The Late Life Legacy of Leaving Home

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ABSTRACT

*This study investigated how earlier patterns of leaving home affected parent-child relations in later life. We proposed different pathways (relationship quality, structural opportunities, long-term reciprocity, and processes of mutual socialization) by which the time spent in the parental home may set the stage for intergenerational solidarity in aging families. Using fixed-effects models with data from SHARE (*N = *7,630 parent-child dyads), we assessed the effects of earlier coresidence on intergenerational proximity, contact frequency, and support exchange more than a decade after children had left home. We found that compared to siblings who moved out "on time", late home leavers lived closer to their aging parents, maintained more frequent contact, and were more likely be providers as well as receivers of intergenerational support. Overall, this evidence paints a positive picture of extended coresidence, revealing its potential of strengthening intergenerational ties across the life course.*

Keywords:

cross-national research, families in middle and later life, intergenerational transfers, parent-child relations, reciprocity, transition to adulthood

INTRODUCTION

We have a fairly comprehensive understanding of parent-child coresidence as well as the timing and pathways out of the parental home. What remains largely unclear, however, is whether it matters in the long term (White & Lacy, 1997). Only very few studies investigated the long-term consequences of leaving home. Importantly, there is an absence of research on how this transition affects parent-child relations in later life. Patterns of leaving home, however, may set the stage for subsequent solidarity and conflict between the generations: "Off-time" departures are likely to predict the quality of parent-child relations at later stages reflecting, for example, early leavers' break-away from unstable families. But the time young adults spent in the parental home may also entail idiosyncratic effects on later parent-child relations. For instance, extended coresidence may promote later awareness for each other's needs or constitute an obligation for adult children to reciprocate in the long term.

In view of these connections, it appears worthwhile to incorporate information on earlier patterns of leaving home into the analysis of parent-child relationships in aging families. In this study, we examined how early, "on-time", and late leavers differed with respect to intergenerational proximity, contact frequency, and support exchange in later life. From a life course perspective, this research design enabled us to investigate how experiences related to earlier transitions were carried over into late parent-child relationships. We begin by discussing different pathways on how patterns of home leaving may affect parent-child relations in later life. Our empirical analysis used pooled data from two waves (2004/05, 2006/07) of the Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), comprising respondents from 14 European countries and Israel.

BACKGROUND

A large body of literature suggests that young adults' age at leaving home reflects the quality of earlier family relationships. In this sense, any "influence" of the time spent in the parental home on later parent-child relations may be attributable to pure selection effects. For instance, a history of family conflict is known to promote early home leaving (e.g., Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). At the same time, problematic parent-child relations may be carried over into later life, producing a spurious correlation between early departures and lower levels of intergenerational solidarity in aging families. Whereas premature leavers are undoubtedly selected on adverse family climate, however, it is less clear whether the reverse is true for "mature coresiders". Some research suggested that those who got along better with their parents and benefited from supportive family ties were indeed more likely to stay at home until later ages (Aquilino, 1990). But overall, the empirical picture is inconsistent. For example, Ward and Spitze (2007) analyzed US panel data to find that harmonious ties to parents did not predict coresidence at a later wave. White and Rogers (1997) reported that although parents and grown children appeared to be generally satisfied with sharing a household, continued coresidence involved some decline in relationship quality. Indeed, by most popular accounts, but also according to a number of scholars (e.g., Parsons, 1949; Schnaiberg & Goldenberg, 1989) extended coresidence represents an anomalous situation where parents fall victim to "greedy and lazy children" (Mitchell, 2006, p. 86). A negative picture of extended coresidence is also consistent with classical life course theory which would argue that children who are "off schedule" in their passage to adulthood may put strain on intergenerational relations whereas on-time transitions may entail positive effects because they fit with prevailing age norms (see Hagestad, 1986).

Despite these ambiguities, the literature offers some hints on how to assess the influence of extended coresidence on the quality of parent-child relations. The critical questions are

apparently how coresidence is perceived by both parties and how parent-child relations actually develop during the time of sharing a home. In this respect, White (1994, p. 94) notes that the "extent to which coresidence is perceived as unfairly burdensome by parents seems to depend much less on whether the child is too old than on whether the child is too dependent." This view has been corroborated by a number of empirical studies which found that coresidence primarily reflected the needs of adult children (e.g., Ward, Logan, & Spitze, 1992) and that increased intergenerational tension occurred primarily when children's personal problems and their inability to achieve an adult status necessitated coresidence (Pudrovska, 2009).

These considerations suggest, first, that the duration of coresidence is likely to have an idiosyncratic influence and is therefore more than a proxy for earlier family climate – at least as far as prolonged home staying is concerned. Second, the question of whether the experience of coresidence creates conflict, cohesion, or both, is likely related to the degree of children's dependency on parents as well as the prevailing normative context in which the transitions occur. Thus it appears that the relationship between age at leaving home and the quality of parent-child relations may not be strictly linear. Whereas it might be the case that overall, those who were exposed to an adverse family environment left early and those who benefited from a feathered nest stayed longer, the group of very late leavers may be distinct. In other words, young adults who move regularly toward independence are unlikely to be among the latest leavers and, as a result, do also not violate cultural expectations pertaining to family transitions. In contrast, unusually late departures may signal difficulties to complete the passage to adulthood which in turn may entail detrimental effects of coresidence on the quality of relations to parents, possibly extending into later life.

A related pathway that can be hypothesized to mediate the relationship between patterns of home leaving and later parent-child relations focuses on geographical distance across the life

course. As a component of the structural dimension in the typology of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991), parent-child proximity reflects opportunities for contact and support exchange. A recent study suggested that timing and distance of move-outs are interrelated dimensions in the process of home leaving: Younger leavers moved across greater distances whereas those who stayed longer relocated closer to their parental home (Leopold, Geißler, & Pink, 2011). With respect to the above discussion, this evidence may point to continued dependency of late home leavers. But beyond the family sphere, it is also consistent with developmental models of migration which posit that the duration of residence increases the emotional attachment to a region as well as access to its resources such as the job and marriage market. In any case, if home stayers are more likely to live close to their parents in later life, proximity may mediate other dimensions of intergenerational relations such as frequency of contact and support exchange.

Finally, the experience of coresidence in earlier life may also influence later parent-child relations by aspects beyond relationship quality and structural opportunities. As Mitchell (2006, p. 88) noted, "young adult coresiders may want to provide more help to parents in later life (. . .) than non-coresiders in an attempt to "repay" parents for providing them with a home base and burdening them with extra household responsibilities in their time of need." That is, parental investments in the course of extended coresidence build a sense of obligation in adult children. According to the principle of long-term reciprocity, they may later assist their aging parents in order to balance intergenerational support accounts in a longitudinal fashion across the life course (Silverstein, Conroy, Wang, Giarrusso, & Bengtson, 2002). Alternatively, mutual socialization processes during coresidence may represent a bidirectional "exposure" effect on feelings of responsibility, increasing the chance that parents and adult children monitor each other closely and are willing to respond to situations of need in later life (Mitchell, 2006).

To sum up, the connections between relationship quality and the duration of coresidence broadly suggest that the more time young adults spent with their parents, the higher are the expected levels of later proximity, contact frequency, and support exchange. However, in cases of very late home leaving, the duration of coresidence may have been experienced as involuntary and burdensome, reflecting young adults' extended dependency. One implication may be that children's lack of autonomy is carried over into later life, increasing the chance that they continue to rely on parental support. In contrast, if earlier coresidence represents a support debt to be repaid in later life, support should primarily flow upward from children to parents. Finally, if coresidence promotes mutual feelings of obligation, we should observe an increase in late-life support in both directions.

METHOD

Data and Sample

We used data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) (Boersch-Supan et al., 2005), a large-scale panel study representative of the population aged 50 and over in 14 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland) and Israel. There are three main reasons of why the SHARE data were particularly well suited to address our research questions. First, these data offer comprehensive information on up to four children per family, including parents' retrospective reports on their offspring's age at leaving home. Second, this nested data structure (i.e., children within families) enabled us to control for shared family characteristics (see below). Third, the SHARE sample was large enough to apply a number of important restrictions. For the present study, both of the latter points represented significant benefits in dealing with selectivity.

Our analytic sample was selected as follows. First, we pooled data from all respondents (henceforth "families") who were first interviewed in Wave 1 (2004/05) or Wave 2 (2006/07) and reported on between two and four living children (N = 19,967). The minimum number of two children per family was required to estimate fixed-effects models (see analytical strategy below); the upper bound was defined by the SHARE survey instrument because detailed information about children's characteristics was not collected above the parity of four. Second, to capture the long-term effects of earlier coresidence on later parent-child relations, we excluded 8,432 families (42.2 % of total sample size) who still had coresident children at the time of the interview as well as another 4,704 families (40.8 % of the remaining sample) in which the last move-out of a child occurred *less than ten years* before the interview date. Third, the remaining sample was restricted to families without outliers or implausible values on the key predictor variable, children's age at leaving home. We removed all families in which at least one child stayed less than 15 years (N = 424; 6.3 %) or more than 49 years (N = 12; 0.1 %) in the reporting parents' households. The benefits of these exclusions were not only to eliminate extreme cases of home staying but also to remedy, at least to some extent, the potential bias introduced by early departures that were most likely associated with family disruption. We further addressed the latter problem by a fourth sample restriction, removing all families (N = 487; 7.6 %) that included at least one nonbiological (i.e., step, foster, or adopted) child. In these families, the SHARE data did not allow to determine clearly how long each child stayed in the parental home and how long they were exposed to a stepfamily. Step five of our sample selection was aimed at ensuring relatively equal opportunities among parent-child dyads to provide instrumental support in later life. Therefore, we removed families (N = 2,124; 36.0 %) in which at least one child resided outside a geographical distance of 100 kilometers to the responding parent. A sixth sample restriction was necessary to adequately deal with the historical and cross-national variation of our key predictor variable, children's age at leaving home. We excluded families in which at least one child was

born before 1950 (N = 520 families; 13.8 %) because case numbers in the SHARE data were not sufficient to reasonably compute cohort- and country-specific quintiles of coresidence durations (see below for details). Finally, we removed 32 families (0.1 %) with missing data on one or more of the variables used in the analysis. After all restrictions, our sample consisted of 3,229 families, comprising 7,630 parent-child dyads.

Measures

Table 1 presents an overview of all variables used in the analysis as well as background information on the responding parents. We estimated a total of five binary outcomes. Table 1 shows detailed information on how each outcome was measured along with descriptive statistics at dyadic and family level. Dyadic variables were divided by the total number of children in the sample, whereas family level variables indicate the proportion of families in which at least one child was coded one. First, high geographical proximity was measured by an indicator variable for whether a child lived within 5 kilometers from the parent. In this sample, approximately every second child resided within this radius and in about 7 out of 10 families (family level measure), this applied to at least one adult child. The corresponding measures for the second outcome, intergenerational contact, were even higher, indicating that most children contacted their parent more than once a week. Three outcomes pertained to support exchange. The first measured whether a non-coresident adult child provided time transfers such as paperwork assistance (e.g., filling out forms, settling financial or legal matters), household help (e.g. home repairs, gardening, transportation, shopping, household chores) or personal care (e.g., dressing, bathing or showering, eating, getting in or out of bed, using the toilet) to an aging parent within the past year. Parents received such support from at least one child in approximately one of five families; overall, about every seventh child was a provider. A higher prevalence was indicated by the measures for downward (i.e., parent-to-

child) time transfers. However, these measures counted not only the types of support mentioned above, but also looking after grandchildren. Finally, we used an indicator variable for whether the parent had given a financial transfer of 250 Euros or more to an adult child in the past year. Note that we included no outcome measure for upward financial assistance because children barely provided such support in our sample (less than 2 % of all children).

– Table 1 –

Our key predictor variable, children's age at leaving home, was based on the retrospective survey question "In which year did [child's name] move from the parental household?" Parents were asked to count the *last* move-out, allowing for prior instances of home returning. This measure ranged from 15 to 43 across the entire sample, averaging at 22.4 years of age. As covariates, we introduced a number of additional variables which have been shown to predict the outcomes in prior research. These included children's socio-demographic characteristics as well as family-related measures such as birth order and children of their own (see Table 1 for details).

Of course, many characteristics of families and parent-child dyads varied considerably between the 14 countries included in our sample. Table 2 illustrates cross-country variation in all variables that were later introduced in the multivariate models. Every outcome measure revealed notable differences between countries. As expected, proximity and contact frequency were highest in the southern Europe (Hank, 2007). In eastern countries, the balance of time transfers appeared to favor parents whereas the reverse was true in northern and western Europe. In countries with high levels of welfare benefits (e.g., Denmark, Sweden), parents were more forthcoming in supporting their offspring financially, whereas this type of

intergenerational assistance remained a rarity for their counterparts from southern and eastern countries.

– Table 2 –

For the present study, the most important aspect of cross-country variation is the European diversity in the transition to adulthood. The countries represented in our sample are very heterogeneous with respect to a complex set of cultural and institutional factors, including employment and family policies as well as normative expectations regarding the appropriate time to leave home (e.g., Billari, 2004). Whereas departures past the age of 25 are extremely rare in northern Europe (quite similar to North America), they are considered perfectly normal in southern countries such as Italy, Spain, and Greece. Accordingly, our sample reveals marked differences in children's mean age at leaving home, ranging from 20 in Denmark to 25 in Italy and Spain.

With respect to our theoretical considerations, it was critical to assess which age at leaving home was "off-schedule" and may therefore have interfered with prevailing age norms, possibly straining parent-child relations or, alternatively, reflecting a support arrangement of an unusually long duration that may have obligated children to repay in later life. Obviously, this assessment had to be carried out relative to the specific socio-historical context in which a transition took place. Apart from the considerable cross-country differences, it was important to allow for changes across cohorts. As Settersten (1998, p. 1384) noted, the "historical time in which one reaches adulthood, and the conditions associated with that time, are likely to play a significant role in (. . .) determining life-course experiences." We did not consider gender variation because although daughters leave the parental home earlier than sons,

research did not suggest that age norms on leaving home differed accordingly (Settersten, 1998) and there is no obvious rationale for why this should be the case.

Based on these considerations, we proceeded as follows to capture the socio-historical context of home-leaving transitions. First, we constructed three birth cohorts of children (1950-59, 1960-69, and 1970-79). Second, we defined five categories representing earliest, early, average, late, and latest departures from the parental home. Because our sample represented a population selected on the basis of specific analytical reasons, whereas cultural prescriptions of what constitutes an "atypical" transition should rather be reflected in a country's general population, we took advantage of SHARE's large and representative samples for each country to specify these categories. Based on the entire SHARE sample of parent-child dyads (N = 54,412), we defined the process of leaving home starting at age 15 and censored (a) at the coresiding child's age at the interview or (b) at the age of 49 and estimated survivor functions of leaving home separately for each of the three cohorts within each country. From these functions, we computed quintiles of survival times that were matched to our sample with the corresponding country- and cohort-specific values assigned to each child. These quintiles represented our key predictor variables for later parent-child relations, indicating for each child whether s/he left home very early (within the first quintile of cohort- and country-specific survival times), early (second quintile), on average (third quintile), late (fourth quintile), or very late (fifth quintile). Table 3 presents the quintiles for a number of selected countries.

– Table 3 –

Models

In the multivariate analysis, we adopted a fixed-effects approach, using conditional logit models to obtain within-family estimates of the effect of coresidence duration on parent-child relations in later life. As noted in the background section, a predominantly adverse or supportive family environment in earlier life has an impact on the timing of leaving home and is also likely to be reflected in the quality of later parent-child relations. One analytical approach would be to simply treat age at leaving home as correlate, broadly indicating how earlier family climate is carried over into later life. Our theoretical considerations, however, suggested a number of pathways by which the duration of coresidence itself may affect later parent-child relations.

To estimate such effects, it was important to address the problem of selectivity. Concerning early family conflict, we already excluded those who were exposed to parents' marital disruption and/or stepfamilies during childhood and adolescence. But even after these restrictions, it remained likely that families still differed considerably with regard to adverse or intimate and supportive relations during children's passages to adulthood. In this respect, the main idea pertaining to the use of fixed-effects models was that family climate in earlier life represented a factor that all family members shared. In fixed effects models, all characteristics (both observed and unobserved) that are constant within a family drop out of the estimation equation and do therefore not affect the estimates. As a result, adverse family relations as well as a shared family culture of mutual support are rendered inconsequential. Because this analytical strategy focused on differences between siblings within a family, estimates were only obtained for characteristics that varied among them. Therefore, fixed-effects models required at least two children per respondent to explain variation within families (for a detailed account, see Henretta, Hill, Li, Soldo, & Wolf, 1997).

RESULTS

Descriptive Results

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics on the outcomes and controls separately for each quintile of age at leaving home. The proportion of children who lived five kilometers from parents increased markedly across the quintiles. A similar pattern was observed for contact frequency. Those who left home earliest less often maintained frequent contact to parents than the latest leavers from the fifth quintile. Compared to geographical proximity, however, these differences were less pronounced and no clear gradient was observed across the second, third, and fourth quintile. Long-term coresiders, particularly those from the fifth quintile, averaged at higher proportions of support provision to their aging parents but they were also most frequently at the receiving end of time transfers. In contrast, the highest proportion of financial transfer receipt was found for the earliest home leavers.

– Table 4 –

The distribution of the controls across the five quintiles indicated that sons were clearly overrepresented among the late and latest leavers whereas daughters represented the majority of earliest and early departures from the parental home. Overall, the latest home leavers had higher levels of education, worked more often full time, remained childless for longer periods, and were less likely to be married.

Multivariate Results

We used eight multivariate models, presented in Table 5, to estimate our five binary outcome variables. The three additional models (2b, 3b, and 4b) pertained to the fact that parent-child

proximity may be endogenous to intergenerational contact as well as to the exchange of time transfers. That is, parents and adult children may move closer to each other in order to facilitate personal contact and/or the provision of location-specific support such as household help or personal care (Silverstein & Angelelli, 1998; Henretta et al., 1997: 118). Therefore, we estimated each of the three corresponding outcomes (contact, upward time transfers, and downward time transfers) twice – once excluding (Models 2a, 3a, 4a) and once including (Models 2b, 3b, 4b) proximity as a control. Note that the case numbers varied considerably between the different outcomes because in these conditional logit models, only families with variation in the dependent variable were included in the estimation.

– Table 5 –

Model 1 corroborated our descriptive findings on the proximity gradient across the quintiles of leaving home. Earliest leavers were less likely to reside in close proximity to their aging parents than their siblings who left "on time" (third quintile). Conversely, those who were among the latest leavers revealed the highest chances of living close to their parents in later life even under control of a variety of child characteristics. Not surprisingly, we discovered a largely similar pattern with regard to the frequency of intergenerational contact (Model 2a). Under the assumption that proximity was exogenous to contact (Model 2b), these differences appeared to be partly attributable to geographical distance, representing structural opportunities of maintaining frequent contact.

Models 3a showed that "mature coresiders" (fifth quintile) were more likely to provide time transfers to their parents in later life than their siblings who left home at an average age. Again, this effect was reduced after introducing proximity into the equation (Model 3b), but it remained statistically significant (note that the relative reduction of effect size cannot be

interpreted in these models; see Breen, Karlson, & Holm, 2010). Conversely, Model 4a indicated that the late and latest home leavers also received more parental support than their siblings. In analyses not shown, we found that these differences concerned the provision of grandchild care rather than instrumental help given to an adult child. After controlling for structural opportunities to offer location-specific support, however, the effect was no longer statistically significant for the latest leavers although the general pattern across the quintiles remained recognizable (Model 4b). Finally, Model 5 on the receipt of financial transfers from parents did not point to any differences between siblings with respect to their age at leaving home.

Overall, the results on the controls were largely consistent with those reported in previous studies in spite of our extensive sample exclusions. Within aging families, sons had fewer contact and exchanged less support with their parents than daughters (e.g., Hank, 2007; Lennartson, 2010); full time employment appeared to compete with intergenerational contact and the provision of time transfers (e.g., Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2004); well-educated children were geographically more mobile and less often supported financially than siblings who had lower levels of education; and finally, the presence of own children was strongly associated with receiving time help from parents (i.e., looking after grandchildren).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was designed to investigate how earlier patterns of leaving home affected parent-child relations in later life. Family fixed-effects models enabled us to estimate the effects of earlier coresidence duration on intergenerational proximity, contact, and support exchange in aging families. The findings broadly suggested that the time spent in the parental home during young adulthood increased later levels of intergenerational solidarity after controlling for shared family factors and a variety of child characteristics. This evidence did not support the

contention that extended coresidence entails long-term detrimental effects on intergenerational relations resulting from children's prolonged dependency and violation of cultural age norms on leaving home. Instead, the latest leavers were those who lived closest to their aging parents, maintained the most frequent contact, and supported them more often than their siblings who left home "on time". The latter finding is consistent with the model of long-term reciprocity, suggesting that early benefits received within a "feathered nest" may constitute support debts that adult children repay in later life (see Henretta et al., 1997; Silverstein et al., 2002). Importantly, this effect could not be entirely attributed to structural opportunities although age at leaving home revealed a strong positive effect on later parent-child proximity. Late home leavers, however, were also more likely to be at the receiving end of intergenerational support. These patterns, on the one hand, may support the claim that extended coresidence involves processes of mutual socialization, promoting feelings of obligations both of young adults and their parents which later translate into higher levels of support exchange. But on the other hand, this downward intergenerational assistance may rather be a matter of multigenerational bonds (Bengtson, 2001). Because the effects of downward support pertained only to grandchild care, an obvious interpretation is that extended coresidence increased the chances that grandchildren were born into multigenerational households, quite possibly intensifying their relations to grandparents in later life.

It is important to note some limitations of this study. First, age at leaving home represented a rather crude measure of parent-child relationships in earlier life. Obviously, this indicator did not offer any direct information of how coresidence was actually experienced by parents and children. We were also unable to consider the diverse pathways out of the parental home (e.g., leaving home to take up a job, to move together with a partner, to escape from family conflict, etc.) which may also affect parent-child relations in the long term. In addition, our data did not allow determining with absolute certainty that parents' retrospective reports on

their children's age at leaving home were equal to the actual duration of coresidence. This problem concerns, for example, the issue of returning home (Mitchell, 2006). With respect to our data, however, we note that home returning is a rather uncommon phenomenon in Europe (Corijn & Klijzing, 2001).

Second, our claim that we controlled for family-level factors rested on the assumption that these characteristics did not vary among siblings. Whereas this appeared adequate with regard to a general "family climate", it ignored the obvious within-family variation in levels of earlier emotional closeness to parents. Because the latter has been shown to increase the likelihood of support exchange in later life (Parrott & Bengtson, 1999), intergenerational affection represented an important omitted variable in this study. Unfortunately, the SHARE data did not allow considering this aspect in the current research.

These limitations, however, must be weighed against the unique contributions of our research design. There are good reasons to believe that the time spent with parents during the passage to adulthood does indeed affect intergenerational relations and that its impact may resurface even decades later. This study represents the first to examine such long-term effect of coresidence, investigating from a life course perspective how experiences related to earlier family transitions were carried over into late parent-child relations. In this respect, we proposed a number of pathways by which leaving home may set the stage for intergenerational solidarity in later life. We hope to have demonstrated that considering these aspects contributes to understanding patterns of proximity, contact, and support exchange in aging families.

In contrast to the predictions of classical life course theory, this study painted a positive overall picture of extended coresidence, revealing its potential of creating cohesion rather than conflict and strengthening intergenerational ties in later life. In view of that, it appears straightforward to predict good prospects for aging societies that experienced a recent rise in

coresidence, such as the United States (Fleck, 2009). We caution, however, that these effects likely depend on how coresidence is actually perceived. Previous research has stressed that coresidence is mutually satisfying only if it represents a voluntary arrangement whereas the reverse may be true if it is forced upon families, for example by an economic crisis. Future research should attempt to address these issues, using longitudinal data that allow linking specific experiences of coresidence to family outcomes in later life.

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Table 1. *Variables and Descriptive Statistics*

	M	*SD*	*Range*	Description
Characteristics of respondents				
Age	69.99	7.18	50-96	
Male	.43		0-1	
Number of children	2.36	.61	2-4	Sample restricted to the range of 2-4 children
Single-living	.35		0-1	Coded 1 if the respondent was living as a single at the time of interview
Health problems	.49		0-1	Coded 1 if the parent reported limitations in usual activities because of health problems
Characteristics of children (predictors)				
Age at leaving home	22.37	3.77	15-43	Calculated from parents' retrospective reports on the year in which a child left home
Age	42.62	6.13	26-57	
Male	.48		0-1	
Married	.71		0-1	Coded 1 if the child was married and living together with the spouse; 0 if the child was single, living separated from the spouse, divorced, or widowed
Young child	.20		0-1	Coded 1 if the child had an own child < 7 years
Older child	.63		0-1	Coded 1 if the child had an own child >=7 years
Full time employed	.66		0-1	Coded 1 if the child worked full time
High education	.29		0-1	Coded 1 if the child had at least some tertiary education (ISCED > 4)
Firstborn	.43		0-1	Coded 1 for the oldest child in a family
Characteristics of parent-child relations (outcomes)				
Proximity				
Dyadic level	.48		0-1	Coded 1 if the child lived within a radius of 5 km from the parent
Family level	.71		0-1	Coded 1 if at least one child lived within a radius of 5 km from the parent
Contact frequency				
Dyadic level	.65		0-1	Coded 1 if the parent reported a contact frequency to the child of several times a week or more
Family level	.83		0-1	Coded 1 if the parent reported a contact frequency to at least one child of several times a week or more
Support: child to parent (time)				
Dyadic level	.14		0-1	Coded 1 if the child provided personal care, practical household help, or paperwork assistance within the past 12 months
Family level	.21		0-1	Coded 1 if the corresponding dyadic indicator equaled 1 in at least one dyad within the family
Support: parent to child (time)				
Dyadic level	.32		0-1	Coded 1 if the parent looked after grandchildren and/or provided personal care, practical household help, or paperwork assistance to a child within the past 12 months
Family level	.51		0-1	Coded 1 if the corresponding dyadic indicator equaled 1 in at least one dyad within the family
Support: parent to child (cash)				
Dyadic level	.12		0-1	Coded 1 if the parent gave a financial transfer of 250 Euros or more to a child
Family level	.18		0-1	Coded 1 if the corresponding dyadic indicator equaled 1 in at least one dyad within the family

Note: SHARE waves 1 & 2; release 2.5.0., own calculations; unweighted. Respondents (N = 3,229) represent families with two to four non-coresident biological children who left home > 10 years ago and lived < 100 km from parents (N = 7,630 parent-child dyads).

Table 2. *Characteristics of Children and Parent-Child Relations in 15 Countries*

	AT	DE	SE	NL	SP	IT	FR	DK	GR	CH	BE	IL	CZ	PL	IE	Total
Child characteristics																
Age at leaving home	21.96	22.35	20.42	21.88	24.99	25.09	22.17	19.97	23.29	22.06	23.01	22.49	22.94	23.97	23.67	22.37
Age	41.94	42.34	40.87	40.81	43.89	43.89	42.82	41.22	44.39	41.98	43.35	42.80	44.15	45.33	42.61	42.62
Male	.44	.48	.53	.46	.49	.50	.47	.49	.46	.46	.50	.43	.48	.47	.37	.48
Married	.66	.69	.48	.71	.92	.90	.65	.58	.84	.61	.73	.84	.81	.91	.79	.71
Has young child	.16	.14	.29	.29	.24	.14	.23	.27	.12	.18	.17	.31	.11	.06	.21	.20
Has older child	.64	.59	.52	.46	.71	.76	.60	.52	.78	.48	.70	.60	.83	.87	.62	.63
Full time employed	.70	.64	.70	.58	.68	.57	.74	.76	.60	.54	.63	.66	.78	.68	.54	.66
High education	.34	.31	.26	.29	.19	.09	.31	.44	.25	.11	.41	.51	.14	.16	.49	.29
Firstborn	.44	.45	.44	.42	.46	.43	.42	.43	.45	.42	.40	.41	.46	.44	.36	.43
Parent-child relations																
Proximity <= 5km	.43	.50	.44	.52	.73	.62	.36	.37	.67	.39	.48	.28	.52	.59	.37	.48
Contact > once a week	.52	.56	.70	.67	.84	.82	.57	.59	.92	.48	.59	.78	.58	.56	.68	.65
Parent received time transfer	.14	.18	.10	.08	.08	.10	.08	.12	.26	.10	.12	.10	.30	.16	.12	.14
Parent gave time transfer	.29	.27	.41	.38	.30	.26	.34	.43	.26	.31	.36	.25	.24	.18	.28	.32
Parent gave cash transfer	.13	.13	.18	.12	.02	.09	.11	.18	.08	.08	.12	.23	.10	.11	.01	.12
Number of dyads	340	578	725	897	235	409	538	681	508	364	955	348	634	342	76	7,630

Note: SHARE waves 1 & 2; release 2.5.0., own calculations; unweighted. Dyads between parents and two to four non-coresident biological children who left home > 10 years ago and lived < 100 km from parents (N = 7,630). See Table 1 for details on the variables. Country codes: Austria (AT), Germany (DE), Sweden (SE), Netherlands (NL), Spain (SP), Italy (IT), France (FR), Denmark (DK), Greece (GR), Switzerland (CH), Belgium (BE), Israel (IL), Czech Republic (CZ), Poland (PL), Ireland (IE).

Table 3. *Quintiles of Age at Leaving Home in Selected Countries*

	Quintiles of Survival Time			
	20 %	40 %	60 %	80 %
Spain				
Birth cohorts 1950-59	22	25	29	39
1960-69	23	26	29	35
1970-79	24	27	29	33
Denmark				
Birth cohorts 1950-59	18	19	20	22
1960-69	18	19	20	22
1970-79	18	19	20	22
France				
Birth cohorts 1950-59	19	21	22	25
1960-69	19	21	23	26
1970-79	20	22	24	26
Greece				
Birth cohorts 1950-59	19	22	25	30
1960-69	20	23	27	33
1970-79	23	27	30	36
Czech Republic				
Birth cohorts 1950-59	20	22	25	29
1960-69	20	22	24	29
1970-79	21	23	25	30

Note: SHARE waves 1 & 2; release 2.5.0., own calculations; unweighted.
Survivor functions were calculated separately for each country and birth cohort using the unrestricted sample (N = 54,412 dyads). Process time started at age 15 and was censored at the interview or age 49.

Table 4. *Means of Variables by Quintiles of Leaving Home*

	Country- and Cohort-Specific Quintiles of Age at Leaving Home					
Variables	1st Earliest	2nd Early	3rd Average	4th Late	5th Latest	Total
Outcomes (parent-child relations)						
Proximity <= 5km	.44	.47	.49	.52	.55	.48
Contact > once a week	.63	.65	.65	.66	.67	.65
Parent received time transfer	.14	.13	.12	.16	.17	.14
Parent gave time transfer	.33	.30	.31	.34	.35	.32
Parent gave cash transfer	.14	.13	.12	.11	.11	.12
Controls (child characteristics)						
Age	41.20	42.51	42.98	43.63	44.69	42.62
Male	.32	.45	.53	.61	.67	.48
Married	.68	.76	.73	.71	.64	.71
Has young child (< 7 years)	.21	.19	.19	.21	.24	.20
Has older child (>= 7 years)	.63	.68	.65	.61	.54	.63
Full time employed	.60	.65	.69	.70	.72	.66
High education	.26	.27	.30	.32	.33	.29
Firstborn	.42	.42	.43	.44	.46	.43

Note: SHARE waves 1 & 2; release 2.5.0., own calculations; unweighted. Dyads between parents and two to four non-coresident biological children who left home > 10 years ago and lived < 100 km from parents (N = 7,630). See Table 1 for details on the variables.

Table 5. *Conditional Logistic Regressions*

	Parent-Child Relations in Later Life							
	Proximity <= 5km	Contact > once a week		Parent received time transfer		Parent gave time transfer		Parent gave cash transfer
Predictors	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b	Model 4a	Model 4b	Model 5
Age at leaving home (ref: 3rd quintile)								
1st quintile	-.33**	-.49***	-.32*	.02	.06	-.30†	-.30†	-.36
	(.11)	(.13)	(.15)	(.18)	(.19)	(.17)	(.17)	(.28)
2nd quintile	-.08	-.19	-.08	.06	.07	-.11	-.15	-.03
	(.11)	(.12)	(.14)	(.18)	(.19)	(.16)	(.17)	(.25)
4th quintile	.17	.08	.07	.36†	.28	.49**	.45*	-.39
	(.11)	(.14)	(.16)	(.19)	(.19)	(.17)	(.18)	(.28)
5th quintile	.50**	.43*	.42†	.70**	.58*	.53*	.41	-.10
	(.16)	(.19)	(.22)	(.26)	(.27)	(.25)	(.25)	(.41)
Controls (child characteristics)								
Male	-.06	-.75***	-.88***	-.22†	-.23†	-.72***	-.74***	-.54**
	(.08)	(.09)	(.10)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)	(.18)
Age	-.03†	-.08***	-.08***	.00	.01	-.20***	-.20***	-.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)
Married	-.21*	-.24*	-.20	.37*	.42*	-.15	-.09	-.86***
	(.09)	(.11)	(.13)	(.16)	(.17)	(.14)	(.14)	(.20)
Full time employed	-.03	-.44***	-.42***	-.32*	-.29*	.10	.14	-.30
	(.08)	(.10)	(.11)	(.14)	(.15)	(.13)	(.13)	(.19)
High education	-.28**	-.04	.03	-.01	.10	-.14	-.13	-.61*
	(.11)	(.12)	(.14)	(.17)	(.18)	(.15)	(.16)	(.24)
Has young child < 7	.18	.38*	.45*	-.07	-.15	4.10***	4.18***	.23
	(.13)	(.15)	(.18)	(.23)	(.24)	(.26)	(.26)	(.29)
Has older child >=7	.16	.21	.25	.10	.05	3.10***	3.19***	.43†
	(.12)	(.13)	(.16)	(.20)	(.20)	(.24)	(.25)	(.26)
Firstborn	.04	.16†	.14	-.04	-.06	.33*	.31*	-.06
	(.08)	(.10)	(.11)	(.14)	(.15)	(.13)	(.13)	(.20)
Proximity <= 5 km			2.08***		1.07***		.84***	.04
			(.12)		(.15)		(.12)	(.19)
χ^2	46.75	186.85	60.27	25.76	85.44	806.44	854.92	51.07
df	12	12	13	12	13	12	13	13
Number of dyads	3530	2848	2848	1337	1337	2773	2773	740
Number of families	1408	1118	1118	538	538	1130	1130	297

Note: SHARE waves 1 & 2; release 2.5.0., own calculations. Logit coefficients (standard errors) are shown. Dyads between parents and two to four non-coresident biological children who left home > 10 years ago and lived < 100 km from parents (N = 7,630). See Table 1 for details on the variables.
† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.