UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO
SCHOOL IN SOCIAL SCIENCES
SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

XXVII cycle

a.y. 2014-2015

Ph.D. Dissertation

Leaving Home Sooner or Later: Co-residence and Parent-Adult Child Relations in Italy and Sweden

PhD candidate:
Marco Tosi

Supervisor:
Carlo Buzzi

Co-Supervisor:
Marco Albertini

Summary

Introduction

Since the mid-1900's, academic interest in intergenerational family relations has often been intertwined with concerns for the weakening of intergenerational bonds in modern Western societies. According to the structural-functionalist perspective, extended family relations appear to be antithetical to occupational and geographical mobility in modern industrial societies. Urbanization and industrialization led to the destruction of traditional extended family ties, so that parents and their adult children remained isolated and alienated from each other (Burgess, 1916; Parsons, 1942; for a review Cohler, 1983; Mancini and Blieszner, 1989). However, over the last decades, researchers have rejected this hypothesis, dispelling the myth of the *isolated nuclear family*. The seminal work of Litwak (1960) shed new light on nuclear family relations, suggesting that family members maintain their relations even when they are separated by huge spatial distances and class differences. The concept of *modified extended family* developed by the author indicates that in modern societies family members reside away one from another, but they are not necessarily socially or emotionally distanced. Following on from this, a large body of research has shown that parents and their adult children remain close and linked to one another throughout their entire lives (Bengtson, 2001; Hogan and Eggebeen, 1995; Lye, 1996; Ruggles, 2007; Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997; Swartz, 2009).

In the last decades, scholars have shown a renewed interest in intergenerational family bonds (Bengtson, 2001). This is due to several factors such as demographic shifts (dramatic improvement of life expectancy and reduced fertility rate), changes in family structure (*e.g.* marital instability and cohabitation), economic processes (*e.g.* female labor market participation) and changes in values (less identification with the family), which are contributing to alter parent-child relationships in Western countries (Silverstein and Giarrusso, 2010). With regard to demographic changes, Bengtson (2001) points out that, as a

consequence of increased life expectancy, intergenerational relations are becoming increasingly more important for the well-being of American families. Parents and their children spend "longer years of shared lives", along which they remain involved in one another's lives, maintaining frequent contact and exchanging various forms of support. As suggested by the concept of *lifelong solidarity* (Szydlik, 2008), intergenerational family relations represent an enduring source of support and solidarity for parents and their adult children over the course of their lives. Family network is a durable source of solidarity, but it is also a flexible resource responding to lifetime circumstances. Family relationships are typically (re)defined and shaped according to individual life course transitions (Bucx *et al*., 2008; 2012; Swartz, 2009). A central argument of this thesis is that family members adapt their relationships to circumstances and events of their life course, and that life course transitions have long-term consequences for later parent-child relations.

The dramatic improvement of healthy life expectancy is contributing to an alteration of life course phases, with a sensible protraction of the shared lifetime in which parent-adult child relationships are relatively free from need and responsibilities to provide care. Since most elderly people enjoy good health conditions and are self-sufficient for a long period of their lives, parents and their adult children can establish adult-to-adult relationships without committing to provide care to each other (Bucx, 2009; Settersten 2007; Swartz, 2009). Thus, in the "middle years" of parent-child relationships *lifelong solidarity* becomes particularly relevant for its affective and associative aspects. Emotional support is found to be the most common type of help in parent-adult child relationships (Hogan and Eggebeen, 1990; 1995; Lawton *et al.*, 1994). Affective ties, the quality of relationships and the frequency of contact between parents and their adult children are described as central sources of social integration that can affect the well-being of both parents and their offspring (Mancini and Blieszner, 1989; Umberson, 1992). In this thesis, particular attention is paid to parent-child interaction as a salient indicator of family cohesion in the "middle years" of the life course.

Because of an increase in longevity and a decrease in fertility, family structure has changed: families are smaller than before and are described as a "beanpole", a structure in which living members come from various generations but with few members representing each generation (Bengtson *et al*., 1996). This implies a "verticalization" of family structures, according to which vertical relations between generations became increasingly important, compared to horizontal relations within one generation (Bengtson, 2001). Beside the ageing

process, family structure has become more varied, due to the growth of divorce rates and changing patterns in family formation (Blossfeld *et al.,* 1993). Increased marital instability in contemporary families is found to be associated with weakened family obligations (Cooney, 1994), less time investments in the relationship with young children (Kalmjin, 2013a), less affective relations (Amato and Booth, 1996) and less frequent parent-adult child interactions (Albertini and Garriga, 2011). Young adults are also more inclined to cohabit, with possible negative effects on their relations with parents, especially in societies where marriage is on average expected to act as a mean of binding generations together (Nazio and Saraceno, 2012; Yahirun and Hamplová, 2014). These demographic processes are partly related to changes in ethical values. Some scholars emphasize that the idea of family has lost its original significance, as result of a process of individualization involving diminished loyalty and bonds toward family (Inglehart, 1977; Komter and Vollebergh, 2002; Popenoe, 1993). In brief, changes in values and family structure raise questions about the extent to which parents and adult children will continue to be relevant sources of emotional and practical support in contemporary societies.

Parent-child relationships are also affected by economic processes. High female participation in the labor market implies a higher opportunity-cost in providing help and care to elderly parents, as well as in assuming the role of kin-keeper in the family (Silverstein and Giarrusso, 2010). Furthermore, labor market uncertainty and the deteriorating economic situation of younger cohorts are likely to increase the parents' commitment to support their children. The family becomes a critical source of protection for young adults, as they face social and economic risks in their early careers (Blossfeld, *et al*. 2011). As public pension systems redistribute resources from the employed to the elderly, old parents are usually released from economic needs and able to support financially their children. On account of this, the fourth chapter of the present dissertation examines the downward flow of economic resources from parents to adult children.

Family adaptations to changing socio-demographic and economic conditions are forcefully debated in academic circles (Silverstein and Giarrusso, 2010). The present dissertation aims to contribute to this debate, by focusing on the association between leaving-home transitions and later parent-child relations. Nest-leaving processes are undergoing several changes that derive from changed economic and demographic conditions. Financial hardships experienced by young adults tend to translate into longer periods of co-residence

with parents (Aassve *et al.*, 2013). Rapid growth in divorce and separation is correlated to early departures from the parental home for nonfamily living, reducing young adults' orientations toward traditional family roles (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1998; Ward and Spitze, 2007). Marriage, the dominant route out of the parental home, is replaced by various forms of non-family living and non-marital cohabitation, which countervail the traditional life cycle pattern (*e.g.* Goldscheider *et al*., 2014). Thus, the departure from the family nest, a milestone-process in the transition to adulthood, has become more complex (see Billari and Liefbroer, 2010), with a subsequent multiplication of choices about the time and reason for leaving the nest (Inglehart, 1977; Van de Kaa, 1987). A question that is addressed in the following empirical chapters is whether this heterogeneity of co-residence experiences and complexity of the nest-leaving process have consequences for later parent-adult child relationships. In particular, in order to take into account this heterogeneity in nest-leaving processes, this thesis will examine three dimensions of intergenerational co-residence, *i.e.* its duration, different pathways out of the parental home (*e.g.* family formation), and childhood family climate.

Three aspects of intergenerational linkages are analyzed as outcome variables: residential proximity, the frequency of parent-child contact, and the downward flow of economic resources from parents to their adult children. By devoting particular attention to these three dimensions of intergenerational solidarity, the first chapter presents an overview of the literature on parent-adult child relationships. The first chapter also describes long-standing cultural differences between Italy and Sweden. These two countries are considered particularly interesting settings in terms of nest-leaving patterns and intergenerational relationships. In Italy, late home-leaving is regarded as the norm, and the time-span within which this event occurs is the longest among Western European countries. In Sweden, instead, the decision to leave the parental home typically occurs at early ages and is more standardized by age than elsewhere in Europe (Billari *et al.*, 2001; Billari and Wilson, 2001). Thus, the perception of intergenerational co-residence is likely to vary across these two contexts that represent two extreme cases in nest-leaving processes. I ask whether in these two different settings a prolonged permanence in the parental home may positively affect later parent-child relations, and whether this association depends on a possible role played by age norms.

Moreover, by examining Italy (chapter 2) and Sweden (chapter 3) individually, it is possible to understand whether country-specific family dynamics play an important role in the association between home-leaving behaviors and later parent-child relations. In Italy, marriage may fulfill cultural expectations about union formation, whereas in Sweden marriage tends to play a less relevant role in home-leaving decisions. In turn, parental union dissolution is a diffused phenomenon in Sweden, while Italian couples are less likely to break up. To address these important contextual features, I decided to examine Italian and Swedish parent-child relationships in separate chapters.

The second chapter examines the connection between home-leaving patterns and later levels of residential proximity and parent-child contact in Italy. This chapter aims to contribute to the existing literature by investigating the role of different pathways out of the parental home in affecting later parent-child relations. Moreover, Italy is an interesting case to investigate the consequences of a violation of normative expectations about home-leaving. Some scholars suggest that Italian parents are particularly protective toward their children and try to discourage them from socially unacceptable behaviors with interpersonal sanctions (Rosina and Fraboni, 2004). In addition, young adults are usually dependent from their family of origin as the main provider of welfare. Thus, a violation of parental expectations may bring greater losses for Italian adult children than for those living in other societies where social policies foster individual autonomy.

The third chapter focuses on home-leaving processes and intergenerational contacts in Sweden. The main contribute of the third chapter is to ask whether union dissolution and family conflict during childhood and adolescence constitute important mechanisms behind the connection between home-leaving age and later parent-child contacts. Childhood family climate is often considered as a source of selection in home-leaving decisions, and these family circumstances may be carried over into later parent-child relations. Moreover, this chapter examines whether young adults who stay at home for longer have more opportunities to form binding relationships with mothers than with fathers.

The fourth study aims to extend the findings of the previous two chapters, by analyzing intergenerational financial transfers and using a within-family approach (or a sibling design). This strategy allows to understand whether late home leavers are more likely to receive economic support from their parents, than their siblings who move out of the family nest at an earlier age. Compared to previous research, this study uses a more recent wave of SHARE

data and examines Italian and Swedish intergenerational relations separately. In the last section of the fourth chapter, I consider fifteen European countries in order to provide a broader picture of parental allocation of economic resources across Europe.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

Introduction

The present chapter offers an overview of the literature on parent-child relations and home-leaving behaviors. It introduces the general framework for the three studies presented in the following chapters. In particular, this chapter is organized as follows. The first section illustrates the model of intergenerational solidarity (1.1.1), the concept of ambivalence (1.1.2), and the connection between home-leaving and ambivalent feelings in parent-adult child relationships (1.1.3). The second (1.2) and third (1.3) sections focus on two specific dimensions of intergenerational family solidarity, namely associational (*i.e.* parent-child contact) and functional solidarity (*i.e.* intergenerational transfers). These two aspects of parent-child relations along with residential proximity represent the dependent variables of the following studies. Section 1.4 offers an overview of the family life course perspective, as a general orientation for linking current patterns of parent-child relationships with previous family history. I also devote particular attention to Elder's (1994) concept of *linked lives* (section 1.4.1), and the long-term consequences of previous family events (*e.g.* home-leaving) on later parent-child relationships (section 1.4.2). Section 1.5 summarizes previous research on home-leaving processes and adulthood transition, in order to better understand how young adults' life course decisions may be conceptualized by sociological and psychological theories. Finally, the last section 1.6 of this chapter describes cultural differences between countries characterized by strong and weak family ties, such as Italy and Sweden. This section

will hopefully help to understand how family organization and intergenerational family relationships are deeply rooted in different cultural settings.

1.1 Conceptual Framework of Intergenerational Relations

The model of intergenerational family solidarity, as presented by Bengtson and Schrader (1982), led empirical research on intergenerational relations over the last three decades. This model tends to emphasize the positive characteristics of the family, such as harmony and cohesion among its members. Because of its underestimation of negative feelings, intra-family conflict and contradictory expectations that may coexist in intergenerational relations, the solidarity model drew criticism. Lüscher and Pillemer (1998) proposed the concept of intergenerational ambivalence as a "general orientation" for empirical research, suggesting that family members may experience ambiguity in role expectations, and simultaneous feelings of solidarity and conflict toward each other. This led to a re-theorization of the classical theoretical framework of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson *et al*., 2002). The following three paragraphs focus on the intergenerational solidarity model (1.1.1), the concept of ambivalence (1.1.2) and the reformulation of the solidarity model (1.1.3).

1.1.1 *Intergenerational Solidarity Model*

Intergenerational solidarity theory represents the classical framework for research on parent-child relationships. The family is seen as a social community based on harmony and solidarity, in which the members share norms and values, and perform the natural function of help and care (Komter and Vollebergh, 2002). The roots of this perspective lie in the distinction between *Gemeinshaft* and *Gesellshaft* (Tonnies, 1887) and Durkheim's (1893) concepts of *mechanical* and *organic solidarity*. The cohesion of a social group is described as a product of internalized social norms (*mechanical solidarity* and *Gemeinshaft*) and the functional interdependency of its members (*organic solidarity* and *Gesellshaft*). Social norms tend to increase individuals' similarity, while the functional interdependency of family members implies some extent of consensus over social rules.

Bengtson and Schrader (1982)[1] conceptualize intergenerational family solidarity as a multidimensional construct that is specified by the relationship of six essential components: *affection* (or emotional link), *association* (or contact), *consensus* (or agreement on attitudes), *function* (or instrumental support), *familism norms* (or individual obligations to the family) and the *opportunity structure* (such as geographical proximity) for parent-child interactions. The six dimensions of solidarity are found to be interrelated to one another, indicating that families characterized by strong affective ties are, for example, also likely to exhibit frequent interaction, close residential proximity and high levels of support exchange between generations. However, empirical findings reveal that these six solidarity elements cannot be combined into a single additive scale or a unitary construct (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991). The intergenerational solidarity model therefore emphasizes the multidimensionality and complexity of family relationships, rather than being a unique measure.

Empirical studies examine intergenerational solidarity by means of three different ways, *i.e*. focusing on one dimension only, studying two or more components as indicators of solidarity, and examining the interdependence of different components (Leopold, 2012b; Suitor *et al*., 2011). In particular, the third direction of research aims to capture the complexity of family relations by identifying the association between different dimensions of solidarity. For example, Silverstein and Bengtson (1997) identify three main types of parent-child relations in American families. First, tight-knit relationships refer to the notion of *traditional extended family* in which family members are embedded in a dense network of kinship. Second, the detached type of parent-child relationships corresponds to Parsons' (1942) concept of *isolated extended family* characterized by weak intergenerational ties and lonely elderly. Third, *variegated* types of solidarity are the most common in American families, suggesting that family relationships are usually more complex than those characterized by a low or high level of solidarity. Interestingly, Guo *et al.* (2012) find a similar family relation typology in a completely different context, specifically in a Chinese rural province. Through the lens of the solidarity model, the authors also describe some unique patterns of Chinese family relations, such as the "*distant reciprocal ties*, which represents corporate extended family relations in Chinese rural migrant families that are

[1] The first conceptualization of intergenerational solidarity can be found in Bengtson *et al.* (1976) and Bengtson and Cutler (1976). In that initial conceptualization, intergenerational solidarity is composed by three elements: association ("objective" interaction or activities); affect ("subjective" interaction - the degree of sentiment between members); and consensus (agreement in values and opinions).

characterized by mutual support and reciprocal relations between migrant children and their parents" (p.1125). Thus, the model of intergenerational solidarity appears as a flexible model that is able to capture differences and similarities of intergenerational relationships in various cultural and institutional contexts. The multidimensional construct of intergenerational solidarity can guide the research of family relations in different settings, by preserving peculiar characteristics of family ties.

1.1.2 *The Concept of Intergenerational Ambivalence*

Recently some scholars have criticized the intergenerational solidarity model, emphasizing that solidarity and conflict are not two opposite sides of a *continuum* where high solidarity corresponds to low conflict and *vice versa*. Some scholars describe family as place of cooperation, mutual support, harmony and consensus, whereas another line of research underlines caregiver stress, family problems, conflict, abuse and violence within family (Marshall *et al.,* 1993). As suggested by the classical sociology of Simmel (1904), the coexistence of harmony and tension is an unavoidable trait of small groups such as the family. Thus, the notion of *intergenerational ambivalence* was developed to integrate this mix of positive and negative features in the research of parent-child relationships.

Intergenerational ambivalence refers to "contradictions in relationships between parents and adult offspring that cannot be reconciled" (Lüscher and Pillemer, 1998:416). It comprises two central dimensions. First, *psychological or individual ambivalence* is an ambiguity of feelings experienced at the individual level. Psychological ambivalence involves simultaneous feelings of love and hate toward the same individual.

Second, sociological ambivalence was formulated by Merton and Barber (1963:94) and refers to "incompatible normative expectations of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior" that derive from social-structural positions or roles. For instance, the literature on "sandwich" or "pivot" generations describes how ambivalence in women's caregiving role may rise in three-generation families with dependent children and early-disabled grandparents. The middle generation usually faces conflicting expectations about supporting the ascendant and descendant generation (Henretta *et al.*, 2002). This may produce ambivalent relations, if the middle generation decides to favor one generation over the other, fulfilling family expectations only from one side. However, Grudy and Henretta (2006) find that in Britain and the U.S., the middle generation tends to solve these conflicting expectations by assisting both

young children and disabled parents, rather than prioritizing the need of one generation. But the side effect of fulfilling the expectations of both generations is to detach themselves from the labor market. In this regard, structural ambivalence does not seem to be solvable, since the middle generation is expected to occupy an active position in the labor market and sustain the economy of their household.

Sociological ambivalence in its first formulation is defined as an unresolvable experience inherent in social positions. However, the following theoretical contributions indicate that contradictory expectations are "an ongoing feature of social relations and must be continually negotiated and renegotiated over the life course" (Connidis and McMullin, 2002:559). Ambivalence appears as a temporary state that emerges from an interplay between a structured set of social relationships and individual agency. For instance, compared to working-class women, those of the upper class may experience greater ambivalence, since their work is an important part of their identity and may be incompatible with family tasks. Because of their considerable economic resources, they have also more chances to resolve the mismatch between family and work expectations, by outsourcing family responsibilities to private services. Certain social groups are, therefore, in an advantaged position to resolve the conflict between family and work expectations. In addition, family/work reconciliation policies, such as parental leave, may reduce the ambivalence experienced by family members. Thus, institutional and cultural settings affect how intergenerational ambivalence is experienced within the family (Connidis and McMullin, 2002).

1.1.3 *Leaving Home and Intergenerational Ambivalence*

It is chiefly relevant to this dissertation to understand how simultaneous feelings of dependency and autonomy may emerge during the transition from the parental home to residential autonomy. Although the following studies do not include any measure of intergenerational ambivalence, these simultaneous expectations about individual autonomy and family interdependence may affect different aspects of family solidarity and parent-child relations. Thus, I present a briefly digression on home-leaving transition and ambivalence.

Structural ambivalence is likely to depend on life course, as parents and children (re)define their relationships in response to new circumstances, priorities and mutual developmental paths (Kiecolt *et al.*, 2011; Luescher and Pillemer, 1998; Pillemer *et al.*, 2012; Willson *et al.*, 2006). As parents develop expectations about their young adult children,

ambivalent feelings may be produced by children's failure in achieving adult statuses, *i.e.* moving out of the living parental home, entering the labor market and completing their transition into marriage, cohabitation and parenthood. On the one hand, normative expectations prescribe that children should build their path counting on their own effort, detaching themselves from parental resources. On the other hand, parents feel obliged to support their children in reaching their independence and the adult status (Bengtson *et al.,* 2002; Pillemer and Suitor, 2002; Pillemer *et. al.,* 2007; 2012). Thus, parents may experience ambivalent feelings of solidarity and conflict, when their children infringe the normative unwritten rule expectation of reaching independence in a timely fashion.

From children's perspective, the ambivalence may be produced by simultaneous expectations of independence and solidarity. Young adult children feel the pressure of achieving economic and social autonomy while maintaining solid relations with their parents (Silvertein and Giarrusso, 2010). They are expected to achieve independence by distancing themselves from their parents and focusing on their own family and career projection. Besides, social expectations prescribe the importance of maintaining intergenerational bonds and family obligations. Therefore, during early adulthood ambivalence can emerge in response to opposite impulses between family interdependence and individual autonomy (Pillemer *et al.*, 2012).

The literature suggests that an extended co-residence is often connected to conflict and ambivalent feelings between parents and their adult children, reducing their eagerness to find emotional support in later parent-child relations (Kiecolt *et al.*, 2011; Ward and Spitze, 1992). The consequences of a prolonged period of co-residence for the quality of parent-child relationships are however debated. Parents tend to treat their co-resident adult children as immature near-adults, but they are also likely to present greater affection toward them than toward children who left the parental home earlier (Aquilino, 1997, 1999, 2006; Smits *et al*., 2010; Ward and Spitze, 2007). Kiecolt *et al.* (2011:379) find that co-residence is "unexpectedly related to lower ambivalence on parents' part", suggesting that relations with co-resident adult children are more predictable and less stressful than the ones with adults who moved out of the parental home. A question that is addressed in the following chapters is whether the length of co-residence is also relevant to later parent-child relationships, when adult children will have left the nest.

1.1.4 *Solidarity, Conflict and Ambivalence*

Although the concept of ambivalence was formulated in contrast with the intergenerational solidarity model (Lüscher and Pillemer, 1998), Bengtson *et al.* (2002) suggest that these two approaches can be complementary. The authors re-theorize the model of intergenerational solidarity, including four specifications.

First, intergenerational solidarity is a multidimensional concept through which it is possible to capture the complexity of family relations. It can be measured by using a set of indicators, describing diverse types of family relationships. Given this complexity, solidarity is not a synonym for harmony, and a high level of solidarity is not to be regarded in absolute positive/negative terms. For instance, some people may feel more content by reaching a higher degree of autonomy and a lower degree of connection with the family of origin along a given dimension of solidarity (Bengtson *et al.,* 2002).

Second, a high level of solidarity on one side, *e.g.* functional solidarity, may generate feelings of dependency and a low level of solidarity on another side, *e.g.* affection. For instance, extreme levels of affection may inhibit personal development (Szydlik, 2008), and intensive forms of help may induce negative effects on individuals' well-being. Silverstein *et al.* (1996) suggest that receiving moderate amounts of assistance might have positive effects on the psychological well-being of elderly receivers, whereas it might be harmful in excessive amounts. Therefore, intensive assistance may be seen as *too much of a good thing* from the receiver's perspective, while from the giver's perspective it may be *too much of a burden*, accompanied by strain, resentment and disruption of previous everyday life activities (Van Gaalen and Dykstra, 2006).

The third point regards the importance of including conflict in the intergenerational solidarity model. By considering solidarity and conflict simultaneously, it is possible to understand whether ambivalence emerges from conflicting expectations. Bengtson *et al.* (1996) argued that solidarity/conflict combinations take four different forms of parent-child relationships: high solidarity/low conflict, low solidarity/high conflict, high solidarity/high conflict and low solidarity/absence of conflict. In a similar fashion, Szydlik (2008) suggests that all dimensions of intergenerational solidarity may be bearers of sporadic or consistent conflict. For example, too close parent-child relationships may produce limited personal development; financial transfers may be an expression of power relations; and maintaining frequent contacts may offer the opportunity for nurturing disagreement toward others'

opinion. Therefore, different types of solidarity are differentiated according to degrees of conflict, ranging from *consensual solidarity* to *conflictual solidarity*, whereas the opposite of solidarity is *complete generational autonomy*.

The fourth indication refers to the life course perspective. By using longitudinal analyses scholars can identify processes of negotiation in parent-child relationships and different dynamics of solidarity and conflict. These analyses may trace temporary states of ambivalence and conflict, and processes of adaptation of parent-child relationships to new life course circumstances. Longitudinal analyses should be developed, considering the hierarchical structure of intergenerational family relations (Szydlik, 2008). On an individual level, *opportunity structure* reflects economic and time resources, and *need structure* includes financial, emotional, practical and health problems. On the meso level, *family structure* plays a crucial role for family relations and includes the past history of socialization, the current family composition (factors like the number of siblings) and earlier family events such as a divorce of parents. On a macro level, *cultural-contextual structures* represent a whole set of country-specific institutions and societal conditions within which intergenerational relations are embedded. Therefore, the effects of resources, needs and family configuration on the weight of intergenerational solidarity and conflict depend on cultural and institutional context. For instance, using data from the *Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe* (2004), Igel and Szydlik (2011) found that grandparental resources (*e.g.* time, health conditions), child's needs (employment and the age of the grandchild) and gender roles are integrated in contextual structures that shape the meaning of grandparents' role, affecting the occurrence and intensity of grandchild care support.

1.2 Associational Solidarity: Intergenerational Contact

The frequency of contact between parents and their adult children, as stressed, is an important constituent of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991), as well as a good indicator of the strength of the parent-child relationship (Bucx *et al.*, 2008; Lye *et al.*, 1995). Intergenerational contact has long been a central concept in the literature on family relations and kinship network. One of the most influential and controversial theories on intergenerational contact and family relations has been Talcott Parsons' (1942, 1943) model of the isolation of the nuclear family. According to Parsons, the kinship network loses its economic functions and its significance, and the family becomes a "more specialized agency

than before", confining its functions to procreation and sexual relations (Parsons, 1943). This entails a "decline of the family" and the stabilization of a new type of family structure, *i.e.* the nuclear family (residence), where family members living in separate households remain isolated from one another. Parsons' (1942, 1943) preposition of an isolated nuclear family suggests that an increasing social and geographical mobility of the labor force has detrimental effects on intergenerational co-residence and parent-child interactions.

Following Parsons' theory, industrial societies require an increasing distance between place of birth, residence and work. Since the work is not a product of collective activities of the family, people are more likely to live independently from the rest of the family of origin, developing specific preferences about the opportunity to live on their own. Because of greater geographic mobility, the elderly often end up distant and alienated from their adult children, and older parents rarely see their children (Shanas, 1980). As young adult leave the parental home and establish their own household, family members do not have interests in contacting one another. Leaving the parental home appears as a breaking point of parent-child relationships, which entails a conclusive estrangement from parents. Structural-functionalist arguments predict that, by moving out of the parental home, children pursue their own life and withdraw from parents' care, regardless of their previous relations during the period of co-residence.

The thesis of the isolated nuclear family also assumes that a social status is achieved by association. Industrialized economies lead individuals to desire either a high profile position as a status symbol in itself, or a highly paid position that permits the purchase of status symbols. Parsons argues that the social status of an individual is partially achieved through the association with others with an equal or higher occupation. Upward mobile individuals may see their interaction with parents as a loss of status and prestige. Thus, individuals who attempt to move up the occupational ladder are likely to detach themselves from their parents' lives.

However, in contrast to Parsons' theory, Litwak (1960) has shown that nuclear families maintain their extended family network, even when adult children reach a higher class position. Moreover, a large body of research has shown that parents and their adult children remain in touch throughout their entire life course, even when they are separated by great distances (Hogan and Eggebeen, 1995; Lye, 1996; Rossi and Rossi, 1990; Swartz, 2009). Family members share an interest in maintaining intergenerational contact for purposes of

support, companionship and emotional attachment (Mancini and Blieszner, 1989). Empirical research is usually based on the concept of *modified-extended family*, suggesting that family members maintain contact and emotional ties through modern transportation and communication facilities (Litwak, 1960; 1985). Advanced technologies facilitate different forms of contact, fostering intimate but physically distant relations among family members. Contacts between parents and their adult children may occur through different means, such as telephone, e-mails or various social media.

A question that arises is whether face-to-face contact may be substituted by other forms of contact in contemporary societies. Treas and Gubernskaya (2012) find that face-to-face interaction and other forms of contact exhibit a similar trend over time, suggesting that technological changes occurring from 1986 to 2001 did not lead people to prefer non-in-person contact (*e.g.* mobile calls). Face-to-face contact does not seem to be replaced by other forms of interaction. On the contrary, an increase of the overall amount of parent-child contact may be observed over time. In line with these findings, other researchers focus on face-to-face interaction and phone calls, suggesting that these forms of contact are positively correlated with and affected by similar predictors (Kalmijn, 2006; Lye *et al*., 1995; Rossi and Rossi, 1990; Sarkisian and Gerstel, 2008). For instance, Greenwell and Bengtson (1997) have shown that working-class individuals are more prone to phone as well as visit their parents than middle-class adult children. Equally, Kalmijn (2006) points out that in the Netherlands highly educated individuals have preferences for less frequent contact with parents in terms of both visits and phone calls. In brief, these findings do not support the hypothesis that a less frequent in-person interaction is compensated by more frequent indirect contact, but rather face-to-face and telephone contact appear as two similar indicators of the same concept, *i.e.* associational solidarity.

Given the existing correlation between face-to-face and other forms of contact, empirical research can choose one form of contact as an overall indicator of associational solidarity. Ward *et al.* (2014:570) argue that face-to-face contact continues to be "the most basic and significant form of contact" and that the analysis of the frequency of in-person contact offers a broader understanding of overall contact frequency. The predominant focus of previous research centers on visits, that is the most elementary way in which parents and their children can share experiences. Some scholars underline that parent-child relationships are maintained and consolidated by in-person interaction and shared activities that require time,

effort, attention, and skills of both generations (Dykstra, 1990; Van Gaalen *et al.*, 2010). It should not be surprising, therefore, that face-to-face interaction is found to encourage parent-child intimacy to a broader extent than contact *via* telephone or mail (Connidis and Davies, 1990; Lawton *et al*., 1994). Furthermore, the importance of in-person contact is shown by studies on intergenerational transfers, suggesting that it enables family members to exchange various forms of help and care (Rossi and Rossi, 1990; Ward *et al.,* 2014). Since the empirical approach of this dissertation focuses on intergenerational contact, it seems now relevant to introduce a brief digression on the association between intergenerational contact and other dimensions of family solidarity, such as support exchange and emotional closeness.

1.2.1 *Intergenerational Contact, Support and Affection*

As far as the relation between contact and practical assistance is concerned, it is obvious that the latter type of support is not available without face-to-face encounters between a giver and a receiver. It is less obvious whether frequent in-personal contact can be associated with children's propensity to provide care in a longitudinal perspective. Leopold *et al.* (2014) find that, compared to his/her siblings, the adult child who keeps in touch with their parents more frequently tends to assume the caregiver role at a later stage. During previous interactions, parents and their adult children may develop mutual expectations about assuming a future caregiving role. Family members who maintain frequent intergenerational contact also face lower costs in giving support to one another, and they are usually more aware of their reciprocal needs (Kalmjin and Dykstra, 2006). On account of this, parent-child contact appears as an important factor predicting intergenerational transfers of care in later life (Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997).

The literature points out that adult children who maintain more frequent contact with parents are more likely to provide support to them (Brandt and Deindl, 2013; Leopold and Raab, 2011; Leopold *et al.,* 2014), and they have also a higher probability of receiving financial transfers from parents (Cox and Rank, 1992; Lennartsson *et al.,* 2010). Although the benefits of social contacts are mutual (Silverstein and Bengston, 1997), the "intergenerational stake" hypothesis posits that children and parents have different expectations and understandings of their relationship (Giarrusso *et al.,* 1995; Swartz, 2009). Parents and adult children typically present different perceptions and subjective *criteria* to evaluate family contact and cohesion. In particular, Silverstein and Giarrusso (2010:1041) point out that

"parents are more strongly incentivized to emotionally invest in their children than children are incentivized to emotionally invest in their parents". Thus, the parents' tendency to see their relationship with their adult children as strongly close may constitute a reason in itself for giving financial support in exchange of contact. On account of this, Lennarson *et al.* (2010) find that Swedish parents are motivated to repay contact, because they are more prone to value the time spent together than their children do.

Intergenerational contact can be also viewed as a form of support in itself. Kalmjin and Dykstra (2006:63) argue that face-to-face contact is "a good indirect measure of intergenerational support because it includes many forms of instrumental support that are too idiosyncratic to measure in standard surveys". Lawton *et al.* (1994) have shown that parent-child contact is not only related to practical assistance but also to less apparent forms of support, such as emotional or expressive ones. The link between affective ties and social interaction is theorized by Homans (1950). His model of social exchange posits that individuals who share common experiences tend to develop feelings of closeness and empathy. Simultaneously, these feelings act as symbolic rewards for maintaining frequent interactions and sharing experiences. Affective ties increase the propensity of people to interact, and the familiarity produced by frequent interaction increases affection and positive sentiment among family members. For this reason, the association between affection and contact seems to be explained by familiarity and personal affinity gained through social interactions. Lawton *et al.* (1994:66) find that mother-adult child contacts and feelings of affection operate to reinforce one another through a "process by which familiarity breeds fondness".

Although a positive correlation between the amount of contact and the quality of parent-child relationships has been outlined by former research on the subject, it is also important to underline that there exist circumstances in which this correlation is not necessarily high. If family members share the normative obligation to keep in touch with one another, frequent interaction can occur even when affection is low. Van Gaalen and Dykstra (2006) define the parent-child relationships where "just keeping in touch" is the norm as an obligatory tie, suggesting that parents and their adult children may feel obliged to maintain their interaction. Moreover, frequent parent-child interactions might offer the opportunity not only to share interests and opinions, but also to fight and disagree. This sometimes leads family members to develop ambivalent feelings of closeness and conflict (Szydlik, 2008; Van Gaalen *et al.,*

2010). Furthermore, the frequency of contact can be reduced by time and spatial restrictions, even when the quality of relationships is high (Kalmjin and Dykstra, 2006). This could be the case of migrant workers living abroad, but yet affectively connected with their parents. In these cases, frequent interactions with parents are only partly related to affection, even though in most circumstances the amount of contact is positively associated with the quality of relations.

1.3 Functional Solidarity: Intergenerational Financial Transfers

This section focuses on functional aspects of family solidarity and individual reasons for giving economic support. The literature on the matter focuses on transfer motives, *i.e.* altruism and reciprocity. A non-trivial question might be why scholars are interested in transfer motives. A possible answer is that altruism and reciprocity are central issues in public policy and social inequality (Kolm, 2006). By examining transfer motives, it is possible to understand the role of the family as a resource-redistributing institution that contributes to reducing or fostering social and economic inequality in a society or societal group.

A large body of quantitative research has tested altruism and reciprocity, as predominant motives for producing intergenerational family transfers (*e.g.* McGarry and Schoeni, 1997). However, empirical evidence supports both hypotheses and, in most cases, it is not possible to understand whether adult children are triggered to repay earlier parental investments or whether their action is driven by altruism. For instance, Attias-Donfut and Wolff (2000) suggest that in France intergenerational transfers of money from parents to adult children tend to prevent the risk of downward social mobility. This may be interpreted as an altruistic behavior if the purpose is to improve children's well-being, but it can also be seen as a rational endowment if the parents' aim is to promote better conditions to reciprocate in later life (Kohli and Kunemund, 2003). Thus, empirical research does not provide conclusive evidence in support of altruism and exchange hypotheses. As noticed by Silverstein *et al.* (2002:S11), it is also hard to distinguish between self-interested behaviors and feelings of obligation: "it is also not possible for us to know whether adult children are consciously motivated by an explicit sense of obligation to reciprocate for past transfers or whether parents made strategic investments in their children with the expectation of old-age support". Moreover, Elster (2006) suggests that, given a plurality of motives that may coexist simultaneously, psychological processes of ranking motives are subject to misrepresentations

due to historical and national contexts in which individuals act. For instance, "Tocqueville claimed that the Americans he observed on 1830 imputed even spontaneous altruistic behavior to self-interested motives, thus showing the privileged place of the latter motivation in normative hierarchy", whereas "today that ranking is reversed" (p.186). Since actors are often not conscious of their reasons for giving, the following paragraphs present the debate on transfer motives by focusing on their behavioral consequences, rather than providing a philosophical discussion of what really constitutes the core motivation for people.

1.2.1 *Altruism*

A common definition of altruism has to do with the fact that donors are eager to promote the well-being of others, because the receivers' utility is incorporated in their utility function (Becker 1974; 1991). By assuming that parents are aware of their children's financial conditions[2], they might decide to allocate their resources for their needy children, simply because they feel happy when they see their children happy. In Adam Smith's (1759) words, "how selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it" (Part I, Section I, Chapter I). This suggests that the basic feeling behind altruistic behaviors is empathy, *i.e*. "an other-oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived welfare of another person" (Batson, 1998:417).

However, as suggested by Andreoni (1989), altruistic behaviors can be induced by feelings of satisfaction in giving, rather than by empathy. The author argues that the act of giving can be explained by a *warm glow* or a *joy of giving*, *i.e*. good feelings that donors derive from their act. Andreoni argues that, when the production of such warm glow is the goal and not simply a side effect of the act of giving, the transfer motive is named *impure altruism*. Elster's (2006) brain scan experiments support this hypothesis and show that subjects display an activation of satisfaction-related brain circuits before performing a cooperative and generous act. This could indicate that self-satisfaction is the actual purpose of altruistic acts. Whether this conclusion can be extended to parents' altruistic behaviors is a standing question, which bears important consequences for the redistribution of economic

[2] Whit regard to intergenerational transfers of money, the parent is supposed to be in a dominant economic position. Specifically, Becker (1974) considers the family as dominated by an altruistic distributing *pater familias*.

resources. If an altruistic act is driven by the desire to enhance the welfare of others, as predicted by the "pure altruism" theory, transfer behaviors will be contingent to the receivers' need, and private financial transfers will compensate the lack of public protection system. By contrast, if altruistic behavior is driven by a joy of giving, the donor may persist in giving even when the need is met and/or public transfers have already satisfied the receivers' need (Kunemund and Rein, 1999; Schokkaert, 2006).

An altruistic action can be generated not only by empathy and self-interested motivations but also by a sense of fairness. *Impartial altruism* (Kolm, 2006; Elster, 2006) is stimulated by an internalized sense of justice, *i.e.* what Adam Smith (1759) defined as "having an impartial spectator in one's breast". This may be stimulated by general principles of equality shared by people in most Western societies. The norm of equality is likely to induce parents to distribute their economic resources equally among the offspring, rather than providing more support to less well-off children (Kalmijn, 2013b).

In the context of the family, the altruistic motive is often replaced by affection, an unconditional expression of love (Becker, 1991). Empirical findings show that in the U.S. past history of affection is correlated with a greater likelihood of receiving and giving various forms of support (Parrott and Bengtson, 1999; Rossi and Rossi, 1990). However, the results are mixed, and some scholars underline that intergenerational transfers are contingent to the receiver's needs when parental duty promotes supportive behaviors regardless of child-parent closeness (McGarry and Schoeni, 1995; Swartz, 2009; Ward and Spitze, 2007).

1.2.2 *Exchange and Reciprocity*

In contrast to altruism, intergenerational exchange and reciprocity refer to transfer behaviors driven by the expectation of a future compensation or repayment of the transfers previously received. Both economic exchange and the norm of reciprocity assume that social relationships are governed by the normative expectation that a debt should be repaid (Silverstein *et al.,* 2002; 2006; Gouldner, 1960). The present section delves into theories on economic exchange and reciprocity norms.

In the rational choice theory, individuals exchange their resources in order to maximize their personal rewards and minimize the costs (Becker, 1974). The exchange of social and economic resources is defined as a type of self-interested behavior. Parents' investments in their children aim at obtaining assistance from them in the future and, in turn, adult children

are keen on assisting their parents in view of economic rewards (Silverstein *et al*., 2002). By taking into account the whole history of parent-child relationships, Silverstein *et al.* (2002) distinguish two different mechanisms of inter-temporal exchange, *i.e*. investment strategy and insurance model. In the *investment strategy*, parents' early investments in children are driven to maximize their returns. Repayments occur without any consideration of the receiver's need and can be seen as an earned reward (Frankenberg *et al.*, 2002). For instance, Cong and Silverstein (2011) point out that Chinese elderly parents provide financial support to their migrant sons to facilitate their economic success and for reaping benefits from their investments. Thus, intergenerational transfer of money may aim to maximize the children's socio-economic status, increasing the joint lifetime wealth.

The second mechanism of inter-temporal exchange is the *insurance model* or *support bank model* (Antonucci and Jackson, 1990). Initial investments may be seen as rational alternatives to the purchase of long-term care insurance. Differently from the investment strategy, adult children are expected to repay only when necessary. An original perspective to test inter-temporal exchange is proposed by Kalmjin (2013b). He suggests that Dutch parents are more likely to give support to the child who presents stronger filial responsibility. Since filial responsibility translates in supportive behaviors in times of need, it can be argued that early parental investments are addressed to the purchase of an insurance for the old age. Early parental investments tend to ingrain in children a sense of obligation that brings them to provide support in later life (Silverstein *et al.,* 2002).

Differently from the economic exchange, the universal norm reciprocity derives from the internalized obligation to repay, that is perceived as a symbolic system of equity. Adhering to this system of expectations grants a social status, whereas violating these norms may place individuals in an intolerable position (Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1974; Kolm, 2006). By defining who is in and who is out of the exchange, the reciprocity norm creates and maintains bonds among the members of a group (Coleman 1990; Homans, 1950; 1974). To this extent, the concept of reciprocity was already present in early sociological and anthropological research. Marcel Mauss (1906:34) argues that reciprocity is "one of the human rocks on which societies are built". Equally, Simmel (1950:387) avers that "social equilibrium and cohesion could not exist without the reciprocity of service and return service".

If one infers from this background, the reciprocity norm may operate not only in a bilateral exchange (in parent-child dyads), but also in the whole context of the family, as a resource to socialize young children to the importance of maintaining family obligations. This is the case of so-called *demonstration effects*. Microeconomic exchange theorists usually describe the *demonstration effect* as a self-interested motivation in which a rotten or selfish adult child provides support to his/her parents in order to demonstrate to his/her own children the importance of supporting one another, thus obtaining benefits from them in later life (Cox and Stark, 1992). However, young children are not directly advantaged by previous gifts and may feel obliged to reciprocate only in relation to a generalized sense of reciprocity. As noted by Leopold and Raab (2011:106), parents do not invest in their children, but "buy into a system of temporally generalized reciprocity". Parents instill obligations in their children not only in terms of "any gift should be repaid", but also in terms of a long-term deposit of equity (Antonucci and Jackson, 1990). This entails a normative view that people feel obliged to give something back even after many years. Gouldner (1960) suggests that the recipient feels indebted to the donor until he/she has balanced the relation with a return gift. Silverstein *et al.* (2002) point out that long-term reciprocity is guided by an implicit social contract between generations that ensures the equity of gifts in parent-child relationships and the stability of family groups.

1.4 The Family Life Course Perspective

The life course perspective is one of the most influential approaches in social sciences. It emphasizes that individuals change their roles and positions over time, getting involved in institutions such as marriage and parenthood. In the literature on intergenerational relationships the life course perspective is particularly relevant for two main reasons (Bucx, 2009; Leopold, 2012b). First, the family life course perspective emphasizes the interconnection between individual life course and the life course of the subject's relatives. The concept of *linked lives* indicates that individual life course transitions affect other family members (Elder, 1994). Second, early life course events may have important long-term consequences over later family relationships. Closer and harmonious relationships are likely to be carried over into later relationships, suggesting some extent of continuity in family relations over the life course (Suitor *et al*., 2011).

1.4.1 *The Concept of "Linked Lives"*

Elder (1991)'s concept of *linked lives* emphasizes the interdependence of family members' life courses. The timing and order of social roles in children's generations are interconnected to those of their parents. For example, adult children's transition into romantic partnerships leads their parents to take on new family roles, namely father-in-law and mother-in-law. Children's union formations also bear consequences for the overall family network, expanding its size. The birth of a child represents not only a transition into parenthood, but also a transition into grandparent roles. Thus, the individual's life course is embedded in the context of the family and can shape other members' lives.

Since family relations are intimate, intensive and relatively enduring, life course interconnections appear particularly relevant in examining individual well-being as well as patterns of intergenerational family solidarity. The notion of *linked lives* suggests that the well-being of one generation is intertwined with life course changes of other generations. Parents usually feel responsible and worry about what happens to their children (Pillemer *et al.,* 2010). For example, Kalmjin and De Graaf (2014) have shown that adult children's transition to divorce has detrimental consequences on parental well-being, and this effect is stronger for parents with traditional family norms who perceive divorce as a socially disapproved family event. These findings suggest that parents have some expectations about their children's life course, and they experience feelings of shame and failure when their children violate these expectations.

Life course transitions of one person can also affect intergenerational solidarity, by altering the individual's relationships with parents (Connidis, 2010). This may occur through different mechanisms, namely changing needs and increasing/decreasing parent-child closeness and similarity. With regard to intergenerational family transfers, social roles are linked to a set of resources and needs. For instance, leaving the parental home may expose children to risks of economic vulnerability and poverty (Aassve *et al*., 2006; Kauppinen *et al*., 2014), and parents are likely to protect their young adult children against these economic hardships (Julkunen, 2002). Whereas moving out of the parental home can be regarded as a resource-depleting role, the transition into partnership is likely to detach adult children from parental resources. Adult children who enter romantic unions typically increase their economic resources (in the U.S., Sarkisian and Gerstel, 2008; Waite and Harrison, 1992) and expand their supportive network to their partners' family and friends (Bucx, 2008). For these

reasons, married and cohabiting adults are found to receive less practical help (Rossi and Rossi, 1990) and financial assistance (Lee and Aytac, 1998; Sarkisian and Gerstel, 2008) from their parents than those who are not.

It is particularly interesting for our purposes to focus on the connection between life course transitions of one generation and the frequency of intergenerational contact. Scholarly literature on the theme suggests that the quality of relationships and the amount of contact increase as parents and their children become more similar in their statuses and circumstances (Aquilino, 1997; Merrill, 2011; Pillemer and Suitor, 2002). For example, using longitudinal data, Ward *et al.* (2014) have shown that adult children have more frequent contact with their parents when they transit into parenthood. This may be due to sharing experiences of parenthood and behavioral expectations associated with grandparenting roles, including their involvement in childcare and visiting grandchildren.

Opposed to what is observed for parenthood transitions, the frequency of face-to-face contact tends to decrease when adult children get married (Bucx, 2008; Merrill, 2011; Musick and Bumpass, 2012). This suggests a picture of the marriage as a "greedy institution", *i.e.* an exclusive relationship that weakens other relationships. Sarkisian and Gerstel (2008) argue that the effect of marriage on parent-child relations is explained by a complex interplay between structural factors, *i.e.* time constraints, resources and need of parental support, and cultural factors regarding the idea of marriage as a self-sufficient unit. A recent study supports this view, indicating that in Central and Nordic Europe, where individualistic attitudes are more developed, marriage operates as an exclusive relationship that competes with family relations. By contrast, in Southern European countries marriage tends to strengthen parent-child relationships (Yahirun and Hamplová, 2014). The consequences of marriage for later parent-child relations will be debated in Chapter 2.

Overall, parent-child bonds are renegotiated when family members go through different life changes. Parents and their adult children brings new priorities, goals, and responsibilities into their relationships. Thus, through the lens of the family life course perspective, it is possible to capture adaptation processes of parent-child relationships to new life course circumstances (Monserud, 2008).

1.4.2 *Long-term Consequences of Family History and Events*

The second reason why it is important to include the life course perspective in a research on intergenerational relationships is based on long-term consequences of previous family history and events. Whereas the concept of *linked lives* stresses the role of life course transitions as points of discontinuity, the effects of family history emphasize the continuity in parent-child relations over the life course. Parents and children share a common history that can have long-term effects over later parent-child relationships. The *social learning view* emphasizes that interaction styles that are learned during childhood and adolescence are carried over into later life (Aquilino, 1991b; 1997; Bucx, 2009; Whitbeck *et al.,* 1994). At an early stage of life course, young children are embedded in a family context in which they can observe and learn patterns of family communication, negotiation and conflict. Early experiences are generally more important than later ones in the formation of family attitudes as those relating to the relationship with parents (Goldscheider and Waite, 1987). Stressful childhood environments tend to favor a less positive representation of the self and of interactions with other people, accompanied by less intimate and more distanced relationships with family members (Merz and Gierveld, 2015). Family experiences in childhood and adolescence, as remembered by family members, tend to influence the current quality of relationships and the amount of contact between parents and their adult children (Parrott and Bengtson, 1999; Rossi and Rossi, 1990; Whitbeck *et al.,* 1994). For example, Booth and Amato (1994) find that divorce or separation are particularly harmful for later relations with adult children when it occurs in childhood and adolescence. Although the hypothesis that the negative effects of parents' divorce decline according to the age of the children is debated, the overall long-term consequences of family dissolution on the quality of relationships and the frequency of parent-adult child contact are well established in the literature (Albertini and Garriga, 2010; Cooney, 1994; Kalmijn, 2013; Lennartsson, 2001; Lye, 1995). This provides evidence on how far the family climate tends to persist over the life course.

In addition, Kalmijn (2013c) has shown that these disadvantages of having a divorced father are to a large extent due to shorter co-residence periods and fewer possibilities to invest in the relationship with their children. The author also suggests that, with regard to differences between non-co-resident biological fathers and stepfathers, sharing a residence has greater beneficial effects on later parent-child relations than biology. This sheds light on the power of co-residence length in strengthening parent-child ties over the life course.

As far as intergenerational transfers are concerned, a large body of research points out that previous family history affects the propensity to providing financial assistance as well as practical help and care (*e.g*. Davey and Eggebeen, 1998; Ikkink *et al.,* 1999; Silverstein *et al.,* 2002; 2006). The family network represents a convoy of solidarity, by adapting the family members' supportive capacity to the uncertainty of life course (Antonucci *et al.,* 2014; Bucx *et al.,* 2012; Riley and Riley, 1993). Because of internalized family norms and obligations, parents and adult children are potential providers who feel responsible to providing support when others' needs rise. Family interactions during childhood and adolescence are likely to trigger feelings of family responsibility and obligations that are important bases for future supportive behaviors. Thus, previous history of affection and parent-child interaction is carried over into later supportive behaviors.

Another line of research examines the long-term consequences of non-normative transitions into later family relations. The basic idea is that people perceive age stages for central family transitions as guidelines for the course of family life (Neugarten *et al*., 1965; Settersten and Hagestad, 1996; Neugarten *at al*., 1965; Ward and Spitze, 1992; 1996). The violation of these norms may lead to interpersonal sanctions and penalties. Notably, the idea of time as a regulation of social life is not new in sociology, and already Durkheim (1967) described it as "an endless chart before our minds". Parents usually feel responsible for their children's failures and may experience feelings of shame and disappointment when their adult children do not fulfill normative expectations. However, the hypothesis that off-time transitions may have long-term negative effects on parent-child relations is disputed. Some researchers do not find any negative effect of adult children's failure in achieving an independent status on their relationships with parents (Leopold, 2012a; Settersten *et al.*, 1996; Settersten and Hagestad, 1996), whereas others have shown its detrimental consequences (Pillemer and Suitor, 2002; White, 1998). These mixed results could be due to different perceptions about life transitions. An extended period of intergenerational co-residence may negatively affect later relations only when it is seen as unwarranted dependency (Aquilino, 1991b; Ward and Spitze, 2007). Suitor and Pillemer (2000) point out that mothers report closer relationships with their children who experienced non-normative status transitions, when these events are perceived as involuntary; whereas the opposite effect is found when non-normative transitions are seen as voluntary. In addition, Gilligan *et al.* (2015) argue that norm violations have consequences for parents only when resulting in extreme deviant

behaviors and formal legal sanctions. Starting from this debate, the present dissertation investigates whether too early or late departures from the parental home have negative consequences for later parent-child relations. The following chapters ask whether a violation of the normative age and pathway out of the parental home may bring sanctions in later family relations.

1.5 Home-Leaving and the Transition to Adulthood

This section focuses on previous research concerning home-leaving patterns and the transition to adulthood. The literature suggests that some external markers or life course events define the idea of "adulthood". The transition to adulthood is typically described by five main life course changes: leaving the parental home, finishing school, entering the labor market, having a partner and becoming parents (Furstenberg *et al.*, 2004; Setterston, 2007). Through these life course transitions, individuals become increasingly integrated into social institutions and committed to employment, romantic partners, and children. The timing and order of these events has dramatically changed during the course of the twentieth century. From the period of the 1950s through the 1970s, the sequence of life events becomes increasingly standardized, predictable and regulated by formal institutions and informal norms (Modell, 1976; Billari and Liefbroer, 2010). Young adults generally left the family nest to get married and became parents after few years. Since the early 1980s, this "standard biography" becomes more heterogeneous, with a sensible multiplication of timings and routes out of the parental home. Some authors suggest that the prevalence of individualistic value orientations is one of the most important factors leading people to freely choose their life course trajectories. As a consequence of an increasing secularization and emphasis on self-realization, the "standard biography" has tended to be replaced by a "choice biography" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Inglehart, 1990). This de-standardization of the life course is often linked to the notion of *Second Demographic Transition.* From this perspective, the transition to adulthood becomes less standardized and more complex, as a result of several socioeconomic, cultural, and technological changes in Western societies (Lesthaeghe, 2010; Liefbroer and Dykstra, 2000; Van de Kaa, 1987). Billari and Liefbroer (2010: p.73) found that "a new European pattern of the transition to adulthood is emerging": during early adulthood, life events occur relatively late, cover a longer time-span, and their order is less clear and predictable than ever before.

Differently from demographic theories, Arnett (2000, 2001) argues that the idea of adulthood is not defined by demographic transitions such as leaving the parental home, finishing education or cohabiting with a partner. Rather, the transition to adulthood is characterized by a individualistic perception of themselves as responsible and independent in making life decisions. Three internal markers for adulthood are considered particularly relevant: accepting responsibility for one's self, becoming capable of making independent decisions, and achieving financial independence. These dimensions of psychological maturity are achieved by young adults through various life experiences before taking on adult responsibilities. Some scholars describe the period between the end of adolescence and the beginning of young adulthood (between 18-25 years of age) as a new life course stage named *emerging adulthood* (Arnett, 2000; 2007; Parra *et al*., 2015). This life phase reflects an individual sense of being neither adolescents nor adults, and offers the opportunity for the explorations of romantic relationships, work experiences and various life possibilities (Arnett, 2007). In this life course stage, parental surveillance is diminished, and emerging young adults may reexamine the beliefs learned in their family of origin with their own independent reflections. Through questioning their worldviews, people acquire their own adult identity. From this perspective, emerging adulthood seems to be a period of the life course where social norms are weak and several life course trajectories are possible. Lanz and Tagliabue (2007) argue that, because of the lack of social control and external norms, emerging adults freely choose their own paths to independence. Thus, this psychosocial view suggests a certain degree of de-standardization of the transition to adulthood.

Both demographic and psychological theories are tied to the idea of de-standardization of the life course. To describe this process of de-standardization in Italy and Sweden, I report empirical findings concerning the timing and pathways out of the parental home as crucial features of the transition to adulthood. I do not consider psychological (or internal) markers of adulthood because they are often unobservable from the data. Moreover, as noted by Liefbroer and Toulemon (2010), experiencing demographic events has important consequences for young adults' life course outcomes, such as their socio-economic status and well-being. Thus, external markers of the transition to adulthood appear to be more relevant for individual life chances than their personal feelings of adulthood.

Considering Sweden as a forerunner country of the process of individualization, Billari (2001) observes that nest-leaving decisions are highly standardized by age. More specifically,

among the cohorts born during the first decades of the century, the age at leaving home was on the average 21 for women and 23 for men, and it was rather scattered: about 15 percent of young adults left the family of origin before age 17, and about 25 percent remain at home after age 24 (Statistics Sweden, 1994). The age at leaving home has decreased over time and has become more concentrated in few ages. Those born in the 1940s or later were about 19 and 20 respectively when they moved out of their parental home, and only 5-10% of them left the family nest before age 17 or after age 24 (Dribe and Stanfors, 2002; Neyer *et al.*, 2013: p.108-111; Statistics Sweden, 1994: p.51). These findings do not support the idea about an increasing de-standardization of home-leaving age in Sweden. In Italy, instead, the increasing heterogeneity in nest-leaving age appears to be consistent with the de-standardization hypothesis. The interquartile difference is equal to 8.3 years for men and 5.2 for women born between 1945-50; 9.5 and 7.7 for those born around 1960; and it is equal to 10 and 8 years for young adults born around 1970 (Billari, 2001; Billari and Wilson, 2001; Buzzi *et al*., 2002; 2007).

The de-standardization hypothesis can be also tested by considering the heterogeneity of different pathways out of the parental home. With regard to Swedish home-leaving patterns, declining marriage rates have been accompanied by the increasing diffusion of non-marital cohabitation since the 1960s (Statistics Sweden, 2009). Moreover, the percentage of children enter the labor force immediately upon leaving home has decreased over time (from 59% for cohorts born in 1949 to 50% for those born in 1964), with the concomitant expansion of higher education (Dribe and Stanfors, 2002). In 1990s, more than 40% of Swedes aged 20-22 were in full-time higher education, and about 72% of them received study grants or loans (Cook and Furstenberg, 2002). In Italy, young adults tend to live with parents during their tertiary education. But, leaving the parental home for educational purposes has increased across recent generations (Rusconi, 2006). Furthermore, only 2% of women born in the 1950s leave the parental home for non-marital cohabitation, while this proportion reaches 9% among women born between 1966-70. The diffusion of non-marital cohabitations, as "non-traditional" routes out of the family of origin, is more evident for specific social groups: in medium or big municipalities of North-Centre, 18% of women born between 1965-67 leave the family nest to cohabit with a partner (Mazzuco *et al.*, 2006; Ongaro, 2001; Rosina and Fraboni, 2003). Thus, among certain social groups, there is an increasing de-synchronization between home-leaving and marriage. On the total population, instead, more than 80% of

women born between 1964/70 move out of the parental home directly to get married (Billari and Rosina, 2004). Overall, these findings partly support the idea of the increasing de-standardization and complexity in the pathways of leaving home.

1.5.1 *Determinants of Leaving Home*

During the last decades, a growing body of research has studied the micro and macro determinants of young adults' decisions to move out of the family nest. These determinants are often classified into three main classes. First, structural opportunities and constrains may facilitate or hamper young adults' decision to leave the parental home (Billari and Liefbroer, 2007). As noticed by Aassve *et al.* (2013), the economic recession during the last decade has contribute to increase the diffusion of intergenerational co-residence in Europe. The percentage of co-residing young adults has increased by 5.2 points in Sweden and 1.8 in Italy between 2007 and 2010. At the micro-level, employment and income appear to be more important preconditions to leave the parental home for Southern than for Nordic young Europeans (Aassve *et al*., 2002). In a similar vein, housing market conditions are relevant factors in affecting home-leaving processes, especially in Southern European countries where the availability of mortgages is low and the rental market is restricted (Mulder and Billari, 2010; Mulder and Clark 2000). Moreover, structural opportunities depend on parental resources. Wealthy parents often have preferences for family privacy and tend to favor children's residential independence (Aquilino, 2005; Gierveld *et al*., 1991; Goldscheider *et al*., 2014; White, 1994). Parental homeownership and housing conditions, instead, seem to have the reverse effect. As suggested by the "feathered nest" hypothesis, young adults tend to delay their residential independence when the parental home appears a comfortable place (Avery *et al.* 1992; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999; Mulder & Clark, 2002). Interestingly, the role of parental resources seems to be more important for sons than for daughters (Aassve *et al*., 2002). It is possible that parents are more prone to help their sons than daughters, because they expect that sons occupy the role of resource provider in their future families (Mulder and Blaauboer, 2010).

The second class of determinants of home-leaving focuses on the influence of cultural factors, individual attitudes and value orientations (Billari and Liefbroer, 2007; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1989, 1998). As previously noted, the process of individualization and the diffusion less traditional values may be considered as a driving force behind the declining

relevance of age norms in shaping home-leaving decisions. However, researchers have shown that the importance of age norms continues to play a role in affecting demographic choices, even in countries where the individualization process is more advanced (Liefbroer and Billari, 2010). Interestingly, Aassve *et al.* (2010) found that individual perception of social norms concerning people's exit from the parental home tends to be explained by cultural factors (*e.g.* religiosity) at the regional level, while structural factors (*e.g.* unemployment rate) have a significant impact at the country level. In addition, Billari and Liefbroer (2007) found that societal norms and perceived norms of friends are not significantly associated with home-leaving decisions, whereas a significant influence is found with regard to the perceived norm of parents. These results support the idea that social norms are perceived by young adults mainly through family pressures and parental expectations.

Thirdly, parent-child relationships and family structure may affect the decision to leave the nest. Previous research has shown that children who live in stepfamilies or in single-parent families have a high risk of leaving the parental home at younger ages. This effect seems to be mainly due to the relationships between stepparents and stepchildren and the amount of family resources that are available for children (Blaauboer and Mulder, 2010). Moreover, a familialistic interpretation of the transition to adulthood suggests that affective ties between Italian parents and their children encourage young adults to stay at home for longer. In Italy, parents consider children as their own extensions and do not encourage them to become autonomous (Bonifazi et al., 1999; Mazzuco, 2006; Santarelli and Cottone, 2009). However, few empirical evidence is carried out on this hypothesis. Familialistic settings are often characterized by traditional family orientations and religious beliefs that are associated with high levels of parental authority and supervision. This may exert social pressure on young adults' life course decisions, rather than fostering closer parent-child relationships.

The literature suggests that these determinates of the transition to adulthood may have a different meaning for sons and daughters. For instance, young adult daughters seem to be strongly affected by family structure and their relationships with parents. Women are more likely to value having close family relationships, and they are usually affected more strongly by family tensions than men are (Amato and Booth, 1996; Aquilino, 1991; Rossi and Rossi, 1990). Blaauboer and Mulder (2010) have, indeed, shown that the influence of family atmosphere on the decision to leave the parental home is greater for daughters than for sons. Moreover, sons who live alone with their mothers often miss an important figure for their

development (the father), while daughters tend to form binding relationships with their mothers (Aquilino, 1991). The opposite effect holds true for those living in stepfamilies. Daughters generally experience conflicts with their stepfathers, so that they are more prone to escape from the family nest, than sons do. Furthermore, daughters' behaviors are generally more closely monitored by parents, so that parental expectations and value orientations may play a greater role on their life course decisions (Mitchell, 2004; Rossi and Rossi, 1990). Overall, gender differences in the process of leaving home as well as in the development of family relationships underline the importance of employing separated analyses for sons and daughters.

1.6 Country Differences: Italy and Sweden

Although family relations are likely to be affected by several macro-level factors, such as institutional settings and economic policies, this section focuses only on long-term cultural differences. The historical perspective on family organization is based on the negative association between age at marriage and size of the household (Laslett, 1972). The European geography is, therefore, divided in two systems of family formation, consisting in late marriages and neo-local families in the North, and early marriages and complex families in the South. In Southern European countries, the departure from the parental home occurs at a late age and tends to coincide with marriage and a stable economic position. In some cases people who marry opt to live with their parents as a permanent solution. By contrast, in the central and Northern parts of Europe, children move out of the parental home at an early age when they have a minimum level of economic independence, and only later in their life do they decide to form a family (Laslett, 1972; 1983).

These differences in home-leaving behaviors and union formation are rooted in cultural and historical traits of Mediterranean and Central-Nordic European areas. Reher (1998) avers that the existence of Continental and Nordic organizations of the family and the emphasis on individual autonomy were already observed by Tacitus in pre-Cristian times. Over the course of centuries, in Northern Europe it was common for young adults to leave the family of origin to work as servants in another home. The circulation of servants provides evidence on how young adults achieved independence mainly on their own effort, developing cultural ideas about the importance of individual autonomy and fostering a culture of autonomous nuclear families. In Southern Europe, instead, young adults preferred to stay at home until having an

adequate income and a partner. Reher (1998) presents data from the 1860 census, indicating that the presence of servants on the total population was 10.4% in Sweden and almost negligible in Italy (only 2.2%). These findings are consistent with a large body of literature on Middle Age and fifteenth-century *catasto* data (Da Molin, 1990; Viazzo, 2003; 2006; 2010).

With regard to the strength of intergenerational ties, scholars underline the presence of long-term cultural differences between Northern and Southern Europe (Reher, 1998; Barbagli *et al.*, 2003; Dalla Zuanna, 2001; Micheli, 2000). Reher's (1998:203) country classification is based on the idea that "there are regions where traditionally the family group has had priority over the individual, and others where the individual and individual values have had priority over everything else". In a similar vein, Dalla Zuanna (2001:139) defines strong family ties areas as those in which "most people consider their own utility and family utility as being the same thing". Based on co-residence data, the definition of strong and weak intergenerational ties may imply different outcomes regarding the moment of transition out of the parental home and the way in which the family protects its needy members. As previously noted, Southern and Northern European countries are characterized by different patterns of leaving home. In the former countries, where the family group tends to predominate over the individual, an extended period of intergenerational co-residence is considered as a relevant part of the socialization of offspring. In the latter, instead, leaving the parental home at early ages is seen as an important step in young adults' education (Reher, 1998).

The second outcome is how extended family relations act as welfare institutions, particularly concerning the provision of care to the elderly. Reher (1998) argues that in Mediterranean countries the family is more essential for its vulnerable members than in Northern Europe. Kertzer's (1989) work supports this view, indicating that in 1880 over 70% of Italians aged 64 or more resided in their extended families with at least one of their children. Even today old parents live with children in Italy, Spain and Portugal in a higher proportion than in Northern Europe, where public institutions provide services to needy elderly. Moreover, other strategies to support old parents have been traced in Mediterranean areas, such as the circulation of the old parents among the offspring's households and the geographical proximity between generations. Following from this, Micheli (2012) argues that the difference between strong and weak family systems is based on different insurance models for older ages. In Southern European countries, where young adults typically leave the parental home at a late age, the support received by children through an extended co-residence

will be reciprocated during older age. Because of moral obligations based on "the golden rule of reciprocity", adult children feel obliged to repay the support received early in life. In Continental and Northern Europe, instead, where parents spend less money and time to protect their children, they can save resources for their older age. Although a large body of literature has shown that reciprocity is a universal norm in the family and small groups (Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1950; 1974), Micheli (2012) argues that strong and weak family systems facilitate two different old-age insurance models, *i.e.* one based on reciprocity and another based on private saving. Reher (1998:211) suggests that, in the Middle Ages, reciprocal support between parents and children also occurred in Nordic regions of Europe. However, retirement contracts were there explicitly stipulated "listing in great detail the rights and obligations of children and parents", whereas in Southern countries intergenerational support mechanisms were informal and normatively controlled by others in society.

It seems chiefly relevant to the present dissertation to focus on how different old-age insurance models may affect the link between co-residence duration and later parent-child relationships. It is possible that a prolonged period of intergenerational co-residence has a positive influence over later parent-child relationships in Italy, where adult children feel particularly obliged to reciprocate the help received through an extended co-residence.

Moreover, to understand the evolution of Swedish and Italian family organization, it is important to highlight the influence of the Protestant Reform and Catholic Church. Over the course of centuries, both Protestant and Catholic Churches have influenced family relations, by controlling union formation, inheritance systems and emphasizing the importance of conjugal bonds (Goody, 1983). As Silverstein *et al.* (2012) argue, the imperative to honor one's mother and father can be traced in all religious tractates, from Confucian writings to the well-known fourth commandment in the ancient testament. However, the Protestant Reform emphasizes self-reliance, autonomy and the value of work as a sign of predestination, whereas the Catholic Church reinforces the idea of family loyalty, parental authority and the hierarchical structure of households (Reher, 1998). Catholic Church dominates the Italian religious market (Introvigne and Stark, 2005) and encourages the principle of parental devotion through explicit prescriptions (*e.g.* the fourth Commandment). Catholics are also explicitly obliged to attend the Sunday ritual, where they can interiorize institutional teachings such as parental devotion and pro-family behaviors (Myers, 2004; Mahoney, 2010). In addition, the position of the Church has historically permeated several aspects of family

life, through the control of national mass media, public schools and its influence on Italian governments (Vignoli and Salvini, 2014). In Sweden, instead, the influence of the Church on political and family issues is much less pronounced. This could suggest that children's devotion toward parents is seen as an obligation much more in Catholic cultures than in Protestant ones.

Furthermore, the Catholic Church limited women's role in Italian society to family roles, by fostering the fathers' authority within the household. By implication, in Italy comparatively little change involved women's role before the mid-nineteenth century, and still today gender equity in the family is far from being reached. In contrast, Sweden, where Protestant roots have promoted individual position in society, has gone the furthest in the gender revolution (Bernhardt and Goldscheider, 2006; Goldscheider *et al.*, 2014; Mencarini and Sironi, 2010). Following from this reasoning, women tend to be constrained by family responsibilities and expectations to a larger extent in Mediterranean patriarchal societies than in Nordic ones, where the gender revolution is more advanced (Bernhardt and Goldscheider, 2006). Gender differences in intergenerational relations may be much more marked in Italy than in Sweden.

The dominance and persistence of cultural patterns in family organization can be observed in current trends. Sweden is often described as a forerunner in "new" family behaviors, such as cohabitation, marital disruption and sub-replacement fertility. Only a minority of all Swedish children (45% in 2004) are born to married couples (Statistics Sweden, 2009), parental divorce or separation reaches 25% of families with children up to age 16 (Gähler and Palmtag, 2014), and marital cohabitation is so common as to be the norm among young adults (Bernhardt, 2004). These changes have been theorized as a "Second Demographic Transition" (Lesthaeghe, 1991; Van de Kaa, 1987). By contrast, in Italy "traditional" family forms are prevalent (Castiglioni and Dalla Zuanna, 2009; Billari, 2004; 2008). For example, by the end of the 2000s, less than 20% of children were born outside marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2010). Equally, considering relationships among parents and non-co-resident adult child, a large body of literature has shown that intergenerational co-residence, geographical proximity and frequent face-to-face interaction are much more common in Italian families than in Swedish ones (*e.g.* Albertini and Saraceno, 2007; Hank, 2007; Tomassini *et al.,* 2004). For instance, Hank (2007) finds that about 60% of Italian parents aged 50 years or older live with at least one child, and only 6% have all children who live

further than a 25-km radius from their own residence. In Sweden the proportion of old parents living with at least one child is 17%, and more than 24% of them reside at greater distance than 25km from their offspring. With regard to intergenerational transfers of money, Billari (2004) has shown that in 2001 74% of Italian young adults claimed to be economically dependent on their parents, whereas only 39% of young people affirm the same in Sweden. This dependence on the family of origin can be also observed in larger amounts of financial transfers from parents to non-co-residing children (Albertini *et al*., 2007; Albertini and Kohli, 2013).

1.6.1 Regional Differences

Although Reher (1998) and Laslett (1983) define Continental-Nordic and Mediterranean areas as two homogeneous cultures, it is worth remarking that regional and sub-regional variability is found in Mediterranean countries. A classic example is Flandrin's (1979) notion of the existence of "two Frances", displaying marked and long-standing differences in family organization of Mediterranean and Atlantic regions. In contrast with the Atlantic France where the nuclear family was widespread, Southern regions were characterized by extended and structurally complex families, where different generations as well as siblings' families lived together. In a similar vein, scholars have recognized at least three forms of family organization in Italy from the latter part of the Middle Ages up to the mid-nineteenth century.

First, the Northern and the central part of Italy were characterized by late marriage age and the complex patrilocal family, *i.e*. married couples residing with the husband's parents. Researchers have shown that the persistence of this pattern was linked to the sharecropping system, which favored the formation of large households as work groups in Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna (Kertzer, 1989), Umbria (Silverman, 1968) and Marche. Because of the need to control the producer/consumer ratio within the family, sharecroppers typically had larger and complex families. Moreover, living in the parental home after marriage mostly involved the first male child who was destined to inherit the entire patrimony (Le Play, 1871).

The second type of family organization, mainly characteristic of Southern Italy, refers to simple neolocal families, *i.e*. nuclear families living close to the parental home, and early marriage. People typically moved out at an early age to get married. Differently from what happened in the North of the country, the inheritance was equally distributed among the

offspring who resided on their own, but close to the wife's parents (Barbagli, 1991; Micheli, 2012; Le Play, 1871; Santarelli and Cottone, 2009). The dominance of the nuclear family in the South of Italy was mainly related to an economic organization characterized by large estates and seasonal hired hands (*latifundium*), which did not require large families as productive units. Another interpretation is provided by Banfield (1958), suggesting that the diffusion of nuclear family in Southern Italy was related to the *ethos* of "amoral familism", *i.e*. the loyalty of each individual to their nuclear family members and their inability to act for the public good. On account of this, leaving home to marry was inherent to the Southern-Italian "mentality", prescribing that male relatives had to protect women's honor and virginity, essential features for getting married (Da Molin, 1990). However, some researchers contradict the image of the nuclear family as a dominant organization in the South of Italy. For example, Douglass (1980) finds that families were patrilinear and extended in Molise, indicating that some exceptions were present there, too. The third type, indeed, is represented only by Sardinia, combining neolocal households with late marriage. Similarly to the pattern reported for Northern Europe, in pre-industrial Sardinia young adults left the parental home to work as servants, married late and lived in nuclear families.

Far less distinctions can be traced in Northern Europe. Focusing on Sweden, which constitutes together with Italy the setting of the following empirical analyses, the organization of the family and kinship network is characterized by Germanic roots. The Germanic family was bilateral, *i.e*. comprising descendants from both wives and husbands, and neolocal. Contemporary Swedish language emphasizes bilateral kin, distinguishing "a *farfar*, literally father's father, or parental grandfather from a *morfar*, mother's father, or maternal grandfather" (Kolk, 2014:28). A peculiarity of Sweden is related to its geography: the chances of finding jobs and education are rather concentrated in few large cities, thus increasing outmigration rates in more sparsely populated regions (Malmberg and Pettersson, 2007). Thus, these structural opportunities are linked to greater distances from parents living in remoter areas (Chudnovskayan and Kolk, 2015).

Although the following studies of this dissertation do not focus on regional differences in parent-child relationships, it is important to consider that the meaning of co-residence experiences may vary across regions within the same country. Given a country-level institutional setting, the regional variation in the age at leaving home will be mainly interpreted in terms of cultural differences. Individuals live under the same policy and legal

framework, thus contextual differences in home-leaving behaviors allow to identify the presence of social acceptance imposed in certain surroundings. On the meso-level, social disapproval of young adults' decisions may be exerted by the family of origin, the neighborhood and the group of peers, which constitute the "relevant others". The following chapters attempt to identify socially accepted behaviors in leaving home patterns in order to understand the consequences of a violation of a meso-level norm.

Chapter 2

Study I

Home-Leaving Transition and Later Parent-Child Relationships: Proximity and Contact in Italy

An earlier version of this chapter has been presented at ECSR Spring School on Family Complexity and its Implications for Inequality (10/3/2014, Turin), ESPAnet Conference "Beyond the Crisis in Europe" (16/9/2014, Oslo) and "SUDA Demographic Colloquium" (23/10/2014, Stockholm).

2.1 Introduction

A large body of literature suggests that for any individual, leaving home is the first important step toward autonomy, self-reliance and adult status (*e.g.* Modell *et al.*, 1976; Ongaro, 2001). Over the life course, children evolve from a status of dependence on parents to a more independent position, adapting their relationship with their parents to new circumstances (Aquilino, 1997; Bucx *et al.*, 2008). Previous research points out that parents and adult children remain close and linked to one another even after the children move out of the parental home (Litwak, 1960). However, less attention has been devoted to the consequences of leaving-home transition for later parent-child relationships.

An exception is to be found in Leopold (2012b). Overviewing the whole European context, the author found that the time young adults spend in parental home tends to promote intergenerational solidarity in later life. The present study aims to contribute to this literature, by including different reasons for moving out of the parental home. Here I am able to trace different pathways to independence that may be associated with different degrees of individualism and familial attitudes (Gierveld *et al*., 1991). Some scholars have emphasized that the number of possible routes out of the parental home has increased across generations (Goldscheider *et al*. 2014; White 1994). The theory of the *Second Demographic Transition* states that changes in patterns of adulthood transition and family formation are accompanied by changes in ethical values with a progressive importance of individual autonomy and a less significant identification in traditional family life (van de Kaa, 1987; Lesthaeghe, 1995). In the Italian pattern of adulthood transition, marriage may be considered the normative way to achieve residential autonomy. Other occurrences – such as cohabitation, pursuit of higher education or career, and desire for independence – are becoming widespread among highly educated young adults in Northern regions (Barbagli *et al*., 2003), and may favor high levels of individualization and a weaker involvement of children in their parents' life.

Moreover, this study addresses this phenomenon in a culture of strong family ties such as Italy, where cultural expectations about leaving-home transition are supposed to be intimately linked to later intergenerational relationships. Billari *et al.* (2002) classify the typical pattern of transition to adulthood in Italy and Spain as "latest-late", indicating a general postponement in the transition to residential independence, partnership and parenthood. In Southern Europe, young adults generally leave their home at a late age, when they get married (Billari *et al.*, 2001; Billari and Kohler, 2004; Ongaro, 2001; Rosina and

Fraboni, 2004); after moving out, they usually reside close to their parents, and maintain frequent contact with them (Glaser and Tomassini, 2000; Tomassini *et al.*, 2004; Kalmijn and Saraceno, 2008; Hank, 2007). In this context, where family group prevails over individual autonomy, cultural expectations on family ties may regulate the leaving-home transition as well as later intergenerational relations (Reher, 1998). Following from this, a violation of normative expectations about home-leaving may have greater consequences for parent-child relations in Italy than in other societies where social policies and cultural norms foster individual autonomy.

Furthermore, Italy is characterized by huge regional differences in home-leaving patterns and family relationships. Some scholars underline the importance of the regional level − e.g. cultural differences, housing and educational policies − in shaping adulthood transition (Billari *et al*, 2008). In Northern Italy, young adults stay at home for a long time and are more likely to experience non-traditional residential forms, such as cohabitation or shared apartments. In the South young people tend to abandon the nest earlier than in the North. They are also more likely to leave the parental home to marry, reside close to their parents, and maintain frequent interaction with them (Billari and Ongaro 1999, Rosina and Fraboni 2004, Di Giulio and Rosina 2007; Santarelli and Cottone, 2009). Italy is, therefore, an interesting case to understand whether regional-level cultural norms play a role in affecting home-leaving behaviors and later parent-child relations.

Based on pooled data from two waves (2003 and 2009) of the *Family and Social Subject Survey*, the present study explores the association between the timing and reasons for leaving parental home and later parent-child relations in Italy. I focus on residential proximity and parent-child contact because they constitute two crucial dimensions of intergenerational family solidarity and reflect the basis for intergenerational transfers of help and care (Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997). In particular, the aim of this research is to answer two questions: does an association between intergenerational co-residence and later level of proximity and contact exist? Can the differences in parent-child proximity and contacts be explained by the children's different motivations to move out?

2.2 Background and Hypotheses

2.2.1 *Co-residence Length*

The literature points out that an extended period of co-residence may be associated with a deeper involvement of children in their parents' lives. The time spent in the parental home offers the opportunity for family members to share activities, interests and attitudes (Aquilino, 1997; Aquilino and Supple, 1991). This process of sharing may increase the emotional attachment between generations, which may have a positive influence on their relationships in later life. In addition, a long permanence in parental home facilitates children's integration in the collective life of the family, where family norms and attitudes are promoted. Previous research has shown that early home leavers are likely to develop attitudes about the importance of individual autonomy, whereas adult children who move out of the parental home at a late age tend to be characterized by "pro-family attitudes" (Goldscheider and Lawton, 1998; Rosina *et al.,* 2003). As suggested by Billari *et al.* (2001), with respect to Southern European family culture, an extended co-residence allows parents to transmit care-oriented values and norms. This process of socialization is likely to vary according to different societies and societal groups in which families are embedded. In a given social group and historical time, the longer the time spent in parents' home, the higher the propensity to develop attitudes about maintaining close intergenerational bonds later in life. Hence, it can be hypothesized that *in each social group, the longer the time adult children spend in their parents' home, the higher their propensity in later life to reside near their parents and maintain frequent interaction with them* (*Hypothesis 1*).

A possible mechanism behind the association between the age at leaving home and later parent-child relationships is related to family climate during childhood/adolescence. The quality of family relations may affect whether a child will be an early or late home leaver (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1989; 1998; 1999; Goldscheider *et al.,* 2014), and these experiences can be carried over into later relationships. However, previous research found mixed results regarding the effect of positive family relationships on the age at which young adults leave their parental home (Bucx and Van Wel, 2008; Goldscheider *et al*., 2014; Ward and Spitze, 2007). Whereas early home leavers may be selected by a hostile family climate, an extended period of co-residence does not seem to be due to a positive family environment. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the influence exerted by the duration of co-residence on later parent-child relationships is not completely reduced to a mere selection effect.

According to the literature on age norms (Settersten, 1998), deviations from the normative timing in the passage to adulthood may have adverse effects on later life. Social policies along with cultural expectations contribute to the institutionalization of the life course, establishing a predictable timetable of roles and transitions for an individual (Aassve *et al.*, 2010; Breen and Buchmann, 2002; Mayer, 2001). A violation of this timetable can weaken the relation between the individual and the socio-institutional context (Ward & Spitze, 1992). Social norms may prescribe that young adults should not move out before the socially accepted time, and leaving earlier can be seen as a signal of detachment from family expectations. In turn, an extended co-residence may indicate difficulties in completing adulthood transition and an excessive dependency from parents' resources. As argued by Pillemer and Suitor (2002), when children do not fulfill expectations for normal adult development, parents express doubt regarding their children's ability to live independently and to form their own family. The literature supports this view, suggesting that an extended co-residence is often related to conflict and ambivalent feelings between parents and their children (Aquilino 1997; 2006; Pillemer and Suitor, 2002; Ward and Spitze, 1992; 1996; 2007). On account of this, social norms set an "age deadline" prescribing the upper end limit to leave one's parental home (Aassve *et al*., 2010; Billari and Liefbroer, 2007; Settersten, 1998; Settersten and Hagestad, 1996). Early and late departures that violate cultural expectations around the normative time to leave home may be related to a lower propensity to reside close, and maintain frequent interactions with parents. Adult children who leave the nest "on time" have the highest likelihood of maintaining close relationships with their parents. Thus, I would expect to observe *a parabolic association between co-residence duration and later levels of residential proximity and contact with parents, with lower levels of proximity among early and late leavers* (*Hypothesis 2*). It is also important to note that hypotheses 1 and 2 are mutually exclusive.

The normative age depends on the local socio-historical and cultural context of any given family. With respect to leaving home transition, young adults can perceive themselves as being "on time", only by comparing their behavior to those of their peers (Billari and Liefbroer, 2007). The basic idea is that social norms about the appropriate timing of leaving home are shared and defined within specific social groups. As to geographical differences, in the South of Italy there is a tradition of early home leavers compared to North and Central regions. Prior research highlighted that in Italy the age for leaving home increases among

those born after 1955, and that women tend to move out earlier than men (Billari, 2004). According to these findings, I consider sex, cohorts of birth and Italian macro-regions as fundamental dimensions in defining social groups across which the appropriate time to leave home can vary.

2.2.2 *Reasons for Leaving the Parental Home*

The literature on adulthood transition distinguishes four main reasons for leaving the parental home: marriage, cohabitation, pursuing higher education or career, and desire for independence.

Historically, marriage was defined as the normative occasion to leave the parental family (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1989) and the primary mechanism through which intergenerational ties strengthened (Levi Strauss, 1969). During the twentieth century the meaning of marriage has changed in most Western countries. Some scholars have shown that modern marriage is an expression of self-realization and functions as a "greedy institution" – an exclusive relationship that weakens parent-child relations (Coser and Coser, 1974). Sarkisian and Gerstel (2008) found that in the U.S. the negative effect of marriage on parent-child relations is partly explained by different time constrains, degrees of economic independence and demographic factors. The unexplained part of this gap is interpreted as a cultural phenomenon: in the U.S. married couples are supposed to be able to satisfy their practical and emotional needs, by relying only on themselves. In a similar vein, by using longitudinal data, Ward *et al.* (2013) found that in the U.S. children's entry into marriage deflects their involvement in intergenerational relationships. In line with these findings, researchers have shown that even in European societies married individuals tend to have less frequent social interactions with their parents than those who are single ([in the Netherland] Bucx *et al.*, 2012; [in a number of European countries] Yahirun and Hamplová, 2014).

Although the negative association between marriage and parent-child contacts has been found in many Western societies, there are indications about the reverse effect in Southern European countries. A recent research suggests that in Southern Europe marriage continues to operate as an institution that strengthens family ties between generations (Yahirun and Hamplová, 2014). Italy is often characterized by a strong traditional values and a relative immobility in the diffusion of non-traditional behaviors, such as cohabitation. For instance, Ongaro (2001) has shown that about 80% of Italian women born in the 1960s move out of the

parental home to marry. Other researchers point out that the large majority of young people aged 18-24 declare the importance of marriage for their romantic relationships (Buzzi *et al*., 2002; Rosina and Fraboni, 2004). In the sample used for this study, only 14% of Italian adult children claim that marriage is an outdated institution (the question is available only in the first wave, 2003). In a similar vein, Surkyn and Lesthaeghe (2002) found that Italians present the highest level of consent toward marriage in Western countries. Moreover, social pressures to marry tend to act through the channel of the family of origin, and Italian parents are particularly likely to discourage their children from behaviors that are socially uncommon or not accepted (Vignoli and Salvini, 2014). They tend to adopt social and material sanctions when their children do not conform to their expectations about union formation (Di Giulio and Rosina 2007; Rosina and Fraboni, 2004). Thus, it is possible that children who take life course choices which are clashing with the traditional pattern to independence experience conflicts with parents in later life. In a familialistic setting, abandoning the nest in order to marry may fulfill normative expectations and is supposedly related to strong later intergenerational ties. Marriage can be seen as the normative occasion to leave the family of origin. Other circumstances of moving out of the parental home may be perceived as a rejection of the socially accepted pattern. Thus, it can be hypothesized that *adult children who left the family of origin to get married may be more likely to reside close and maintain frequent interaction with parents than those who left the parental home for other reasons (Hypothesis 3)*.

Moreover, unobserved features can characterize young adults who move out of the parental home to marry. For example, Corijn (1999) argues that leaving-home transition is influenced by religious values, in Italy, Spain, and Poland where Catholics are the majority of the population. Religious individuals are found to postpone the moment of moving out to get married, and are often characterized by high levels of familialism and a low degree of individualistic attitudes (Van de Kaa, 1987).

The second pathway out of the parental home is non-marital cohabitation. Cohabitation, a less traditional reason for leaving-home, may be linked to individualistic attitudes and a less significant involvement in traditional family life. Empirical research point out that cohabiting adult children are usually less prone to maintain frequent contact with their parents than those who are married ([in the U.S.] Eggebeen, 2005; [in the Netherland] Hogerbrugge and Dykstra, 2009). However, scholars point out that in Italy non-traditional unions occur mostly

when supported by parental acceptance (Barbagli *et al.,* 2003; Di Giulio and Rosina, 2007; Rosina and Fraboni, 2004). Leaving the parental home to cohabit with a partner is usually backed by parental consent, and does not appear as a violation of family expectations. In line with this, Nazio and Saraceno (2012) found that, in Italy, cohabiting has only limited negative effects over parent-child contacts. Thus, cohabitation may be seen as a non-transgressive behavior that does not generate intergenerational strains, nor is related to weaker family ties.

Attending advanced education courses and pursuing paid employment are linked to the greater geographical mobility necessary to follow life opportunities in specific geographical areas. Researchers point out that in several countries the highly educated tend to move farther away to take advantage of geographically-delimited opportunities and thus have less frequent intergenerational contacts than their less educated counterparts (in the U.S., Greenwell and Bengtson, 1997; in the Netherlands, Kalmijn, 2006). In Italy, empirical evidence comes from studies on internal migrations that show a pattern of geographical mobility within highly educated groups, whereas in the 1950s the migration fluxes involved less educated individuals for longer-distance moves (Bonifazi and Heins, 2000). Pursuing a higher education or a career may primarily affect the geographical distance between parents and children; also, as the result of individualistic attitudes, it may be related with scarce intergenerational contacts.

Those who leave their parental home early, because of their desire for autonomy and independence, may be driven by individualistic attitudes (Gierveld *et al*., 1991) that may be also connected to less involvement in their parents' life. It can be conjectured that, in a culture of strong family ties where social expectations prescribe the prevalence of the family, assigning priority to individual autonomy over the group may generate intergenerational tension.

The motivations to leave the parental home appear to be somewhat related to later parent-child relationships, and are also associated with different timings of leaving home. It is well known that in Italy the prolonged stay of children in their parental home generally corresponds to marriage (Barbagli *et al.*, 2003). Attending higher education courses, instead, may induce young adults to leave the parental home at an early age. Early and late home leavers are likely to follow different pathways in education, employment and union formation, which in turn may affect their chances and preferences for high levels of proximity and contact with parents. Thus, it can be hypothesized that *the association between co-residence*

duration and later levels of proximity and contact may be partially mediated by different reasons for leaving home (*Hypothesis 4*).

2.1.3 *Gender Differences*

The literature suggests that intergenerational co-residence may have greater consequences for daughters than for sons. Women tend to invest more in family relationships, assuming family responsibilities and providing informal services when necessary. Co-resident daughters are usually more involved in parents' life (Aquilino and Supple, 1991) and may be more prone to develop attitudes about the importance of family bonds during the period of intergenerational co-residence. In turn, parents tend to control and attach greater importance to adult daughters, and the violation of social norms on their part may imply greater losses (Ward and Spitze, 1992). Social norms pertaining leaving-home transition may be gender-specific and, in particular, more binding for daughters than for sons. Women may feel a stronger obligation than men to leave the nest "on time" by adhering to cultural and parental expectations. Moreover, marriage may be interpreted as the sign that a person is ready to commit and take family responsibilities (Rosina and Fabbroni, 2004). Thus, in a familialistic setting, social expectations on adult daughters' behaviors may prescribe this traditional pathway to independence.

Although I did not formulate any specific hypotheses on gender differences, it is important to examine parent-son and parent-daughter relationships separately. Prior research underlines gender differences in the decisions of young adults to leave home (Chiuri and Del Boca, 2010) as well as in their relationships with parents (Silverstein and Bengtson 1997). Thus, following analyses explore the association between leaving-home transition and later parent-son and parent-daughter relationships separately.

2.2 Data and Method

The empirical analysis is based on the last two waves of the *Family and Social Subject Survey* (the *Italian component of Generations and Gender Survey*) that took place in 2003 and 2009. This is a five-year module of the annual survey *Indagine Multiscopo* (Multipurpose survey), conducted by the Italian National Statistical Office (ISTAT). The survey offers a representative sample of the Italian population (the response rate is 85%) and involves more than 19,000 families (about 50,000 individuals) in 2003, and 18,000 families (about 44,000

individuals) in 2009. Both waves contain a retrospective section focusing on the transition out of the parental family, as well as union formation and trajectories of family life course. The survey also gathered detailed information about parental characteristics and intergenerational relations, including proximity and contact frequency.

Because about 70% of individuals aged 18-29 live with their parents, those who have left the parental home before the age of 30 are a specific and selected group. Thus, in order to avoid sample selection bias, the sample was confined to children aged 30-64[3]. Since the purpose of the present study is to examine parent-child relationships, the sample was restricted to children who had at least one parent alive at the time of the survey. Moreover, in order to reduce the possible selection bias due to problematic family relations during childhood and adolescence, I decided to exclude individuals who left their parental home before age 16 from the analysis. Thus, I define the transition to residential independence starting at age 16 and censored at age 50, excluding individuals who have left the parental home before or after this time interval. The final sample contains 12,708 adult sons and 14,432 adult daughters.

2.2.1 *Dependent Variables*

The two dependent variables refer to residential proximity and face-to-face contact between adult children and their parents. Proximity[4] was measured on a scale from 1 to 7: living abroad; other city >50 km; other city 16-50 km; other city <16 km; same city >1km; same city <1km; different apartment, same building. Since about 5% of individuals lived abroad, the answer categories "living in another city >50 km" and "abroad" were collapsed into one. When considering residential proximity as a dependent variable the unit of analysis is the parent-child dyad if the parents do not live together (thus, for example, two cases are generated by one child having two divorced parents who live in different households, n=161

[3] Because the results may depend on children's age, separate models have been estimated for different age groups (30-38; 39-46; 47-64). Similar results to those presented in the text are found for each age group. It is also possible that the age at nest-leaving is associated with living farther from the parental home because it allows more/less time for additional spatial moves (Rogerson *et al.,* 1993). However, similar results are found by including the variable "period of time after having left the parental home" (five categories: 1-7, 8-14, 15-21, 22-27, 28-45 years) in the analysis (see Appendix).

[4] Additional analyses were carried out by using geographical distance measured in travel time necessary for the child to reach the parental home. The main findings remain largely consistent with those presented in the text. But more than 1,000 respondents had missing values on this variable.

sons and n=242 daughters). If, on the opposite, the parents live in the same household I consider the child as the unit of analysis.

Frequency of face-to-face contacts is measured on a six-point scale, where 1 equals: "never" and 6 equals: "daily". The original answer categories were collapsed into five (daily; several times a week; weekly; 2 or 3 a month; monthly or fewer) because only 2% of adult children never visit their parents. As previously mentioned, Italians maintain frequent intergenerational interactions (Table 2.1): about 63% visit their parents more than once a week and 37% have daily face-to-face contacts. Since information about contacts with mothers and fathers were collected separately, the original sample included two dyads for each individual, when both parents were alive, and one dyad in case of widowed parents. Although adult children tend to visit their mothers and fathers together, adopting the dyad as unit of analysis allows considering the differences between father-child and mother-child relations. For example, prior research has shown that adult children are more likely to maintain frequent contact and intimate relationships with their mothers than their fathers (Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997). Notably, regression analyses take into account that parent-child dyads within the same family are not independent observations, by including clustered standard errors.

2.2.2 *Independent Variables*

The main independent variable refers to the difference between the actual age and the normative age for leaving the parental home. As noted, social norms are defined within specific social groups, and young adults can perceive these age norms, by comparing their behavior to those of their peers (Billari and Liefbroer 2007; Billari 2004). Thus, the studied sample was divided in 42 groups according to birth cohorts (1939-1948, 1949-1953, 1954-1958, 1959-1963, 1964-1968, 1969-1973, 1974-1979), sex, and three macro-regions (North, Centrum, South). Age norm is defined as the median of all reported ages for leaving the parental home in each group, and ranges from 22 years, among women born in the 50s living in the South, to 27 years among youngest men residing in the Centrum of the country[5]. In order to take into account censored observation in nest-leaving age, survival methods are adopted when computing the normative age at leaving home (Keplan-Meier estimates in

[5] About 90% of the total distribution of DGM is included between values -8 and 8. By excluding values exceeding this interval, the findings remain consistent with those presented in the text.

Appendix). Table 2.1 shows survival estimates on the age at leaving home. Moreover, the interquartile difference within each social group can be used as an indication of the strength of the norm in a given context (Billari and Wilson, 2001).

TABLE 2.1 Median and inter-quintile difference of survival time according to different groups. Estimates computed on the entire sample.

	Men			Women		
	Median age	N	Inter-quintile difference	Median age	N	Inter-quintile difference
North						
1939/48	25	1705	6	23	1828	5
1949/53	25	1214	6	22	1252	5
1954/58	25	1249	7	22	1399	5
1959/63	26	1359	9	23	1501	8
1964/68	27	1538	10	25	1515	8
1969/73	28	1394	10	26	1445	8
1974/79	28	645	10	26	637	8
Centre						
1939/48	25	706	7	23	870	4
1949/53	25	556	8	23	548	5
1954/58	26	551	8	23	592	6
1959/63	27	580	9	23	619	6
1964/68	28	620	10	25	632	8
1969/73	29	584	12	26	588	8
1974/79	30	282	11	27	297	10
South						
1939/48	25	1494	6	22	1539	6
1949/53	25	1153	7	22	1201	6
1954/58	26	1244	8	22	1331	7
1959/63	26	1394	8	23	1448	7
1964/68	27	1386	10	24	1512	8
1969/73	29	1304	11	26	1385	9
1974/79	30	684	11	27	680	11
Total	26	21,642	8	23	22,819	7

The variable "Difference from the Group Median age" (DGM) includes values from -14 to 16, where 0 represents the norm (young adults who leave parental home "on time")[6]. If moving out at ages that are normatively "too early" or "too late" might bring a penalty, I would expect to observe a non-linear relation between DGM and later parent-child relations

[6] Alternatively the "right" time to leave home can be considered as that given by the interviewees answering the question: "in your opinion, which is the right age to leave the parental home?". Given that social norms are, by definition, shared by specific groups, the median of individuals' perception of the "right" age is computed within the 42 groups mentioned in the text. The correlation between the DGM and the "right" time directly expressed by the interviewees is 0.95, and the main results remain the same. Since the answer to this direct question can be biased by post-hoc rationalizations, the median age within a specific group was adopted as the normative age.

(Hypothesis 2). Thus, a quadratic measure of the variable DGM was included in the multivariate analyses. If early and late home leavers violate social expectations about the "right" time for leaving their parental home, the effect on their subsequent parent-child proximity and contacts with parents should present a concavity point corresponding to young adults who left their parents' house "on time". To treat differently the experiences of early (negative values) and late home leavers (positive values), the range of the variable DGM was rescaled, by adding the absolute value of the minimum value of the total distribution (14). In the statistical models I used the variable DGM′ ranging from 0 to 30, whereas in the graphical representations I used the corresponding values of DGM for ease of understanding.

In a further step, I include different motivations for moving out of the parental home in the analysis. These reasons were measured through the question "What was the main reason to start living on your own?". Table 2.1 shows that among males, 59% left their parental home in coincidence with marriage, 5% with cohabitation, 20% in pursuit of career or education opportunities, and 14% left the nest driven by their desire for autonomy. Adult females, instead, are more likely to move out because of marriage (75%) or cohabitation (7%), and are less likely to leave their family to pursue higher education (10%) or for their desire for independence (7%). This shows how marriage is the most widespread reason for leaving the parental home, especially for adult females. Interestingly, about 50% of Italians born between 1968 and 1980 left their parental home to marry, while this proportion reaches 70% among those born before 1959. This is mainly due to an increase of cohabitations (from 2% to 13%) and the desire of independence (from 8% to 15%) as main reasons to leave the nest (results not shown).

TABLE 2.2 Characteristics of the sample

	Men %	Women %		Men %	Women %
Dependent variables:			*Children's characteristics:*		
Residential proximity			Education degree		
Same building	13.4	10.0	Low	45.8	43.1
Within 1 km	25.1	23.9	Medium	42.1	43.0
Same city	23.9	23.4	High	12.1	13.9
Other city<16 km	13.3	15.2	Employment status		
Other city 16-50 km	7.7	10.2	Employed	88.8	55.3
Other city>50 km	16.6	17.3	Unemployed	4.3	5.7
Frequency of visits			Not in LM	6.9	39.0
Daily	35.6	38.8	Region		
Several times a week	27.8	27.2	North	43.6	43.1
Weekly	12.0	10.4	Centre	17.9	17.9
2 or 3 a month	10.5	9.4	South	38.4	39.0
Fewer than monthly	14.0	14.2	Marital Status		
Children's characteristics:			Never married	11.4	8.3
DGM′ (median)	14	14	Married	81.2	79.7
Reasons for leaving home			Divorced	7.4	12.0
Marriage	60.7	76.1	Child <7	6.2	6.0
Cohabitation	5.9	7.2	*Parents' characteristics:*		
Education/job	18.7	9.8	Sex (Father)	40.4	40.7
Independence	14.6	6.8	Marital Status		
Time since leaving			Living together	73.4	73.7
1-7	18.4	13.9	Widowed	22.9	22.0
8-14	25.2	23.9	Divorced or separated	3.6	4.3
15-24	35.0	35.9	Poor health	8.9	9.3
25-46	21.5	26.3	Education degree		
Age (median)	44	44	Low	86.5	85.5
N. of siblings (median)	2	2	Medium	10.9	11.8
Owner dwelling	68.1	70.4	High	2.6	2.7
N. of individuals	12,708	14,432	N. of individuals	12,708	14,432
N. of dyads	19,755	22,555	N. of dyads	19,755	22,555

Note: DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from 0 to 30.

Selected parents' and children's characteristics are used in the following analysis as control variables. Children's characteristics include age, residential region, education degree (12% of sons and 13% of daughters had tertiary education), employment status (87% of sons and 54% of daughters were employed), housing tenure (owner dwelling), marital status (about 80% of children were married), own parenthood and number of siblings. For instance, scholars recognized that highly educated children usually have a preference for a low level of proximity and contact (Kalmijn 2006; Hank, 2007). Employed individuals with their own

family have generally less time to visit their parents (Yahirun and Hamplová 2014). The timing of leaving the family nest may affect the chance of getting high education and individual attachment to the labor market (Billari and Tabellini, 2008). Thus, these children's characteristics may mediate the association between nest-leaving age and later parent-child relations. Parent's characteristics comprise sex (40% were fathers), marital status (about 70% were married parents), and limitations in everyday activities (poor health) (see Table 2.1). The dummy variable "poor health" refers to parents who have been severely limited in their activities for at least the past six months. On account of this, health status is likely to increase parental needs for support, affecting the frequency of intergenerational visits and children residential decisions (*e.g.* Silverstein, 1995; Hank, 2007). Furthermore, an important control variable is "the time since leaving", *i.e.* the difference between children's age at the time of the interview and the age at leaving home. Rogerson *et al.* (1993) suggest that the residential distance between parents and their adult children increases according to the number of spatial moves. Thus, the nest-leaving age may be associated with living farther away, because early home leavers have additional time to make multiple moves, compared to those who left home later (Bordone, 2009; Michielin and Mulder, 2007).

2.2.3 *Analytical Strategy*

The analytical strategy consists in adopting ordered logistic regression models[7] on living distance and the frequency of contact. The analyses are employed separately for sons and daughters in order to take into account different gender behaviors in the leaving-home transition as well as in intergenerational relations. As noted, women tend to assume the responsibility of providing support and maintaining family interactions; thus, parents may have stronger expectations on their nest-leaving decisions than on sons' behaviors.

Concerning residential proximity, children's characteristics and parents' marital status are included as control variables. The analysis on face-to-face contacts, instead, is carried out on parent-child dyads, and thus control variables comprise both children's and parents' characteristics (see Table 2.1). Notably, among these control variables parental dissolution represents an important indicator of family climate. Research has shown that adult children

[7] A sensitivity analysis was conducted to make sure that the results were not influenced by the choice of statistical models. Multinomial logistic regression models yield similar results to those presented here. I chose to present ordered logistic regression models because they are more parsimonious and easy to interpret (see Appendix).

who have experienced parental separation leave their parental home at a significantly younger age (Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1989; 1998; 1999; Mencarini *et al*., 2012) and maintain less frequent family interactions in later life (*e.g.* Albertini and Garriga, 2011). Thus, by including marital disruption in the analysis, the coefficient of co-residence duration decreases, but early and late home leavers continue to present significant difference in their propensity to reside near their parents, and maintain frequent interaction with parents.

After a brief discussion of the descriptive results, multivariate analyses follow two steps. First, I include DGM′ and control variables in the model. To facilitate the interpretation of the results, predicted probabilities are plotted in graphs by computing the average of the predictions. The average of the predictions is obtained by calculating the average of the probability among actual persons in the data (for a technical discussion, see Bartus 2005). To test Hypotheses 3 and 4, the next step consists in adding the reasons for leaving home in the analysis.

2.3 Results

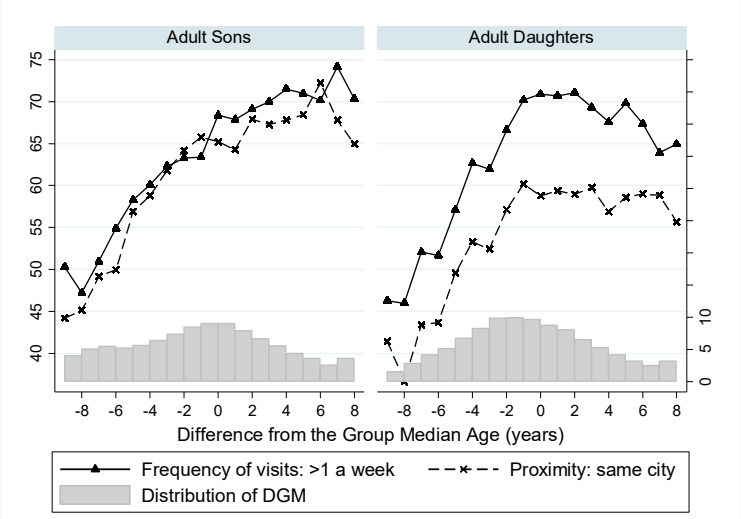
2.3.1 *Descriptive Results*

Graph 2.1 presents descriptive results on parent-child proximity and contacts according to the DGM′. I considered values of DGM ranging between -8 (811 sons and 386 daughters) and 8 (300 sons and 362 daughters), covering about 90% of the total distribution (see the total distribution of DGM in the Appendix). In the graphs, the DGM′ values have been converted in years: value 0 refers to the group median age at leaving home. In Graph 2.1 the percentage of children living in the same city refer to those who reside in the "same building", in the "same city <1km" or in the "same city >1km". Among adult sons of the same social group, the duration of co-residence is positively associated with parent-child proximity and daily face-to-face contacts. About 50% of adult sons who have left their parental home 6 or 8 years before the group median age, reside near to their parents, whereas this proportion is about 65-70% among late home leavers. A largely similar pattern emerged with regard to the frequency of parent-son contact. Compared with late home leavers (70-75% report having visits with parents at least two times a week), adult sons who left their home at an early age are less likely to visit their parents more than once a week (50-55%). Interestingly, the trends regarding residential proximity and face-to-face interactions tend to overlap, indicating that

the duration of co-residence may have an indirect effect on the frequency of parent-son visit through geographical distance.

Women exhibit a more complex pattern. The proportion of daughters living near (same city) to their parents increases markedly until the group median age at leaving home (from 35% to 60%). As the co-residence duration reaches the group median age of moving out, the association between the time spent by daughters in the family of origin and residential proximity disappears. Equally, about 45-50% of daughters who moved out at early ages report having frequent face-to-face contacts with parents, while 65-70% of those who leave parental home "on time" or later visit parents more than once a week. Note that adult daughters who moved out 6 or 8 years later than the group median age tend to visit their parents less frequently (63% report having several visits a week) than those who left home "on time" (70%), suggesting that a violation of social norms around the "age deadline" could be linked to less frequent parent-daughter interactions.

GRAPH 2.1 Residential proximity and the frequency of parent-child contacts according to DGM.



Note: DGM is the difference between the individual age at leaving home and the group median age at leaving home, ranging from -13 to 21.

Table 2.3 presents residential proximity and face-to-face contacts in relation to the reasons for leaving the parental home. Young sons and daughters moving out because of marriage are more likely to reside close (respectively 69% and 60% live in the same city) and

maintain more frequent interactions with their parents (about 70% visit their parents more than once a week), than adult children who left the nest for other reasons. In particular, moving out to attend higher education courses or to seek job opportunities is linked to less propensity of residing near parents (about 40%), and having face-to-face interactions in later life (about 44%). Moreover, the DGM indicates that sons and daughters moving out to seek education and job opportunities tend to leave their parental home respectively six and four years before the group median age, whereas those who move out "on time" or later are more likely to leave their parental home because of marriage or cohabitation. This suggests that the reasons for leaving home are related to different timings. Thus, as expected by the fourth hypothesis, the association between the age at leaving home and later levels of proximity and contact may be partly mediated by different reasons to leave the nest.

TABLE 2.3 Parent-child proximity, face-to-face contacts and DGM according to the reasons for leaving parental home.

	Proximity (same city)		Contact (> once a week)		Median of DGM (years)	
	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Men	Women
Reasons for leaving						
Marriage	69.8	61.0	69.8	70.5	0	0
Cohabitation	54.2	49.3	61.9	58.9	0	+1
Educ/job	41.8	38.0	43.1	43.2	-6	-4
Independence	61.6	52.1	62.7	56.4	-4	0
Total	62.4	57.3	62.4	66.3	0	0

Note: DGM: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from -14 to 16.

2.3.2 *Multivariate Results*

Table 2.3 presents four ordered logistic regression models separately examining parent-child proximity in different groups for men (1a and 2a) and women (1b and 2b). Models 1a and 1b focus on the role of the DGM′, and Graphs 2a and 2b present the predicted probabilities of living in the same city according to the DGM′. As mentioned, the probabilities of living in the same city refer to cumulative probabilities of living "in the same building", "within 1 km" and "in the same city". In the graphs, the DGM′ values have been converted in years: value 0 refers to the group median age at leaving home.

Graphs 2a and 2b (Models 1a and 1b) corroborate the descriptive findings and indicate that in each social group co-residence duration is positively connected to the propensity of

adult children to reside near parents. In line with a recent German study (Leopold *et al*., 2012), late home leavers tend to maintain closer intergenerational proximity, compared to those who leave their family of origin at an early age. The authors suggest that late home leavers are more attached to their local community and, thus, have a lower preference and willingness to move at greater distances. This is particularly evident if we compare early home leavers to adult children who moved out at the socially accepted time or later (Graphs 2a-b). Notably, the positive relation between DGM′ and the likelihood of living close to parents becomes smaller as the co-residence duration reaches the normative age for leaving home. At an early age, the time spent by children in the parental home tends to promote close residential proximity, whereas a prolonged co-residence has a limited relation with the likelihood of residing close to parents. A similar pattern is found in parent-son and parent-daughter relationships, but the curvilinear pattern appears more evident for adult daughters.

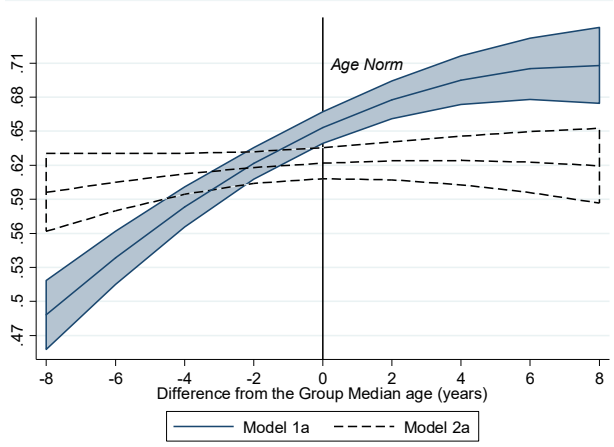
Different reasons to leave the nest are included in Models 2a and 2b. Pathways other than marriage are chosen by highly educated children, thus the coefficient of high education decreases when moving from Model 1a-b to Model 2a-b. In line with Hypothesis 4, among adult sons (Model 2a) the association between the age at leaving home and residential proximity is completely mediated by the influence of the different reasons for moving out. Male early home leavers are likely to leave their family of origin to go after better job and educational opportunities and reside further away from their parents in later life. Adult children tend to move away from their parental home because the structure of the labor market and the education system provides geographically circumscribed opportunities. Desire for independence may be also related to moving out at an early age, but it is not significantly associated with parent-son residential proximity. On the contrary, among adult daughters (Model 2b), all motivations to leave the parental home other than marriage are negatively associated with residential proximity from parents. Moving out of the parental home to get married is characteristic of daughters living closest to parents. This result is consistent with the Hypothesis 3 about marriage as the normative pathway to independence and a sign of adherence to social expectations on family ties. Even when I include the reasons for leaving home in the model, the time spent by daughters in their parental home continues to have a significant relation with later levels of geographical proximity (Model 2b). But, Graph 2.2b shows that this association is weak, after controlling for the reasons for leaving the family nest.

TABLE 2.4 Ordered logistic regression models on residential proximity between parents and their adult children. Clustered standard errors.

	Adult Sons				Adult Daughters			
	Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 1b		Model 2b	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Children's Characteristics								
DGM	0.117***	(0.013)	0.024	(0.015)	0.088***	(0.015)	0.030†	(0.015)
DGM^2	-0.003***	(0.000)	-0.001	(0.001)	-0.002***	(0.000)	-0.001†	(0.000)
Time since leaving (Ref. 1-7)								
8-14	0.111	(0.100)	-0.034	(0.101)	-0.128	(0.085)	-0.140	(0.085)
15-24	0.136	(0.138)	-0.052	(0.140)	-0.247†	(0.111)	-0.261†	(0.111)
25-46	-0.019	(0.189)	-0.222	(0.192)	-0.248	(0.154)	-0.276	(0.154)
Age	0.002	(0.008)	0.014	(0.008)	0.015†	(0.006)	0.017**	(0.006)
Region (Ref. North)								
Centre	0.140**	(0.048)	0.118†	(0.047)	0.083	(0.043)	0.051	(0.043)
South	0.767***	(0.037)	0.771***	(0.038)	0.708***	(0.036)	0.675***	(0.036)
Education (*Ref.* Low)								
Medium	-0.212***	(0.035)	-0.147***	(0.036)	-0.085†	(0.035)	-0.011	(0.036)
High	-0.510***	(0.054)	-0.299***	(0.055)	-0.374***	(0.055)	-0.120†	(0.057)
Employment status (*Ref.* Employed)								
Unemployed	-0.077	(0.076)	-0.091	(0.077)	-0.261***	(0.074)	-0.277***	(0.075)
Not in LM	-0.034	(0.068)	-0.046	(0.068)	-0.189***	(0.036)	-0.220***	(0.036)
Marital Status (*Ref.* married)								
Never married	-0.045	(0.037)	-0.041	(0.037)	-0.018	(0.034)	-0.014	(0.034)
Divorced	-0.606***	(0.082)	-0.642***	(0.082)	-0.657***	(0.073)	-0.663***	(0.073)
Child <7	0.086	(0.066)	0.108	(0.067)	0.095	(0.059)	0.095	(0.059)
N. of siblings	-0.135***	(0.009)	-0.127***	(0.009)	-0.138***	(0.009)	-0.133***	(0.009)
Wave 2009	-0.239***	(0.033)	-0.272***	(0.033)	-0.146***	(0.031)	-0.154***	(0.031)
Owner dwelling	0.355***	(0.038)	0.333***	(0.038)	0.121***	(0.037)	0.110**	(0.037)
Parental marital status (*Ref.* Living together)								
Divorced	0.045	(0.060)	-0.094	(0.067)	0.126	(0.067)	-0.264***	(0.079)
Widowed	-0.065	(0.088)	-0.198†	(0.093)	0.182†	(0.079)	-0.204†	(0.087)
Reasons for leaving (*Ref.* marriage)								
Cohabitation			-0.242***	(0.072)			-0.370***	(0.066)
Educ/job			-1.046***	(0.061)			-1.045***	(0.072)
Independence			-0.022	(0.059)			-0.350***	(0.079)
Constant	-0.777***	(0.195)	-1.601***	(0.215)	-0.601**	(0.185)	-1.559***	(0.201)
N. of children	12,708		12,708		14,432		14,432	
N. of dyads	12,869		12,869		14,674		14,674	

Note: ** p<0.001, * p<0.010, † p<0.05. DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from 0 to 30. Standard errors are clustered by adult children.

GRAPH 2.2a Predicted probabilities of living in the same city (Sons, Table 2.4)



GRAPH 2.2b Predicted probabilities of living in the same city (Daughters, Table 2.4)

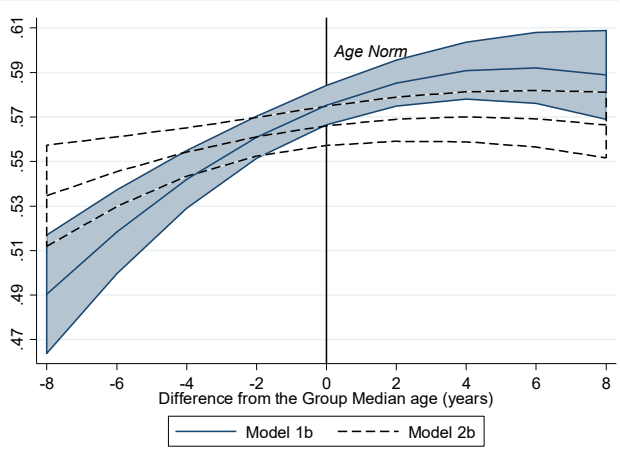
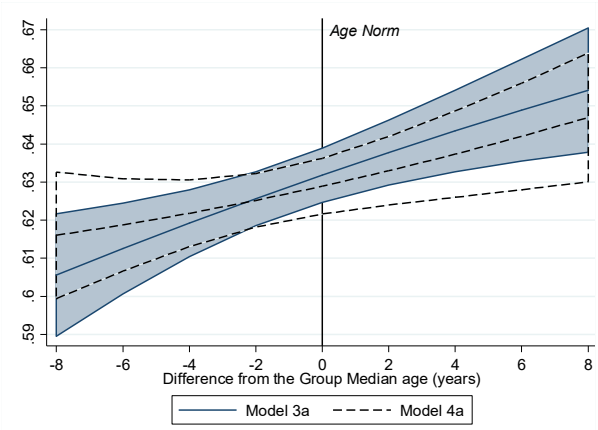


Table 2.4 shows four ordered logistic regression models predicting the frequency of face-to-face contacts between parents and their adult children. Graphs 3a and 3b refer respectively to Model 3a for men and 3b for women and plot the predicted probabilities of having more than weekly face-to-face contacts. The relation between DGM′ and face-to-face contacts is expected to be concave downwards, if adult children who moved out "on time" maintain more frequent intergenerational contact than late and early home leavers (Hypothesis 2). With reference to adult sons (Graph 3a), empirical evidence does not support this hypothesis and indicates that, in a given social group, the longer the time spent in parental home, the higher the frequency of visits in later relationships is. A prolonged co-residence does not violate intergenerational expectations, but rather tends to promote deeper involvement in parental lives. This is consistent with Hypothesis 1 and Leopold's (2012b) findings on the whole European context.

Differently from the pattern observed for sons, the positive association between DGM′ and the frequency of later parent-adult daughter visits (Model 3b and Graph 3b) decreases and ultimately disappears as the co-residence duration reaches the "right" age for moving out. This partially supports both Hypotheses 1 and 2. At an early age, the time spent with parents is likely to function as a socialization process that promotes frequent family interactions in later life, whereas late departures that violate age norms do not have a positive influence in later relations.

Models 4a and 4b take into account the reasons for leaving home. Among men (Model 4a), the coefficient of DGM′ disappears. Sons moving out to seek education and job opportunities tend to leave their parental home at an early age; and after moving out, they are more likely to have less frequent contact with their parents. Conversely, leaving home to cohabit or because of the desire for independence is not significantly related to the likelihood of having frequent parent-son contacts. In particular, leaving home because of the desire for independence is expected to be associated with individualistic attitudes (Gierveld *et al*., 1991), but its coefficient on parent-child contacts is not significant. For women (Model 4b), instead, leaving the parental home for reasons other than marriage does not meet social expectations on adulthood transition, and it is negatively related to the frequency of face-to-face contact with parents in later life. The desire for independence, going after better education or job opportunities and cohabitation, instead of marriage are linked to less frequent parent-daughter visits, even after controlling for geographical proximity. Moreover, the relation between co-residence duration and contact frequency is only partially mediated by the reasons for leaving home. Marriage, in other words, is a necessary but not sufficient condition to maintain frequent family interactions. Marriage is perceived as the "right" pathway for leaving the nest, if it occurs "on time" when the socialization process inside the parents' home is concluded.

GRAPH 2.3a Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly contacts with parents (Sons, Table 2.5)



GRAPH 2.3b Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly contacts with parents (Daughters, Table 2.5).

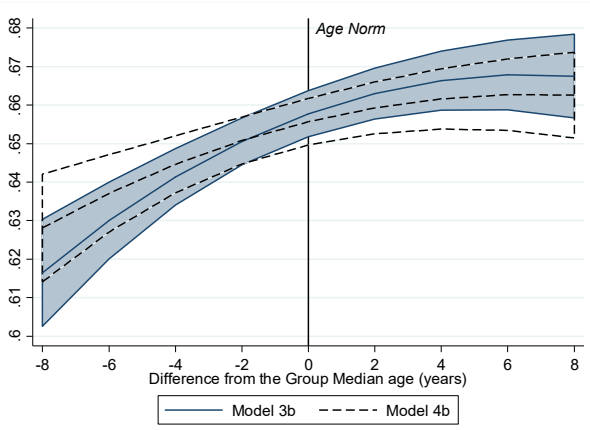


TABLE 2.5 Ordered logistic regression models on the frequency of face-to-face contact between parents and their adult children. Clustered standard errors.

	Sons				Daughters			
	Model 3a		Model 4a		Model 3b		Model 4b	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Children's Characteristics								
DGM	0.026†	(0.013)	0.004	(0.014)	0.065**	(0.015)	0.041*	(0.016)
DGM^2	-0.000	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)	-0.002**	(0.000)	-0.001*	(0.000)
Time since leaving (Ref. 1-7)								
8-14	-0.010	(0.067)	-0.021	(0.067)	-0.139†	(0.067)	-0.144†	(0.067)
15-24	-0.060	(0.098)	-0.081	(0.098)	-0.321**	(0.086)	-0.331**	(0.086)
25-46	-0.176	(0.155)	-0.194	(0.155)	-0.434*	(0.133)	-0.450**	(0.133)
Age	0.002	(0.006)	0.003	(0.006)	0.002	(0.005)	0.002	(0.005)
Region (Ref. North)								
Centre	0.134*	(0.050)	0.128†	(0.050)	0.002	(0.047)	-0.012	(0.047)
South	0.380**	(0.042)	0.382**	(0.042)	0.255**	(0.040)	0.236**	(0.041)
Education (*Ref.* Low)								
Medium	-0.039	(0.040)	-0.022	(0.040)	-0.055	(0.041)	-0.028	(0.041)
High	-0.306**	(0.058)	-0.259**	(0.060)	-0.194*	(0.060)	-0.099	(0.064)
Employment status (*Ref.* Employed)								
Unemployed	0.099	(0.092)	0.098	(0.093)	-0.218*	(0.075)	-0.228*	(0.075)
Not in LM	0.183†	(0.081)	0.180†	(0.081)	-0.057	(0.041)	-0.074	(0.041)
Marital Status (*Ref.* married)								
Never married	-0.147†	(0.062)	-0.198*	(0.068)	0.109	(0.067)	-0.141	(0.078)
Divorced	-0.173	(0.089)	-0.222†	(0.092)	0.055	(0.081)	-0.189†	(0.089)
Child<7	-0.081	(0.070)	-0.075	(0.070)	0.005	(0.073)	-0.002	(0.073)
N. of siblings	-0.125**	(0.010)	-0.124**	(0.010)	-0.134**	(0.010)	-0.133**	(0.010)
Wave 2009	-0.277**	(0.036)	-0.283**	(0.037)	-0.308**	(0.035)	-0.304**	(0.035)
Owner dwelling	0.245**	(0.040)	0.243**	(0.040)	0.252**	(0.039)	0.248**	(0.039)
Parents' Characteristics								
Father	-0.077**	(0.016)	-0.079**	(0.016)	-0.195**	(0.016)	-0.197**	(0.016)
Marital status (*Ref.* Living together)								
Divorced or separated	-0.129*	(0.040)	-0.127*	(0.040)	-0.102*	(0.039)	-0.099†	(0.039)
Widowed	-0.658**	(0.087)	-0.666**	(0.087)	-0.776**	(0.082)	-0.765**	(0.083)
Education degree (*Ref.* Low)								
Medium	-0.068	(0.053)	-0.064	(0.053)	-0.081	(0.049)	-0.061	(0.050)
High	-0.205†	(0.098)	-0.197†	(0.098)	-0.449**	(0.104)	-0.417**	(0.104)
Poor health	0.163*	(0.056)	0.167*	(0.056)	0.321**	(0.051)	0.323**	(0.051)
Proximity (*Ref.* Other city >50km)								
Other city<50km	2.671**	(0.064)	2.627**	(0.065)	2.634**	(0.055)	2.602**	(0.055)
Same city>1km	3.229**	(0.065)	3.183**	(0.066)	3.431**	(0.059)	3.394**	(0.059)
Same city<1km	4.692**	(0.071)	4.647**	(0.071)	4.849**	(0.065)	4.817**	(0.066)
Reasons for leaving (*Ref.* marriage)								
Cohabitation			-0.080	(0.080)			-0.249**	(0.071)
Educ/job			-0.245**	(0.060)			-0.399**	(0.066)
Independence			-0.047	(0.061)			-0.353**	(0.082)
N. of individuals	12,708		12,708		14,432		14,432	
N. of dyads	19,755		19,755		22,555		22,555	

Note: ** p<0.001, * p<0.010, † p<0.05. DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from 0 to 30. Standard errors are clustered by adult children.

2.3.3 An Analysis on the "Strength" of Age Norms

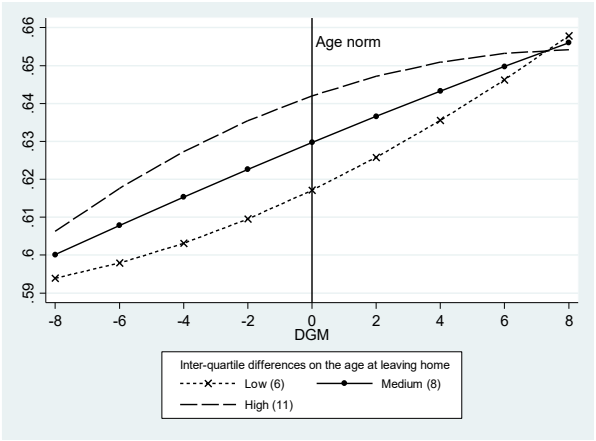
In order to better understand the role of age norm, Table 2.6 includes the interquartile difference on the age at leaving home computed within each social group. The inter-quartile difference provides an indication of the "strength" of social norms about nest-leaving: the norm is considered stronger when people leave the parental home around the same age (Billari, 2001). In other words, the inter-quartile difference is low when people tend to conform with the normative age for leaving the parental home. Thus, one could expect to observe a inversed U-shaped association between DGM and later parent-child contacts in contexts where the inter-quartile difference is low. However, this hypothesis does not seem to be supported by the results. Table 2.6, indeed, shows a non-significant interaction between DGM and the inter-quartile difference. In particular, Graph 2.4a for adult sons indicates that the positive relation between DGM and the frequency of parent-child contacts tends to decline after the norm among social groups where the age at leaving home is less homogeneous (inter-quartile difference is around 11 years). In a similar vein, among adult daughters (Graph 2.4b), this curvilinear pattern is observed especially in contexts where the inter-quartile difference is high (and the norm should be weaker). A tentative explanation of this pattern is that a violation of age norms can be observed only in contexts where social norms are relatively weak. The possible negative consequences of a violation can hardly be observed in contexts where young adults leave the parental home around the same age.

TABLE 2.6 Ordered logistic regression models on the frequency of face-to-face contact between parents and their adult children. Clustered standard errors.

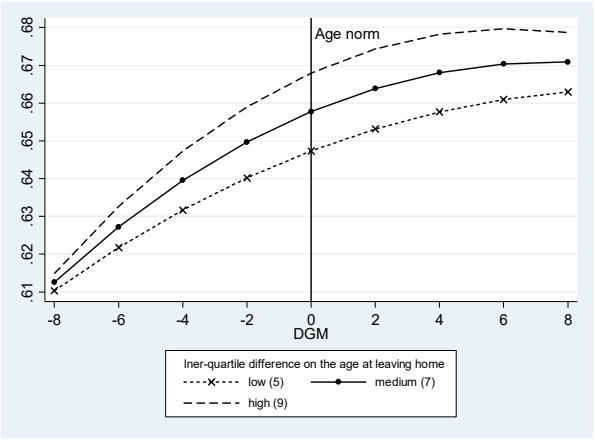
	Sons				Daughters			
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
DGM	0.031*	(0.011)	-0.032	(0.057)	0.085**	(0.013)	0.006	(0.065)
DGM^2	-0.000	(0.000)	0.002	(0.002)	-0.002**	(0.000)	0.000	(0.002)
Inter-quartile difference	0.013	(0.029)	-0.024	(0.054)	0.034	(0.025)	-0.045	(0.073)
DGM X Inter-quartile			0.008	(0.006)			0.011	(0.009)
DGM^2 X Inter-quartile			-0.000	(0.000)			-0.000	(0.000)
N. of children	12,708		12,708		14,432		14,432	
N. of dyads	19,755		19,755		22,555		22,555	

Note: ** p<0.001, * p<0.010, † p<0.05. DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from 0 to 30. Standard errors are clustered by adult children. Control variables are those presented in table 2.5.

GRAPH 2.4a Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly contacts with parents according to DGM and inter-quantile difference on the age at leaving home (within each group). Estimates for sons (Tab. 2.6).



GRAPH 2.4b Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly contacts with parents according to DGM and inter-quantile difference on the age at leaving home (within each group). Estimates for daughters (Tab. 2.6).



2.4 Discussion

Previous research has shown that intergenerational relationships are shaped by early life course transitions. According to account, the leaving-home transition is often viewed as a crucial step in reaching the adult status, and, on such occasion, the parent-child relationship is redefined and shaped according to the different pathways chosen to acquire independence. The findings presented here provide evidence of the connection between the leaving-home transition and later intergenerational relations, including residential distance and frequency of face-to-face contacts.

According to the family life course perspective (Elder, 1991), I hypothesized that the period of intergenerational co-residence promotes residential proximity and frequent contacts (Hypothesis 1). The results for adult sons support this idea, revealing that extended periods of co-residence are related to close proximity and frequent contact in later parent-child relationships. Among Italian adult daughters, however, age norm represents the time limit after which the general positive association between co-residence duration and later intergenerational relationships ceases. Social norms define the accepted "age deadline" for fulfilling expectations for normal adult development and maintaining close proximity and frequent family interactions. In account of this, adult daughters appear to be subject to greater cultural expectations about nest-leaving behaviors. Since women typically assume the responsibility of providing care to parents in need, Italian parents are more likely to influence their behaviors, encouraging them to respect normative expectations about family ties (Rosina and Fraboni, 2004).

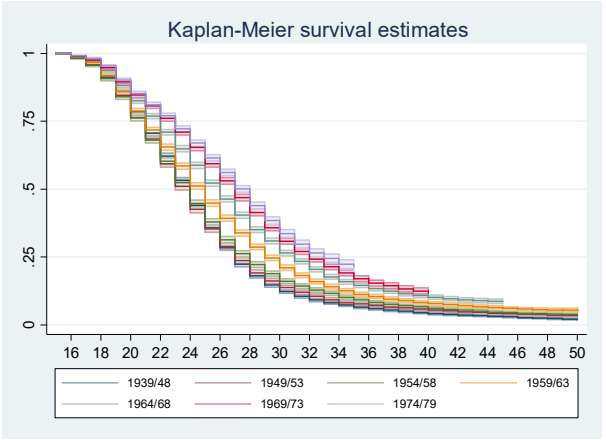
Despite the fact that our findings provide evidence about the influence of age norms on parent-daughter relations, the Hypothesis 2 that violating the socially accepted time for leaving home is correlated with intergenerational tensions in later life cannot be corroborated. This is consistent with Settersten and Hagestad (1996)'s argument that violating cultural age deadlines for family transitions is not accompanied by interpersonal tension and sanctions. The results presented here show that living together for longer periods than what is considered the norm has neither a positive nor a negative association with the frequency of later parent-daughter contacts. As suggested by the literature on intergenerational ambivalence (Pillemer and Suitor, 2002; Pillemer *et al.,* 2012), parents can feel obliged to maintain frequent interactions with their children, even when the quality of parent-child relationships is low. It is plausible that the detrimental consequences of an overly extended co-residence on the quality of relations are compensated by parents' feelings of intergenerational solidarity.

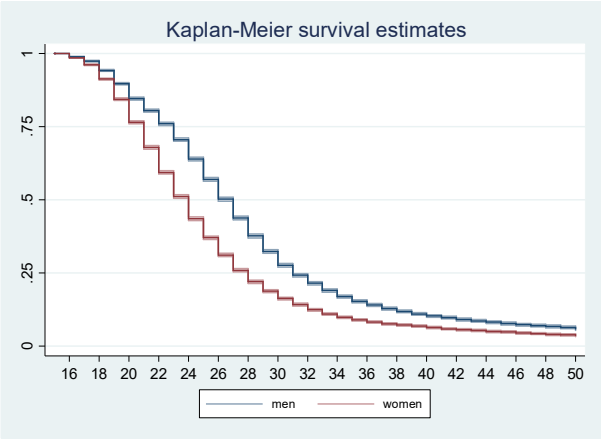
The second research question addressed by this study concerns different reasons for leaving the parental home. In line with my fourth hypothesis, these reasons, at least partially, mediate the association between the age at nest-leaving and later parent-child relations. Adult sons who moved out to get married are more likely to maintain frequent interactions with their parents, regardless of co-residence duration. The evidence shows that young adult sons who postpone the transition to independence leave their parental home in concomitance with their marriage; and after that, they are likely to live near and frequently visit their parents. In other words, sons' timings in leaving home are strictly linked with the different reasons for leaving: early home leavers tend to pursue better education and job opportunities elsewhere, weakening their family ties, whereas postponing independence to get married complies with a culture of strong family ties. Among the reasons other than marriage to move out of the parental home, only following job and education opportunities is related to moving at greater geographical distance and having few face-to-face contacts in later parent-son relations. Cohabiting has a significant effect only on intergenerational proximity, whereas moving out because of the desire for independency affects neither geographical proximity nor the quantity of visits. On this account, desire for independence cannot be interpreted as an expression of individualistic attitudes prevailing over familialistic ones. Moreover, in line with previous research (Nazio and Saraceno, 2012), choosing cohabitation instead of marriage is often backed by parental consent and is not significantly associated with less frequent parent-adult son contacts.

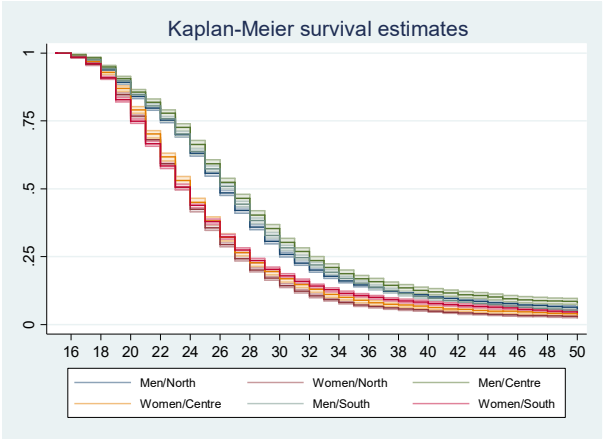
Among adult daughters, the results corroborate my third hypothesis, suggesting that marriage is seen as the normative occasion for leaving the nest. Other routes out of the parental home are negatively related to geographical proximity and frequency of contacts. The reasons for moving out only partially overlap with the age at leaving home, indicating that adult daughters are expected to fulfil expectations about both the normative age, and the appropriate circumstances for moving out. Only after completing the process of socialization inside the parental home, marriage becomes the accepted occasion for leaving their parental home that will be related to strong parent-daughter ties.

Overall, the results presented here reveal the importance of considering leaving-home transition in the research on parent-adult child relationships. The diverse pathways out of the parental home are related to later relationships, through a complex interplay between gender and cultural expectations. An open question is, therefore, to what extent these results can be extended to other societies where gender equality is more advanced and individualism is a stronger ideology. Another question is whether the diverse experiences of intergenerational co-residence can be partly accounted for by family climate during childhood and adolescence. Examining family conflicts as well as the quality of past and current relationships would help to understand how previous life-course transitions can affect later parent-adult child relationships.

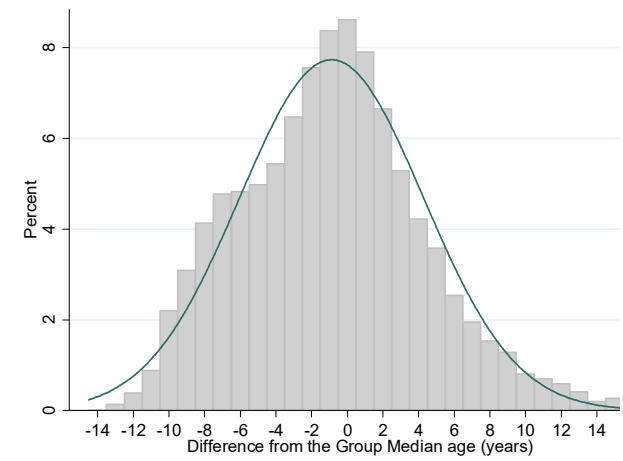
2.5 Appendix







GRAPH 2.5a Distribution of DGM (Sons)



GRAPH 2.5b Distribution of DGM (Daughters)

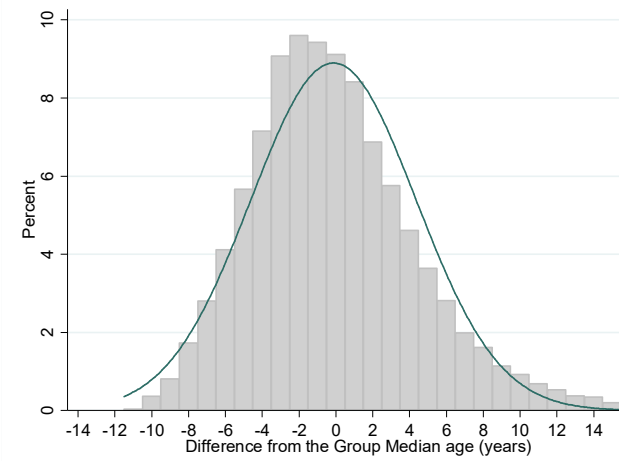


TABLE 2.7 Multinomial logistic regression models on residential proximity between parents and their adult children. Clustered standard errors.

	Residential Proximity (Ref. Other city >50km)			
	Sons		Daughters	
	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.
Other city <50km				
DGM´	0.227***	0.070**	0.184***	0.103***
DGM´^2	-0.005***	-0.002*	-0.005***	-0.003***
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)				
Cohabitation		0.078		-0.346**
Educ/job		-1.525***		-1.177***
Independence		-0.238*		-0.590***
>1km in the same city				
DGM´	0.214***	0.046	0.155***	0.063**
DGM´^2	-0.005***	-0.001	-0.004***	-0.002**
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)				
Cohabitation		-0.150		-0.384***
Educ/job		-1.528***		-1.465***
Independence		-0.331***		-0.620***
Within 1km radius in the same city				
DGM´	0.207***	-0.055	0.141***	0.057**
DGM´^2	-0.005***	-0.002	-0.004***	-0.002**
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)				
Cohabitation		-0.347**		-0.573***
Educ/job		-1.528***		-1.292***
Independence		-0.185*		-0.506***
Observations	12,869	12,869	14,674	14,674

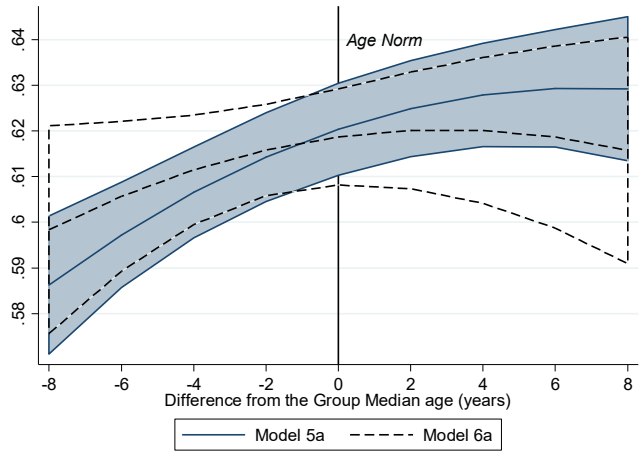
Note: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.010, * p<0.05. Control variables are those presented in Table 2.5. DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving home and the Group Median age, ranging from 0 to 30.

TABLE 2.8 Multinomial logistic regression models on contact frequency between parents and their adult children. Clustered standard errors.

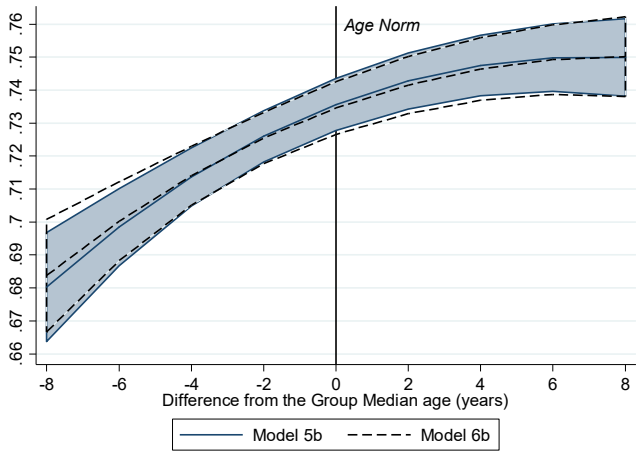
	Contact Frequency (Ref. Less than weekly)							
	Face-to-face contact				**Phone calls**			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.	Coef.
Weekly								
DGM′	0.113***	0.056	0.113***	0.084**	0.027	0.039	0.001	0.019
DGM′^2	-0.001	-0.000	-0.003***	-0.003**	-0.001	-0.001	-0.000	-0.001
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)								
Cohabitation		-0.006		-0.091		0.023		-0.148
Educ/job		-0.562**		-0.502***		0.117		-0.059
Independence		-0.311		-0.262		0.094		-0.009
Several times a week								
DGM′	0.101***	0.041	0.134***	0.075**	0.046**	0.040	0.048*	0.047*
DGM′^2	-0.001	-0.000	-0.003	-0.002**	-0.001**	-0.001	-0.001*	-0.001*
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)								
Cohabitation		0.072		-0.364*		-0.235*		-0.139
Educ/job		-0.574***		-0.919**		-0.038		-0.270**
Independence		-0.335*		-0.717**		-0.094		-0.296**
Daily								
DGM′	0.103***	0.047	0.155***	0.098**	0.045*	0.047*	0.079***	0.070***
DGM′^2	-0.001	-0.000	-0.004***	-0.004**	-0.001*	-0.001*	-0.002***	-0.002***
Reasons for leaving (Ref. marriage)								
Cohabitation		-0.228		-0.461**		-0.148		-0.312**
Educ/job		-0.578***		-0.923***		-0.069		-0.115*
Independence		-0.292*		-0.728***		-0.106		-0.430***
Observations	19,755	19,755	22,555	22,555	19,755	19,755	22,555	22,555

Note: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.010, * p<0.05. Control variables are those presented in Table 2.6. DGM′: Difference between individual age at leaving.

GRAPH 2.6a Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly telephone contacts with parents according to DGM. Estimates from Ordered Logit Models (Sons).



GRAPH 2.6b Predicted probabilities of having more than weekly telephone contacts with parents according to DGM. Estimates from Ordered Logit Models (Daughters).



Chapter 3

Study II

Nest-leaving, family climate and later parent-child contact in Sweden

This chapter is co-authored by Michael Gähler, associate professor at Swedish Institute of Social Research (Sofi), Stockholm.

A similar version of this chapter has been accepted for publication in *Acta Sociologica*

3.1 Introduction

Leaving the parental home and establishing an independent household are often viewed as transitions that produce benefits for the privacy and well-being of adult children and their parents (Umberson, 1992). Because parenting is a stressful role, parents tend to experience an increase in marital happiness and life satisfaction when their children leave the nest (White and Edwards, 1990). In addition, children usually develop a sense of satisfaction and self-reliance when they evolve toward an independent position and an adult status (Aquilino, 1991b). However, prior research has shown that early departure from the parents' home may negatively affect later life outcomes, such as educational careers (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1993), job opportunities and economic conditions during early adulthood (Aassve *et al*., 2006; Kauppinen *et al.*, 2014), as well as both the age at family formation and subsequent union stability (Aquilino, 1991a).

In spite of a large body of literature, little is known about the association between the age at nest-leaving and later intergenerational relationships. Examining this relationship may provide new insights into how co-residence experiences and events in early adulthood shape later family relations throughout the life course. In a previous study focused on the European context, Leopold (2012) used a sibling comparison design to show that late home leavers are likely to maintain higher levels of intergenerational solidarity, compared to their siblings who moved out of the parental home at an earlier age. In a similar vein, Chapter 1 shows that in a culture of strong family ties such as Italy, the time spent by children in the parental home tends to promote family interactions over the life course. In this Chapter I am able to extend the existing knowledge in at least two ways. First, one problem with the existing research is that a number of potential selection effects have not been accounted for. Family instability and problematic intra-family relationships are considered to be crucial factors in social selection processes that both determine nest-leaving behaviors and shape later parent-adult child interactions (Aquilino, 1991b, 1997; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1999; Lummaa, 2007). Children from dissolved families tend to leave the nest at an early age (Bernhardt *et al.*, 2005), and usually maintain less frequent contacts with their parents in later life (Lennartsson, 2001; Palmtag, 2013). These family circumstances are particularly relevant in Sweden, where the proportion of the population that has experienced a parental divorce or separation in childhood (up to age 16) has grown from around 1 to 25 percent during the last

century (Gähler and Palmtag, 2015). Here survey data on partnership dissolution and inter-parental and parent-child conflict during childhood/adolescence offer the opportunity to understand how co-residence was experienced by parents and children. A main purpose of the present study is thus to explore the relationship between children's nest-leaving age and the frequency of subsequent parent-child contacts in Sweden, by devoting particular attention to indicators of childhood family climate as confounding factors and as potential explanatory mechanisms with regard to this relationship.

Second, I study Sweden, where late nest-leaving is regarded as non-normative and where the degree of age variation in nest-leaving is lower than anywhere else in Europe (Billari *et al.*, 2001). Swedish welfare state policy encourages young adults to leave the parental home at an early age and favors family relations which are relatively free from obligations to provide care. In this context, where social policies along with cultural norms foster individual autonomy, late departures from the parental home may be perceived as involving an undesirable loss of privacy and may produce emotional strain between parents and children (Swartz, 2009). On the other hand, the homogeneity of the timing of leaving home may indicate that, compared to young adults in other societies, Swedish late and early home leavers are less differentiated by their experiences of living at home. Thus, a question that remains to be answered is whether the duration of co-residence also matters for later parent-child relationships in Sweden, where the average nest-leaving age is low, where late nest-leaving is non-normative, and where late and early home leavers are differentiated by only a few years.

I examine in-person contacts between adult children and their parents as an important dimension of intergenerational solidarity and as a basis for the intergenerational transfer of emotional and instrumental support (Kalmijn and Dykstra, 2006; Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997). It is well established in the literature that intergenerational relations are increasingly important for the well-being of parents and their children in contemporary ageing societies (e.g. Bengtson, 2001). Also, in societies such as Sweden, where family support and care are to a substantial extent provided by welfare state arrangements, parent-child visits constitute a relevant factor for individual well-being and the exchange of less intensive forms of help. As noted in Chapter 1 (section 1.2), advanced communication technologies facilitate alternative forms of contact, fostering intimate but physically distant relations among family members. However, as argued by Ward, Deane and Spitze (2014: 570), face-to-face contact continues to

be "the most basic and significant form of contact" through which people can share activities and physical experiences.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 Co-residence Duration

As noted in Chapter 1, there are two possible ways in which the duration of co-residence may affect later parent-child relationships.

First, living under the same roof offers the opportunity for family members to share activities, interests and attitudes. Through experiences of intergenerational co-residence, people develop family attitudes, obligations, interaction styles and a congruence of worldviews (Aquilino, 1997; Goldscheider and Lawton, 1998). The time spent in the parental home might promote similarity and family responsibilities by producing in children a deeper involvement in their parents' lives. In turn, moving out in the early phase of young adulthood helps to develop attitudes about the importance of autonomy, work and privacy, rather than strengthening the responsibility for maintaining family bonds and obligations (Goldscheider and Lawton, 1998). Recent findings support this view, suggesting a positive relationship between the age at which children move out and later levels of proximity, contact and support exchange (Leopold, 2012). It is also important to note that co-residence experiences may acquire different meanings according to the social and historical time in which parents and their children are embedded. I consider different geographical areas and birth cohorts to take these social and historical differences into account. Following from this, it can be hypothesized that *in each social group the duration of co-residence is positively associated with the propensity to maintain frequent interactions in later life* (*Hypothesis 1*).

Second, co-residence duration may play a role not only *per se*, but also in relation to the existence of social norms.[1] In their seminal work, Neugarten and colleagues (1965: 711) suggest that people are aware of the social clocks, "age norms and expectations that operate as prods and brakes on behavior". Leaving the family nest at ages that are normatively "too early" (around age 16 in Sweden) may be perceived as constituting a voluntary estrangement from parents, negatively affecting later parent-child relations. In turn, research on young adulthood has defined age norms in terms of an "age deadline" prescribing the upper age limit for leaving the parental home (around age 25 in Sweden) (Aassve *et al.*, 2013; Billari and Liefbroer, 2007; Settersten and Hagestad, 1996). Because parents expect their children to

become independent adults, an overly extended period of intergenerational co-residence may constitute a source of conflict and tension (Aquilino, 1991b; Aquilino and Supple, 1991; Ward and Spitze, 1992, 1996). For example, Hagestad (1985) found that American mothers perceived offspring's difficulties in fulfilling the normative expectation of becoming independent "on time" as a personal failure. Moreover, violating parental expectations about being independent may make children feel guilty, incompetent or lacking in autonomy. Delaying the transition to adulthood may reflect failure in union formation or employment, producing dissatisfaction and possible resentment over co-residence experiences (Ward and Spitze, 1996; Pillemer and Suitor, 2002). As suggested by the literature on intergenerational support, an extended co-residence can be interpreted as *too much of a good thing* (Silverstein *et al.* 1996). A prolonged period of co-residence can be perceived as an excessive burden, disrupting other activities and producing frustrations about being dependent on others for the satisfaction of basic needs. Under such circumstances of excessive dependency, the quality of parent-child relationships is likely to decrease, affecting subsequent patterns of interaction. In this regard, I would expect *early and late departures from the parental home to be related to a lower propensity to maintain frequent contacts with parents* (*Hypothesis 2*).

3.2.2 Selection: Childhood Family Climate

The association between nest-leaving age and the subsequent frequency of parent-child contacts may be due to social selection, since early and late home leavers may be characterized by different experiences in the parental home. One such relevant experience may be the childhood family climate. A positive family climate might influence young adults to stay at home for longer, leading to closer relations and more frequent interactions with parents later in life. However, empirical research shows that the quality of parent-child and inter-parental marital relations does not lead young adult children to postpone nest-leaving (Ward and Spitze, 2007). Whereas positive relations during the period of co-residence seem to have a negligible influence on the decision to leave home, the role of negative family relations is well-established in the literature. A hostile family climate may constitute a "push factor" for a young adult to leave his/her parental home early (Bernhardt *et al.*, 2005; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1998, 1999) and it may also adversely affect the quality of later parent-child relations.

Parental union dissolution, and inter-parental and parent-child conflicts are central indicators of family climate during childhood/adolescence. Children from divorced families tend to develop a sense of independence in relation to their family of origin (Aquilino, 1991b). Research shows that in most countries, including Sweden, young adults from dissolved families move out of the parental home at a significantly younger age than others (see, e.g., Aquilino, 1991b; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1998 [the U.S.]; Bernhardt *et al.*, 2005 [Sweden]; Corijn and Klijzing, 2001 [a number of European countries]). And after moving out, they usually maintain less frequent interactions with their parents (Albertini and Garriga, 2010; Cooney, 1994; Kalmijn, 2013; Lennartsson, 2001; Palmtag, 2013). Focusing on family dissolution in childhood and adolescence, non-custodial parents (usually fathers) are less able to invest time in their children, with possible negative consequences for later relationships (Kalmjin, 2013). According to these findings, it is plausible that the detrimental consequences of parental union dissolution represent an underlying mechanism behind the association between the age at leaving home and later intergenerational contacts.

Scholars have recognized the importance of considering family dissolution and family conflict separately (Amato and DeBoer, 2001), although family conflict is more common in dissolved families (Gähler and Palmtag, 2015) and adolescents from dissolved families are particularly likely to leave the nest as a result of frictions at home (Kiernan, 1992). Bernhardt, Gähler and Goldscheider's (2005) study indicates that an interplay between childhood family structure and conflict plays a crucial role in predicting whether or not Swedish adolescents will become early home leavers. As suggested by the spillover hypothesis, inter-parental conflict can negatively affect the whole family climate and the quality of parent-child relationships (Acock and Demo, 1999; Cox *et al.*, 2001; Gerard *et al.*, 2006). Problematic relations between parents may make the parental home an unpleasant place for children. These children can limit their exposure to their parents' conflict by leaving the nest early. After moving out of their parental home, children can distance themselves from their parents, maintaining less frequent intergenerational interactions. Inter-parental friction in childhood, as remembered by adult children, may influence these children's perceptions of current family relationships, reducing their propensity to maintain close relations with parents. Memories of past conflicts between parents have been found to negatively affect both the quality of family relationships and the amount of parent-child contact in later life (Amato and Booth 1991, 1996; Parrott and Bengtson, 1999).

The third indicator of childhood family climate is conflict between the child and the parent. As previously mentioned, family conflict and problematic parent-child relations tend to reduce the attractiveness of staying at home and may also be carried over into later life. Young adults who experienced intergenerational tension when they were adolescents are likely to present less affectionate and supportive relations with parents (Rossi and Rossi, 1990). Patterns of parent-child interaction established when children were adolescents tend to persist over time and are reused to manage new relations in adult life (Acock and Demo, 1999; Aquilino, 1997). As a result, the frequency of adult intergenerational contacts may thus be affected by conflictual relations between the parent and the child in childhood.

Since parental union dissolution, and inter-parental and parent-child conflict constitute part of the selection process for early and late home leavers, I would expect that the *association between the duration of co-residence and the frequency of later contacts to be partially explained by these three indicators of childhood family climate* (*Hypothesis 3*).

3.2.3 Mediation: Geographical Distance

Since family climate constitutes a relevant selection factor, geographical distance may mediate the association between nest-leaving age and later parent-child relations. The literature suggests that late home leavers are more prone to relocate close to their parental home, compared to those who move out of the nest at an early age (Leopold *et al.*, 2012). In turn, the geographical proximity to parents is a crucial prerequisite for maintaining frequent face-to-face contacts (Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997). Thus, *the influence of co-residence duration on subsequent parent-child visits may be partially mediated by geographical distance* (*Hypothesis 4*).

Moreover, it is important to note that the relationship between geographical distance and the frequency of visits may be endogenous, because adult children may move somewhere close to their parental home in order to maintain frequent contacts with parents (Tomassini *et al.*, 2003). A study by Malmberg and Pettersson (2007) found that Swedish daughters moved greater distances than sons, but that they tended to return to places nearer their parents in their late 50s. At an early stage of the life course, Swedish daughters are more prone to move to urban areas in order to attend higher education, while adult sons tend to relocate close to the parental home. At a later stage, family responsibilities to support elderly parents may affect the frequency of parent-daughter visits through a sequence of residential moves. It is possible

that late home leavers are more likely than early home leavers to feel responsible for maintaining frequent contact with parents and may thus decide to reside close to them. I take this idea into account in our interpretation when describing the role of geographical distance as a possible mediating factor.

3.2.4 Heterogeneity Across Dyads: Sex Similarity

The association between co-residence duration and later parent-child contacts is also likely to vary according to children's sex. Ward and Spitze (1992) argue that intergenerational co-residence has greater consequences for daughters than for sons. Co-resident daughters share more activities with, and are usually more involved in their parents' lives, especially the mother's (Aquilino and Supple, 1991). Relationships between mothers and their daughters have been found to be emotionally closer, involving more frequent contacts than father-son or opposite-sex dyads (Rossi and Rossi, 1990). This finding could suggest that the time spent by daughters in the parental home provides more opportunities to form binding relationships with mothers than with fathers. Moreover, the literature suggests that during childhood and adolescence, children tend to side with the same-sex parent, building alliances and developing a deeper understanding with them (Acock and Demo, 1999; Cox, Paley and Harter, 2001; Gerard, Krishnakumar and Buehler, 2006). Arguably, the longer the period of co-residence, the more permanent the alliance with the same-sex parent becomes. Following from this, it may be hypothesized that *co-residence duration will be more strongly associated with the frequency of contacts in same-sex dyads* (*Hypothesis 5*).

3.3 Data and Method

The empirical analysis is based on the most recent two waves of the Swedish Level of Living Survey (LNU), conducted by the Swedish Institute for Social Research, Stockholm University, in 2000 and 2010 (Evertsson and Magnusson, 2014; www.sofi.su.se). The LNU is a panel survey, based on standardized interviews, that was initiated in 1968 and has since been conducted on five occasions, in 1974, 1981, 1991, 2000 and 2010. It is based on a random sample of approximately 1/1000th of the adult Swedish population (aged 19-75) and each wave can be used as a nationally representative cross-section. The survey contains detailed information on childhood and current living conditions, including, e.g., family structure, age at nest-leaving, and intergenerational relations. In 2000, the sample comprised

5,142 respondents (response rate of 76.6%) and in 2010 the number of respondents was 4,415 (60.9%).

The sample selected for the analyses comprises respondents with at least one parent living (70.2% in 2000 and 69.0% in 2010). I also decided to exclude individuals with parents living abroad, since these relationships are usually affected by different dynamics in terms of face-to-face contacts between parents and children. A further selection criterion was based on the children's living arrangements: adult children (aged 19-75) who had left their parental home were included in the sample. Since only about five percent of respondents were still living at home (234 cases in 2000 and 307 cases in 2010), the possible bias produced by this selection criterion appears to be limited.

To analyze the frequency of contact between parents and their adult children, I decided to use the parent-child dyad as the unit of analysis. When both parents are alive, two dyads are present for each individual, and in the case of widowed parents one dyad is included. The sample includes a panel component, in which observations relating to the same individual are present in both the first and the second wave. The analytical sample used in the present study comprises 4,433 parent-son and 4,335 parent-daughter dyads across two waves (level 1), nested in 2,646 parent-son and 3,061 parent-daughter dyads within waves (level 2) nested in 1,853 sons and 1,905 daughters (level 3). Note that our analyses consider the nested nature of dyads within waves and individuals, by using multilevel models.

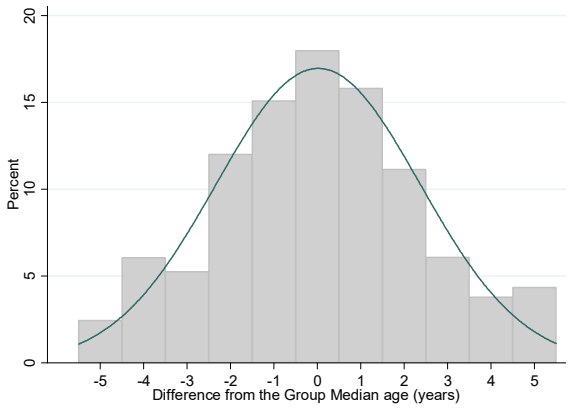
The dependent variable is the frequency of face-to-face contacts between parents and their adult children, based on the question "How often do you usually see your mother/father?" This is measured on a four-point scale: several contacts a week, once a week, 1-3 times a month, and less often than once a month. Table 1 shows that about 45% of Swedish adults see their parents at least once a week. I decided to employ multilevel linear probability models focused on the likelihood of having at least weekly face-to-face contacts with parents. Since logistic estimates may be strongly affected by unobserved heterogeneity (Mood, 2010), the analyses are based on linear regression models, estimated using STATA 13.

The main independent variable refers to the difference between the actual age and the normative age for leaving the parental home. This variable is based on retrospective information about the year in which individuals moved out of the parental home, based on the question "When did you move away from your parental home for the first time?". The

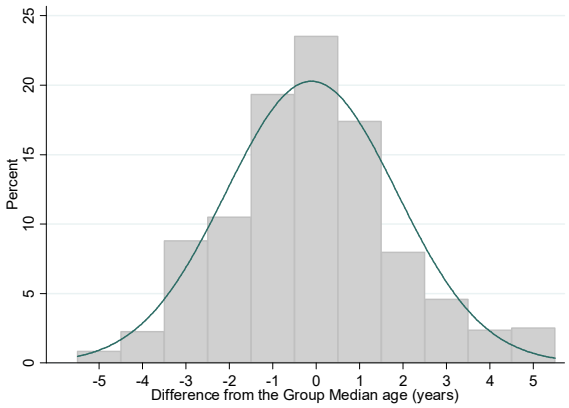
leaving-home transition is considered to start at age 14 and end at age 50, with 32 individuals who fall outside of this selection criterion being excluded. The normative age was defined as the median age at leaving the parental home within a specific group. According to previous research (Dribe and Stanfors, 2002), 18 social groups were defined according to birth cohort group (1925-50, 1951-68, 1969-91), type of home town (born in a city, including Stockholm, Malmö, and Göteborg), sex, and immigration background (having at least one parent born in a non-Nordic country). Interestingly, the median age at leaving home varies only little over time. Among adult children with both parents born in Sweden or another Nordic country, the median age at leaving home is equal to 20 for men and 19 for women regardless of cohort group. This picture is slightly different for adult children born in a city: the median age of nest-leaving is 21 for adult sons and daughters born before 1950, and it is equal to 20 for those born after 1950. Among children with at least one parent born in a non-Nordic country, it is equal to 20 for women, 22 for men born before 1969 and 20 for men born between 1969 and 1991. Despite the presence of individuals who left the parental home as early as 8 years before or as late as 28 years after the group median age, more than 90% of the variability of the age at moving out is included between the values -5 and 5 years. To have at least one hundred respondents for each category, I decided to recode extreme values of the Difference from the Group Median age (DGM) equal to -5 or 5 (see Graph 3.1a and b). To check the reliability of this procedure, I excluded outliers exceeding the range ±5 from the analysis and the results were similar to those presented below. It is noteworthy that the variable DGM is better suited to test Hypothesis 2, about age norms, than the first hypothesis, suggesting a linear relationship between age at nest-leaving and intergenerational frequency of contact. By using age at leaving home, ranging from 14 to 50 years, instead of DGM, our results remain similar, however.

Furthermore, I computed a quadratic measure of DGM to test the hypothesis that an extended co-residence may be linked to a violation of parental expectations, affecting negatively the frequency of contact. For this purpose DGM was rescaled by adding 5 to each value (*i.e.* the original DGM scale of -5 to 5 was transformed into 0 to 10) and then squared.

GRAPH 3.1a Distribution of DGM (Sons)



GRAPH 3.1b Distribution of DGM (Daughters)



Childhood family climate is measured by means of three indicators: parental divorce/separation, parent-child conflict and inter-parental conflict. First, divorce/separation during childhood/adolescence was coded as a dummy variable, indicating that children did not live with their biological parents during the child's entire adolescence (up to age 16) as a result of family dissolution. I also include an indicator for those who "lived without one or both parents for other reasons". These reasons mainly involve children not having grown up with one parent because the parent in question was deceased (114 dyads) and parents who never lived together (122 dyads). Second, conflict between the parent and the child is measured by means of the retrospective question: "Was there any serious friction between you and your biological mother/father?" Third, a similar question was used as an indicator of frictions between the biological parents. It is important to note that retrospective information about childhood family climate might be biased by current patterns of family interactions. People tend to reevaluate past experiences in the light of their current situation. To check the reliability of information about childhood, I compared answers given by the same individual in the first and in the second waves. When considering only the panel component (2,569 dyads), adult children who changed their answers regarding conflicts with parents and/or inter-parental tensions correspond to 5.1% (n=132) of the sample. In the following analyses, the conflict variables are used as they were reported by interviewees. However, I have also checked the results by considering those respondents who changed their answers about having conflicts as both having and not having conflicts, and the findings appear to be robust.

TABLE 3.1 Sample characteristics

	Men			Women		
	% or mean	Range	S.D.	% or mean	Range	S.D.
Frequency of face-to-face contact						
Several times a week	21.7			21.3		
Once a week	23.6			22.9		
1-3 times a month	29.8			29.2		
Less than monthly	24.9			26.6		
DGM	5.0	0-10	2.4	5.0	0-10	2.0
Wave 2010	43.8	0-1		43.2	0-1	
Age	37.9	19-74	11.3	37.9	19-74	11.3
N. of siblings	1.1	0-4	1.8	1.1	0-4	1.9
Living in a city	16.4	0-1		16.3	0-1	
Years of education	13.1	6-21	2.8	13.4	6-21	2.8
Marital status						
Living with a partner	68.1			73.5		
Single	28.1			20.8		
Divorced	3.8			5.7		
Child<10	40.1	0-1		48.4	0-1	
Employment status						
Working	84.7			74.2		
Not working	9.0			16.4		
Student	6.3			9.4		
Parents' characteristics						
Sex (Father)	43.4			43.8		
Age	65.6	40-100	11.9	65.6	40-100	11.7
Education degree						
Low	62.2			61.9		
Medium	21.3			19.6		
High	16.5			18.5		
Nationality						
Swedish	90.3			90.7		
Other Nordic	3.6			3.3		
Non-Nordic	5.1			6.0		
Marital status						
Living with other parent	56.6			56.7		
Other partner	14.6			14.4		
Single	28.8			28.9		
Divorce/separation(>16)	12.7	0-1		12.2	0-1	
Childhood family climate						
Divorce/separation(<17)	15.6	0-1		16.3	0-1	
Lived without one or both parents for other reasons	4.0	0-1		4.7	0-1	
Inter-parental conflict	8.3	0-1		10.0	0-1	
Parent-child conflict	1.4	0-1		3.5	0-1	
Distance (log)	2.7	0-6.9	1.9	2.9	0-7.1	1.9

It should be noted that the survey has only interviewed the adult children (not the parents). Adult children tend to underestimate the frequency of intergenerational contacts and

are also more likely than their parents to perceive their conflicts with parents as being more frequent and severe (Silverstein and Giarrusso, 2010; Gerard *et al*., 2006). Although these discrepancies may produce biased estimates, the children's point of view may be a more appropriate basis for investigating the relationship between home-leaving age and later parent-child contacts, since leaving the parental home is mainly the child's decision.

A number of other control variables were included in the analysis. For the adult children, these were age, number of siblings (from 0 to 4 or more), living in a metropolitan area, marital status, having a child aged less than ten, years of education (from 6 to 21) and employment status. For instance, the marital status of children and the number of siblings have been recognized as constituting important factors that are correlated with nest-leaving age and the frequency of intergenerational contacts. Late home leavers are more likely to form a family of their own and will thus usually have less time to devote to parents than single offspring (Yahirun and Hamplová, 2014). Moreover, adult children from large families can share family responsibilities with their siblings, and may thus have greater freedom to move away at an early age and to maintain less frequent contacts with parents (Malmberg and Pettersson, 2007). The children's characteristics have been included in the analysis as possible confounding factors for these reasons. In a similar vein, a number of parental characteristics were also included: age, sex, birth country (Sweden, other Nordic country and non-Nordic country), marital status and level of education (see Table 3.1). Another important control variable is the time since nest-leaving. Since this variable is entirely defined by individual age at the time of the interview and the age at leaving home, the number of years since nest-leaving have been categorized into 3 groups: 0-5, 6-15, 16-38 years. Residential distance between parents and their adult children was measured in kilometers. The distribution of residential distance has been transformed using the base-ten logarithm to correct its skewed distribution. Since the association between residential distance and face-to-face contacts is not likely to be linear, other methods, e.g. using fraction polynomial regression models, adding a quadratic measure of distance and excluding outliers, were also tested, but the results were equivalent to those presented below.

Our analytical strategy consists of a step-wise addition of different predictors. This allows for the evaluation of changes in the coefficient for DGM when other variables are included. Models 1a and 1b include only DGM, years since nest-leaving, and age to predict the frequency of later intergenerational contacts in order to understand whether there is a

linear relationship between DGM and the frequency of later parent-child visits (*Hypothesis 1*). Models 2a-b add the quadratic measure of DGM to test for a parabolic association between the timing of leaving home and later contacts with parents (*Hypothesis 2*). Models 3a-b include the children's characteristics: age, number of siblings, living in a metropolitan area, marital status, having a child aged 9 or under, years of education, employment status, and the parents' characteristics: sex, birth country, level of education and marital status. This allows us to examine whether the coefficient for DGM remains significant after controlling for possible confounding factors. Models 4a-b include parental union dissolution, inter-parental conflict and parent-child conflict in childhood/adolescence as indicators of family climate during the period of intergenerational co-residence (*Hypothesis 3*). Models 5a-b take geographical distance into account in order to test for an indirect relationship between the deviation from a group-specific median age and later parent-child contacts (*Hypothesis 4*). Finally, I estimate mother-daughter, father-daughter, mother-son, and father-son dyads separately (*Hypothesis 5*).

3.4 Results

Table 3.2 presents multilevel linear probability models for the likelihood of at least weekly visits between adult sons and their parents. Model 1a shows a positive association between the deviation from a group-specific median age (DGM) and later parent-son visits. In order to test hypothesis 2, *i.e.* that early and late nest-leaving are linked to less frequent intergenerational contacts in later life, I include the quadratic measure of DGM in Model 2a. The coefficient for this measure is non-significant and close to zero and I thus conclude that this hypothesis is not supported. Model 3a shows that the likelihood of maintaining frequent contacts with parents increases with the deviation from a group-specific median age, even when controlling for the characteristics of parents and children. Consistent with hypothesis 1, in a given social group (birth cohort and region) each additional year of co-residence duration is associated with an increase of 2.8 percentage points in the probability of having at least weekly contacts with parents.

In Model 4a the positive link between DGM and the frequency of contacts is found even when controlling for parental union dissolution and inter-parental and parent-child conflicts. These indicators are considered to be crucial confounding factors with regard to the relationship between the age at leaving home and the frequency of parent-child visits in later

life. Nonetheless, our results suggest that the positive influence of DGM on later relationships is not driven by this selection effect to any major extent; the coefficient for the within-group age at leaving home decreases from 0.028 in Model 3a to 0.026 in Model 4a. Thus, in contrast to our hypothesis 3, indicators of childhood family climate have only a marginal effect in explaining the association between the within-group age at leaving home and later face-to-face contacts between parents and their adult children.

As regards childhood family climate, the average probability of having weekly visits with parents is 13 percentage points lower for adult sons who experienced a parental divorce in adolescence than for those from intact families. Moreover, considering that adolescents from dissolved families are more likely to experience family tensions, parental union dissolution and inter-parental and parent-child conflict may have cumulative negative effects on later relationships. This seems to be the case for adult sons who experienced tensions with their divorced parents during childhood or adolescence (Coef.= -0.22). Moreover, adult sons from dissolved families are less likely to maintain frequent intergenerational contact, but these long-term adverse consequences are not significantly stronger among re-partnered parents. Thus, as opposed to Kalmijn's (2013a) findings for the Netherlands, divorce and remarriage do not seem to have cumulative negative effects on parent-child contacts among Swedish families.

Model 5a shows that in each social group the age at leaving home is positively associated with later parent-son visits even when I include residential distance in the analysis. The coefficient for DGM decreases from 2.6 to 1.4 percentage points, suggesting that late home leavers are more likely to live near their parental home than adult sons who left their family of origin at an early age. Late home leavers not only have a higher propensity to reside close to parents, but also to visit them more often, given a certain residential distance. Notably, the association between indicators of childhood family climate and the frequency of later visits is partially mediated by geographical distance, suggesting that adult sons from distressed families distance themselves from parents by moving further away, but also by maintaining less frequent contacts with them given a certain residential distance.

To better understand the size of these effects, the predicted probabilities of having at least weekly visits with parents have been illustrated using graphs (see Graph 3.2a for adult sons).

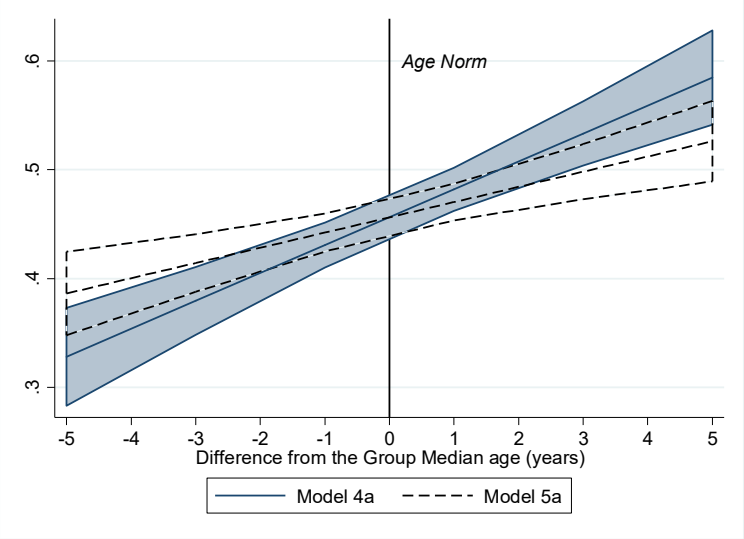
TABLE 3.2 Multilevel linear probability models for the likelihood of at least weekly visits with parents (Adult Sons).

	Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 3a		Model 4a		Model 5a	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Children's Characteristics										
DGM^2	-	-	-0.000	(0.001)	-	-	-	-	-	-
DGM	0.029**	(0.004)	0.030*	(0.015)	0.028**	(0.004)	0.026**	(0.004)	0.014**	(0.003)
Years since leaving (0-5)										
6-15	-0.062*	(0.028)	-0.062*	(0.028)	-0.048	(0.030)	-0.033	(0.030)	-0.006	(0.027)
16-38	-0.089*	(0.041)	-0.089*	(0.042)	-0.063	(0.045)	-0.044	(0.045)	-0.036	(0.040)
Age	0.000	(0.001)	0.000	(0.001)	-0.006**	(0.002)	-0.007**	(0.002)	-0.002	(0.002)
No. of siblings					-0.027**	(0.008)	-0.025**	(0.008)	-0.024**	(0.007)
Living in a metropolitan area					-0.132**	(0.020)	-0.125**	(0.020)	-0.070**	(0.017)
Marital status (Living with a partner)										
Single					0.062**	(0.022)	0.062**	(0.022)	0.039*	(0.020)
Divorced					-0.004	(0.041)	-0.004	(0.040)	0.022	(0.036)
Having a child<10					0.033	(0.020)	0.031	(0.020)	0.027	(0.018)
Years of education					-0.030**	(0.003)	-0.030**	(0.003)	-0.011**	(0.003)
Employment status (Working)										
Not working					0.016	(0.029)	0.032	(0.029)	0.039	(0.026)
Student					-0.211**	(0.037)	-0.214**	(0.037)	-0.164**	(0.033)
Parents' Characteristics										
Father					-0.029**	(0.009)	-0.024**	(0.009)	-0.013	(0.008)
Age					0.004**	(0.001)	0.003*	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)
Birth country (Sweden)										
Other Nordic country					0.008	(0.036)	0.004	(0.036)	-0.002	(0.032)
Non-Nordic country					0.131**	(0.034)	0.136**	(0.034)	0.100**	(0.030)
Education (Low)										
Medium					-0.015	(0.015)	-0.015	(0.015)	-0.016	(0.014)
High					-0.062**	(0.018)	-0.063**	(0.018)	-0.045**	(0.016)
Marital status (Living with other parent)										
Re-partnered					-0.119**	(0.025)	-0.038	(0.031)	-0.018	(0.028)
Single					-0.048*	(0.021)	0.015	(0.025)	0.013	(0.022)
Divorce/separation (>16)					-0.078**	(0.030)	-0.135**	(0.034)	-0.099**	(0.030)
Childhood family climate										
Divorce/separation (<17)							-0.132**	(0.033)	-0.084**	(0.029)
Inter-parental conflict							-0.045	(0.033)	-0.050+	(0.028)
Parent-child conflict							-0.219**	(0.050)	-0.188**	(0.045)

Lived without one or both parents for other reasons							-0.101*	(0.042)	-0.062+	(0.037)
Distance (log)									-0.128**	(0.004)
Constant	0.375**	(0.041)	0.373**	(0.054)	0.861**	(0.075)	0.963**	(0.077)	0.986**	(0.067)
σ level 3	0.333	(0.011)	0.333	(0.011)	0.290	(0.011)	0.287	(0.011)	0.209	(0.011)
σ level 2	0.266	(0.009)	0.266	(0.009)	0.266	(0.009)	0.266	(0.009)	0.259	(0.009)
Observations	4,433		4,433		4,433		4,433		4,433	
N. of sons	1,905		1,905		1,905		1,905		1,905	

Note: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1

GRAPH 3.2a Predicted probabilities of at least weekly visits with parents according to the difference from the group median age. Estimates from Model 4a and 5a for sons (Table 3.2).



GRAPH 3.2b Predicted probabilities of at least weekly visits with parents according to the difference from the group median age. Estimates from Models 4b and 5b for daughters (Table 3.3).

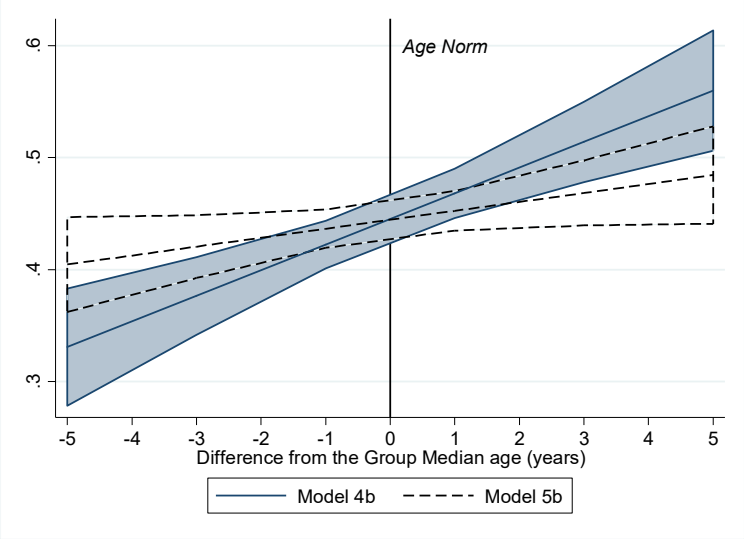


Table 3.3 presents identical regression models, but now predicting the frequency of visits between adult daughters and their parents. As was the case with the models focused on sons, I find a positive relationship between the within-group age at leaving home and later interactions (Model 1b) and this relationship is not curvilinear (Model 2b). This finding, again, provides no support for hypothesis 2, i.e. that late departures from the parental home negatively affect later parent-child relationships. I do find support for hypothesis 1, however, which predicts a positive and linear association between the within-group age at leaving home and later face-to-face contacts. This hypothesis holds true even when controlling for a large number of parental and child characteristics (Model 3b).

In Model 4b, by adding past experiences of family dissolution and conflict, which once again are themselves negatively associated with the current frequency of intergenerational contacts, the coefficient for the within-group age at leaving home (DGM) is only marginally reduced, from 2.5 to 2.3 percentage points, but still remains strongly significant. This finding does not support hypothesis 3. As was the case with sons, adult daughters from dissolved families and families characterized by severe conflict are less likely to maintain frequent intergenerational contacts. Both inter-parental (Coef.=-0.07) and parent-child (Coef.=-0.16) tensions during childhood and adolescence seem to be carried over into later life, and are negatively associated with later parent-adult daughter contacts. Consistent with Aquilino's (1997) findings, earlier patterns of parent-child interaction and conflicts are associated with later relations.

Model 5b shows that the association between the duration of co-residence and later face-to-face contacts for daughter-parent dyads is almost entirely mediated by residential distance. Controlling for the structural opportunities for maintaining personal contacts, the coefficient for co-residence duration decreases from 2.4 to 0.8 percentage points, and it remains significant only at the 10 percent level. In line with hypothesis 4, female early home leavers are more likely to move greater distances, and, for this reason, visit their parents less frequently compared to late home leavers who tend to reside in or return to a place near the family of origin.

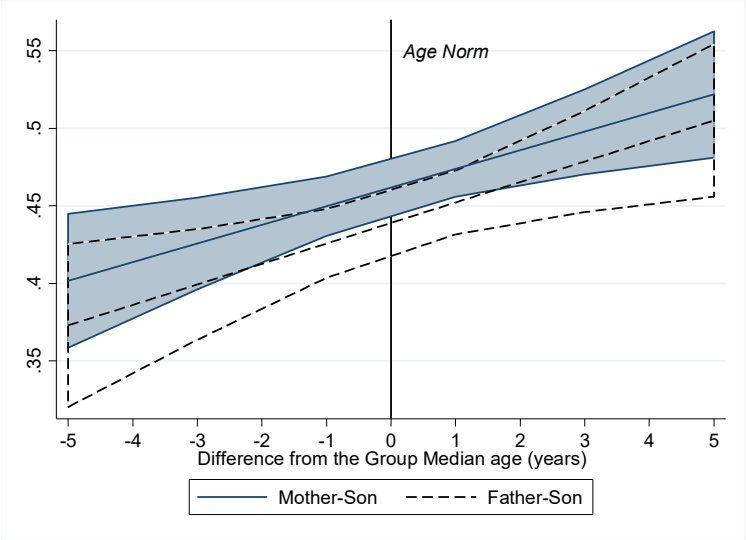
TABLE 3.3 Multilevel linear probability models for the likelihood of at least weekly visits with parents (Adult Daughters).

	Model 1b		Model 2b		Model 3b		Model 4b		Model 5b	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Children's Characteristics										
DGM^2	-	-	-0.000	(0.002)	-	-	-	-	-	-
DGM	0.025**	(0.005)	0.026	(0.018)	0.025**	(0.005)	0.023**	(0.005)	0.008†	(0.004)
Years since leaving (0-5)										
6-15	-0.003	(0.030)	-0.003	(0.030)	-0.030	(0.033)	-0.021	(0.033)	0.043	(0.028)
16-38	-0.077†	(0.041)	-0.077†	(0.042)	-0.122*	(0.049)	-0.105*	(0.049)	-0.036	(0.042)
Age	0.001	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)	-0.003	(0.002)	-0.004*	(0.002)	-0.003	(0.002)
No. of siblings					-0.020*	(0.008)	-0.017*	(0.008)	0.002	(0.007)
Living in a metropolitan area					-0.116**	(0.020)	-0.111**	(0.020)	-0.067**	(0.016)
Marital status (Living with a partner)										
Single					-0.016	(0.023)	-0.012	(0.023)	-0.026	(0.019)
Divorced					0.032	(0.035)	0.035	(0.035)	-0.016	(0.030)
Having a child<10					0.078**	(0.020)	0.079**	(0.020)	0.056**	(0.017)
Years of education					-0.020**	(0.003)	-0.020**	(0.003)	-0.006*	(0.003)
Employment status (Working)										
Not working					0.018	(0.023)	0.025	(0.023)	0.036†	(0.020)
Student					-0.121**	(0.032)	-0.119**	(0.031)	-0.075**	(0.027)
Parents' Characteristics										
Father					-0.083**	(0.010)	-0.082**	(0.010)	-0.066**	(0.009)
Age					0.002	(0.002)	0.001	(0.002)	0.002	(0.001)
Birth country (Sweden)										
Other Nordic country					0.008	(0.038)	0.019	(0.038)	-0.002	(0.033)
Non-Nordic country					0.092**	(0.033)	0.099**	(0.033)	0.066*	(0.028)
Education (Low)										
Medium					-0.006	(0.016)	-0.005	(0.016)	-0.002	(0.014)
High					-0.010	(0.019)	-0.009	(0.019)	0.009	(0.017)
Marital status (Living with other parent)										
Re-partnered					-0.108**	(0.026)	-0.051	(0.032)	-0.060*	(0.028)
Single					0.048*	(0.021)	0.096**	(0.025)	0.055*	(0.021)
Divorce/separation (>16)					-0.064*	(0.031)	-0.106**	(0.036)	-0.065*	(0.030)
Childhood family climate										
Divorce/separation (<17)							-0.085*	(0.035)	-0.065*	(0.029)
Inter-parental conflict							-0.069*	(0.032)	-0.033	(0.026)
Parent-child conflict							-0.162**	(0.039)	-0.144**	(0.034)
Lived without one or both parents for other reasons							-0.046	(0.041)	-0.034	(0.034)

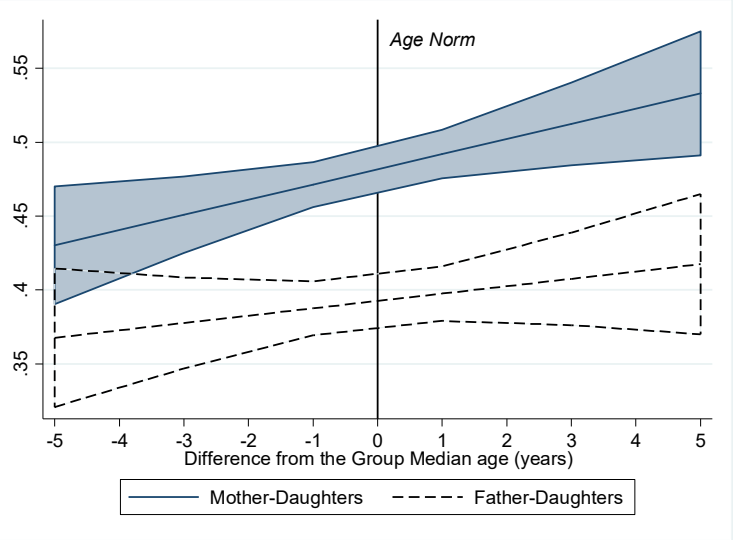
Distance (log)									-0.139**	(0.004)
Constant	0.336**	(0.043)	0.335**	(0.062)	0.850**	(0.080)	0.929**	(0.082)	1.015**	(0.069)
σ level 3	0.342	(0.011)	0.342	(0.011)	0.316	(0.011)	0.315	(0.011)	0.211	(0.011)
σ level 2	0.236	(0.010)	0.236	(0.010)	0.240	(0.010)	0.239	(0.010)	0.234	(0.009)
Observations	4,335		4,335		4,335		4,335		4,335	
N. of sons	1,853		1,853		1,853		1,853		1,853	

Note: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1

GRAPH 3.3a Predicted probabilities of at least weekly visits with mothers and fathers according to the difference from the group median age. Estimates for sons (Table 3.4)



GRAPH 3.3b Predicted probabilities of at least weekly visits with mothers and fathers according to the difference from the group median age. Estimates for daughters (Table 3.4)



To test hypothesis 5, regarding heterogeneity across dyads, separate models have been estimated for mother-daughter and father-daughter dyads, as well as for mother-son and father-son dyads. Table 3.4 shows that nest-leaving age is significantly associated with the frequency of contacts in both mother-son and father-son relationships. Among adult daughters, the age at leaving the parental home is not significantly correlated with the frequency of visits to fathers, whereas the probability of having weekly contacts with mothers is 1 percentage point higher for each additional year of co-residence (see also Graphs 3.3a and 3.3b). This finding provides only partial support for our hypothesis 5, i.e. that staying longer in the parental home is more beneficial for the relationship with the same-sex than with the opposite-sex parent.

TABLE 3.4 Linear probability model for the likelihood of at least weekly visits with parents. Clustered Standard Errors.

	Mother-Son		Father-Son		Mother-Daughter		Father-Daughter	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
DGM	0.012**	(0.004)	0.013**	(0.005)	0.010*	(0.005)	0.005	(0.005)
Constant	0.989**	(0.083)	1.122**	(0.094)	0.919**	(0.081)	0.887**	(0.094)
Observations	2,511		1,922		2,436		1,899	
R-squared	0.354		0.359		0.404		0.360	

Note: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1 Control variables are those presented in Models 5a and 5b (Tables 3.2 and 3.3), including parents' and children's characteristics, indicators of childhood family climate and geographical distance.

3.5 Discussion

Much is known about the consequences of the leaving-home transition for later life course outcomes, such as educational attainment, family formation and economic risks. Less is known about the link between the age at leaving home and subsequent parent-child relationships. This chapter provides evidence on this phenomenon by focusing on nest-leaving behaviors, childhood family climate and face-to-face contacts among Swedish families.

In line with previous findings showing that co-residence duration is positively associated with later intergenerational contacts (Leopold, 2012), my results support the hypothesis that, comparing young adults in the same birth cohort and social group, the time spent by children in the parental home promotes face-to-face interactions in later life also in Sweden. For almost all dyads, i.e., mother-son, mother-daughter, and father-son, the duration of co-residence is significantly associated with intergenerational contacts, thus supporting our

first hypothesis. The only exception is the father-daughter dyad where the positive association does not reach statistical significance.

Overall, the results do not provide evidence for our second hypothesis, thus suggesting that violating social norms about the "right" age to leave home is not negatively related to intergenerational contacts in later life. The literature on intergenerational ambivalence underlines that parents and their children can feel mixed emotions of solidarity and conflict simultaneously (Pillemer and Suitor, 2002). On account of this, further analyses are needed to understand whether an extended co-residence is associated with both frequent parent-child contacts and conflict.

The results reveal that in a given social group and historical time the significant association between the duration of co-residence and the frequency of later parent-daughter visits is mediated by the geographical distance between generations. Late home leavers are more prone to relocate closer to their parents, maintaining frequent contacts with parents in later life. As predicted by hypothesis 4, family responsibility and attitudes promoted by previous experiences of co-residence tend to operate via daughters' geographical movement patterns. This is consistent with Malmberg and Pettersson's (2007) findings, which suggest that in Sweden daughters' responsibilities toward parents affect their geographical mobility. However, separate analyses for mothers and fathers have shown that given a certain distance, the time spent by daughters in the parents' home is positively correlated with the frequency of contacts with mothers. In line with previous research (Aquilino and Supple, 1991) and our hypothesis 5, the results indicate that mothers and daughters may share more activities, interests and attitudes during intergenerational co-residence, fostering mutual involvement in later relationships. Mother-daughter relationships are generally characterized by a high degree of emotional attachment and a deeper understanding (Rossi and Rossi, 1990), which seem to be reinforced through co-residence experiences. This argument suggests a complex interplay between parent-child similarity, gender and co-residence duration in the study of intergenerational relationships in later life.

To at least partly account for social selection processes characterizing late and early home leavers, I examined family dissolution and inter-parental and parent-child conflicts as indicators of childhood family climate. The results show that these three predictors are important for the frequency of adult child-parent interactions but play little role in mediating the association between the duration of co-residence and the frequency of later parent-child

visits. Thus our hypothesis 3, which posited childhood family climate as a possible mechanism behind this association, failed to garner much support. Following the inclusion of indicators of family dissolution and conflict in childhood and adolescence, the effect of within-group age at nest-leaving decreases only marginally. Given this finding, it is worth noting that my measures of family conflict are based on the presence/absence of tensions between family members when the child was aged 0-16. In order to understand how intergenerational co-residence was experienced by children and parents, the intensity of conflict would probably have been relevant. The way the survey question is formulated, however, with explicit reference to serious friction, makes me confident that respondents are not only referring to occasional conflicts during childhood. The results suggest that past experiences of family dissolution and conflicts are carried over into later relationships and they correspond to the findings of extensive research indicating that family dissolution has long-term negative consequences on parent-adult child relationships (see, e.g., Kalmjin, 2013). In line with previous findings on American families (Amato and Booth, 1991, 1996; Parrott and Bengtson, 1999), earlier inter-parental tensions affect the amount of later contacts between adult children and their parents also in Sweden. Earlier patterns of parent-child interaction and conflicts are also associated with the nature of later relationships and they may, of course, also be an indication of current relationships between the adult child and the parent. Our results indicate that parent-child frictions in childhood constitute a disincentive for adult children to interact with parents. This suggests some degree of continuity in parent-child relationships from adolescence to adulthood.

To conclude, the results presented here indicate that earlier experiences of intergenerational co-residence tend to shape later parent-child interactions, even when childhood family climate and other possible confounding factors are taken into account. In a given social group, the time spent under the same roof may give family members the opportunity to share activities, interests and attitudes about the importance of family bonds, and these experiences continue to play a role in family interactions during adulthood. I would argue that intergenerational co-residence tends to "instill" family attitudes as a basis for later family interactions, rather than being a mere consequence of a positive family environment. Indeed, this positive view of extended co-residence does not seem to be altered by family dissolution and tension during childhood and adolescence.

A question that remains unanswered by the present study is whether other dimensions of

intergenerational solidarity are affected by nest-leaving processes. In particular, examining the quality of parent-child relations may contribute to an understanding of whether late home leaving produces inter-personal tensions and other consequences in later life. Another interesting line for future research would be to explore whether changing economic conditions, e.g. recession and an increasing lack of housing, and socio-economic and demographic shifts, e.g. later labor market entry and union and family formation, contribute to increasing the heterogeneity of co-residence experiences. Will young adults who are forced to stay longer in the parental home, and their parents, develop a resentment for co-residence, reducing their willingness to engage in subsequent parent-child relationships, or will these altered conditions instead serve to strengthen long-term intergenerational interactions?

Appendix to the Chapters 2 and 3

Differences Between Italy and Sweden in Contact Frequency

A question that arises from the previous two chapters is whether the association between the age at leaving home and later parent-child contact is different in Italy and Sweden. The time spent under the same roof represents, as noted, an occasion to build stronger intergenerational bonds. Overall this seems to hold true in both Italy and Sweden. However, Reher (1998) suggests that intergenerational co-residence is more important in a culture of strong family ties than in weak family systems. Italian adult children may feel culturally obliged to maintain frequent contact with parents, when they have previously lived in the parental home for a long period of time. A prolonged co-residence and frequent in-person interaction reflect a normative pattern of family relationships in Italy. By contrast, an early exit from parents' home may indicate weak family ties in a context in which maintaining strong family relations is regarded as normative (Bordone, 2009).

Moreover, Soldo *et al.* (1990) argue that in order to reciprocate the previous financial help received, adult children feel obligated to visit their parents more often. Equally, late home leavers may be more likely to support and maintain frequent contact with their parents in order to repay them for providing a home base. This reasoning assumes that an extended co-residence occurs to meet the needs of children who experience problems in making a successful transition to adult roles (Ward and Spitze, 2007). When parents support their children's educational paths and labor market transitions, allowing them to stay at home longer, they would expect to receive something back. If this is the case, the universal norm of reciprocity suggests that late home leavers will maintain frequent contact with parents in both Italy and Sweden (Gouldner, 1960). However, in Sweden adult children may feel less obliged

to have frequent interactions with parents in order to repay. The reciprocity pact appears to be more relevant in a context where public services are scarce and relatives are legally expected to provide support (Finch and Mason, 1993; Saraceno, 2010; Viazzo 2010). According to Micheli (2012), Italian parents maintain their children economically for longer, and this form of support will be reciprocated when their parents are old. A prolonged co-residence might be culturally seen as a form of support that should be reciprocated. Following from this, I would expect that *the duration of intergenerational co-residence has a stronger association with later parent-child interactions in Italy than in Sweden*.

A.1 Data and Method

The empirical analysis addresses country differences, by using an unique database, namely the first two waves of the *Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe* (SHARE 2004 and 2007). SHARE gathers information about people aged 50 and over and their children (up to four). Differently from the previous two chapters, here the data offers the opportunity to examine different parent-child relations within the same family. Thus, the following analysis is carried on parent-child dyads and adopts the old parents' point of view. Since leaving the parental home occurs at a late age in Italy, young adults may still live in the family of origin when their parents are 50. This may lead to biased estimates. To avoid sample selection bias, the sample is confined to respondents aged 65 years or older whose children tend to have already left home (more than 85% in Italy, and 98% in Sweden).

A.1.1 *Measures*

Unlike the analyses presented in the empirical studies I and II, face-to-face and other types of interaction are not distinguished in SHARE data. Parent-child contact is classified into seven categories which are collapsed into four: daily, several times a week, weekly and less than weekly. In line with previous literature (Hank, 2007), the frequency of parent-child contact is much lower in Sweden than in Italy: 53% of Italian children report having daily contact with their old parents, while this proportion is about 17% in Sweden (see Table A.1).

With regard to the independent variable, the age at nest-leaving is divided in five categories, taking into account its distribution within each country. In Italy these five categories are: 16-20 years old for "very early leavers", 21-23 for "early leavers", 24-29 for those who leave home "on time", 30-31 for "late leavers", 32-38 for "very late leavers". In

Sweden early home leavers are those who leave the parental home before being 19 (very early 14-17 and early 18), while adult children who move out of the family of origin at a later age than 21 are regarded as late home leavers (late leavers 22-23, very late leavers 24-29). Thus, being "on time" refers to young adults aged 19-21 at the time of leaving home. These categories are generated in order to have a large category "on time" comprising about 50% of individuals. To check the robustness of the results, different specifications of this variable were tested, *i.e.* using the age at nest-leaving as a continuous variable. The sign and the significance level of this association remain equal in both analyses (see Graph 1).

Other variables are included in the multivariate analysis. An important factor is the distance between parents and their adult children which is measured by four categories: 5km or less, 5-25km, 25-100km and >100km. As noted in the previous chapters, the influence of the age at leaving home may be mediated by geographical distance. Late home leavers are usually more attached in their local community and, thus, tend to relocate close to their parents' house. By contrast, early home leavers are more likely to move far away from the parental home, maintaining fewer contacts with parents in later life (Mulder and Clarck, 2002; Leopold *et al*., 2012). It is also important to note that the relation between geographical distance and contact frequency may be endogenous. For example, adult daughters in Malmberg and Pettersson's (2007) study were likely to return near their old parents in order to provide assistance and have frequent family interactions. Thus, these estimates are conservative because the effect of geographical distance on contact frequency may be partly due to feelings of obligations and preferences which are developed during the period of co-residence. Moreover, Rogerson *et al.* (1993) have shown that residential spatial moves are usually affected by the time since individuals have left the parental home. Late departures may be related to close residential proximity and less frequent contact, because of less time for additional spatial moves. I take into account this hypothesis, by including the time since leaving the parental home in the analysis (3 categories: 0-10, 11-20, 21-45 years).

TABLE A.1 Sample characteristics

	Italy			Sweden		
	% or mean	Range	S.D.	% or mean	range	S.D.
Frequency of contact						
Daily	53.4			17.4		
Several times a week	25.4			38.1		
Weekly	12.8			28.4		
Less than weekly	8.4			16.1		
Children's characteristics						
Age at nest-leaving						
Very early leavers	13.0			13.2		
Early leavers	16.1			15.1		
"On time"	45.0			45.2		
Late leavers	9.9			14.0		
Very late leavers	15.9			12.5		
Time since leaving home						
0-10	30.7			6.0		
11-20	36.6			30.0		
21-45	32.7			64.0		
Age	43.2	27-62	7.3	44.1	19-74	8.3
Sex (Female)	51	0-1		50.0	0-1	
Highly educated	15.6	0-1		34.7	0-1	
Living with a partner	89.6	0-1		78.2	0-1	
Divorced	3.2	0-1		7.9	0-1	
Child<7	15.7	0-1		13.4	0-1	
Not working	13.9	0-1		23.2	0-1	
Stepchild	1.34	0-1		12.9	0-1	
Parents' characteristics						
Sex (Mother)	51.6	0-1		48.7	0-1	
Age	72.9	65-100	6.1	73.5	65-100	6.9
Living in a city	15.9	0-1		31.6	0-1	
Education degree						
Low	86.1			62.4		
Medium	10.2			20.0		
High	3.7			17.6		
Marital status						
Living with a partner	78.7			76.2		
Divorced	1.1			6.4		
Other single	20.3			17.4		
Poor health	19.6	1-0		16.1	1-0	
N. of children	2.7	1-5	0.9	2.7	1-5	0.9
Distance						
<5Km	52.5			27.6		
5-25	22.1			23.1		
25-100	10.2			18.6		
>100	15.2			30.6		

Children's characteristics are: age, sex, education, living with a partner, being divorced, having a child aged 6 or less, working, having a stepparent. The association between nest-

leaving age and later contact with parents may be partly mediated by these characteristics. Highly educated adult children are more likely to be early home leavers and having less intensive family interactions in later life. Late home leavers are more prone to form a stable union and having children. Adult children who live with a partner have also less time to interact with parents (Sarkisian and Gerstel, 2008), whereas having a young child may encourage parents to enact the grandparent role increasing the amount of visits between generations (Silverstein and Mareco, 2001). Thus, children's education and marital status are considered as mediating factors. Equally, parents' characteristics may be related to children's decision to leave the nest and the frequency of later parent-child interaction. For instance, stepchildren and those from dissolved families are found to leave the parental home at an early age. Henretta *et al.* (2014) point out that mothers make greater investment in their own biological children than in their stepchildren. For this reason, stepchildren may have relatively less contact with their parents in later life. Thus, early home leavers may have fewer contacts with parents because of confounding factors, such as parental union dissolution and re-partnering. Parents' characteristics include: sex, age, living in a city, education, marital status, health conditions and number of children.

With regard to the analytical strategy, the analysis is performed by the estimation of ordinal logistic regression models for Italy and Sweden separately. Then, in order to show the differences between the coefficients, I use a pooled model with interaction terms.

A.2 Results

Table 2 presents multivariate results for Italy and Sweden separately. In Italy (the first model) early home leavers (those who leave the parental home before age 20) are less likely to maintain frequent contact with their old parents in later life, compared to adult children who move out of the parental home "on time" or later. In turn, an extended period of intergenerational co-residence is associated with a higher propensity to interact with parents. This is consistent with the findings presented in Chapter 2, suggesting that the duration of co-residence tends to promote family involvement in later life. Similarly, in Sweden late home leavers (those who moved out after age 21) are more prone to interact frequently with their parents. But, adult children who leave the parental home at an early age (those who leave the parental home before age 19) are not differentiated from those who move out "on time" in their propensity to maintain family contact. This is partially different from what I found in

Chapter 3 (Empirical Study II), by using LNU data. Whereas the findings of the third chapter show a linear association between the duration of intergenerational co-residence and later parent-child contact, here only late home leavers exhibit a higher propensity to keep in touch with their parents in later life. This could be explained by differences in the two databases or by the different specifications of the variable regarding the age at leaving home. The Graph 1 shows the predicted probabilities of visiting parents more than once a week from a model in which the age at leaving home is considered as a continuous variable. Although the effect of nest-leaving age is linear by default, a little variation is shown between early home leavers who moved out of the parents' home before age 19 and those who leave the nest "on time" around age 20.

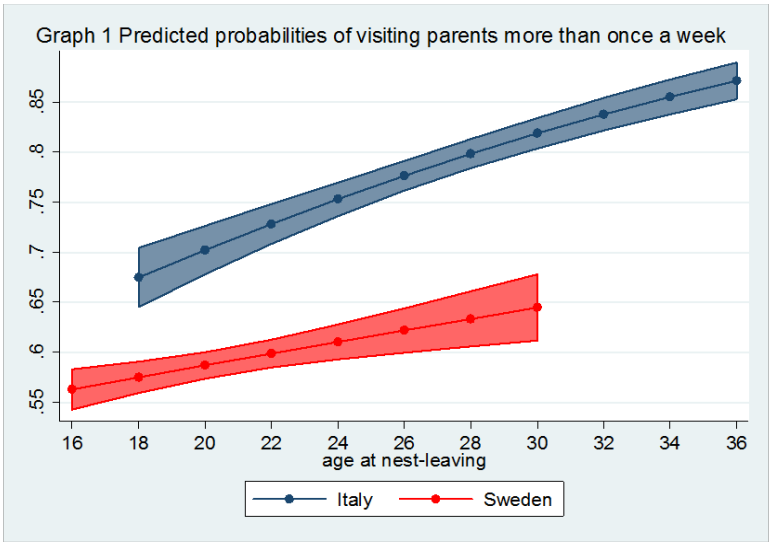
Finally, the complete model examines the frequency of parent-child contact in Italy and Sweden, by including interaction terms. Consistent with my hypothesis, the results show that the association between the age at nest-leaving and later interaction between old parents and their adult children tend to be stronger in Italy than in Sweden. As suggested by the literature (Micheli, 2012; Reher, 1998), prolonged periods of intergenerational co-residence are likely to encourage adult children to keep in touch with their old parents especially in a culture of strong family ties. This is opposed to Bordone's (2009) findings on the first wave of SHARE data (2004), indicating that the association between the duration of co-residence and later parent-child relationships in Italy and Sweden is mainly driven by differences in the level of proximity to parents. However, differently from her research, here I use two waves of SHARE data, and, most importantly, I adopt the parent-child dyad as unit of analysis instead of the relationship between older parents and their-first born child.

Despite of these differences, the results presented here reveal that in two extreme different contexts, an unique mechanism drives the influence of co-residence length over later relations. The longer the time spent in the parental home, the stronger the relation with parents in later life. Cross-country differences are also relevant: an extended co-residence has a greater influence on later parent-child relations in Italy than in Sweden.

TABLE A.2 Ordinal logistic regression model on the frequency of old parent-adult child contact in Italy and Sweden. Clustered standard errors.

	Italy		**Sweden**		**Overall**	
	O.R.	S.E.	O.R.	S.E.	O.R.	S.E.
Children's Characteristics						
Age at nest-leaving (*Ref.* "on time")						
Very early leavers	0.70**	(0.08)	0.95	(0.08)	1.02	(0.08)
Early leavers	0.90	(0.09)	0.93	(0.07)	0.96	(0.07)
Late leavers	1.23†	(0.13)	1.20*	(0.10)	1.16†	(0.09)
Very late leavers	1.58***	(0.18)	1.20*	(0.10)	1.09	(0.09)
Time since leaving home (*Ref.* 0-10)						
11-20	0.91	(0.10)	0.97	(0.13)	0.89	(0.07)
21-45	0.74†	(0.13)	0.85	(0.14)	0.74**	(0.08)
Age	0.99	(0.01)	0.97***	(0.01)	0.99**	(0.01)
Sex (Female)	1.77***	(0.12)	2.05***	(0.11)	1.92***	(0.08)
Highly educated	1.16	(0.12)	0.89†	(0.05)	1.01	(0.05)
Living with a partner	0.91	(0.11)	0.87†	(0.06)	0.90†	(0.05)
Divorced	1.13	(0.23)	0.83†	(0.09)	0.91	(0.08)
Having a child<7	1.18†	(0.11)	1.32***	(0.10)	1.26***	(0.07)
Not working	1.17	(0.28)	1.38†	(0.23)	1.31*	(0.18)
Stepchild	0.55†	(0.19)	0.59***	(0.06)	0.62***	(0.06)
Wave	1.11	(0.09)	0.93	(0.06)	1.00	(0.05)
Parents' characteristics						
Mother	1.03	(0.09)	1.15*	(0.08)	1.09	(0.05)
Age	0.99	(0.01)	1.02**	(0.01)	1.01	(0.01)
Living in a city	0.88	(0.09)	0.84*	(0.06)	0.85**	(0.05)
Education degree (*Ref.* Low)						
Medium	1.33*	(0.18)	0.94	(0.08)	1.05	(0.07)
High	1.53*	(0.28)	0.92	(0.08)	0.99	(0.07)
Marital status (*Ref.* Married)						
Divorced	0.43**	(0.13)	0.40***	(0.07)	0.42***	(0.06)
Other single	0.89	(0.09)	0.91	(0.08)	0.88†	(0.06)
Poor health	1.05	(0.10)	1.02	(0.10)	1.02	(0.07)
N. of children	0.79***	(0.03)	0.79***	(0.03)	0.79***	(0.02)
Distance(*Ref.*<5Km)						
5-25	0.26***	(0.02)	0.48***	(0.04)	0.35***	(0.02)
25-100	0.17***	(0.02)	0.32***	(0.03)	0.24***	(0.02)
>100	0.10***	(0.01)	0.17***	(0.01)	0.13***	(0.01)
Italy (*Ref.* Sweden)					2.57***	(0.20)
Italy X Age at nest-leaving						
Very early X Italy					0.59***	(0.08)
Early X Italy					0.90	(0.11)
Late X Italy					1.09	(0.15)
Very late X Italy					1.52**	(0.20)
Constant	0.01***	(0.01)	0.08***	(0.04)	0.05***	(0.02)
Constant	0.04***	(0.02)	0.44†	(0.19)	0.24***	(0.08)
Constant	0.17**	(0.10)	3.52**	(1.54)	1.47	(0.49)
N. of respondents	2,116		2,416		4,532	
Observations	4,336		5,415		9,751	

Appendix: *Differences between Italy and Sweden in contact frequency*



Note: these estimates come from a pooled model with interaction between country (Italy and Sweden) and the age at leaving home (as linear variable).

Chapter 4

Study III

The Timing of Nest-Leaving and Intergenerational Transfers of Money in Later Life

A different version of this chapter has been presented at ECSR conference, Tallinn, 2015.

4.1 Introduction

A large body of literature focuses on factors affecting the downward flow of economic resources from parents to their adult children. Intergenerational financial support is often related to the resources and needs of parents and their children, such as income and wealth, employment status and occupation, and marital status and parenthood (Bengtson, 2001; Hogan and Eggebeen, 1990; Kohli and Künemund, 2003). Interestingly, far less attention has been paid to past family events in early adulthood as predictors of parents' transfer behaviors.

During early adulthood, young people make important life decisions regarding independent living, education, work, and family formation. Leaving the parental home is a central marker of adult status and may have profound consequences for later life chances. Early departure from the parental home is found to have long-term negative effects on educational careers (Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1993), economic conditions during early adulthood (Aassve *et al.*, 2006; Kauppinen *et al.*, 2014), and later patterns of solidarity between parents and their adult children (Bordone, 2009; Leopold, 2012b). Young adults who leave their parental home at an early age generally face high risks of poverty and have less resources to invest in their education and future economic success (Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1998). The direction of this association is, however, disputed[8]. Some scholars find that with regard to southern European countries, a long permanence in the parental home has a negative impact on educational attainment (Billari and Tabellini, 2008) and lifetime economic opportunities (Alesina and Giuliano, 2007; Alessie *et al*., 2005; Sironi and Billari, 2015). In this context, a late transition to independence tends to reduce the number of job experiences, individual goals, and motivations toward work, which suggests that late home leavers may find difficulties in detaching themselves from parental resources. This situation may evoke the popular image of co-residing adult children as "clumsy, overgrown babies", who are too lazy to acquire maturity and independence from parents (Billari and Tabellini, 2008). Therefore, It is important to examine whether in different societies the timing of leaving the family nest affects later chances of receiving financial support from parents, and whether this association acquires a particular meaning in Southern Europe.

[8] The relation between the age at leaving home and later economic opportunities, including occupation and income, is likely to be a reversed U-shaped association. The left part of this curve can be observed only in Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries, where people tend to leave the parental home early. By contrast, the implications of a late transition out of the parental home can be observed only in Southern European countries (Sironi and Billari, 2015).

In a previous study on SHARE data, Leopold (2012) has shown that late home leavers maintain higher levels of intergenerational family solidarity throughout their life courses, than their siblings who leave the family nest at an earlier age. The author also found a non-significant association between the timing of leaving home and intergenerational transfers of money. Building on Leopold's work, the present study aims to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon by comparing two extreme European contexts such as Italy and Sweden. By examining Italy and Sweden individually it is possible to understand whether the effect of co-residence length varies according to country-specific peculiarities. Late home-leaving may acquire a special meaning in Italy, where late home-leaving is typically associated with the perception of adult children as "clumsy, overgrown babies". Moreover, section 4.6 aims to extend this analysis to the whole European context, in order to understand whether the association between home-leaving age and parents' economic support varies across different intergenerational transfer regimes.

4.2 Background and Hypotheses

4.2.1 *Co-residence Length*

According to the family life course perspective, the timing and sequencing of life events have important consequences for later family relations (Elder, 1991; 1994). The transition to independence is an important step in the life course, when young adult children and their parents start to establish a relationship between two mature and autonomous adults (Aquilino, 2005; Bucx *et al.*, 2012); thus, as investigated in the previous chapters, later parent-child relations will be affected by nest-leaving processes. With regard to economic transfers from parents to their adult children, the association between nest-leaving age and the likelihood of receiving financial support may be explained by different mechanisms, *i.e.* parent-child closeness, family attitudes and parental responsibilities.

First, living in the same household may offer the opportunity for parents and their children to share interests, attitudes, and values (Aquilino and Supple, 1991), thus fostering parent-child closeness in later life. Arguably, the longer the period of intergenerational co-residence, the higher the opportunity for sharing activities and interests with parents. These feelings of closeness may be translated into greater opportunities of receiving economic support from parents. The literature has, indeed, shown that feelings of affection between

parents and their children are correlated with supportive behaviors between generations (Parrott and Bengtson, 1999). It is also important to note that parent-child closeness may constitute a selection effect, rather than being a consequence of intergenerational co-residence. Some scholars suggest that the quality of parent-child relationships has significant influence on young adults' decision to leave the family of origin (Bonifazi *et al*., 1999; Santarelli and Cottone, 2009). However, as investigated in the second Chapter of the present thesis, inter-parental and parent-child conflicts play only a marginal role in explaining the association between nest-leaving age and intergenerational contact. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that co-residence length is not a mere consequence of pervious family climate.

Second, family attitudes may be sources of selection in nest-leaving processes, as well as consequences of the period of intergenerational co-residence. With regard to social selection, "pro-family" attitudes and norms may affect the timing of acquiring residential independence and may also have a positive influence on parents' propensity of providing financial support. In other words, common family characteristics, such as familialistic attitudes, may produce biased estimates in the association between home-leaving age and the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents. A possible solution is to adopt a within-family approach. This strategy eliminates the bias due to common family characteristics such as family norms and provides a deeper understanding of how parents allocate their resources among children (Kalmjin, 2013; Leopold, 2012; Suitor *et al*., 2006). By reducing possible selection biases, individual attitudes and norms are likely to be consequences of the period of co-residence. Goldscheider and Waite (1987) have shown that early residential autonomy makes young adults less family-oriented and changes their lifestyles and attitudes toward family relations. In turn, late home leavers tend to exhibit stronger pro-family attitudes, than those who leave the family of origin at an early age. Children who present stronger family attitudes may be more likely to receive financial assistance from parents, than their siblings who are less family-oriented. Kalmijn (2012) found that in the Netherlands parents are more prone to invest their economic resources in the child who present stronger feelings of responsibility, with the expectation of receiving future compensations. Hence, it can be hypothesized that *adult children who leave the parental home at late ages are more likely to receive financial assistance from parents, than their siblings who move out of the family of origin at an early age* (*Hypothesis 1*).

Third, it can be argued that the time spent under the same roof fosters parental responsibility and obligation to provide financial support to offspring. Parental responsibility to provide economic support refers to the generalized normative expectation that parents have the duty to support their children in need. Feelings of responsibility are defined as a stock of internalized social values that obligate family members to provide support when necessary (Silverstein and Conroy, 2009; Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997; Silverstein et al., 2006; 2012). Silverstein *et al*. (2012) argue that this stock of shared norms and feelings of responsibility is accumulated by children through social interaction during childhood and adolescence. Until children leave the family nest, parents are able to spend time with them, instilling the idea of supporting each other (Kalmijn, 2013c). This process of socialization is likely to be mutual for both children and their parents: a prolonged period of co-residence may expose not only children but also parents to a process of socialization that promotes family responsibilities and obligations (Leopold, 2012). As long as children live under the same roof, parents usually feel responsible toward them, by developing norms about supporting them in later life. This mutual process may increase not only late home leavers' chances to receive financial support, but also their propensity to provide practical help to their parents. Late home leavers may be more likely to exchange social and economic support with their parents than their siblings. Co-residence length may foster a simultaneous giving- and- receiving between parents and their children. Thus, it can be hypothesized that *the association between the age at leaving home and intergenerational financial transfers decreases or disappears when controlling for practical assistance given to parents (Hypothesis 2).*

4.2.2 Children's Age and the Time since Home-Leaving

Intergenerational transfers and family responsibilities are likely to change over adult children's life courses. The literature suggests that family support is a flexible resource responding to life course circumstances and needs (Bucx *et al*., 2012). Financial support that parents provide to their offspring has been found to be crucial in young adulthood when children are establishing their own household and careers in the labor market (*e.g.* Aquilino, 2005). As offspring grows older and their economic circumstances improve, intergenerational financial transfers decline (Cooney and Uhlenberg, 1992; Hogan and Eggebeen, 1990). Hartnett *et al.* (2013) have shown that the negative association between children's age and the likelihood of receiving financial assistance from parents is only partly explained by their

offspring's needs. This finding suggests that age norms prescribe when it is socially desirable for parents to give financial help and for offspring to accept such economic assistance. The authors argue that there is an age around which it is "too late" to give and accept financial assistance from parents. Thus, it is possible that the provision of cash transfers occurs when children are relatively young and when parents' help is perceived as socially acceptable.

Moreover, intergenerational financial transfers may be affected by the time young adults spend since home-leaving. For instance, some scholars suggest that residential distance tends to increase according to the time since leaving the parental home. In a given age group, early home leavers have additional time to make multiple spatial moves, which may increase residential distance from the parental home (Michielin and Mulder, 2007; Rogerson *et al.*, 1993). Following the same logic, late home leavers may have greater chances of receiving economic support from parents, because of their shorter period of independent living. For instance, Mencarini and Tanturri (2006) have shown that 65% of Italian young adults who leave their parental home receive financial assistance from their parents in the first housing. Parents' economic help is a critical source of support for young adult children who are establishing an independent residence. Thus, it can be hypothesized that *the association between nest-leaving age and parents' economic support decreases or disappears after controlling for the time since home-leaving (Hypothesis 3)*.

It is important to note that the association between the time since home-leaving and intergenerational transfers of money may be endogenous. Co-resident children may expect to be helped by parents when they decide to leave the family nest (Aquilino, 2005; Mencarini and Tanturri, 2006). Thus, young adults' decision to move out of the parental home may be affected by their expectations about parents' economic support. For example, compared to those of the working-class, upper class children may expect that their parents provide economic support to them during the transition out of the parental home. By comparing siblings within the same family, I partly take endogeneity into account.

4.2.3 *Other Control Variables: Children's Characteristics*

Hypothesis 3 suggests that the influence of nest-leaving age on later financial transfers decline as children improve their economic positions. Thus, children's characteristics, such as employment status, appear to be important factors that may mediate or moderate the link between nest-leaving decisions and parents' transfer behaviors. Researchers found that the

timing of leaving home is correlated with later economic conditions, such as employment and income (for Italy, Billari and Tabellini, 2008; for Sweden, Kauppinen *et al.*, 2014). In turn, these economic conditions are related to the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents. Altruism theories suggest, indeed, that children's needs are the most powerful predictors of intergenerational assistance (Attias-Donfut and Wolff, 2000; Kohli and Künemund, 2003). Moreover, children's educational attainment can be considered as a proxy of labor market opportunities and identifies a standard route out of the parental home − *i.e.*, early home-leaving to attend tertiary education. Furthermore, previous research has found that early and late home leavers follow different pathways of family formation (Goldscheider *et al*., 2014). Therefore, the positive association between the duration of co-residence and the propensity of parents to provide economic transfers may be partially mediated by children's employment, education, and marital status as indicators of financial need.

Research focusing on within-family differences underlines the importance of considering birth order. Lastborn children are likely to be the last to leave the family nest. Empting the nest may have a particular meaning for parents, probably affecting later parent-child relationships. The so-called "empty-nest syndrome" refers to a feeling loneliness and depression that occurs after children grow up and leave the parental home (Mitchell and Lovegreen, 2009). Because of these negative feelings, parents may expect that their lastborn children remain at home for longer. Moreover, parents who have multiple children tend to favor the firstborn child over the others. Previous research has shown that the firstborn child tends to be favored by parents because he/she can benefit from undivided attentions and a higher proportion of parental resources in early childhood (Emery, 2012; Suitor and Pillemer, 2007). As families become larger, sibling competition increases and children receive a decreasing proportion of resources. The later they join the family, the lower the proportion of parental resources. The literature has provided evidence of this argument in an early stage of the family life course. Furthermore, evolutionary biology emphasizes that parents usually see their first-born children as more mature and responsive, and thus they develop preferences for allocating their resources to them.

Stepchildren are often less likely to stay in the parental home for longer, and are also more likely to choose routes out of the parental home that are not supported financially by parents (Aquilino, 1991; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1998). In turn, parents have fewer normative obligations, more strained relations, and less contacts with their stepchildren than

with biological children (Ward and Spitze, 2007). For these reasons, previous research found that parents tend to favor their biological offspring over stepchildren, when they allocate financial resources among their children (Berry, 2008; Henretta *et al.*, 2014).

4.2.4 *Sweden and Italy*

The analysis has been carried out for two countries, namely Italy and Sweden. As noted, these two countries are two distinct settings in terms of nest-leaving behaviors and intergenerational financial transfers. Albertini *et al.* (2007) have shown that Italy and Spain are the countries where the frequency of financial gift is the lowest in Europe, whereas in Sweden the occurrence of cash transfers is the highest. The highest amount of economic transfers, instead, is found in Italy and Spain, while the lowest is observed in Sweden.

Long-standing differences in family organization of "strong" and "weak" family systems have existed since the eighteenth century. In Nordic European countries, young adults usually left the parental home to work as servants in other households, whereas in Southern Europe a late nest-leaving age typically occurred at the moment of marriage. In countries where individualistic orientations prevail, an early transition to independence is regarded as a sign of young adults' maturity and an important step in their education, while prolonged co-residence is perceived as an undesired loss of privacy (Smits *et al*., 2010; Swartz, 2009). By contrast, in Italy where young adults leave the parental home at a late age, extended co-residence is seen as a fundamental part of the socialization of offspring (Reher, 1998). Thus, intergenerational co-residence may be culturally seen as an extended process of socialization into family responsibilities. The literature supports this view, indicating that in Italy sharing residence with parents is not only an indicator of a limited maturity and autonomy, but also a sign of strong feelings of obligation toward other family members (Rosina *et al*., 2003; Santarelli and Cottone, 2009).

Moreover, in Southern European countries, young adults tend to postpone the transition out of the parental home to prevent economic hardships (Aassve *et al.,* 2002; 2006). An extended period of intergenerational co-residence is the main support that parents provide to their offspring (Albertini and Kohli, 2013). A prolonged period of co-residence often meets the needs of children who experience problems in entering the labor market and/or making a successful transition to adult roles. Thus, if these circumstances are carried over into later life,

adult children who leave the parental home at late ages will be less integrated into the labor market and more dependent on their families for economic resources.

On the contrary, in Sweden the timing of leaving home may have only a short-term influence on later chances of receiving financial transfers from parents. Research on youth poverty points out that young adults often face social and economic risks after leaving the parental home. Due to increasing participation in higher education and problematic entries into the labor market, young adult children spend long periods without a job or in unstable financial positions. In Sweden and other Nordic European countries, economic vulnerability is particularly high during young adulthood and is found to be associated with early departures from the parental home (Aassve *et al*., 2006; 2013; Iacovou and Aassve, 2007; Iacovou and Berthoud, 2001; Kauppinen *et al*., 2014). These economic risks are typically limited in duration, encouraging parents to provide a financial assistance over the short run (Julkunen, 2002). Thus, in Sweden the likelihood of receiving intergenerational cash transfers may be particularly affected by the time since leaving the parental home, perhaps leading to greater assistance over the short run. Hence, I would expect that *the duration of co-residence has a stronger positive association with parents' transfer behaviors in Italy than in Sweden (Hypothesis 4)*.

4.2 Data and Method

The data used for the empirical analysis come from the *Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe* (SHARE). SHARE is a multidisciplinary and cross-national panel survey on health, socio-economic status and family relations, and it is representative of individuals aged 50 or over in 12 countries in the first wave, 14 in the second one, and 15 in the fifth wave[9]. The three waves (1,2 and 5) used in the present study gathers information on 31,115 individuals in the 2004/2005, 34,415 in 2006/2007 and 61,683 in 2013.

In SHARE children's information is gathered from old parents' point of view and is available for the four children who live nearest the parental home. This allows to adopt the parent-child dyad as the unit of analysis. By adopting this strategy, it is possible to examine within-family differences, *i.e.* comparing siblings within the same family. Since parents

[9] The third wave (2008/2009) focuses on old parents' life histories and does not include information about adult children. The fourth wave (2011) includes information about adult children as parts of individual social network, and thus these questions have been remarkably changed from previous waves.

usually manage their financial resources together, I consider both parents as a single transfer actor. Those who do not manage their finances jointly, instead, are treated separately. Therefore, in line with previous research on SHARE data, the unit of analysis is the transfer actor-child dyad (*e.g.* Albertini and Kohli, 2013). Moreover, since the purpose of the present study is to examine the association between the age at leaving home and the downward flow of economic resources from parents to their adult children, the sample is confined to adult children who live independently from parents. Another two selection criterion is used in the analysis. Early home-leaving may reflect childhood disadvantages and problematic family relationships. Thus, the sample was confined to adult children who leave the parental home after age 15 in order to reduce possible selection bias.

4.2.1 *Measures*

The dependent variable refers to the occurrence of financial transfers from parents to their adult children. In SHARE data only cash transfers of 250 euro (2,342 SEK in Sweden) or more are registered. The question refers to intergenerational transfers that occur during the year before the interview. Panel respondents, instead, are asked whether they provided financial gifts since the previous interview. This difference in the formulation of the questions may produce biased estimates in the likelihood of receiving financial help when the timing of the two interviews changes remarkably across countries and families (for a discussion, see Emery and Mudrazija, 2015). However, in Sweden and Italy the timing of the interview largely overlaps, thus indicating that the opportunity to provide a financial transfer to an adult child is almost equally distributed across Swedish and Italian families (www.share-project.org).

The independent variable, *i.e.* the age at which adult children leave the parental home, is based on the retrospective question "In which year did [child's name] move from the parental household? [The last move to count]". The question explicitly asks to consider the last move out of the parental home, and thus late departures from the parental home may refer to people who returned home before the last move-out. However, people who return home are a relatively small group, and thus it is reasonable to assume that the age at leaving home defines the end of the period of intergenerational co-residence. The age at leaving home was divided into three categories (early, "on time" and late), by using the first and fourth quintile of its distribution within countries, cohorts (1950-1963; 1964-1973; 1974-1985) and sex. Young

adults' departures from the parental home are considered as early or late with respect to what other people do in a given country and birth cohort. When computing quintiles of the age at leaving home, survival functions are adopted in order to take censored observations into consideration (Table 4.1). In Sweden, young adults leave the parental home around age 19 for women and 20 for men, regardless of their birth cohort. Only among adult daughters born after 1973, the median age at leaving home increases from 19 to 20 years old. Table 4 shows that in Italy the median age at leaving home is equal to 27, 29 and 27 for adult sons, and it is equal to 24, 26 and 25 for daughters born between 1950/63, 1964/73 and 1974/85 respectively.

TABLE 4.1 Survival estimates concerning the age at leaving home

Country		25%	50%	75%	N.
Sweden					
	Sons				
	1950/63	19	20	22	1424
	1964/73	19	20	22	1971
	1974/85	19	20	22	1866
	Total				5261
	Daughters				
	1950/63	18	19	21	1500
	1964/73	18	19	21	1873
	1974/85	19	20	21	1902
	Total				5275
Italy					
	Sons				
	1950/63	24	27	31	1000
	1964/73	25	29	32	1206
	1974/85	23	26	29	605
	Total				2811
	Daughters				
	1950/63	21	24	29	986
	1964/73	23	26	30	1254
	1974/85	22	25	28	654
	Total				2894

A set of children's characteristics is included in the analysis. Control variables comprise children's sex, age, marital status (having a partner), education degree (highly educated), birth order (lastborn), stepchildren, and the frequency of contact (monthly contact or less). A low level of parent-child contacts may be considered as a proxy of a low quality of parent-child relationships, which in turn may affect the timing of leaving home and the likelihood of receiving intergenerational transfers of money. Moreover, SHARE data gathers three types of

children's support to parents, namely personal care, practical help and help with paperwork. Furthermore, the time since leaving the parental home considers young adults who have left the family of origin for no more than 5 years (see Table 4.2).

TABLE 4.2 Sample Characteristics. Families with at least two children and variation in receiving financial transfers across children.

	Italy			Sweden		
	% or mean	Range	SD	% or mean	Range	S.D.
Financial transfers	43.9	0-1		46.6	0-1	
Home-leaving age						
Early	21.5			24.2		
"on time"	59.2			60.3		
Late	19.3			15.4		
Female	46.6	0-1		51.0	0-1	
Age	40.4	17-67	8.1	36.9	17-67	9.7
Highly educated	25.1	0-1		33.4	0-1	
Living without a partner	19.7	0-1		38.4	0-1	
Employment status						
Not working	22.6	0-1		22.2	0-1	
Lastborn	36.5	0-1		33.6	0-1	
Stepchild	0.8	0-1		6.0	0-1	
Monthly contacts or less	7.6	0-1		10.3	0-1	
Time since leaving						
5 years or less	20.6	0-1		9.6	0-1	
N. of children	446			1567		

4.2.2 *Analytical Strategy*

In order to examine within-family differences, the following empirical analyses are based on fixed effects logistic regression models. This approach allows to compare siblings within the same family to one another, thereby minimizing residual confounding. More specifically, a within-family comparison allows to eliminate the bias of measured and unmeasured family characteristics shared by family members. In fixed effects models, only families with at least two children and variation in the outcome variable (*i.e.* receiving economic assistance from parents) are included in the analysis. Table 4.2 shows that these selection criteria strongly reduce the total number of observations (446 children in Italy and 1567 in Sweden).

In the first step, I examine whether late home-leaving is associated with the likelihood of receiving financial transfers from parents in Italy and Sweden (Models 1a-c). Models 2a-c include adult children's support to parents in order to test hypothesis 2. This analysis cannot

identify whether parents' financial support is given to reciprocate, or with expectation of future compensation. But, the scope is to examine whether late home-leaving promotes mutual assistance between generations. In Models 3a-c, I add the time since leaving the parental home in the analysis to understand whether parents' financial assistance is provided to adult children who have just left the family of origin (hypothesis 3). In a further step, to evaluate country specific peculiarities in the association between home-leaving age and later parents' transfer behaviors, separate regressions are run for Italy and Sweden. Finally, the analysis is extended to 15 countries in order to contextualize the Italian and Swedish cases in a broader European perspective (Table 4.6).

4.3 Results

Table 4.3 presents fixed effects models concerning the likelihood of receiving financial transfers from parents. Consistent with hypothesis 1, late home leavers are more likely to receive financial support from parents than their siblings who leave the family of origin at an early age (Model 1a). The odds of receiving cash transfers form parents is 30% higher for late home leavers than for adult children who move out the parental home "on time". Early home leaving, instead, has a non-significant association with the likelihood of receiving cash transfers from parents: the odds ratio is equal to 1.

In Model 2a, the effect of late nest-leaving is no longer significant when controlling for practical support received by parents. The odd ratio for late home-leaving, indeed, changes from 1.30 in model 1a to 1.25 in model 2a. This is in line with the second hypothesis that co-residence length fosters a mutual process of socialization and a bidirectional exchange of support between generations.

Model 3a indicates that parental allocation of financial support among their adult children is affected by the time since leaving the family of origin. The odds ratio concerning late home leavers decreases from 1.30 in model 1a to 1.19 in model 3a. Adult children who have left the parental home for no more than five years are more likely to receive financial support then their siblings. In line with hypothesis 3, late home leavers exhibit a higher propensity to receive transfers of money, mainly because they have just left the parental home. Overall, the time since leaving the parental home seems to be more important than the timing of nest-leaving in shaping the allocation of financial support among adult children.

Other control variables have a significant influence in explaining within family differences. According to altruism theories, parents tend to allocate their financial resources to their less educated, unemployed, and/or single children than to those who have a higher education, an employment or live with a partner. Moreover, in line with previous studies, younger adult children tend to be favored by parents over their older siblings. Parents also tend to allocate financial support to their biological children and to those who maintain more than monthly contact with them.

TABLE 4.3 Fixed effects logistic regression models concerning the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents.

Entire Sample	Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 3a	
	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.
Home-leaving age (ref. "On time")						
Early home leaver	1.00	(0.13)	0.97	(0.13)	1.03	(0.14)
Late home leaver	1.30*	(0.20)	1.25	(0.19)	1.19	(0.19)
Age	0.93***	(0.02)	0.93***	(0.02)	0.94***	(0.02)
Lastborn	0.76**	(0.10)	0.75**	(0.10)	0.75**	(0.10)
Female	1.38***	(0.14)	1.37***	(0.14)	1.37***	(0.14)
Stepchild	0.31**	(0.18)	0.30**	(0.18)	0.30**	(0.17)
Highly educated	0.80*	(0.11)	0.82	(0.12)	0.81	(0.11)
Not working	2.55***	(0.35)	2.56***	(0.36)	2.51***	(0.35)
Living without a partner	1.70***	(0.20)	1.72***	(0.21)	1.67***	(0.20)
Monthly contacts or less	0.51***	(0.11)	0.57**	(0.13)	0.51***	(0.11)
Help given to parents			2.41***	(0.61)		
Time since leaving						
5 years or less					1.47*	(0.30)
N. of families	741		741		741	
N. of dyads	2,013		2,013		2,013	

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. SHARE data 2004, 2007 and 2013.

4.3.1 Results for Sweden and Italy

Table 4.4 illustrates results for Sweden. Compared to their siblings who move out around the median age, late home leavers do not have a higher probability to receive financial assistance. Indeed, the odds ratio is close to one. This finding does not support the first and the second hypothesis that the duration of co-residence tends to promote closeness, family attitudes, and parental responsibility to provide economic assistance to the offspring. Rather, this finding suggests that the allocation of financial support within Swedish families is not affected by the timing of leaving home. Other factors such as employment, education and marital status appear to be more important in affecting parental allocation of financial resources among their children. In particular, the odds of receiving economic support is about

2.7 times higher for adult children who are unemployed or in education than for their employed siblings.

Moving from Model 1b to Model 2b, time transfers from adult children to parents are positively correlated with the likelihood of receiving financial support. Parents are more likely to give financial support to the child who provide practical help to them. But, still the association between the age at leaving home and financial transfers remain non-significant. Finally, Model 3b includes the time since leaving the parental home. Adult children who have left the parental home for no more than five years do not have a higher likelihood of receiving financial support from parents. Previous research has shown that in Nordic countries economic risks are particularly high after leaving the parental home, and thus parents may be motivated to provide financial assistance to their young adult children (Julkunen, 2002). The findings presented here, however, do not provide evidence in favor of this hypothesis. It is also important to note that in Sweden only a few early home leavers have parents aged 50 or over. Thus, from this analysis, it is not possible to understand whether parents' economic support is directed to facilitate the transition to independence of early home leavers.

TABLE 4.4 Fixed effects logistic regression models concerning the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents in Sweden.

Sweden	Model 1b		Model 2b		Model 3b	
	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.
Home-leaving age (ref. "On time")						
Early home leaver	1.01	(0.16)	0.98	(0.15)	1.01	(0.16)
Late home leaver	1.16	(0.22)	1.11	(0.21)	1.13	(0.22)
Age	0.92***	(0.02)	0.92***	(0.02)	0.92***	(0.02)
Lastborn	0.74*	(0.12)	0.74*	(0.12)	0.74*	(0.12)
Female	1.49***	(0.17)	1.50***	(0.17)	1.49***	(0.17)
Stepchild	0.38*	(0.23)	0.37*	(0.22)	0.38*	(0.22)
Highly educated	0.82	(0.13)	0.84	(0.13)	0.83	(0.13)
Not working	2.66***	(0.42)	2.67***	(0.43)	2.63***	(0.42)
Living without a partner	1.82***	(0.24)	1.84***	(0.25)	1.80***	(0.24)
Monthly contacts or less	0.52***	(0.13)	0.56**	(0.14)	0.52***	(0.13)
Help given to parents			2.26***	(0.63)		
Time since leaving						
5 years or less					1.17	(0.30)
N. of families	561		561		561	
N. of dyads	1,567		1,567		1,567	

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. SHARE data 2004, 2007 and 2013.

Table 4.5 presents fixed effects logistic models concerning the allocation of economic support within Italian families. The variable "stepchild" has been excluded from this analysis, because only four stepchildren are present in the Italian data. Model 1c shows that late home

leavers have a higher likelihood of receiving financial support from their parents, compared to their siblings who move out of the parental home "on time" or earlier. In line with the first hypothesis, late home-leaving is significantly associated with later parents' transfer behaviors (Odds Ratio is equal to 1.65). Interestingly, the allocation of economic resources among children is only marginally guided by children's characteristics. The findings reveal that only children's employment status has a significant influence on intergenerational financial transfers. This finding is consistent with results of previous studies (Albertini and Kohli, 2013).

In Model 2c, the odds ratio for late nest-leaving decreases only marginally, from 1.65 to 1.62, when including the practical support given from adult children to parents. This finding does not corroborate the hypothesis 2 that living in the parental home for longer can be seen as a mutual process of socialization toward parental and filial responsibilities. The mutual exchange of practical and economic support between generations does not seem to be promoted by the timing of leaving home. Model 3c shows that the association between the age at leaving home and the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents is no longer significant when controlling for the time since leaving the parental home. Parents tend to support their children financially when they have just left the family of origin. Consistent with hypothesis 3, young adults' transition to independence seems to have only a short-term influence on the allocation of parents' resources within Italian families.

TABLE 4.5 Fixed effects logistic regression models concerning the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents in Italy.

Italy	Model 1c		Model 2c		Model 3c	
	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.
Home-leaving age (ref. "On time")						
Early home leaver	1.01	(0.27)	0.91	(0.25)	1.17	(0.33)
Late home leaver	1.65*	(0.46)	1.62*	(0.45)	1.22	(0.38)
Age	1.00	(0.04)	0.99	(0.04)	1.02	(0.04)
Lastborn	0.94	(0.26)	0.89	(0.25)	0.89	(0.25)
Female	1.09	(0.25)	1.01	(0.23)	1.11	(0.25)
Highly educated	0.77	(0.29)	0.83	(0.32)	0.73	(0.28)
Not working	2.27***	(0.67)	2.31***	(0.68)	2.25***	(0.67)
Living without a partner	1.28	(0.36)	1.31	(0.37)	1.33	(0.38)
Monthly contacts or less	0.48	(0.23)	0.58	(0.28)	0.45*	(0.22)
Help given to parents			4.89**	(3.46)		
Time since leaving						
5 years or less					2.35**	(0.89)
N. of families	180		180		180	
N. of dyads	446		446		446	

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. SHARE data 2004, 2007 and 2013.

4.3.2 Parents' Economic Support across Europe

This paragraph aims to extend previous analysis by considering four clusters of European countries. The literature has consistently established the existence of three transfer regimes (Albertini and Kohli, 2013; Brandt *et al.*, 2013): Nordic (Sweden and Denmerk), Continental (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxemburg) and Southern regime (Spain, Italy and Greece). In Nordic European countries, young adults tend to move out of the parental home at an early age, and frequently they receive financial support from non-co-residing parents. By contrast, in Southern European countries the transition out of the parental home typically occurs at a late age when young adults have enough economic resources to form their own family; after moving out of the family of origin, few economic transfers flow out of the walls of the parental home (Albertini *et al.*, 2007; Albertini and Kohli, 2013; Brandt and Deindl, 2013). Thus, a question that arises is whether the age of nest-leaving can be related to later intergenerational transfers in societies where parental support is rather limited, and in others where an extended co-residence is regarded as a non-normative phenomenon. Moreover, SHARE data (wave 5) offers the opportunity to test this association in Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary).

Table 4.6 presents fixed effects models concerning the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents, according to different transfer regimes. Home-leaving age is not significantly associated with the likelihood of receiving financial assistance from parents in Nordic, Continental and Eastern countries. In Southern Europe, instead, parents tend to allocate their financial resources in favor of late home leavers. Adult children who leave the family nest at a late age are more likely to receive economic assistance, than their siblings who move out of the parental home at an earlier age. However, as I have previously noted for the Italian case, this positive association is mainly due to the time since leaving the parental home. Intergenerational transfers appear to be related to an early stage of young adulthood where people are establishing a their own household. Late home-leaving may be associated with a low amount of time for reaching economic stability, and thus parents tend to provide economic support to adult children who have just left the parental home.

Interestingly, the allocation of financial support among adult children seems to be guided by similar predictors across different European contexts. Children's education, employment and marital status affect parental favoritism regardless of the social context in which families are embedded.

TABLE 4.6 Fixed effects logistic regression models on the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents according to the age at leaving home

Regime:	Nordic		Continental		Southern				Eastern	
	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Odds Ratio	S.E.
Home-leaving age (ref. "On time")										
Early home leavers	0.96	(0.11)	1.01	(0.08)	0.88	(0.14)	0.93	(0.15)	1.12	(0.27)
Late home leavers	0.87	(0.11)	0.87	(0.08)	1.48**	(0.25)	1.29	(0.24)	1.10	(0.28)
Age	0.94***	(0.02)	0.96***	(0.01)	0.97	(0.03)	0.98	(0.03)	0.98	(0.03)
Lastborn	0.83	(0.10)	0.97	(0.08)	1.04	(0.17)	1.00	(0.16)	1.47	(0.35)
Stepchildren	0.33**	(0.15)	0.51*	(0.20)	0.38	(0.47)	0.38	(0.47)	0.71	(0.55)
Female	1.43***	(0.13)	1.12*	(0.07)	0.99	(0.13)	0.99	(0.13)	1.44*	(0.27)
Highly educated	0.92	(0.10)	0.83**	(0.07)	0.72*	(0.14)	0.72*	(0.14)	0.87	(0.25)
Living without a partner	1.24***	(0.06)	1.34***	(0.05)	1.39***	(0.11)	1.39***	(0.11)	1.11	(0.12)
Not working	2.30***	(0.28)	1.82***	(0.16)	2.14***	(0.37)	2.14***	(0.37)	2.57***	(0.64)
Monthly contacts or less	0.47***	(0.09)	0.47***	(0.06)	0.78	(0.28)	0.76	(0.27)	0.43***	(0.13)
Help given to parents	1.80***	(0.35)	1.70***	(0.29)	2.07**	(0.64)	2.11***	(0.65)	1.91*	(0.64)
Time since leaving										
5 years or less							1.46*	(0.31)		
N. of families	913		1,845		489		489		239	
Observations	2,502		4,934		1,210		1,210		605	

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. SHARE data 2004, 2007 and 2013. Nordic countries: Sweden and Denmark; Continental countries: Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxemburg; Southern countries: Spain, Italy and Greece; Eastern countries: Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. Survival estimates are computed to understand the distribution of nest-leaving age within sex, cohorts and countries (see Graphs below). Full models with interaction terms between home-leaving age and country clusters show that the effect of late home-leaving is significantly higher in Southern countries than in Nordic, Continental and Eastern countries. In particular, late home-leaving seems to have a positive effect on intergenerational transfers in Italy, Greece, Belgium and Hungary.

4.4 Discussion

The life course perspective suggests that early life course events affect later individual's outcomes (Elder, 1994). In this light, chapters 1 and 2 have shown that previous experiences of intergenerational co-residence have a significant influence on later parent-child relationships. In this chapter, I hypothesized that the longer the period of intergenerational co-residence, the higher the opportunity of receiving financial support from parents. The results reveal that, after controlling for family specific influences that are common across siblings, the timing of leaving home is not significantly associated with the likelihood of receiving financial assistance. In Sweden, early and late home leavers are not differentiated by their chances of receiving financial transfers from parents, while in Italy this association is mainly explained by the time since leaving the parental home. In line with Leopold's (2012) findings, the time spent by children in the parental home does not appear to foster economic support between generations. Thus, the evidence does not corroborate hypotheses 1 and 2, that late home-leaving may promote parental feelings of responsibility and mutual support between generations. In particular, I do not find evidence supporting the idea that the time spent in the parental home exposes not only children but also their parent to socialization processes that foster the mutual exchange of support in later life.

In Italy, young adults who have left the parental for no more than 5 years are more likely to receive economic assistance from parents than their siblings who live independently for longer. I hypothesized that in a culture of strong family ties intergenerational co-residence tends to bind older and younger generations one to each other (Reher, 1998). However, the findings shows that parental responsibility to support their children does not seem to be transmitted through a prolonged period of time spent under the same roof. Rather, in line with hypothesis 3, leaving the parental home is related to the size of later parents' transfers over the short run, when young adults are pursuing high education or are establishing a more stable position in the labor market. Parents tend to support young adults' transitions to independence and the exploration of adult roles during early adulthood. It is reasonable that parents provide financial support to their children who have just left the family of origin, because of young adults' economic difficulties. Unfortunately, SHARE data does not allow to observe adult children's income and wealth, which may constitute the main mechanism behind the association between residential autonomy and parents' financial support.

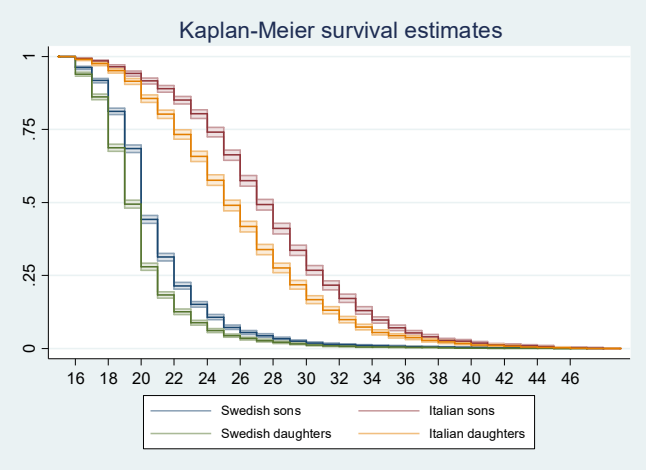
It is also important to note that the short-term effect of home-leaving on intergenerational financial transfers may be endogenous. Adult children's decisions to leave

the parental home may depend on their expectations about parental financial support (Aquilino, 2005; Mencarini and Tanturri, 2006). The sibling comparison only partly account for endogeneity, because siblings may have different expectations about parental economic support.

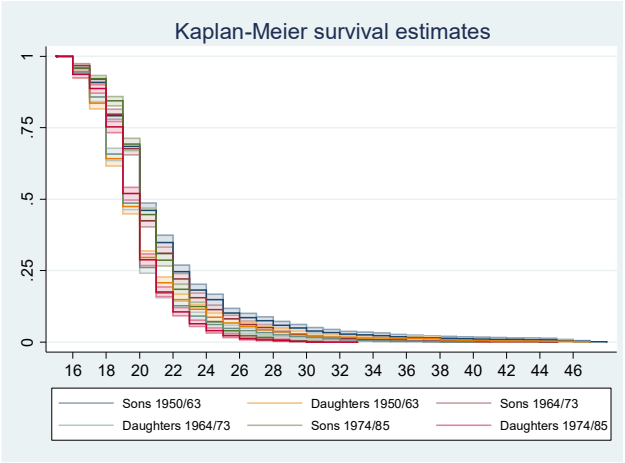
Moreover, previous research has shown that in Sweden early home leavers are likely to have high risks of poverty after having left the parental home (Kauppinen *et al*., 2014). Thus, I hypothesized that early departures from the parental home may have short-term positive effects on intergenerational financial transfers. The findings presented here do not support this idea. It is also possible that the short-term effect of early home-leaving on intergenerational transfers of money are biased by sample selection, given that only parents aged 50 years or over are included in SHARE data.

The results for different intergenerational transfer regimes reveal that the short-term effect of late home-leaving on intergenerational financial transfers is found only in Southern European countries. It is possible that parents' financial support is particularly important for late home leavers in southern European countries where the family is the main welfare provider. On the contrary, this association is not significant in Nordic, Continental and Eastern countries.

Appendix



Sweden



Italy

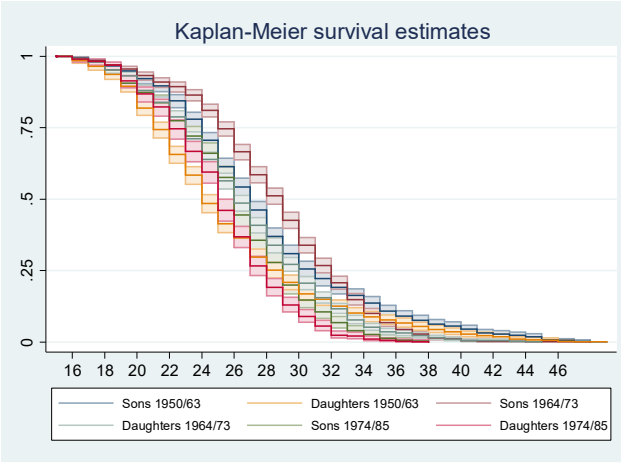
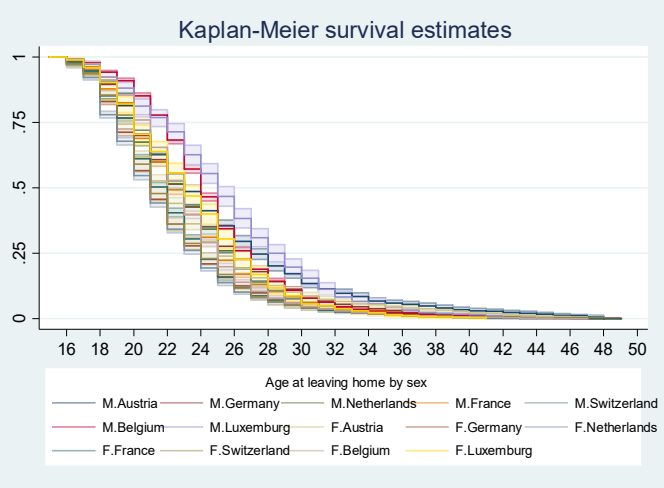


TABLE 4.7 Average Marginal Effects of nest-leaving age on the likelihood of receiving financial support from parents. Estimates computed from fixed effects logistic regression models for 15 European countries.

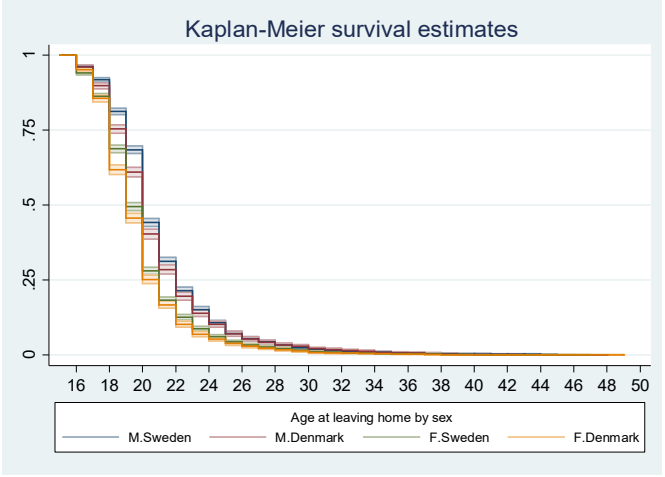
	Interquartile difference			
	3 years		10 years	
	AME	S.E.	AME	S.E.
Home-leaving age (ref. "On time")				
Early home leavers	-0.009	(0.019)	-0.005	(0.034)
Late home leavers	-0.007	(0.021)	0.003	(0.039)
N. of families	3,834			
N. of dyads	10,247			

AME: Average Marginal Effects, assuming fixed effects equal to zero.

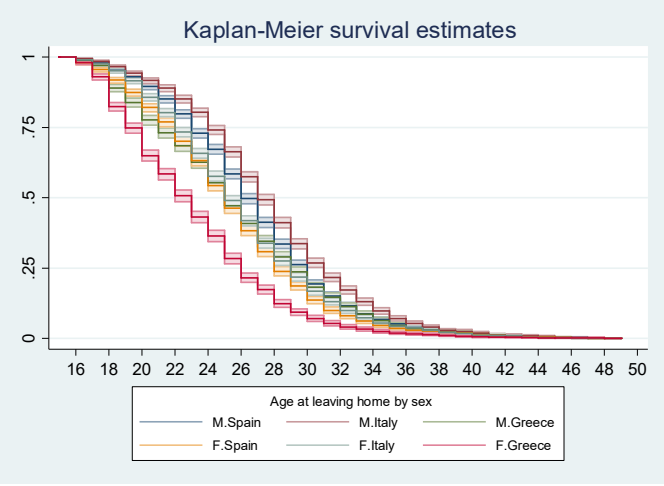
Continental Regime



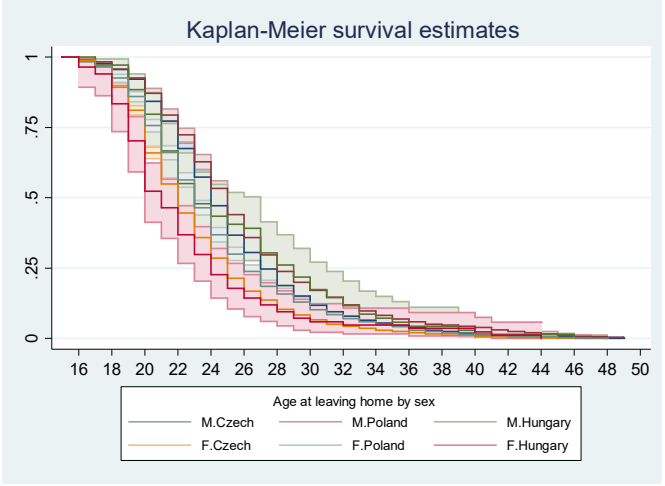
Nordic Regime



Southern Regime



Eastern Regime



Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Intergenerational family relationships in contemporary societies have been widely debated by academics. Shift in demographic and economic conditions as well as transformation of family structures and cultural values have contributed to altering the relationship between parents and their adult children. Today parents and their children spend a longer part of their lives together, maintaining voluntary forms of solidarity, rather than developing strong feelings of obligation (Bengtson, 2001). The present dissertation contributes to this literature, by examining whether intergenerational family solidarity is related to previous experiences of intergenerational co-residence in Italy and Sweden. The studies (chapters 2,3 and 4) that I presented in this dissertation were based on two theoretical frameworks: the model of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991) and the family life course perspective (Elder, 1991; 1994; MacMillan and Copher, 2005). First, the intergenerational solidarity model emphasizes the complexity of parent-child relations and the multidimensionality of the concept of solidarity. I investigated three dimensions of intergenerational family solidarity: residential proximity, contact frequency and financial transfers. These aspects of parent-child relations have been described as important factors for the social integration and the well-being of parents and their adult children (Bengtson and Silverstein, 1997; Umberson, 1992). In particular, residential proximity defines the opportunity structure for parent-child interactions and support exchange. The frequency of contact and emotional support are found to be the most crucial forms of solidarity in parent-adult child relationships during the "middle years" of the life course (*e.g.* Lawton *et al.,* 1994). Financial transfers from parents to their children are particularly relevant to understand

the redistributive action of the family and its protective function against economic and social risks in early adulthood.

Second, the family life course perspective suggests that past experiences and individual life course transitions are connected to later parent-child relations. The notion of "linked lives" suggests that family members' life courses are interconnected. Life course transitions experienced by one person have influence on others, by altering their relationship (Connidis, 2010). Thus, the timing and pathway out of the parental home have consequences not only for young adults' life course, but also for their parents' lives.

Moreover, the cultural approach in studying family organization helps to understand how different patterns of intergenerational family relations are deeply rooted in Italian and Swedish contexts (Laslett, 1983; Reher, 1998). Cultural traditions along with institutional and economic settings contribute to shape these preferences and behaviors. Italy is characterized by prolonged periods of co-residence and frequent in-person interactions between non-co-residing family members, whereas in Sweden the average age of leaving home is rather low, and adult children maintain less frequent contact with parents. Swedish young adults leave the family nest when they have a minimal financial independence and often receive an economic support from the family of origin. In Italy, instead, it is comparatively rare that parents provide financial support to their non-co-residing adult children (Albertini *et al.,* 2007).

5.1 Two Contexts, One Mechanism

Differences between cultures of strong and weak family ties are also described in relation to parents' preferences of co-residence. Some scholars have shown that in Southern European countries parental happiness is positively associated with co-residence duration. When young adults move out of the parental home, parents' well-being tends to decline, and their children are generally concerned about this parental distress (Billari and Tabellini, 2008; Bonifazi *et al*., 1999; Mazzuco, 2006). By contrast, in Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries, where privacy is conceived as a normal good, parents' general happiness and marital quality increase as children move out of the home (Smits *et al.*, 2010; Umberson *et al*., 2005; White and Edwards, 1990). Ward and Spitze (2007) suggests that late departures from the parental home are generally perceived as violations of the normative expectation regarding the empty nest of midlife marriages. Thus, one could expect that co-residence length has different implications for later parent-child relations in Italy and Sweden. However, the findings

presented in the first two studies (chapters 2 and 3) reveal that the association between nest-leaving age and later parent-child contacts is guided by a shared mechanism: in each birth cohort and social group that I considered, the duration of intergenerational co-residence tends to promote a deeper involvement between generations. Given a certain distance, late home leavers are more likely to maintain frequent face-to-face contacts with parents, than those who move out of the family nest at an early age. My interpretation is that living under the same roof offers the opportunity to share activities, interests and attitudes that encourage family members to maintain mutual involvement and solidarity later in life.

Focusing on childhood and adolescence, researchers have shown that parents who are able to spend time investing in their children are more likely to maintain closer relationships with them later in life. Intergenerational co-residence appears to have the power to reinforce parent-child relations. For example, by comparing stepfathers and non-co-residing biological fathers, Kalmijn (2013c) finds that sharing a residence is more important than biological relatedness in strengthening intergenerational bonds. My results show that parent-child co-residence has long-term positive effects on family relations not only when it occurs during childhood and adolescence, but also when children postpone the transition to independence during young adulthood. This finding does not support Swartz (2009)'s idea that late departures from the parental home lead to parent-child conflict and feelings of ambivalence in countries, such as Sweden, where the ideology is dominated by individual autonomy. Rather, consistent with Leopold (2012b)'s findings, the time young adults spend in their parental home can be seen as a socialization process toward family attitudes and responsibilities.

It is important to note that my results are partly different from what has been found by previous research. The literature suggests that early leaving is associated with greater distances and a lower opportunity of contact, because longer periods of time since leaving the parental home allows multiple spatial moves (Bordone, 2009; Michielin and Mulder, 2007; Rogerson, 1993). My findings, instead, show that in Italy residential proximity is affected by home-leaving age even after controlling for the time since leaving the parental home. This results may suggest that Italian late home leavers tend to develop preferences for living closer to parents (Glaser and Tomassini, 2000), are emotionally tied to their local community and/or are attached to the local labor market (Granovetter, 1973; Leopold *et al*., 2012).

Furthermore, the literature suggests that early home leavers are likely to escape from family tensions (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1989; 1998; 1999). For this reason, they are

also likely to have less frequent interaction with parents in later life. Thus, the duration of co-residence may affect later parent-child relations, as a side effect of previous family climate. In the Chapter 3, I considered this hypothesis, by examining parents' union dissolution, parent-child and inter-marital conflicts during childhood and adolescence. These indicators of family climate that *per se* have important consequences for parent-adult child interaction, do not affect the association between the age at leaving home and later family relationships in a substantial way. The duration of co-residence seems to have an influence that cannot be reduced to a mere selection effect.

Two interesting conclusions can be drawn from my study in the light of the previous literature. First, classical research on modernization (Parsons, 1942; 1943) suggests that parents and their children remain isolated one each other, as adult children move out of the family of origin. The results presented in this dissertation, instead, indicate that leaving the parental home cannot be seen as a breaking point of parent-child relationships. Rather, earlier experiences of intergenerational co-residence seem to be carried over into later relationships. Co-residence experiences such as its duration, parents' union dissolution, inter-parental and parent-child conflict during adolescence are found to be carried over into later relations, affecting the frequency of contact. Consistently with Aquilino (1997)'s findings, some degree of continuity is found in parent-child relations from adolescence to adulthood.

Second, a large body of literature points out that a prolonged co-residence is related to conflict and ambivalent feelings between parents and their co-resident children (Aquilino, 2006; Kiecolt *et al.*, 2011; Ward and Spitze, 1992). This is partially due to a violation of age norms around the socially accepted time for leaving the parental home. However, the results presented in Chapter 1 and 2 indicate that age norms are not backed up by interpersonal sanctions in later parent-child relationships. This is consistent with Settersten (1998)'s and Settersten and Hagestad (1996: 178)'s findings, revealing that although people perceive age norms in terms of an "age deadline", late home-leaving is regarded "as acceptable, accompanied by little social tension and without consequences for the individual's life". Even though a prolonged co-residence can be seen as *too much of a good thing* (Silverstein *et al*., 1996), the detrimental consequences of an extended co-residence are not carried over into later adult relationships. Some scholars argue that, by considering age norms as internalized values, no sanctions can be attached to these norms (Heckhausen, 1999). "Internalized norms

are taken for granted by those who hold them, and, therefore, people comply with these norms even in the absence of external sanctions" (Billari and Liefbroer, 2007: 182).

Interestingly, the literature points out that the effects of age norms on the timing of life course transitions is declining in contemporary societies. The notion of Second Demographic Transition suggests that individual life courses and events during young adulthood become less predictable and less normatively regulated in their timing than ever before (Van de Kaa, 1987). The process of individualization of the life course may weaken the effectiveness of sanctions related to age norm violation, especially in countries where individualistic attitudes prevail (Billari, 2001). This may be one possible reason for why I did not find any negative effect of age norm violation on subsequent intergenerational contact, and why I found an indication of the role of age norms only in Italy.

5.2 Limitations

A limitation of the present research is related to the measurement of age norms. One could think that the operationalization of normative age, *i.e.* the group median age at leaving home, appears to be somewhat arbitrary. Many other variables that I did not consider may be used to constitute social groups across which nest-leaving age can vary. One of them concerns social class differences that can affect the age at leaving the family nest. Alternatively, age norms may be considered as that directly expressed by the interviewees. In Chapter 2, I consider this idea, by analyzing the question: "in your opinion, which is the right age to leave the parental home?". Moreover, I used the inter-quartile difference on the age at leaving home as measure of the strength of age norms. But, in contexts where the inter-quartile difference is low, young adults tend to leave the parental home around the same age, and thus it is difficult to observe the consequences of a violation of the norm.

It is also important to remark that the deviation from a group median age is a measure better suited to test the hypothesis about age norms, than the hypothesis that co-residence duration promotes family involvement. Indeed, the latter is based on absolute nest-leaving age. However, historical and social contexts tend to shape how individuals enact the parent role. For instance, young cohorts may be more inclined to communicate with their children, facilitating new forms of parent-child exchange. Old cohorts, in turn, may instill in their children the principle of parental devotion and authority that have consequences for later parent-child relations. Thus, the positive effect of co-residence duration on later parent-child

relations acquires different meanings according to the social context in which families are embedded. By taking into account these sources of heterogeneity, my results suggest that longer periods of co-residence than what is considered the group-specific norm foster parent-child contacts in later life.

Second, it is noteworthy that late home leavers may maintain closer relationships with parents, because they may be characterized by warmer relationships during the period of co-residence (Goldscheider *et al*., 2014). Whereas indicators of intra-family tensions and problematic relations are available in Swedish data (LNU), I am not able to observe indicators about a positive family climate during childhood and adolescence. However, previous research has found mixed results regarding the hypothesis that a positive family climate would lead young adults to postpone the transition out of the parental home (*e.g.* Bucx and Van Wel, 2008; Ward and Spitze, 2007). Moreover, I argue that the length pf co-residence fosters "pro-family" attitudes, but the reverse could be true. This selection effect is an important limitation of this thesis, given that I am not able to observe family attitudes during childhood and adolescence. I would suggest that if the association between nest-leaving age and later parent-child contacts is driven by a selection effect, I should find a positive relation regardless of gender differences or heterogeneity across dyads.

Third, it would be interesting to examine feelings of affection and ambivalence in current parent-child relations. The literature suggests that ambivalence can emerge in response to opposite expectations about individual autonomy and family interdependence (Pillemer *et al*., 2012); these feelings may be carried over into later relations. Therefore, positive influence of prolonged periods of co-residence on the frequency contact may be countervailed by negative effects on the quality of family relationships. Unfortunately, Italian and Swedish data do not provide information about the quality of parent-child relationships.

Fourth, a limitation is related to theories on altruism and exchange. During the transition to adulthood, parents' financial support may be interpreted in terms of altruism, since early departures from the parental home are typically accompanied by high risks of poverty (*e.g.* Aassve *et al.,* 2013). These findings are consistent with previous research on youth poverty in Nordic countries, but it is noteworthy that I am not able to observe children's income and wealth by using SHARE data. The literature also suggests that parents are more prone to invest their economic resources in their young adult children to facilitate their educational or economic success (Aquilino, 2005; Cong and Silverstein, 2011; Lee and Aytac, 1998). Early

residential independence may foster a sense of enterprise, and a "taste for independence" (Goldscheider and Waite 1987; Mulder and Clark 2002; Ruggles, 2007), which might increase the effectiveness of parents' financial investments. In this case, giving financial support to early home leavers may be a rational investment that promotes better economic conditions to reciprocate in later life. Thus, from this analysis it is not possible to know whether parents are motivated by altruism or self-interested exchange.

5.3 Differences Between Italy and Sweden

Although the findings suggest that there is a common mechanism in Italy and Sweden, important between-countries differences are found with regard to adult daughters' behaviors. Italian adult daughters appear to be under "pressure" to leave the parental home and get married in a timely fashion, adhering to age norms and cultural expectations about family ties. As noted, age norm violation does not imply any interpersonal sanction in later relations with parents. But, daughters who spend more time in the parents' home than what is considered the norm do not exhibit a stronger involvement in parents' lives. In a similar vein, Italian daughters who leave the parental home to marry tend to maintain frequent contacts with parents, compared to those who leave the family nest for other reasons. It can be argued that in Italy social expectations surrounding daughters' behaviors appear to be stronger than those concerning sons' life course decisions. Daughters are important sources of emotional and practical support for their parents, assuming responsibility and the role of kin-keeper in the family (Rossi and Rossi, 1990). Thus, parents tend to have greater expectations on daughters' transition to independence and family formation. Overall, this finding suggests that the timing and pathways out of the parental home are related to later parent-child relationships, *via* a complex pattern of cultural and parental expectations about adult children's life courses.

By contrast, the frequency of contact between Swedish parents and their daughters is shaped by the age at nest leaving mainly because of their residential spatial moves. Compared to Swedish adult daughters who leave the nest at an early age, late home leavers are more prone to remain attached to their local community because of their familiarity with their region and their access to the local labor market (Goldscheider and DaVanzo, 1989; Granovetter, 1973; Leopold *et al.,* 2012). Children who leave the parental home late to reside close to the family of origin have more opportunities to maintain frequent face-to-face contact with parents. In line with Malmberg and Pettersson (2007)'s findings, family responsibility

promoted by the period of co-residence operate though daughters' spatial moves, rather than affecting the amount of contact directly. The association between geographical distance and the frequency of visit may be endogenous (Tomassini *et al*., 2003), indicating that Swedish women may return near their parents in order to visiting them and providing care. These considerations suggest that family responsibilities instilled by parents early in life are likely to translate in both the quantity of contact and children's residential moves.

Moreover, I also found that the length of shared residence tends to foster mutual involvement between parents and adult children especially in same-sex parent-child relations. Mother-daughter relationships are often described as emotionally closer. Mothers and daughters share more activities, experiences, and family roles during the period of co-residence. Parent-child similarity is *per se* an incentive to interact and build closer relations. In addition, co-residing young children are more prone to side with same sex-parents than with opposite sex-parents (Acock and Demo, 1999; Gerard *et al*., 2006), bringing their relationship closer in later life. This holds true for Swedish parent-adult child relations (Chapter 3), but in Italy I do not find any difference in the sex composition of the dyads (Chapter 2, results not shown). It is plausible that in Sweden parent-child interactions are more individually developed than in Italy where family members could tend to interact all together. In Sweden parent-child contact may be culturally conceived as a personal interaction, rather than an occasion for reuniting the whole family group. This finding can also reflect between-countries differences in divorce rates, since adult children from intact families are more likely to visit both parents together.

By using a sole database, namely SHARE data, differences between Italy and Sweden were analyzed more deeply. According to Reher's (1998) argument about strong and weak family ties, intergenerational co-residence is found to be more important for parent-child relationships in Italy than in Sweden. A culture of strong family ties defines the period of co-residence as a fundamental process in developing family attitudes and responsibility to support each other. Thus, the frequency of contact seems to depend on the age at which young adults leave their parental home much more in Italy than in Sweden.

Furthermore, by using a within-family approach (chapter 4), intergenerational financial transfers from parents to their adult children do not seem to be correlated with the timing of leaving home. Only short-term effects of nest-leaving age on parents' financial support are

found in Italy and other southern European countries. Parents appear to be important sources of economic support for their young adult children who have just left the parental home.

Due to increasingly youth economic vulnerability during the Great Recession, young adults start to delay the process of leaving home. This phenomenon raises popular concerns about prolonged periods of economic dependency from parents and a possible loss of privacy between generations. Intergenerational co-residence may become a progressively less voluntary arrangement, producing some strain between parents and their children. Young adults who are forced to stay at home for longer may developed resentment over co-residence experiences, negatively affecting their relations with parents in later life. However, at least with regard to parent-adult child relationships, my results indicate that late nest-leaving does not have negative implications for later life.

In conclusion, the importance of intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion in ageing societies is shaped by the increasing diversity of life course trajectories. The changing transition to adulthood constitutes an important part of these trajectories; it marks the end of the socialization process inside the parental home and the starting point of a mature relationship between autonomous adults. Leaving the parental home appears, therefore, as the basic matrix for later patterns of solidarity between parents and their adult children.

References

Aassve, A., Arpino, B. and Billari, F.C. (2010), Age norms on leaving home: Multilevel evidence from the European social survey, *Environment and Planning*, 45, 383–401.

Aassve, A., Cottini, E. and Vitali, A. (2013), Youth vulnerability in Europe during the great recession, Dondena Working Paper Dondena Centre for Research on Social Dynamics, Milan, IT: Bocconi University.

Aassve, A., Iacovou, M. and Mencarini, L. (2006), Youth poverty and transition to adulthood in Europe, *Demographic Research*, 15(2), 21-50.

Aassve, A., Billari, F.C., Mazzuco, S. and Ongaro, F. (2002), Leaving home: a comparative analysis of ECHP data, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 12, 259-275.

Acock, A.C. and Demo, D.H. (1999), Dimensions of family conflict and their influence on child and adolescent maladjustment, *Sociological Inquiry*, 69(4), 641-658.

Albertini, M., Kohli, M. and Vogel, C. (2007), Intergenerational transfers of time and money in European families: Common patterns-different regimes?, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 17(4), 319-333.

Albertini, M. and Kohli, M. (2013), The generational contract in the family: An analysis of transfer regimes in Europe, *European Sociological Review*, 29(4), 828-840.

Albertini, M. and Garriga, A. (2011), The effect of divorce on the parent-child contacts, *European Societies,* 13(2), 257-278.

Albertini, M. and Randl, J. (2012), Intergenerational transfers and social class: Inter-vivos transfers as means of status reproduction?, *Acta Sociologica*, 55(2), 107-123.

Albertini, M. and Saraceno, C. (2008), Intergenerational contact and support: The long term effects of marital instability in Italy. In Saraceno, C. (ed.), *Families, Ageing and Social Policy: Generational Solidarity in European Welfare States*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 194-216.

Alesina, A. and Giuliano, P. (2007), The power of the family, NBER Working Papers. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Alessie, R., Brugiavini, A. and Weber, G. (2005), Saving and cohabitation: The economic consequences of living with one's parents in Italy and the Netherlands, NBER Working Paper Cambridge, MS: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Amato, P.R. and Booth, A. (1991), Consequences of parental divorce and marital unhappiness for adult well-being, *Social Forces*, 69(3), 895-914.

Amato, P.R. and Booth, A. (1996), Prospective study of divorce and parent-child relationships, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 58(2), 356-365.

Andreoni, J. (1989), Giving with impure altruism: Applications to charity and Ricardian equivalence, *Journal of Political Economy*, 97, 1447-58.

Antonucci, T.C. and Jackson, J.S. (1990), The role of reciprocity in social support. In Sarasin, B.R., Sarasin, I.G. and Pierce, G.P. (eds.), *Social support: An interactional view*, New York: Wiley, 173-198.

Antonucci, T.C., Ajrouch, K.J. and Birditt, K.S. (2014), The convoy model: Explaining social relations from a multidisciplinary perspective, *The Gerontologist*, 54(1), 82-92

Aquilino, W.S. (1991a), Family structure and home-leaving: A further specification of the relationship, *Journal of Marriage and Family,* 53(4), 999-1010.

Aquilino, W.S. (1991b), Predicting parents' experiences with coresident adult children, *Journal of Family Issues*, 12(3), 323-342.

Aquilino, W.S. (1997), From adolescent to young adult: A prospective study of parent-child relations during the transition to adulthood, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 59, 670-686.

Aquilino, W.S. (1999), Two views of one relationship: Comparing parents' and young adult children's reports of the quality of intergenerational relations, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 858 – 870.

Aquilino, W.S. (2005), Impact of family structure on parental attitudes toward the economic support of adult children over the transition to adulthood, *Journal of Family Issues*, 26, 143-167.

Aquilino, W.S. (2006), Family relationships and support systems in emerging adulthood. In Arnett, J.J. and Tanner, J.L. (eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century*, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 193–217.

Aquilino, W.S. and Supple, K. (1991), Parent-child relations and parents' satisfaction with living arrangements when adult children live at home, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 53, 13-27.

Arnett, J.J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties, *American psychologist*, 55(5), 469.

Arnett, J.J. (2001), Conceptions of the transition to adulthood: Perspectives from adolescence through midlife, *Journal of adult development*, 8(2), 133-143.

Arnett, J.J. (2007), Emerging adulthood: What is it, and what is it good for?, *Child development perspectives*, 1(2), 68-73.

Avery, R., Goldscheider, F. and Speare, A. (1992), Feathered nest/gilded cage: Parental income and leaving home in the transition to adulthood, *Demography*, 29(3), 375-388.

Attias-Donfut, C. and Wolff, F.C. (2000), Complementarity between private and public transfers. In Arber, S. and Attias-Donfut, C. (eds.), *The Myth of Generational Conflict. The Family and State in Ageing Societies*, London: Routledge, 47-68.

Blaauboer, M. and Mulder, C.H. (2010), Gender differences in the impact of family background on leaving the parental home, *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 25(1), 53-71.

Banfield, E. (1958), *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*. Glencoe, Ill., The Free Press.

Barbagli, M. (1991). Three Household Formation Systems in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Italy. In Kertzer D.I. and Saller R.P. (eds.), *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press.

Barbagli, M., Castiglioni, M. and Dalla Zuanna, G. (2003), *Fare famiglia in Italia: un secolo di cambiamenti.* Bologna: Il Mulino.

Bartus, T. (2005), Estimation of marginal effects using margeff, *The Stata Journal*, 5(3), 309-329.

Batson, C. (1998), Altruism and prosocial behavior. In Gilbert, D. (eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 282-316.

Beck, U. and Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2002), *Individualisation*, London: Sage.

Becker, G.S. (1974), A theory of social interactions, *Journal of Political Economy*, 82, 1063-1093.

Becker, G.S. (1991), *A Treatise on the Family*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bengtson, V.L., Olander, E. and Haddad, A. (1976), "The generation gap" and aging family members: toward a conceptual model. In Gubrium, J.F. (ed.), *Time, self and roles in old age*, New York: Behavioral Publications.

Bengtson, V.L. and Cutler, N.E. (1976), Generations and intergenerational relations: perspective on aging groups and social change. In Binstock, R. H. and Shanas, E. (eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social sciences*, New York: Academic Press, 130-157.

Bengtson, V.L. and Schrader, S.S. (1982), Parent-child relations. In Mangen, D.J. and Peterson, W.A. (eds.), *Handbook of Research Instruments in Social Gerontology*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 115-85.

Bengtson, V.L. and Roberts, R.E. (1991), Intergenerational solidarity in ageing families: An example of formal theory construction, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 53, 856-870.

Bengtson, V.L., Rosenthal, C. and Burton, L. (1996), Paradoxes of families and aging. In Binstock, R.H. and George, L.K. (eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social sciences*, New York: Academic Press, 253-282.

Bengtson, V.L. (2001), Beyond the nuclear family: The increasing importance of multigenerational bonds, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 1-16.

Bengtson, V.L., Giarrusso, R., Mabry, J.B. and Silverstein, M. (2002), Solidarity, conflict, and ambivalence: Complementary or competing perspectives on intergenerational relationships?, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 568-576.

Bernhardt, E.M. (2004), Is the Second Demographic Transition a useful concept for demography?, Vienna Yearbook of Population Research, 25-28.

Bernhardt, E., Gähler, M. and Goldscheider, F. (2005), Childhood family structure and routes out of the parental home in Sweden, *Acta Sociologica,* 48(2), 99-115.

Bernhardt, E. and Goldscheider, F. (2006), Gender equality, parenthood attitudes, and first births in Sweden, Vienna Yearbook of Population Research,19-39.

Bernheim, D., Shleifer, A., and Summers, L. (1985), The strategic bequest motive, *Journal of Political Economy*, 93, 1045-1076.

Berry, B. (2008), Financial transfers from living parents to adult children: Who is helped and why? *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 67, 207-239.

Billari, F.C., Philipov, D. and Baizán, P. (2001), Leaving home in Europe. The experience of cohorts born around 1960, *International Journal of Population Geography*, 7, 339-356.

Billari, F.C., Castiglioni, M., Castro Martin, N.T., Michielin, F. and Ongaro, F. (2002), Household and union formation in a Mediterranean fashion: Italy and Spain. In Klijzing, E. and Corijn, M. (Eds), *Fertility and Partnership in Europe: Findings and Lessons from Comparative Research,* 17-41, U.N., New York.

Billari, F.C. (2004), Becoming an adult in Europe: A macro(/micro)-demographic perspective, *Demographic Research*, Special Collection, 3(2), 13-44.

Billari, F.C. and Liefbroer, A.C. (2007), Should I stay or should I go? The impact of age norms on leaving home, *Demography*, 44(1), 181-198.

Billari, F.C. and Liefbroer, A.C. (2010), Towards a new pattern of transition to adulthood?, *Advances in Life Course Research*, 15(2), 59-75.

Billari, F.C. and Tabellini, G. (2011), Italians are late. Does it matter?. In Shoven, J.B, *Demography & The Economy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 371-412.

Billari, F.C. and Wilson, C. (2001), Convergence towards diversity? Cohort dynamics in the transition to adulthood in contemporary Western Europe, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Working Paper WP2001-039.

Blaauboer, M. and Mulder, C.H. (2010), Gender differences in the impact of family background on leaving the parental home, *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 25(1), 53-71.

Blau, P. M. (1964), *Exchange and power in social life*, New York/London: Wiley.

Blossfeld, H.-P., Manting, D. and Rohwer, G. (1993), Patterns of change in family formation in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands: Some consequences for solidarity between generations. In Becker, H.A. and Hermkens, P.L. (Eds.), *Solidarity of generations: Demographic, economic, and social change and its consequences*, Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers, 175-191.

Blossfeld, H.-P., Hofäcker, D., and Bertolini, S. (2011), *Youth on globalized labour markets. Rising uncertainty and its effects on early employment and family lives in Europe*, Opladen and Farmington Hills (MI): Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Bonifazi, C. and Heins, F. (2000), Long-term trends of internal migration in Italy, *International Journal of Population Geography*, 6(2), 111-131.

Bonifazi, C., Menniti, A., Misiti, M., and Palomba, R. (1999), Giovani che non lasciano il nido. Atteggiamenti, speranze, condizioni all'uscita di casa. Rome: Technical Report Italian National Research Council, Istituto di Ricerche sulla Popolazione.

Bordone, V. (2009), Contact and proximity of older people to their adult children: A comparison between Italy and Sweden, *Population Space Place*, 15, 359–380.

Brandt, M. and Deindl, C. (2013), Intergenerational transfers to adult children in Europe: Do social policies matter?, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 75(1), 235–251.

Breen, R. and Buchmann, M. (2002), Institutional variation and the position of young people: A comparative perspective, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 580(1), 288-305.

Burgess, E. (1916), *The Function of Socialization in Social Evolution*, Chicago: University Chicago Press.

Bucx, F. (2009), Linked lives: Young adults' life course and relations with parents, PhD Dissertation, Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

Bucx, F., Van Wel, F. and Knijn, T. (2012), Life course status and exchanges of support between young adults and parents, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 101-115.

Bucx, F., Van Wel, F., Knijn, T. and Hagendoorn, L. (2008), Intergenerational contact and the life course status of young adult children, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 144–156.

Bucx, F. and Van Wel., F.W. (2008), Parental bond and life course transitions from adolescence to young adulthood*, Adolescence*, 43, 71-88.

Buzzi C., Cavalli A. and de Lillo A. (2002), *Giovani del nuovo secolo*, Bologna: il Mulino.

Buzzi C., Cavalli A. and de Lillo A. (2007), *Rapporto giovani: sesta indagine dell'Istituto IARD sulla condizione giovanile in Italia*, Bologna: il Mulino.

Castiglioni, M. and Dalla Zuanna, G. (2009), Marital and reproductive behaviour in Italy after 1995: Bridging the gap with Western Europe?, *European Journal of population*, 25, 1-26

Chiuri, M.C. and Del Boca, D. (2010), Home-leaving decisions of daughters and sons, *Review of Economics of the Household*, 8, 393-408.

Chudnovskaya, M., and Kolk, M. (2015), Educational Expansion and Intergenerational Proximity in Sweden, *Population, Space and Place*.

Clark, W.A. and Mulder, C.H. (2000), Leaving home and entering the housing market, *Environment and Planning A*, 32(9), 1657-1671.

Cohler, B.J. (1983), Autonomy and interdependence in the family of adulthood: A psychological perspective, *Gerontologist* 23, 33-39.

Coleman, J.S. (1990), *Foundations of social theory*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap.

Cong, Z. and Silverstein, M. (2011), Intergenerational exchange between parents and migrant and nonmigrant sons in rural China, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73(1), 93-104.

Connidis, I.A. and McMullin, J.A. (2002), Sociological ambivalence and family ties: a critical perspective, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 558-567.

Cooney M.T. (1994), Young adults' relations with parents: the influence of recent parental divorce, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 56, 45-56.

Cooney, T. and Uhlenberg, P. (1992), Support from patents over the life course: The adult child's perspective, *Social Forces*, 71, 63-84.

Corijn, M. and Klijzing, E. (1999), Transition to adulthood in Europe, CBGS European Studies of Population Series.

Cox, M.J., Paley, B. and Harter, H. (2001), Interparental conflict and parent-child relationships. In: Grych JH and Fincham FD (eds.) *Interparental conflict and child development: Theory, research, and application*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 249-272.

Cox, D. (1987), Motives for private income transfers, *Journal of Political Economy*, 95, 508-546.

Cox, D., and Rank, M.R. (1992), Inter-vivos transfers and intergenerational exchange, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 74, 305-314.

Cox, D., and Stark, O. (1992), Intergenerational transfers and the demonstration effect, Working Paper, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Dalla Zuanna G. (2001), The banquet of Aeolus. A familistic interpretation of Italy's lowest low fertility, *Demographic Research*, 4 (5).

Davey, A. and Eggebeen, D.J. (1998), Patterns of intergenerational exchange and mental health, *The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 53, P86–P95.

Da Molin, G. (1990), Family forms and domestic service in southern Italy from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, *Journal of Family History*, 15, 513–523.

Di Giulio, P., & Rosina A. (2007), Intergenerational family ties and the diffusion of cohabitation in Italy, *Demographic Research*, 16 (14), 441-468.

Douglass, W.A. (1980), The South Italian family: a critique, *Journal of Family History,* 5, 340.

Dribe M and Stanfors M (2002) Leaving home in post-war Sweden: A micro-level analysis of the determinants of leaving the parental home in three birth cohorts, Lund Papers in Economic History, Department of Economic History, 81.

Durkheim, E. (Original work published 1892), *Cours de sociologie de la famille: La famille conjugale*, Paris: Minuit, 35-49 (Eds. 1967).

Elder, G. (1991), Lives and social change, in Heinz, W. (ed.), *Theoretical advances in life course research*, Weinham, Germany: Deutscher Studies Verla, 58-114.

Elder, G. H. (1994). Time, human agency, and social change: Perspectives on the life course, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 57, 4 – 15

Elder, G.H. (1998), The life course as developmental theory, *Child Development*, 69(1): 1-12.

Elster, J. (2006), Altruistic behavior and altruistic motivations. In Kolm, S.C. and Ythier, J.M. (eds.), *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 183-206.

Emery, T. and Mudrazija, S. (2015), Measuring intergenerational financial support: Analysis of two cross-national surveys, working paper presented at the conference Population Association of America (Annual Meeting).

Finch, J. and Mason, J. (1993), *Negotiating Family Responsibilities*, Routledge, London.

Flandrin, J.-L. (1979), *Families in former times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fors, S. and Lennartsson, C. (2008), Social mobility, geographical proximity and intergenerational family contact in Sweden, *Ageing and Society*, 28(2), 253-270.

Frankenberg, E., Lillard, L. and Willis, R.J. (2002), Patterns of intergenerational transfers in Southeast Asia, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 627-641.

Gähler M. and Palmtag E.L. (2014) Parental divorce, psychological well-being and educational attainment: Changed experience, unchanged effect among Swedes born 1892-1991. *Social Indicators Research*. Online first. DOI: 10.1007/s11205-014-0768-6.

Gerard J.M., Krishnakumar, A. and Buehler, C. (2006), Marital conflict, parent-child relations, and youth maladjustment: A longitudinal investigation of spillover effects, *Journal of Family Issues,* 27(7), 951-975.

Giarusso, R., Stallings, M. and Bengtson, V.L. (1995), The "intergenerational stake" hypothesis revisited: parent-child differences in perceptions of relationships 20 years later". In Bengtson, V.L., Schaie, K.W. and Burton, L.M. (Ed.), *Adult intergenerational relations: effects of societal change*, New York: Springer.

Gierveld, J.D.J., Liefbroer, A.C. and Beekink, E. (1991), The effect of parental resources on patterns of leaving home among young adults in the Netherlands, *European Sociological Review*, 7(1), 55-71.

Gilligan, M., Suitor, J.J., Feld, S. and Pillemer, K. (2015), Do positive feelings hurt? Disaggregating positive and negative components of intergenerational ambivalence, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77, 261–276

George, L.K. (1986), Caregiver burden: Conflict between norms of reciprocity and solidarity. In Pillemer, K. and Wolf, R. (Eds.), *Elder abuse: Conflict in the family*, Dover, MA: Auburn House, 67-92.

Glaser, K. and Tomassini, C. (2000), Proximity of Older Women to Their Children: A Comparison of Britain and Italy, *The Gerontologist*, 40, 6, 729–737.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Goldscheider, C. (1993), *Leaving Home Before Marriage: Ethnicity, Familism, and Generational Relationships*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Lawton, L. (1998), Family Experiences and the Erosion of Support for Intergenerational Coresidence, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60(3), 623-632.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Goldscheider, C. (1989), Family structure and conflict: Nest-leaving expectations of young adults and their parents, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 51(1), 87-97.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Goldscheider, C. (1998). The Effects of Childhood Family Structure on Leaving and Returning Home. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 60, 745-756.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Goldscheider, C. (1999). *The changing transition to adulthood: Leaving and returning home*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Goldscheider, F.K., Bernhardt, E. and Lappegård, T. (2014), Studies of men's involvement in the family, *Journal of Family Issues*, 35(7), 879-890.

Goldscheider, F.K. and Waite, L.J. (1987), Nest-Leaving Patterns and the Transition to Marriage for Young Men and Women, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 49(3), 507-516

Goody, J. (1983), *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gouldner, A.W. (1960), The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement, *American Sociological Review*, 25, 161-78.

Granovetter, M.S. (1973), The strength of weak ties, *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.

Greenwell, L. and Bengtson, V.L. (1997), Geographic distance and contact between middle-aged children and their parents: The effects of social class over 20 years, *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 52B, S13-S26.

Grundy, E. and Henretta, J.C. (2006), Between elderly parents and adult children: a new look at the intergenerational care provided by the "sandwich generation", *Ageing & Society*, 26, 707-722.

Guo, M., Chi, I. and Silverstein, M. (2012), The structure of intergenerational relations in rural China: A latent class analysis, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 1114-1128.

Hagestad, G.O. (1985), Dimensions of time and the family, *American Behavioral Scientist* 29(6): 679–694.

Hank, K. (2007), Proximity and contacts between older parents and their children: a European comparison, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69, 1, 157 – 173.

Hartnett, C.S., Furstenberg, F.F., Birditt, K.S. and Fingerman K.L. (2013), Parental Support During Young Adulthood : Why Does Assistance decline with age?, *Journal of Family Issues*, 34, 975-1006.

Heckhausen, J. (1999), *Developmental Regulation in Adulthood. Age-Normative and Sociostructural Constraints as Adaptive Challenges*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Henretta, J.C., Hill, M.S., Li, W., Soldo, B.J. and Wolf, D.A. (1997), Selection of children to provide care: The effect of earlier parental transfers, *The Journals of Gerontology*, 52, 110-119.

Henretta, J.C., Grundy, E. and Harris, S. (2002), The influence of socio-economic and health differences on parents' provision of help to adult children: a British-United States comparison, *Ageing & Society*, 22, 441-58.

Henretta, J.C., Van Voorhis, M.F. and Soldo, B.J. (2014), Parental money help to children and stepchildren, *Journal of Family Issues*, 35(9), 1131 –1153.

Hogan, D.P., and Eggebeen, D.J. (1995), Sources of emergency help and routine assistance in old-age, *Social Forces*, 73(3), 917–936.

Hogan, D. and Eggebeen, D. (1990), Giving between generations in American families. *Human Nature*, 1, 211–32.

Hogan, D.P., Eggebeen, D.J. and Clogg, C.C. (1993), The structure of intergenerational exchanges in American families, *American Journal of Sociology*, 98, 1428-1458.

Hogerbrugge, M.J. and Dykstra, P.A. (2009), The family ties of unmarried cohabiting and married persons in the Netherlands. *Journal of marriage and family*, 71(1), 135-145.

Homans, G.C. (1950), *The human group*, New York: Harcourt Brace.

Homans, G.C. (1974), *Social behavior: Its elementary forms*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Iacovou, M. and Berthoud, R. (2001), Young people's lives: A map of Europe, Colchester: University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research.

Iacovou, M. and Aassve, A. (2007), *Youth Poverty in Europe*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Igel, C., Brandt, M., Haberkern, K. and Szydlik, M. (2009), Specialization between Family and State: Intergenerational Time Transfers in Western Europe, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 40, 203-226.

Igel, C. and Szydlik, M. (2011), Grandchild care and welfare state arrangements in Europe, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 21(3), 210-224.

Inglehart, R. (1977). *The silent revolution: Changing values and political styles among Western publics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Introvigne, M. and Stark, R. (2005), Religious competition and revival in Italy: exploring European exceptionalism, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, 1.

Ikkink, K.K., Van Tilburg, T., and Knipscheer, K.C.P.M. (1999), Perceived instrumental support exchanges in relationships between elderly parents and their adult children: Normative and structural explanations, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 831-844.

Julkunen, I. (2002), Social and material deprivation among unemployed youth in Northern Europe, *Social Policy & Administration*, 36(3), 235-53.

Kalmijn, M. (2013a), Long-term effects of divorce on parent-child relationships: Within-family comparisons of fathers and mothers, *European Sociological Review,* 29(5), 888-898.

Kalmijn, M. (2013b), How mothers allocate support among adult children: evidence from a multiactor survey, *Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 68(2), 268-277.

Kalmijn, M. (2013c), Adult children's relationships with marred parents, divorced parents, and stepparents: Biology, marriage, or residence?, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 75, 1181-1193.

Kalmijn, M. (2006), Educational inequality and family relationships: Influences on contact and proximity, *European Sociological Review*, 22(1), 1-16.

Kalmijn, M. and Saraceno, C. (2008), A comparative perspective on intergenerational support: responsiveness to parental needs in individualistic and familialistic countries, *European Societies*, 10, 3, 479-508.

Kalmijn, M. and Dykstra, P.A. (2006), Differentials in face-to-face contact between parents and their grown-up children. In Dykstra, P.A., Kalmijn, M., Knijn, T.C.M., Komter, A.E., Liefbroer, A.C. and Mulder, C.H. (eds), *Family Solidarity in the Netherlands*, Amsterdam, NL: Dutch University Press, 63-85.

Kauppinen, T.M., Angelin, A., Lorentzen, T., Bäckman, O., Salonen, T., Moisio, P. and Dahl, E. (2014), Social background and life-course risks as determinants of social assistance receipt among young adults in Sweden, Norway and Finland, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 24(3), 273-288.

Kertzer, D.I. (1989), The joint family household revisited, *Journal of Family History*,14,1-20.

Kiecolt, J.K., Blieszner, R. and Salva, J. (2011), Long-term influences of intergenerational ambivalence on midlife parents' psychological well-being, *Journal of Marriage and Family,* 73, 369-382.

Kiernan, K.E. (1992), The impact of family disruption in childhood on transitions made in young adult life, *Population Studies*, 46(2), 213-34.

Kohli, M. (1999), Private and public transfers between generations: Linking the family and the state, *European Societies*, 1, 81-104.

Kohli, M. and Kunemund, H. (2003), Intergenerational transfers in the family: What motivates giving?. In Bengtson, V.L. and Lowenstein, A. (eds.), *Families, aging, and social support: International perspectives*, Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 123-142.

Kohli, M, Kuenemund, H. and Ludicke, J. (2005), Family structure, proximity and contact. In Boersch-Supan, A. *et al.* (eds), *Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe – First Results from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe*, MEA:Mannheim, 164-170.

Kolk, M. (2014), Multigenerational Processes in Demography, Stockholm University Demography Unit - Dissertation Series 12.

Kolm, S.C. (2006), Introduction to the economics of giving, altruism and reciprocity. In Kolm, S.C. and Ythier, J.M. (eds), *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1-114.

Komter, A.E. and Vollebergh, W.A.M. (2002), Solidarity in Dutch families: Family ties under strain?, *Journal of Family Issues*, 23(2), 171-188.

Kunemund, H. and Rein, M. (1999), There is more to receiving than needing: Theoretical arguments and empirical explorations of crowding in and crowding out, *Ageing and Society*, 19, 93-121.

Lanz, M. and Tagliabue, S. (2007), Do I really need someone in order to become an adult? Romantic relationships during emerging adulthood in Italy, *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 22(5), 531-549.

Lawton, L, Silverstein, M, Bengtson, V. (1994), Affection, social contact, and geographical distance between adult children and their parents, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 56, 57–68

Laslett P. (1983). Family and Households as Work Group and Kin Group: Areas of Traditional Europe Compared. In Wall R., Robin, J. and Laslett, P. (eds), *Family Forms in Historic Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laslett, P. (1972), Preface to the first impression. In Laslett, P. and Wall, R. (eds.), *Household and family in past time*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leopold, T. and Raab, M. (2011), Short-term reciprocity in late parent-child relationships, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73, 105-119.

Leopold, T. and Raab, M. (2013), The temporal structure of intergenerational exchange: A within-family analysis of parent-child reciprocity, *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27: 252-263.

Leopold, T. (2012a), Linked lives. Within families and across generations, PhD dissertation, University of Bamberg.

Leopold, T. (2012b), The Legacy of leaving home: Long-term effects of coresidence on parent-child relationships, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 399-412.

Leopold, T., Geissler, F. and Pink, S. (2012), How far do children move? Spatial distances after leaving the parental home, *Social Science Research*, 41, 4, 991–1002.

Lennartsson, C., Silverstein, M. and Fritzell, J. (2010), Time-for-money exchanges between older and younger generations in Swedish families, *Journal of Family Issues*, 31(2), 189-210.

Lennartsson, C. (2001), Child-parent contacts. A study of social contacts between adult children and their parents in Sweden. In Lennartsson, C. (ed.) Still in touch. Family contact, activities and health among elderly in Sweden. PhD Thesis, Swedish Institute for Social Research, Stockholm University.

Le Play F. (1871), *L'organisation de la famille selon le vrai modèle signalé par l'histoire de toutes les races et de tous les temps*, 3rd edn. Tours, Alfred Mame et fils.

Lee, Y. and Aytac, I.A. (1998), Intergenerational financial support among Whites, Blacks, and Latinos, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 426-441.

Lesthaeghe R. (1991), The Second Demographic Transition in Western countries: An interpretation. Vrije Universiteit Brussel, IPD – WP, 2.

Lesthaeghe, R. (2010), The unfolding story of the Second Demographic Transition, *Population and Development Review*, 36(2), 211-251.

Liefbroer, A.C. and Billari, F.C. (2010), Bringing norms back in: A theoretical and empirical discussion of their importance for understanding demographic behavior, *Population, Space and Place,* 16(4), 287-305.

Liefbroer, A.C. and Toulemon, L. (2010), Demographic perspectives on the transition to adulthood: An introduction, *Advances in Life Course Research*, 15(2), 53-58.

Litwak, E. (1960), Occupational mobility and extended family cohesion, *American Sociological Review*, 25, 9-21.

Litwak, E. (1985), *Helping the elderly: Complementary roles of informal networks and formal systems*, New York: Guilford Press.

Lowenstein, A. (2007), Solidarity–conflict and ambivalence: Testing two conceptual frameworks and their impact on quality of life for older family members, *Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 62, 100–107.

Lüscher, K. and Pillemer, K. (1998), Intergenerational ambivalence: A new approach to the study of parent-child relations in later life, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 413-425.

Lye, D.N. (1996), Adult child-parent relationships, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22, 79-102.

Lye, D.N., Klepinger, D.H., Hyle, P.D. and Nelson, A. (1995), Childhood living arrangements and adult children's relations with their parents, *Demography*, 32, 261 – 280.

Mahoney, A. (2010), Religion in families, 1999–2009: A relational spirituality framework, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(4), 805-827.

Malmberg, G. and Pettersson, A. (2007), distance to elderly parents: analyses of Swedish register data, *Demographic Research*, 17, 679-704.

Mancini, J. and Blieszner, R. (1989), Ageing parents and adult children: research themes in intergenerational relations, *Journal of Marriage and Family,* 51, 275-290.

Marshall, V.W., Matthews, S.H. and Rosenthal, C.J. (1993), Elusiveness of family life: A challenge for the sociology of aging. In Maddox, G.L., Powell, M. and Lawton L. (eds.), *Annual review of gerontology and geriatrics*, 13, New York: Springe, 39-72.

Mauss, M. (1906), Essai sur les variations saisonnières des sociétés eskimos. Etude de morphologie sociale. In Durkheim, E. (ed.), *L'année sociologique*, Paris: Félix Alcan, 48-132.

Mazzuco, S. (2006), The impact of children leaving home on the parents' wellbeing: A comparative analysis of France and Italy, *Genus LXII*, 3(4), 35-52.

Mazzuco, S., Mencarini, L. and Rettaroli, R. (2006), Similarities and differences between two cohorts of young adults in Italy: Results of a CATI survey on transition to adulthood, *Demographic research*, 15, 105-146.

McGarry, K. and Schoeni, R.F. (1997), Transfer behavior within family: Results from the Asset and Health Dynamics Study, *Journals of Gerontology*, 52, 82-92.

Mencarini, L. and Sironi, M. (2010), Happiness, housework, and gender equality in Europe, *European Sociological Review*, 28(2), 203-219.

Mencarini, L., Meroni, E. and Pronzato, C. (2012), Leaving mum alone? The effect of parental separation on children leaving home decisions, *European Journal of Population*, 28(3), 337-357.

Mencarini, L. and Tanturri, M.L. (2006), Una casa per diventare grandi. I giovani italiani, l'autonomia abitativa e il ruolo della famiglia d'origine, *Polis*, 20(3), 405-430.

Merrill, D. (2011), *When your children marry: How marriage changes relationships with sons and daughters, Lanham*, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Merton, R.K. and Barber, E. (1963), Sociological ambivalence. In Tiryakian, E. (ed.), *Sociological theory: Values and sociocultural change*, New York: Free Press, 91-120.

Merz, E-M. and Gierveld, J. (2015), Childhood memories, family ties, sibling support and loneliness in ever-widowed older adults: quantitative and qualitative results, *Ageing and Society*, 1, 1-28.

Micheli, G.A. (2000), Kinship, Family and Social Network: The anthropological embedment of fertility change in Southern Europe, *Demographic Research*, 3.

Micheli, G.A. (2012), Two strong families in Southern Europe? Re-examining the geography of kinship regimes stemming from the reciprocity mechanisms between generations, *European Journal of Population/Revue européenne de Démographie*, 28(1), 17-38.

Michielin, F. and Mulder, C.H. (2007), Geographical distances between adult children and their parents in the Netherlands, *Demographic Research*, 17, 655–678.

Modell, J., Furstenberg, F. and Hershberg, T. (1976), Social change and transitions to adulthood in historical perspective, *Journal of Family History*, 38, 7-32.

Molm, L.D. and Cook, K.S. (1995), Social exchange and exchange networks. In Cook, K.S., Fine, G.A. and House J.S. (eds.), *Sociological Perspectives on Social Psychology*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 209-235.

Monserud, M.A. (2008), Intergenerational relationships and affectual solidarity between grandparents and young adults, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 182-195.

Motel-Klingebiel, A., Tesch-Römer, C. and von Kondratowitz, H.-J. (2005) Welfare states do not crowd out the family: Evidence for mixed responsibility from comparative analyses, *Ageing and Society*, 25, 863–82.

Mulder, C.H. and Clark, W.A.V. (2002), Leaving home for college and gaining independence, *Environment and Planning*, A34(6), 981-999.

Mulder, C.H. and Billari, F.C. (2010), Homeownership regimes and low fertility. *Housing Studies*, 25(4), 527-541.

Musick, K. and Bumpass, L. (2012), Reexamining the case for marriage: Union formation and changes in well-being, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 1-18.

Myers, S.M. (2004), Religion and intergenerational assistance: Distinct differences by adult children's gender and parent's marital status, *The Sociological Quarterly*, 45(1), 67-89.

Nazio, T. and Saraceno, C. (2012), Does cohabitation lead to weaker intergenerational bonds than marriage? A comparison between Italy and the United Kingdom, *European Sociological Review,* 29, 549-564.

Neyer, G., Andersson, G. and Kulu, H. (2013), *The Demography of Europe: Introduction*, Springer Netherlands.

Neugarten B.L., Moore J.M. and Lowe J.C. (1965), Age norms, age constraints, and adult socialization, *American Journal of Sociology,* 70(6), 710-717.

Ongaro F. (2001), Transition to adulthood in Italy. In Corijn, M. and Klizing, E. (eds.), *Transition to Adulthood in Europe*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Palmtag, E.L. (2013), Break-up and then what? A study of intergenerational contact between adult children and their divorced/separated parents. 8th conference European Network for the sociological and demographic Study of Divorce, Oxford, UK, 26-28 September.

Parra, A., Oliva, A. and del Carmen Reina, M. (2015). Family Relationships From Adolescence to Emerging Adulthood A Longitudinal Study, *Journal of Family Issues*, 36(14), 2002-2020.

Parrott, T.M. and Bengston, V.L. (1999), The effects of earlier intergenerational affection, normative, and support expectations, and family conflict on contemporary exchanges of help, *Research on Ageing*, 21(1), 73-105.

Parsons, T. (1942), Age and sex in the social structure of the United States, *American Sociological Review*, 7, 604-616.

Parsons, T. (1943), The kinship system of the contemporary United States, *American Anthropologist*, 45, 22-38.

Pillemer, K. and Suitor, J.J. (2002), Explaining mothers' ambivalence toward their adult children, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 602 – 613.

Pillemer, K., Suitor, J.J., Mock, S.E., Sabir, M., Pardo, T.B. and Sechrist, J. (2007), Capturing the complexity of intergenerational relations: Exploring ambivalence within later-life families, *Journal of Social Issues*, 63, 775 – 791.

Pillemer, K., Munsch C.L., Fuller-Rowell, T., Riffin, C. and Suitor, J.J. (2012), Ambivalence Toward Adult Children: Differences Between Mothers and Fathers, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 1101-1113.

Reher, D.S. (1998), Family ties in Western Europe: persistent contrasts, *Population and Development Review*, 24(2), 203–234.

Riley, M.W. and Riley, J.W. (1993), Connections: kin and cohort. In Bengtson, V.L. and Achenbaum, W.A. (eds.), *The changing contract across generations*, Hawthorne, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 169-190.

Popenoe, D. (1993), American family decline, 1960 – 1990: A review and appraisal*, Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 55, 527 – 555.

Rosina, A., Fraboni, R., and Sabbadini, L.L. (2003), Diventare donne e uomini in Italia. In Pinnelli, A., Racioppi, F., and Rettaroli, R. (eds.), *Genere e demografia*, Bologna: Il Mulino: 173-192.

Rosina, A. and Fraboni, R. (2004), Is marriage losing its centrality in Italy? *Demographic Research*, 11, 149–172.

Rossi, A.S. and Rossi, P.H. (1990), *Of Human Bonding: Parent/Child Relations across the Life Course*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York.

Ruggles, S. (2007), The Decline of Intergenerational Coresidence in the United States, 1850 to 2000, *American Sociological Review*, 72(6), 964-989.

Rusconi, A. (2006), *Leaving the parental home in Italy and West-Germany: opportunities and constrains*, Soziologische Studien, Shaker.

Santarelli, E. and Cottone, F. (2009), Leaving home, family support and intergenerational ties in Italy: Some regional differences, *Demographic Research*, 21(1), 1-22.

Sarkisian, N. and Gerstel, N. (2008), Till marriage do us part: Adult children's relationships with their parents, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 360–367.

Schokkaert, E. (2006), The empirical Analysis of transfer motives, in Kolm, S.C. and Ythier, J.M. (eds), *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 127-176.

Settersten, R.A., Jr. and Hagestad, G.O. (1996), What's the Latest? Cultural Age Deadlines for Family Transitions, *The Gerontologist*, 36, 178–88.

Setterston, R.A., Jr. (2007), Passages to adulthood: Linking demographic change and human development, *European Journal of Population*, 23, 251-272.

Shanas, E. (1980), Old people and their families: The new pioneers, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 42, 9-15

Silverstein, M., Chen, X. and Heller, K. (1996), Too much of a good thing? Intergenerational social support and the psychological well-being of older parents, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 970-982.

Silverstein, M. and Bengtson, V.L. (1997), Intergenerational solidarity and the structure of adult child/parent relationships in American families, *American Journal of Sociology*, 103, 429-460.

Silverstein, M., Conroy, J.S., Wang, H., Giarrusso, R. and Bengtson, V.L. (2002), Reciprocity in parent-child relations over the adult life course, *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 57, 3–13.

Silverstein, M., Gans, D. and Yang, F.M. (2006), Intergenerational support to aging parents: The role of norms and needs, *Journal of Family Issues*, 27, 1068-1084.

Silverstein, M. (2006), Intergenerational family transfers in social context. In Binstock, R.H. and George, L.K. (eds.), *Handbook of ageing and the social sciences*, San Diego: Academic Press, 165-178.

Silverstein, M. and Giarrusso, R. (2010), Aging and family life: a decade review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(5), 1039-1058.

Silverstein, M. and Conroy, S.J. (2009), Intergenerational transmission of moral capital across the family life course. In Schoenpflug, U. (ed.), *Cultural Transmission*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 317-337.

Silverstein, M., Conroy, S.J. and Gans, D. (2012), Beyond solidarity, reciprocity and altruism: moral capital as a unifying concept in intergenerational support for older people, *Ageing and Society*, 32, 1246-1262.

Silverstein, M. and Marenco, A. (2001), How Americans enact the grandparent role across the family life course, *Journal of Family Issues*, 22, 493-522.

Sironi, M. and Billari, F.C. (2015), Stay with mommy and daddy or move out? Consequences of the age at leaving home in the United State, working paper presented at the conference Population Association of America (Annual Meeting).

Silverman, S. (1968), Agricultural organization, social structure, and values in Italy: amoral familism reconsidered, *American Anthropologist*, 70(1), 1-20.

Simmel, G. (1904), The sociology of conflict I, *American Journal of Sociology*, 9, 490-525.

Smith, A. (1759), *The theory of moral sentiments*, Part I, Section I, Chapter I: Of Sympaty, edited by Haakonssen, K. (2002), Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Smits, A., Van Gaalen, R.I. and Mulder, C.H. (2010), Parent-child coresidence: Who moves in with whom and for whose needs?, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 1022-1033.

Soldo, B.J., Wolf, D.A. and Agree, E.M. (1990), Family, households, and care arrangements of frail older women: A structural analysis, *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 45, S238-S249.

Statistic Sweden (1994), Fakta om den svenska familjen, Stockholm, Statistics Sweden.

Statistics Sweden (2009), *Theme: Children. Children Today-describing children's living conditions based ion the "convention on the ritghts of the child*", Stockholm, Statistics Sweden.

Suitor, J.J., Sechrist, J., Gilligan, M. and Pillemer, K. (2011), Intergenerational relations in later-life families. In Settersten, R. and Angel, J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Sociology of Aging*, New York: Springer, 161-178.

Swartz, T.T. (2009), Intergenerational Family Relations in Adulthood: Patterns, Variations, and Implications in the Contemporary United States, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35, 191-212.

Szydlik, M. (2008), Intergenerational solidarity and conflict, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 39, 97-114.

Tomassini C, Wolf, D.A. and Rosina A. (2003), Parental housing assistance and parent-child proximity in Italy, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(3), 700-715.

Tönnies, F. (1887), *Gemeinschaft und gesellschaft: Abhandlung des kommunismus und sozialismus als empirschen kulturformen*, Leipzig, Germany: Reisland Verlag.

Thorne, B. (1992), Feminism and the family: Two decades of thought. In Thorne, B. and Yalom, M. (eds.), *Rethinking the family*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 3-30.

Treas, J. and Gubernskaya, Z. (2012), Farewell to moms? Maternal contact for seven countries in 1986 and 2001, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 297–311.

Uehara, E.S. (1995), Reciprocity reconsidered: Gouldner's moral norm of reciprocity and social support, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 12, 483-502.

Umberson, D. (1992), Relationships between adult children and their parents: Psychological consequences for both generations, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 54(3), 664-674.

Umberson, D., Williams, K., Powers, D.A. and Chen, M. (2005), As good as it gets? A life course perspective on marital quality, *Social Forces*, 84, 493–511.

Van de Kaa, D. (1987), Europe's Second Demographic Transition, *Population Bulletin*, 42(1), Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC.

Van Gaalen, R.I. and Dykstra, P.A. (2006), Solidarity and conflict between adult children and parents: A latent class analysis, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68, 947–960.

Van Gaalen, R.I., Dykstra, P.A., and Komter, A.E. (2010), Where is the exit? Intergenerational ambivalence and relationship quality in high contact ties, *Journal of Aging Studies*, 24, 105–114.

Viazzo, P.P. (2003), What's so special about the Mediterranean? Thirty years of research on household and family in Italy, *Continuity and Change*, 18(1), 111–137.

Viazzo, P.P. (2006), The self-sufficient household? An anthropological reconsideration of the Italian evidence, *Revista de Demografia Historica*, 24(2), 89–110.

Viazzo, P.P. (2010), Macro-regional differences in European kinship culture. In Heady, P. and Kohli, M. (eds.), *Family, kinship and state in contemporary Europe*, Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 271–293.

Vignoli, D. and Salvini, S. (2014), Religion and union formation in Italy: Catholic precepts, social pressure, and tradition, *Demographic Research*, 31, 1079-1106.

Waite, L.J. and Harrison, S.C. (1992), Keeping in touch: How women in mid-life allocate social contacts among kith and kin, *Social Forces*, 70, 637-655.

Ward, R.A., and Spitze, G.D. (1992), Consequences of parent-adult child coresidence: A review and research agenda, *Journal of Family Issues*, 13, 553-572.

Ward, R.A. and Spitze, G.D. (1996), Will the children ever leave? Parent-child coresidence. history and plans, *Journal of Family Issues,* 17(4), 514-539.

Ward, R.A. and Spitze, G.D. (2007), Nestleaving and coresidence by young adult children: the role of family relations. *Research on Ageing*, 29(3), 257-277.

Ward R.A., Deane, G. and Spitze, G.D. (2014), Life-course changes and parent-adult child contact, *Research on Aging,* 36(5), 568-602.

Willson, A.E., Shuey, K.M., Elder, G.H., Jr., and Wickrama, K.A.S. (2006), Ambivalence in mother adult child relations: A dyadic analysis, *Social Psychology Quarterly,* 69(3), 235-252.

White L. and Edwards J.N. (1990), Emptying the nest and parental well-being: An analysis of national panel data, *American Sociological Review,* 55(2), 235-242.

Whitbeck, L., Hoyt, D. and Huck, S. (1994), Early family relationships, intergenerational solidarity, and support provided to parents by adult children, *Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 49, S85-S94.

Yahirun, J. and Hamplová, D. (2014), Children's union status and contact with mothers: A cross-national study, *Demographic Research*, 30, 1413-1444.