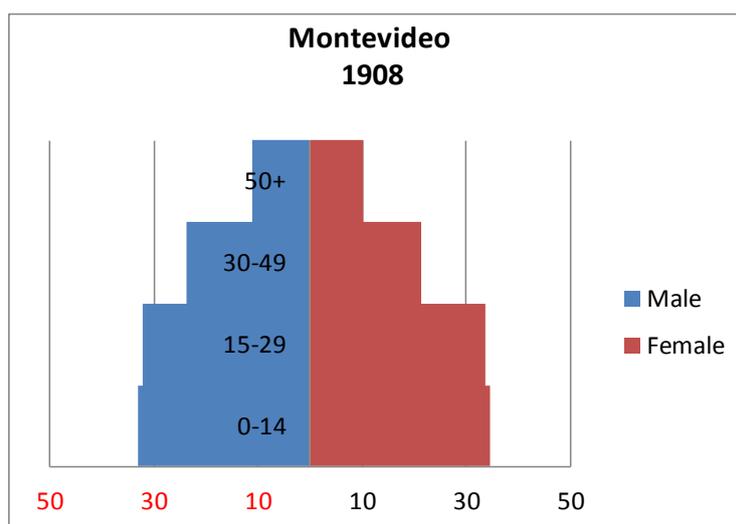
**Table 2. Population Pyramid of Montevideo by nationality, 1858**

<b>Montevideo</b>				
	<b>Uruguayans</b>		<b>Foreigners</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>0-14</b>	1345	1658	540	510
<b>15-29</b>	618	1282	1132	885
<b>30-45</b>	394	760	1656	942
<b>50+</b>	186	219	663	263

Source: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59

Fifty years later the population pyramid had changed and showed a higher proportion of children and less concentration in the active population age group. Society was on the way to demographic transition. Research by Damonte (1994) shows, that mortality began to decrease in 1880, as a consequence of improvements in health care, wages and living conditions. There are difficulties in measuring fecundity. Nevertheless, Pollero (2001), using a system based on birth rate data and his own child method, argues that by 1908 a process of decreasing fertility had begun and that immigrants had a lower fertility rate than Uruguayans.

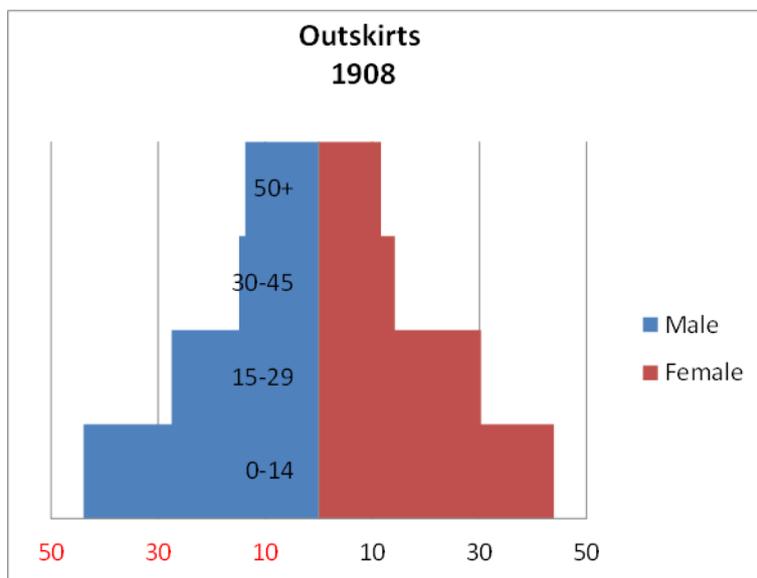
**Figure 2. Population pyramid of Montevideo, 1908**



Source: Censo Nacional de 1908

In contrast, if we look at the rest of the country with mainly rural population and a smaller proportion of foreigners (see Table 1), the resulting pyramid shows a pre-transition demographic model with a young age structure with high percentage of children (0-14 age group) which corresponds to high fertility and low mortality levels.

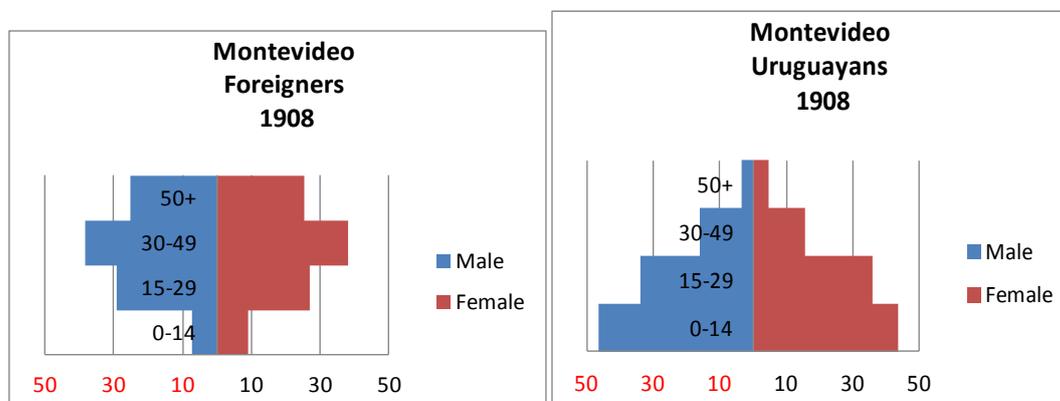
**Figure 3. Population pyramid of Outskirts, 1908**



Sources: Censo Nacional de 1908

By 1908 foreigners had lost weight in the overall population structure. However, the main features of their population structure had become even stronger: the unbalanced sex ratio and weak representation of the 0-14 age group among immigrants. Mass immigration increased at the end of the 19th century, due to the transport revolution and an increasing wage gap between Uruguay and the countries of origin (Bértola, L., et al. 1999, Williamson 1998).

**Figure 4. Population pyramid of Montevideo by nationality, 1908**



Source: Censo Nacional de 1908

#### 4. Family ties in a changing society

By 1858 the nuclear family had already become predominant in Montevideo, and there were other particularities regarding the rapid growth of the population in the city and integration between the previously-settled population and newcomers.

The typology used to classify families is based on Pollero (2004), who adapts Lasslett's typology to capture local particularities. This classification enables us to distinguish between nuclear and augmented nuclear families (Nuclear II) and then extended families and others. Unlike in other regions of Latin America, the incidence of non-relatives living in households was very high (Kuznesof 1980). In Montevideo, the data show a large number of non-kin living with nuclear families. It is difficult to establish the exact role of these persons in the household. Probably most of them were apprentices, workers in the family business, and newcomers. The proportion of people living in nuclear households was 26% of the population and people living in households with non-relatives (Nuclear II) amounted to 38%.

There were fewer other relatives living in extended families, and these were mostly brothers and sisters rather than parents. The multi-generational family was an exception. Here we must consider the immigration factor (70% of household heads were immigrants)

**Table 3. Family types. Montevideo 1858 (percentages)**

	Nuclear I	Nuclear II	<b>Subtotal</b>	Extended	One-person	Unstructured	Doubtful
Household No	34	28	<b>62</b>	14	6	15	4
Person No.	26	38	<b>64</b>	17	1	12	6

Source: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59

Note: Nuclear I: household head with or without spouse and children

Nuclear II: nuclear plus other non relatives

**Table 4. Family types by Household Head and Nationality. Montevideo 1858**

	Nuclear I	Nuclear II	<b>Subtotal</b>	Extended	One-person	Unstructured	Doubtful
Uruguayans	27	24	51	26	7	13	3
Foreingers	37	29	<b>66</b>	9	5	15	4

Source: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59

As regards nationalities, as expected, the nuclear family was more common among foreign household heads than in the native population. Spaniards and Italians living in Montevideo tended to be more systematic at building nuclear families than in their countries of origin. According to a study based on marriage registers, 78 percent of the Spanish in Montevideo came from Northern Spain: Galicia and the Basque country (Camou 1997). Research based on the Spanish Population census of 1860 describing family structure as related to the country's geography showed the predominance of stem families in these regions (Peña 1992).

Although immigrants came from the less developed parts of Western Europe, their family structure in their destination country may differ considerably from what they built up in their country of origin. The people who settled in Argentina and Uruguay were of diverse regional and social origins, and the cultural traditions they brought with them responded to different models of society. The drastic rupture caused by migration to the New World must have brought about far-reaching changes in their lives. First, because emigration meant a release from family ties and the construction of a new kind of family, very often with partners of a different nationality or region of origin (Camou and Pelegrino 2014). Hereditary ties with the family of origin were in most cases non-existent.

Furthermore, migration does not only mean breaking away from a place of origin and an effort to adapt to a new society; it also involves the selection of the people who emigrate. These would have tended to be individuals who were more determined to solve their economic or other problems than the people who remained behind, and also individuals who were more prepared to make and accept changes.

The data available for 1908 do not enable us to identify household types. The city had a higher number of children living with their parents than in 1858. This evolution responds to two parallel features: an increase in children's survival and better registration of children. The number of servants decreased sharply between 1858 and 1908 and only high income families continued to employ them, but the number of non-relatives in households remained stable over the period.

**Table 5. Household structure 1858-1908 (number of people per household)**

	Montevideo 1858	Montevideo 1908
Male household head	0.9	0.8
Female household head	0.1	0.2
Children	1.4	2.5
Other relatives	0.2	0.5
Servants	0.4	0.1
Non related person	0.8	0.7
Household size	4.7	5.4
<b>Number of cases</b>	<b>2287</b>	<b>54836</b>

Sources: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59 and Censo Nacional de 1908

**Table 6. Household size in Montevideo**

<b>1858</b>	<b>Uruguayans</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>
Household s	8.1	3.4
<b>1908</b>	<b>Uruguayans</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>
Household s	9.5	2.8

Sources: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59 and Censo Nacional de 1908

Note: In both censuses children were classified by their own nationality, not that of their parents.

In 1908 non-relatives were more concentrated in Uruguayan than in foreigners' homes, which along with the difference in the number of children made for big differences in household size.

Household with non-relatives increased with the urbanization process. Household sizes did not decrease in the Americas until the 1920s (Hareven 1976). At that time the rapid population growth of previous decades due to continuous new flows of immigrants and also to natural growth made for a serious housing shortage. For this reason the city was overcrowded and rents were very high. According to Bértola, Camou et al. (1999), while in 1913 Southern Cone PPP food prices were similar to, or slightly higher than European levels, rents for apartments were five or six times higher than those in Europe. Mass immigration also put great pressure on urban housing.

Households consisting of a nuclear family plus other non-relatives represent a type that reflects economic and social aspects of society. These were often mentioned as a characteristic feature of Latin American societies linked to the complexity of family houses in many shanty towns today (Kuznesof and Oppenheimer 1985).

### **5. Women's position in the family**

The number of households with female heads was not high compared to other regions in Latin America. Many Latin American countries had a higher proportion of female household heads in this period (Pollero 2001) (Kuznesof 1980). In 1858 and 1908, the percentage for Montevideo was somewhat higher than for Europe, where it did not rise beyond 10 to 15%.

There are interesting differences between the Uruguayan and foreign populations.

Among the Uruguayans, the proportion of female household heads was very high in 1858. Despite the important influence of the Catholic Church in Latin America, marriage as a behavioral norm was not as universal as it had been in pre-industrial European societies, and free union was a fairly widespread practice. In the middle of the 20th century, Uruguay and Argentina, both of which were influenced by European immigrants, had fewer consensual unions than other Latin American countries, but nevertheless marriage was not as generalized as in Europe (Maubrigades 2015).

In this context, we find a high proportion of female household heads. This was a dominant characteristic in the process of early modernization in many Latin America countries, especially in places where the production system tended to exclude women from rural areas, like Uruguay. "They were constituted by lower-class persons with little capital, involved in handicraft production on a small scale. For Brazil and Latin America the importance of this kind of household as an early accommodation to modernization is coming to light because of the length of the period of transition (which may make it more perceptible) and because of the existence of household level censuses of an unusually detailed character." (Kuznesof 1980:606). As Kuznesof indicates for Sao Paulo, in Montevideo this high frequency of female household heads was associated with the fragmentation and instability of lower-class households. Circumstances like wars and men in rural regions having temporary work may also contribute to increases in these figures. In 1908 the percentage of Uruguayan households with female heads diminishes. The end of the civil wars, the strengthening of the State and the spread of civil marriage contributed to this evolution.

Foreigners showed the opposite trend, from very low to higher numbers of households headed by women. In the case of foreigners the low level appears to be related to the sex ratio (152.8 men per hundred women in 1858). Among immigrants the proportion of married women was very high. In 1858 the proportion of Uruguayan single women over 35 is twice the number of female foreigners in this age bracket (Camou and Pellegrino 1992).

**Table 7. Female Household Head (% of total Household Heads)**

<b>Montevideo 1858</b>	<b>14.3</b>
Uruguayans 1858	31.6
Foreigners 1858	6.6
<b>Montevideo 1908</b>	<b>18</b>
Uruguayans 1908	21.6
Foreigners 1908	15.4

Sources: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59 and Censo Nacional de 1908

Age at marriage is another indicator of women's role in the family and their independence with regard to personal decisions. Research by Maubrigades (2015) has shown a correlation between fewer legal marriages and younger female age at marriage. Montevideo marriage data show that in the period 1860-1880 Uruguayan women married at a younger age than foreigners.

Both indicators point to differences between the two groups as regards women's position in the family, and it can be concluded that Uruguayan women were in a more subservient position.

**Table 8. Female age at marriage by nationality**

	<b>Montevideo</b>	
	<b>Uruguayans</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>
1860	21	23
1865	20	23
1870	21	23
1875	20	23
1880	20	23

Source: Own estimation based on marriage records

## **6. Labour market participation**

Many researchers have pointed out that at that time Latin America was a region with labour scarcity (Bulmer Thomas 2003), but it would be more precise to say that mobile wage earners were scarce.

Recent research confirms that a very unequal society emerged. Bértola (2000) estimated the evolution of the Gini index for Uruguay in the period 1870-2000 and found that inequality in the country worsened between 1870 and 1910. This was a period in which land prices increased considerably and land ownership was heavily concentrated. Inequality among workers also worsened due to the expansion of the unskilled workforce, in which immigrants prevailed, while skilled labour was scarce. Integration of the immigrants

was conditioned by the fact that almost no workable land was available and housing in urban areas was expensive.

The labour relations, which emerged during that period of economic growth reveal the migrants' contribution to the establishment of modern labour relations and the changes, also for native workers that occurred at the time. When we come to examine labour indicators, we find that Uruguay was different from other Latin American countries, and that within Uruguay there were differences between groups by nationality and gender. During this period Uruguay and Argentina were the most advanced countries in the region in terms of GDP and had the highest share of market wage earners in their employment structures (Camou 2014).

The consolidation of a wage labour market was a gradual process in Latin America. In the context of rapid economic growth and improving living standards, the countries of the Southern Cone, and in particular Uruguay, received massive European migration flows that constituted the main source of a mobile labour force for the market.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the Uruguayan economy was undergoing big changes stemming from its integration into the international economy. The export sector, supported by the modernization of transports, was driving the economic boom. The development of an urban economy generated an increased demand for labour in manufacturing and services. From 1858 to 1908 the labour relations structure changed to an increased market wage labour proportion.

Montevideo, as the main pole of attraction for immigrants, went through important changes in the composition and volume of the population and the integration of newcomers into productive activities.

From 1858 to 1908 immigrants decreased as a percentage of the active population. This is due to the nationalization of second generation immigrants and an increase of the Uruguayan labour force. Although the labour participation rate of immigrants remains higher than the Uruguayan for both men and women.

**Table 9. Labour force participation rate. (Population 10 years and more).**

**Montevideo.**

	<b>Men</b>		<b>Women</b>	
	<b>Urug.</b>	<b>Foreign</b>	<b>Urug.</b>	<b>foreign</b>
<i>1858-59</i>	55	87	17	21
<i>1889</i>	68	89	23	33
<i>1908</i>	81	98	16	22

Sources: Padrón de Montevideo 1858-59, Censo de Población del departamento de Montevideo de 1889 and Censo Nacional de 1908.

In 1858 the participation rate of Uruguayan men in the labour market was very low; by contrast, the rate of activity of immigrants was 89 percent. The different demographic profile of immigrants and natives provides a powerful explanatory factor. Other factors like differences in working habits or discipline and motivation were also important. In our view, this behavior can be attributed to the fact that “modern” working habits were not yet consolidated. Apart from some upper class professions such as "owner", "merchant" and "military”, we found few occupations among the Uruguayans. This pattern appears to match the world Barrán (2001) describes, in which entertainment, gambling, war, politics and big business were the inhabitants’ main activities. There must have been an unstable and informal labour force that could not be registered by the formal institutions.

In terms of female participation in the labour market, Uruguay also performed well in the Latin American context. At the beginning of the 20th century, Uruguay was in a group with Chile and Argentina, showing a relatively higher rate of women’s participation in the labour market, well ahead of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico (Camou 2016). As far as foreigners were concerned, female labour force participation rate was higher throughout the period. From 1889 to 1908 labour force participation in both female groups declined, a trend that may have been linked to a more global pattern of female labour evolution with higher levels of female participation in the early stages of development, followed by a decrease during the period of rapid industrialization (Goldin 2006, Seguino and Grown 2006, Camou 2014).

## **7. Main results**

The process of social and economic transformation that takes place during the period reveals that massive migration, like the one Uruguay received, has a strong impact on family formation and gender roles.

The evidence for Uruguay shows an unstructured society in a period of rapid population growth resulting from immigration flows and natural population growth. Uruguay, as a latecomer to the age of mass migration, received groups of immigrants dominated by single, young, unskilled males. As a result, the population profile shows an inverted pyramid, which was part of the reason why, traditional family structures were distorted with an overrepresentation of young males. Therefore we find many people who were not relatives lived in the households. The under-representation of relatives of older generations reinforced the predominance of the nuclear family. These characteristics are clearly stronger among foreigners or newcomers.

The position of women in this atypical family also differs between Uruguayans and immigrants. Among foreigners there were more married women, but Uruguayans were more likely (or forced) to be living in

households headed by women. At that time, Uruguayans' behavior can be associated with the instability of lower class occupations and with lower average age at first marriage.

In accordance with a characteristic feature observed among migrants, they showed higher labour force participation rates. In the case of foreign women, they were more likely to be married than native Uruguayans. This might be related to a more independent role in the family.

Our results show that the influx of immigrants in society led to weaker family ties, not only due to the individual characteristics of the immigrants themselves or their cultural background, but rather as a part of the development process of a new society, in which the ties to ancestors were losing weight.

As next step in this research, we plan to exploit our sources more intensely, and also to draw comparisons to other Latin American countries, in which immigrant groups did not play such a crucial role. Unfortunately, there is a source-related problem, because not many Latin American censuses at the beginning of the 20th century provide information regarding household structures. For this reason other population's surveys, mainly from the second half of the 19th century must be explored.

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